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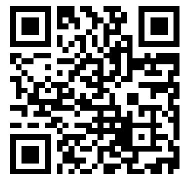

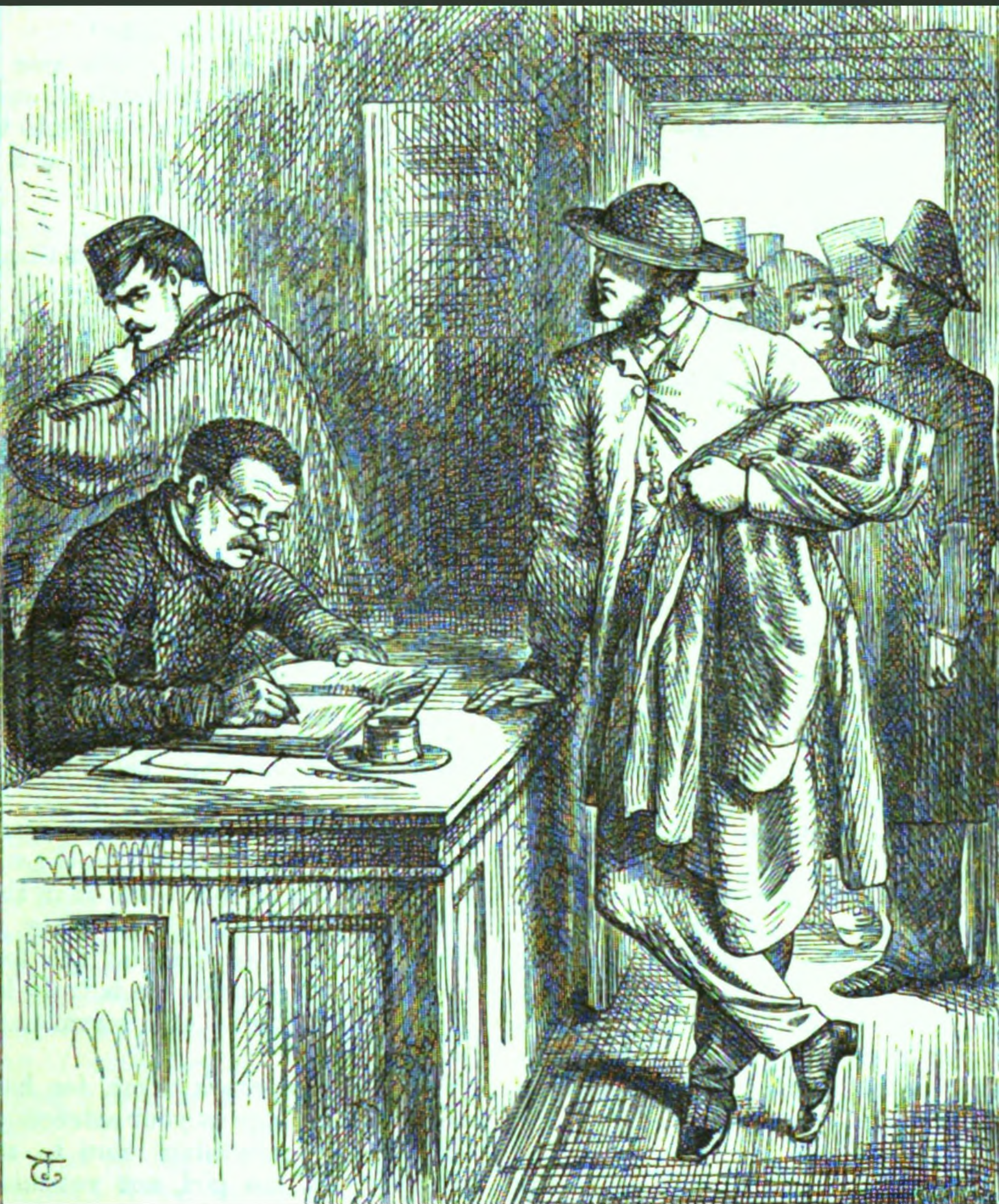

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AN

Illustrated Miscellany

OF

LITERATURE, ART, SCIENCE, & POPULAR INFORMATION.

VOLUME IV.

DECEMBER, 1860, TO JUNE, 1861.

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ONCE A WEEK.

THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XVI.

"MISS HENDERSON," said Ernest Adair, as Mrs. Urquhart's servant entered a little room on the ground-floor of one of the little inns at Versailles, "you are punctual, but you don't look pleased."

"I shouldn't say I was," replied the domestic.

She was rather a pretty girl, in spite of a flattish face, a large mouth, with plenty of white strong teeth in it, a couple of hard black eyes, and a habit of erecting her head in a slanting and defiant manner.

"I am so sorry," said Ernest Adair, whose regret was certainly not expressed in the tone in which the careless words were said, nor was it more palpably demonstrated by the way in which he threw himself upon a straw-bottomed chair,

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placed his feet upon the other, and proceeded to kindle the eternal cigarette.

"Now, don't make me smell of smoke, Mr. Adair, but say what you want to say, and let me go, as we have got some people, and I shall be missed."

"You have got some people? Name the people."

"Nobody you know."

"That, my dear, is an assumption on a subject of which you know nothing. I know everybody, and whether I do or not, be good enough to do as I ask you."

"Well, I don't know the names."

"That is an untruth."

"I declare I don't. Madame called one of the ladies her dear Louise."

"How long have they been there?"

"Only half an hour."

"English or French?"

"There is a gentleman and two ladies. He is French, and one of the ladies is English."

"Is that my dear Louise?"

"No, the other."

"You are short in your replies to-day, Miss Henderson, or shall I say Matilda—not that I believe that to be your name. I should have thought that your experience had told you that short answers do not suit me."

"I have told you all I know, and how can I tell you more?"

"You can tell me a great deal more, and will have the goodness to do so."

"I say then that I know nothing of them, except that they came in a carriage."

"How many horses, and their colour?"

"Two horses,—brown ones."

"Colour of carriage?"

"Dark green."

"There, you see, valuable information at once, which shows that you do not do yourself justice. They sent in their cards, I suppose?"

"Angelique took them in."

"You will be kind enough to copy them for me, and enclose the copy in one of those blue envelopes I gave you. Post it this evening."

"Very well. Is that all? I shall be sure to smell of smoke," said Matilda, "and Madame does hate it so."

"Naturally. It reminds her of her husband, who is never without a cigar, I think."

"I wish you were half as good a man as Mr. Urquhart."

"Never wish impossibilities, my dear. I have no ambition to attain such a sublime of virtue as can impress even Miss Matilda Henderson with admiration."

"Can I go?"

"Certainly not. What I have told you is the smallest part of our business. Your look of impatience is not lost upon me, and I answer it by saying that if you had chosen to tell me all that you have told me without giving me the trouble of questioning, we should have saved much time. So, if Madame boxes your ears it will be your own fault."

"Madame box my ears, indeed!"

"It might be for your good, occasionally," said Ernest. "I have felt that so strongly, that I have at times been inclined to do it myself, and I don't know that I may not yet make that effort for your improvement. In the meantime, I have something else to tell you."

"Do make haste," said the girl.

"You are going to have another visitor."

"Yes, I expected that."

"And why did you not mention your expectations to me?"

"Why, what time have I had? The note came only an hour ago."

"A lady's note, English hand, the letter L on the seal?"

"No, there was no seal."

"Careless in the writer, knowing the house she was writing to."

"It is like you, to drive a girl into spying and meanness, and then throw it in her teeth," said Matilda.

"Is it? I pique myself on my consistency, do you know?" returned Adair, smiling. "How did you manage to read the note?"

"I have not read it. Madame tore it open eagerly, and hurried through it, and seemed very much pleased. Then she went into the little spare bedroom, and looked about it, as if she wanted it to be ready for somebody."

"But gave no orders?"

"No. Don't I tell you that these other people came?"

"Very well; don't be angry. You have no idea who this new visitor is?"

"Not I. I shall know when she comes, I suppose, and that will be time enough for me."

"It will not. There are reasons why you should know beforehand, and that is why I have asked your presence here, Miss Henderson."

"Well, who is it?"

"Your mistress's sister. What a tell-tale face you have! You look as pleased as if it were your own sister coming. Perhaps more so?"

"You have no call to talk about my sister, or anybody else belonging to me, Mr. Adair," returned the girl, flushing up. "I shall be glad if Mrs. Hawkesley is coming, because she is a kind creature."

"Visions of five-franc pieces, spare my aching sight! ye unworn dresses, crowd not on my soul!" said Adair, rather to himself than the girl.

"It has nothing to do with her presents," retorted Matilda, catching at the meaning of the parody; "but because she is truly kind and considerate, and thinks of a servant as if she were flesh and blood."

"Is that a reproach to me, for having failed to render due homage to your attractions?"

"Have you anything more to say to me, Mr. Adair?" said the girl, not vouchsafing to notice the speech.

"Yes. First, it is not Mrs. Hawkesley who is coming. Don't look vexed, Mrs. Urquhart's other sister is quite as well off as Mrs. Hawkesley, and there are several reasons why the visit may be a much better thing for you than if it were from that good-natured lady who kept you up so late from her love of going to the theatres."

"Is it Mrs. Lygon?"

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"Certainly. Has your mistress a third sister?"

"Well, Mrs. Lygon is a very sweet lady, too; though she is prouder than Mrs. Hawkesley."

"What the deuce do you know about pride?" answered Adair, with an expression of bitter contempt, which stung the girl into sudden anger.

"As much as a gentleman," she replied, hastily, "who sets servants to spy upon their mistresses, gets copies of letters and cards, and does all sorts of mean tricks."

"I like that honest outbreak," said Adair, not in the least discomposed. "I like earnestness, and never quarrel with the way in which it shows itself. But if I do some little things which offend the delicate feelings of a lady's-maid, I do some generous things to make up for them. I think that your handsome admirer, Monsieur Silvain, would not have gone quite so well out of that little affair about Madame's wine and some other trifles, if I had not befriended him with the police."

"Poor Silvain would have been a better man, if—if you had not made his acquaintance," said Matilda, with tears rising to her eyes, "and why you should demean yourself to make friends with a perfumer, I don't know, but I am sure for no good."

"I am sorry to hear such aristocratic sentiments from a daughter of the people," said Ernest Adair, gravely. "Don't you know that we are all equal, and though you think I ought to despise poor little Silvain——"

"Despise him, indeed!" said she, in another rage. "You have much more right to be despised by him, I can tell you that."

"Quite right, my dear. I have no settled residence and position in the world, whereas he has a charming little shop in which he sells the very worst perfumery in the whole world, at prices that will soon enable him to claim Mademoiselle Henderson's fair hand. But as she will not be able to give it without my approbation, she should not try to make me an enemy of the lover of her heart."

"I must go," said the girl. "What will Madame say?"

"I will secure you from Madame's anger. There. When I say a thing of that kind I mean it. Now, attend to me, and forget Monsieur Silvain for a moment. Mrs. Lygon is coming to visit your mistress, and as I want to arouse all your instincts as a lady's-maid, let me tell you that the visit is a secret one, and made without the knowledge of either of the ladies' husbands. Now, if Madame shows such want of confidence in you as to try to keep that from you, I suppose that you know what is due to yourself."

"What do I want to know about her secrets. If it was not for you I would never have touched one of her letters in my life."

"Thank me for having educated you into intelligence, then. And whether you care about her secrets or not, I care a good deal about them, and therefore I shall require you to be particularly on the alert until I tell you to relax your vigilance."

"You make me do what you like, but I hate myself, and——"

"And me. We all hate people who compel us to do sensible things, and I don't expect you to be wiser than the rest of the word. But I promise you that whatever you do, under my directions, shall be to your advantage; and it is exceedingly agreeable, my dear Mademoiselle Henderson, to put it in that way, instead of hinting at any little unpleasantness that might arise—let us say to Monsieur the perfumer, if he dropped out of my good graces through any indiscretion of yours. You understand?"

"Tell me what to do," said Matilda, doggedly.

"In the first place, Mrs. Lygon will not come direct to your house. She desires, as I say, to avoid meeting your large master."

"She can't meet him, for there has been some railway accident, and he is gone to set it right."

"Ah! That is news to me," said Adair, turning to her with more interest. "When did he go?"

"This morning."

"The brave man! The good man!"

"Yes, he is that," said Matilda, "though you do not mean it when you say it."

"But I do. He delights me much. I am pleased with the large Scotchman. Excellent Robert! Worthy Urquhart!"

He was occupied in new and sudden thought, and the mocking words dropped from his lips unmeaningly.

"That is well," he said, after a pause. "It would be better if the other were not on his way; but Providence seldom sends us everything that we desire, and perhaps it would not be good for us, my dear, if it did. Not in Versailles—excellent! Then listen again, intending bride of Monsieur Silvain. Mrs. Lygon will be at your house sooner than expected. That is to say, she will meet her sister, to whom she has of course written, making an appointment, and Mrs. Urquhart will state to her that the Caledonian giant being away, his castle may be approached without fear. Now, I must know where the ladies meet; and that you must instantly find out for me. After they have come home, the business must be in your hands. So, off instantly with you, and manage to find the note which Mrs. Urquhart has received. If you can get it, do; but at all events learn the place of meeting, and bring the news to me."

"I think she put the note in her pocket. How am I to get at it?"

"Matilda, you make me blush for your incapacity. Am I to tell a lady's-maid what pretence to invent in order to get a dress into her hands—can I imagine that it is torn, or is not fit to go out in, or is wanted for a pattern, or any of the thousand-and-one lies that are already in your mind, and any one of which will do for an excuse to put your hand upon the letter. Do I not know the adroitness of your kind? Away, I tell you, and remember that I am waiting for you here, and shall count the minutes——"

"If I cannot get it."

"Then I shall not reproach you, my dear, but I think that the worthy Monsieur Silvain may be less forbearing, after the domiciliary visit with

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which the police may favour him, at an early date."

"I think you are a fiend," said Henderson, leaving the room.

"I don't think I am," said Ernest Adair, aloud, to himself, after her departure. "Indeed, I may say that I am sure I cannot be a fiend, because there are such manifest interpositions of Providence in my favour. What a very remarkable piece of good fortune it was that, instead of following Mrs. Lygon to the station, I resolved to remain in Boulogne, and see Jules Dufour about that other matter. And again, how fortunate that the said Jules had not recovered his night of gambling and drinking, and thereupon could not appear until the afternoon. Then, what an extraordinarily good thing it was that I happened to think of watching the arrivals from England, and that I should hear Mr. Arthur Lygon announce his advent on the soil of France. Again it was a thing which really shows how I am favoured of fate, that he should believe that extremely respectable official whom I sent to throw himself in his way, and give him the exact time for the departure of the Paris train, which train my friend Mr. Lygon thereby missed. Well, in all these successes, I had some share; and I will not affect to be over-grateful to fortune, but in this last matter I claim no credit at all. Could I dream that a railway accident would occur for the express purpose of sending out of Versailles that gentleman whose presence there was so peculiarly objectionable to me at the moment? No, I must distinctly dispute my friend Matilda's proposition, and assert, on the contrary, that I am not a fiend."

Ernest Adair either found pleasure in this kind of mocking self-communing with himself, or it had become a habit which he could not shake off. But, to do him justice, he never indulged in it at a time when it might have been dangerous, and it was a a favourite phrase with him that the melodramatic expedient of an overheard soliloquy could not be fairly introduced in the drama of his life. But to talk to himself was Adair's custom, as it is with many men, who will avow that they never seem thoroughly masters of a plan, or thoroughly prepared for an interview, until they have held actual discourse with themselves upon it, and have had a sort of private rehearsal of what is to come. It has been held that talking to oneself is a sign of weakness, although the wittiest men have defended the practice by the wittiest suggestions; but there is perhaps a greater weakness, and that is the attempt to base a general psychological rule upon an accidental habit.

Adair had to wait longer than pleased him in the little room at the inn, nor did the questionable absinthe which he obtained there tend to make his hour pass the more agreeably.

But at length his spy returned, hurriedly, from the house, which stood but a few hundred yards from the Place d'Armes.

"Victory, eh?" he said.

"Madame is actually out, and on her way to meet—

"To meet where—where?"

"Near the Fountain of Neptune."

"What, in the gardens here?"

"Yes."

"Good child—excellent Matilda—embrace Monsieur Silvain on my behalf at the first opportunity," said Adair, hastily gathering up his cap and gloves.

"You will meet her, or she will see you. I could scarcely get away in time to run round."

"My dear Matilda," said Ernest Adair, "is there anything disreputable about me, which should make me avoid the eyes of your mistress?"

"Oh, I cannot understand you," said the girl.

"Probably not," he replied. "All in good time. Nay, you are a meritorious agent, and deserve the confidence of your principal. I will behave better to you than Mrs. Urquhart does, in that respect. I have no desire that the two ladies should have much opportunity of talking confidentially in the gardens, because I very much want to know what they say, and listening in the open air is not a very easy thing. Therefore, my dear Matilda, Madame Silvain that is to be, I shall endeavour to drive the ladybirds home, and therefore, at the right moment, I shall permit Mrs. Urquhart to see that I am in the neigbourhood."

"I can see her coming," said the girl, looking out of a side window.

"Very elegantly dressed, and in a way that does her maid the highest honour," said Adair. "That fair complexion of hers reminds me of my own beloved land—and now I think is just the time to go out. Remember, Madame Silvain, from the moment they return, you are to be all ear, except that you are to be also all eye, as I shall be particularly curious about any letters that may arrive during Mrs. Lygon's visit. And find out whether the Scotch giant sends any word of his intention to come home. Good child!"

He touched her black hair with his neatly gloved hand, and went out. The girl dashed her hand impatiently over the place he had touched, as if to blot out the impression of his having done so, and then looked to see the meeting between him and her mistress. But though from the door of the inn she could see Mrs. Urquhart entering the gates of the palace, Mr. Adair did not join her, nor could the girl catch any glance of him on her way home.

The fact simply was that Ernest Adair had gone in another direction, and long before Mrs. Urquhart had passed through the court yard, he was in the gardens. How he managed this is not of much consequence; persons with Ernest Adair's private advantages over their fellows have frequently means of obtaining singularly irregular admission to all sorts of places, especially in France.

CHAPTER XVII.

Mrs. Urquhart went on her way as rapidly as is consistent with the walk and bearing of an elegantly dressed woman in France, (one has seen an Englishwoman in England sufficiently oblivious of the grand duty of life as to be in an ungraceful hurry when on the way to an important interview, nay, even when she had only a kindness to do), and was soon within sight of the Fountain of Neptune. But she had another and an unwelcome sight to encounter before she could reach the

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basin in which stood and stands the sea-compelling Poseidon.

It was, however, no more repulsive an object than the well-dressed and striking-looking man who had been interesting himself so deeply in her movements, and he approached her with a newspaper in his hand, and apparently without seeing her.

Yet he might well have been excused for lowering his "Galignani," and noticing the beautiful woman who advanced.

Exquisitely fair, and with features of singular regularity, Mrs. Urquhart was permitted, even in Paris, to pass for a beauty. Her walking costume prevented much display of her golden tresses, or of the symmetry of her head and bust, but the delicate mouth and the blue eyes came with a double and instant charm upon you, and you felt thankful, and content to wait for other revelations. Of middle height, her figure was full and rounded, and to-day her anxiety to meet her sister had given her step an elasticity which it did not usually evince, and had also imparted some addition of colour to her almost too pale complexion. A lovelier creature had seldom paced through those proud gardens, even in the days when they were consecrated to all that was noble and gay—and perhaps, even in those days of levity, never had a lovely woman walked towards the Fountain with more sadness at her heart, or better reason for such sadness.

Ernest dropped his paper at the right moment, recognised Mrs. Urquhart, and raised his cap. He noticed that her lips suddenly compressed, and then formed themselves into a half-smile, which had nothing in it beyond the stereotype courtesy of society. She would as soon have been without her charmingly-fitting gloves as without that smile when she met an acquaintance. That was all.

But not quite all in the case of Ernest Adair. Mrs. Urquhart's smile disappeared even sooner than usual, and in its place came a strange shade over the beautiful face. The effect was painful—it was really like that of the sudden fading away of sunshine from a bright river or a glowing flower-plot. The features themselves were not perhaps capable of much expression, but the whole face yielded to the sensation of the moment, and a story was told — one which there was no need to tell to the man who stood before her.

Stood, but for a moment. His only object has been told by himself, and that was already attained.

He passed her with a bow, and the ordinary words of greeting, and would have gone on.

But Bertha was a weak woman, and even while she feared, dreaded, almost hated, she could not bear to pass by the man whom she had so much reason to abhor. Before finally judging her, note her nature.

"Reading, in the retirement of Versailles?" she said, with a forced smile and a slight laugh which was aught but cheerful, and had something in it that should have suggested pity—those who have heard such laughs often have spent a life which should trouble them when it comes to the ending.

"I was looking for English news," said Adair, in that artificial voice which implies a desire to forbear from any earnest talk—men are, perhaps, cowards when using it,—women, when they speak in it, are either to be feared or pitied, or both. "But I find," he continued, "news which affects friends here. Is this railway accident serious?"

"No, no, I believe not. I do not know. I do not understand such things. Mr. Urquhart has gone to the place."

"Let us hope that he will not be detained long."

And he was again about to pass on, when Bertha said, harshly:

"You received my note?"

"With the *gage d'amitié*. It is here," and he touched his finger, and pressed it to his lips. "All thanks. But I must not detain you from your walk."

And then he passed on in spite of a word which still sought to stop him, and which he seemed not to hear. Perhaps he left the gardens, perhaps he entered the palace, and from some window gazed out eagerly, as many a jealous lover or furious husband may have done in the old days, for there is not a corner of that strange place but has clinging in it a story of a bad man and a foolish woman.

In a few minutes more, the sisters met.

Words of affection, looks from moistened eyes, warm pressure to the heart—and Laura and Bertha were again, as of old, in counsel against the common enemy.

"Did you meet him?" was Bertha's first question.

"No. What, has he followed you here?" asked Laura.

"I spoke to him this moment. I thought that you must have seen us."

"It is the same thing for his purpose. He knows that you will have told me. O Bertha, Bertha, my darling, how we are hunted!"

And for a few moments the two women did look tearful and helpless enough, as they stood each holding the other's hand convulsively.

Mrs. Lygon was the first to speak.

"It must not last, and shall not," she said, brushing away her tears. "I have risked too much,—O! I know not yet what I have risked, but come what will of it now, this torture must be ended."

"Torture, indeed," said Bertha, "but what can we do? If I were rich, I might go on supplying him, though, since he has taken to play, I could never know where his demands would end. But whether Robert has fancied that I am extravagant, or whether he has calls upon him which make it necessary for him to spend less, I know not, but he has supplied me far less liberally of late, and I have been driven to strange devices to obtain the money."

"Nothing that would be——

"Would be disgraceful if known, darling, you mean. No, not disgraceful—at least nothing wrong—I am told that other women do such things. I have no secrets from you. I have pawned a great many of my jewels."

"Dearest Bertha."

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"Well, that would not be of much consequence, because I have enough left to wear upon any ordinary occasion, and Robert is not very likely to wish me to go to any grand place at present—he is so closely occupied with business that he scarcely visits anywhere, and always seems rather pleased when I refuse invitations."

"You *will* tell me everything? You have no reason to apprehend that he has the faintest suspicion."

"You make me tremble so that I can scarcely stand. You do not mean that you have heard anything that makes you say that, Laura?"

"Not a syllable, not a whisper, nothing of the kind. I spoke only on what you had said."

"Does anything I have said make you think that such a thing is possible?" gasped Bertha, trembling like an aspen-leaf. "It may be so, now you detect it at once, while I have been living in such a state of maddening and distracting unhappiness, that I can form a judgment on nothing. Do you see anything to terrify us?"

"No, no, Bertha; be calm, my love."

"I am certain you meant something."

"Indeed I did not."

"You have heard something, and that has brought you over so suddenly and secretly, and I am to flee. Oh, I cannot flee, my darling; if they hunt me to death I must die. I have no more energy, no more courage, and it would be much better that I were dead."

"Do not talk madly," said Laura, energetically, almost impatiently, pressing both her sister's hands in her own. "There is no new danger whatever, at least none to you."

"To whom, then?"

"To me, perhaps; but we will not speak of that now. What I have done, is done, and God will protect me through the rest,—at least I pray so. But we must be calm and rational, my dearest Bertha, and not bring the worst upon ourselves, when we may be able to avert it. You were speaking of your jewels."

"Oh, yes. I was saying that I did not care about their being sent away, as I have told you, only that sometimes Robert lets a curious fancy come upon him, and he asks me to come down to dinner with some particular ornament which he has given me. His memory is wonderful; and if he should happen to ask me to wear something which I have not kept back, I know not indeed, with my nerves in the condition in which they are, what I should say. His going away, even for a few days, is a relief."

"My poor Bertha, I gathered all this from the last note which you wrote to *him*."

"He has sent you that?" said Bertha, colouring to the temples.

"He gave it into my hand," said Laura, calmly. "Where and when, I will tell you by-and-by. But we have much to say to one another."

"We must not say it here," said Bertha, looking round, as if in terror.

"Not here, dear? Where can there be less [i]rruption than in these quiet walks?"

"No, no. He may hear us. I know he will. He has spies everywhere—all round."

"You must exaggerate, dear Bertha. Your fears have made you create dangers where there are none."

"No, I tell you," said poor Bertha, sinking her voice to a whisper, although there was no one within a hundred yards of the sisters, "he knows everything. Why is he in the garden to-day? Only to show that he knew I was coming, and why."

"Impossible, dear child, unless you have shown him my note."

"No, that I have in my pocket, here—see."

Mrs. Urquhart felt for the note, and Laura saw her face blanch with agitation.

"No, I have not got it. He has it. He has taken it from me. I know not how, but he has it."

"How childish, dearest! How much more rational to suppose that, if you have really not got it, you left it on the table or dropped it on the floor. How shall I ever be able to help you if you are so wild?"

"I put it most carefully into my pocket, I tell you," said Bertha, "and felt that it was safely there, and yet he has managed to get hold of it. You may judge what sort of a life I am leading."

"I will not argue with you, dear, but I wish I were as sure of finding a bank-note on your table as my letter."

"Come home at once with me. Oh, not for that, but that we may speak in safety."

"Are we safer there than here?"

"Yes, yes. Come, dear."

"I would come in a moment, but there is one thing I want to say. He hinted to me that you had been compelled to place confidence—more than you ought to place in any servant—in——"

"Henderson?"

"Yes, that is the name."

"There is nothing to fear from her."

"Bertha, she is in his power."

"There is nothing to fear from her. Do not speak more about it. I would tell you everything."

"You must, dear, now, for reasons which I will give you. Else all will be ruined."

"Well, come to the house."

"I will. But, Bertha, there is no fear of Robert's coming back while I am here?"

"None whatever. He will be away at least a week. But tell me, dearest, why should you object to see Robert? I thought that you admired him so much, and I am sure that he always had the highest regard for you."

"I will answer that, dear, when I tell you my whole story. Now, listen. It must not be known that I am at your house."

"Do you mean that the servants—Henderson knows you, of course, but not any of the others."

"What I mean is that you must put me into your little room, where I will live while I am with you."

"Yes, yes, certainly, love."

"And remember, Bertha, whoever comes, and

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I make no exception, dear—I am neither seen nor mentioned."

"That is all easy enough, but, my dear girl, what does this anxious charge mean? Who are you afraid should follow you?"

"It does not matter. Nobody must see me."

"Laura," sobbed out Bertha, "I *dare* not ask you whether there is anything that you are—that *you* are afraid to tell me——"

"Nothing, nothing," said Laura, in her turn colouring deeply, but with a far different reason from that which had crimsoned the face of her sister. "I will tell you all, but promise me that I shall be kept in concealment, come who may."

"Why, of course I promise. What is such a promise as that between you and me? But I warn you of one thing. *He* will know it."

"That I care not for."

"Then let us go. I know that he is watching us."

"To what end—to what good?"

"I know not, but it is so. Come."

And the sisters left the palace, and proceeded to the house in the avenue.

(To be continued.)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PRESIDENT ELECT OF THE UNITED STATES.

"Honest Old Abe," as the Americans call Lincoln, was originally a farm-labourer in Illinois. Frederick Douglas, "the little giant," his defeated antagonist, was a cabinet-maker.

We can in our own country, I know, point to instances of great judges, who have swept out offices; great generals, who have risen (socially) from the ranks; great poets, who have been ploughmen, or the sons of simple yeomen; and great college professors, who have been the sons of carpenters; but in America the instances are so frequent, that they scarcely attract attention. Up and down, men toss in that feverish seething sea of Transatlantic life, so that no one stares to hear that the new inhabitant of the White House on the banks of the Potomac was once a wood-cutter, any more than he would to see the wealthy merchant, with whom he dined last year in his splendid palace in the Fifth Avenue, stirring round oyster soup or "clam chowder" in a gilded refreshment cellar in the Broadway. Rising and falling are both very easy in America.

In one of his "stump speeches," when lately itinerating the north-west provinces, Frederick Douglas, after informing the crowd that he had first been a school teacher, and then a cabinet-maker, peculiarly skilful in the construction of bureaus and secretaries, and nearly as good at bedsteads and tables, went on to describe how, like Lincoln, he afterwards turned advocate, got into the Legislature, and eventually attained notoriety by his speeches on "squatter sovereignty," and the Kansas and Nebraska Bill. Having thus sketched himself as a self-made man, "the little giant" went on to praise "Old Abe" as one of those peculiar men who seemed to succeed with admirable skill in all that he undertook. He was the best teller of a story he (Douglas) knew. When he was younger he could throw any of the "boys" wrestling; he would outrun an Indian at a foot-race; he pitched quoits truer and further; he was the luckiest tosser of a copper. He "could spoil more liquor than all the rowdies in the town put together," and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse-race, trotting-match, fist-fight, or rifle-match, excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody that was present."

Old Abe is a gaunt giant more than six feet high, strong and long-limbed. He walks slow, and, like many thoughtful men (Wordsworth and Napoleon, for example), keeps his head inclined forward and downward. His hair is wiry black, his eyes are dark-grey; his smile is frank, sincere, and winning. Like most American gentlemen, he is loose and careless in dress, turns down his flapping white collars, and wears habitually what we consider evening dress. His head is massive, his brow full and wide, his nose large and fleshy, his mouth coarse and full; his eyes are sunken, his bronzed face is thin, and drawn down into strong

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corded lines, that disclose the machinery that moves the broad jaw.

This great leader of the "Republican" party—this Abolitionist—this terror of the "Democrats"—this honest old lawyer, with a face half Roman, half Indian, so wasted by climate, so scarred by a life's struggles, was born in 1809, in Kentucky. His grandfather, who came from Virginia, was killed by the Indians. His father died young, leaving a widow and several children. They removed to Indiana, Abe being at that time only six years old. Poor, and struggling, his mother could only afford him some eight months' rough schooling; and in the clearings of that new, unsettled country, the healthy stripling went to work to hew hickory and gum-trees, to grapple with remonstrating bears, and to look out for the too frequent rattlesnake. Tall, strong, lithe, and smiling, Abe toiled on as farm-labourer, mule-driver, sheep-feeder, deer-killer, woodcutter, and, lastly, as boatman on the waters of the Wabash and the Mississippi.

I, who have stood for hours and days watching the boatmen of these rivers, know how laborious is their life,—how hard they toil to get their flatboats off the sand-bars,—how they moor at night among the fever-haunted cotton-trees,—how they kill the alligator, and make boots of his bossy skin,—how they spend hours under an almost African sun, dragging cotton bales down the steep earth banks,—how they have to gouge, and stab and shoot, to keep their own life and soul together,—what with the thievish "rowdies," the "river gamblers," and the rough backwoodsmen of Arkansas, Kansas, and Texas.

About 1830, Abe broke from this wild life, and went off to Illinois as field-labourer, first—then as shopman—lastly, by a natural American transition, as volunteer in the New Salem Company, bound for the war in Florida, against either Black Hawk, Billy Bowlegs, or some other desperate Indian chief determined to defend his cedar-trees, sand-plains, and marshes. This was the making of Abe. Daylight began to show: his stanchness, principle, energy, and sense soon made him a captain.

When the war was over, Abe returned to Springfield, the capital of Illinois, and resided in the plain two-storied white plank-house that he now lives in. In 1832 (for Abe was now a man of mark), he tried for aseat in the legislature, but failed. The year after, however, he was elected, and sat sturdily in the local parliament for four sessions.

Now, as you seldom meet an American who has tried less than four professions, Abe began next to study law, and his excellent head aiding him, he became an advocate, and practised with great success at Springfield.

The old stanchness, the "duty-feeling," as the Germans call moral principle, was helping on old Abe, now in the court-room at Springfield, as it had done in the Indiana woods, and on the cotton-landings at Baton Range. Already an active politician, Lincoln now declared himself a Whig, and supported Henry Clay. In 1846, he got a step further on, and was elected for Congress, where he sat till 1849. He became known there as a sturdy, dangerous Abolitionist, and on the Wilmot proviso he voted forty-two times (for the measure). A foe to popular cries and territorial aggression, he resisted Douglas, and opposed the Mexican war as unconstitutional.

In the years between 1849 and 1854, Lincoln retired from stump and platform and devoted himself to law. In 1854, as a Whig candidate for Illinois, he was defeated, but, like Sir John Moore, Abe's retreat ended in victory. In 1856 he took an active part for Fremont, and against Buchanan. In 1858 the Republicans of Illinois unanimously chose Abe as their candidate, and in a stumping tour he assailed his opponent Douglas on the squatter sovereignty question—pleading for abolition—but Douglas was nevertheless elected.

With these bold and honest antecedents, imagine the alarm and rage of the democrat "rowdies" on suddenly learning that the Chicago convention had nominated Old Abe, "the honest lawyer," as their Republican candidate for the President, that fiery Seward had waived his claims, and that Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, a clever, business man, was to be the Republican Vice-President. Was it any wonder the "dead rabbits," the "shoulder hitters," the "plug-uglies," and the "rummies," in bar-room and ten-pin alley absolutely foamed at the mouth, as the adherents of such political clubs are apt to do? Was it any wonder that the "little giant" himself said at a great ox-roast in Jones's Wood near New York, that if "Lincoln shall attempt to subvert the constitution, violate its provisoes, or make war upon the rights and interests of any section of this confederacy, *I will aid to the full extent of my power in hanging him higher than Virginia hung John Brown.*" (Vociferous cheering and cries of "Bravo!")

No wonder the spindly trees and tawdry drinking sheds of Jones's Wood rang with cries of "Good!" "There's plenty of rope in New York!" "Go it, Dug!" "Sail in!" "Let her rip!" "That's the talk!" "That's so!" "Good for you!" "Three cheers and a tiger for Dug the little giant!" Hei! hei! hei! hei! UGH!

The windows in every city were full of political caricatures. Douglas riding on a rail—Abe splitting rails—Lincoln on a platform, and the "etarnal nigger" grinning underneath. Out flew swarms of political song-books, virulent and venomous. The Republicans declared Douglas drank too much rye whiskey—the democrats laughed at Lincoln's first splitting rails, and then taking to splitting hairs. His friends said Lincoln could cut seven cord of wood in a day, that he repeated his prayers every night, that he was very like General Jackson, only his boots were a trifle larger. The democrats replied: "Tell us any lies about the old rail-splitter, but don't show us his darned ugly picture, or we'll be sick—sure!"

Nothing could equal the absurdity and unconscious bathos of these Tyrtæuses of party. The democrats, to the tune of "Gaily the Troubadour," sang:

"Gaily did Little Dug come from his home,
While he was yet in youth not twenty-one,
He joined our gallant band on the frontiers:
Little Dug, Little Dug, give him three cheers."

They nicknamed the Abolitionists the "woollies,"

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Lincoln the "rail member," and talked blasphemously about slavery as "an institution guarded by the records of the world, by the traditions of all mankind, by the logic of history, and the fitness of things." The "divinely instituted" and patriarchal system of slavery was perpetually preached up; and "nigger worship" decried as mining the South, and dissolving the Union, and hurrying on all parties to the "great irrepressible conflict."

Douglas "stumped" the States, and canvassed at every bar-room and liquor-store, let us remember. Lincoln remained quietly at home, abusing no one, and soliciting no popular applause. The Republicans—sanguine, high-spirited, and cool—exulted in "old honest Abe" and his long struggles when he lived in the old Kentucky cabin on the hills of Hardin county. "No robbing the treasury, now," they cried. "They would make the Locos run to slavish Cuba. Every honest poor man now would get his prairie-farm; they would crack 'the Soft Shells,' and send 50,000 'Wide-awakes' to guard Lincoln on his road to Washington." The election songs played all sorts of fantasias on the rail-splitting experience of Abe, garnishing their verses with technical allusions to please the backwoodsmen and wood-clearers of the North-West; for instance:—

> "Tom Ewing boil'd de brackish water,
> He drove faster than he oughter;
> But *Abe's* de real ring-tail snorter.
> A splittin' ob de rail,
> A splittin' ob de rail,
> De ten-foot, white-oak rail.
> He drove his glut right through the cut
> With maul of hickory tough."

Torch-light processions now lit up the midnight of cities troubled in their sleep. Armies of the Republican Wide-awake clubs, in red oil-cloth caps, and carrying coloured lanthorns on poles, defiled down High-streets, making night hideous with noisy bands, discharge of cannon, fierce bonfires, and starry bursts of Roman candles.

In irritating violence, and readiness for bloodshed, there was not a pin to choose between either party. Lincoln objected to the Dred Scott decision, and declared the Missouri compromise unconstitutional. Mr. Somebody Wolf declared the negro was mere animated property, with triple-plated skull and a special strong smell. A quiet paper —"The Olive Branch"—writing on "Negro Equality," said: "White men, voters, see to this in time, and, voters, keep this taint, this blot, this degradation from your households and firesides—*out-vote this detestable proposition of equality of races!*"

Nor were the Republicans a whit behind.

Helper wrote:—"It is for you to decide whether we are to have justice peaceably or by *violence*, for, whatever consequences may follow, we are determined to have it one way or the other."

The religious "New York Tribune" calmly advised all Abolitionists to deal no more with pro-slavery merchants; not to enter slave-waiting hotels; not to give fees to pro-slavery lawyers; not to call in pro-slavery physicians; not to listen to pro-slavery clergymen.

Mr. Joshua Giddings spoke of a time when Southern slave-holders would turn pale, and when they would "strike off the shackles of the slave, and, let me tell you that that time hastens—it is rolling forward."

The Hon. Erastus Hopkins said:—"If peaceful means fail us, and we are driven to the last extremity, when ballots are useless, *then we will make bullets effective.*" O! ghost of Penn, only hear Erastus!

The great Helper book, which became an election pamphlet, and was most powerful for the Abolitionists, spoke of the number of slave-holders, and added:—"Against this army . . . . we think it will be an easy matter, independent of the negroes, who, in nine cases out of ten, would be delighted with an opportunity to *cut their masters' throats.*"

But most extreme and ferocious of all came that wolf Fenrir, the Hon. John S. Hale, of peaceful New Hampshire, who actually said, to the horror of the belligerent South:—"And if it comes to blood, let *blood come.* No, sir, if that come—must come—let it come, and it cannot come too soon, sir. Puritan blood has not always shrunk from such encounters; and when the war has been proclaimed with the knife—and the knife to the hilt, too—the steel has sometimes glistened in their hands."

But enough of such ill-timed and mischievous speeches; and, though we have purposely quoted only the words of influential men, let us remember that these harangues were uttered, and these books written, during a time of feverish excitement, and that they were peppered highly to rouse the appetite of the populace.

But one thing is remarkable during all the violence of this paper war, that not even the most venomous democratic tongue dared revile Lincoln. Men called him "rail splitter," and there was an end. They laughed at his age (only 51) and at his political defeats. They cried out that Dug was too "smart" for him. They said, "Let him split rails and split hairs, but not split the Union." They even growlingly allowed that he was honest. They dreaded, they confessed, to see raised the "black piratical flag" of war between free and slave labour, ending in the enslavement of the North. "This fanatical horde," they cried, "will goad the government to extreme measures. Give us Douglas, and down with Lincoln!"

In vain moderate men pointed out Lincoln's calm equality, and the probability that, as President, Abe would set his face against all violent measures, and practically, after so much opposition, do no more real harm than the much vituperated Van Buren did formerly.

Lincoln's speech upon his election confirms these philosophical opinions. "Let us," said the good man, for such I am sure he is, "let us at all times remember that all American citizens are holders of a common country, and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling."—Immense applause, and cheers for half an hour, I dare swear. Mr. Lincoln will not, we must remember, become working President till some time in March next, so there is time to consider our verdict.

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The other defeated candidates are soon dismissed. Douglas is a brilliant and not very high-principled demagogue. In many ways, talent excepted, he resembles Webster. He will doubtless run again as President. Bell, of Tennessee, is an old man, for quiet and union at all risks. Breckenridge is a young Kentucky gentleman of great promise, but too young for president. Lane is a nobody from outlying Oregon. Everett, the historian, is not publicly great. He always stood very low on the betting list.

Let us not rate Lincoln too high: a President has really not much motive power. He is not an originator; conscience and party keep him down; Abe will probably do nothing. If troubles run high, every one knows a popular war with Mexico, or with Spain for Cuba, would quiet them directly. Every sensible American feels that the north cannot do without the south, or the south without the north. One has money, the other cotton. The one is afraid to rebel, the other afraid to strike. The two parties are exactly in the absurd position of the poet in the old political epigram—

"The Earl of Chatham with his sword drawn,
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Vaughan.
Sir Richard, longing to get at 'em,
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

Though slave-holding volunteers are drilling under the palmettos in Charleston, though Alabama buys powder, though Virginia collects muskets, and fiery South Carolina borrows cannon, I think no trouble will ensue just yet. The fire will smoke out; the prudent will spit and wait for Lincoln's first overt act. This may have large consequences. At present the cotton crop is just ready for selling, but I do think, as do wiser and more far-seeing men than myself, that in the case of a second abolitionist President being elected, the South will lose all hope, get mad and desperate, and risk all in a blow at Northern Freedom.

CUNARD.

WIDOW HOGARTH AND HER LODGER.

On the 26th day of October, 1764, died William Hogarth. Very ailing and feeble in body, but still with his heart up and his mind, as ever, quick and vigorous and full of life, he had moved on the day before from his pleasant snug cottage at Chiswick to his town house in Leicester Fields. He turned now and then in his bed uneasily, as he felt the venomous slanders of Wilkes and Churchill still wounding and stinging him like mosquito bites: else was the good little man at peace. "I have invariably endeavoured to make those about me tolerably happy." "My greatest enemy cannot say I ever did an intentional injury." So he wrote at the close of his life; and there was much love for him in the world, culminating in his own household. His servants all had been years and years in his service, he had painted their portraits and hung them up in his house; there is homage to both master and servants in the fact. After all, a man may, if he chooses, be a hero even to his valet de chambre. None could have dreamt the end was so near; it is not known that any doctor was attending him. He had read and answered a letter in the morning; fatigued with the effort, he had retired to bed. He was alone when the fatal attack came on, the "suffusion of blood among the arteries of the heart." Starting up, he rang the bell with a violence that broke it in pieces; they had not thought so much strength remained to him. He fell back fainting in the arms of Mary Lewis, his wife's niece; she had lived in his house all her life, and was his confidential assistant in publishing and selling his prints. She supported the poor creature for two hours, and he drew his last breath in her arms.

Widow Hogarth wore her deep crape, be sure, with an aching void in her heart, and an acute sense of the painful wrench to her life caused by this bereavement. A fine stately woman still, though she was now fifty-five. She had sat for Sigismunda but six years back (the dreadful mistake in historical art which poor William had vainly perpetrated in emulation of Correggio). Something of the beauty of the Jane Thornhill, who thirty years before had stolen away with her lover to be married at the little village church of Paddington, must have yet remained. The interment, as all the world knows, took place in Chiswick Churchyard; a quiet funeral, with more tears than ostrich-plumes, more sorrow than black silk. It was not for some six or seven years after, that the sculptured tomb was erected, and Garrick and Johnson calmly discussed the wording of the epitaph. It is "no easy thing," wrote the doctor. Time had something numbed their sense of loss when they sat down to exchange poetical criticism, though habit is overpowering; and it would have taken a good deal, at any time, to have disturbed Johnson from his wonted pose of reviewer; just as the dying sculptor in the story, receiving extreme unction from his priest, found time to complain of the mal-execution of the crucifix held to his lips. "Pictured morals," he wrote, "is a beautiful expression, but *learn* and *mourn* cannot stand for rhymes. *Art* and *Nature* have been seen together too often. In the first stanza is *feeling*, in the second *feel*. *If thou hast neither* is quite prose, and prose of the familiar kind," &c., &c.

William dead and buried, the window shutters reopened, and heaven's glad light once more permitted to stream into the house, the red eyes of the household a little cooled and staunched, came the widow's dreadful task of examining the property of the deceased, of picking up the fragment's that remained. How to live? Survivors have often to make that painful inquiry. There was little money in the house. The painter's life had been hard-working enough; the labourer was willing, but the harvest was very scanty. Such a little art public! such low prices! The six "Marriage à la Mode" pictures were sold for one hundred and twenty guineas, including Carlo Maratti frames, that had cost the painter four guineas each. The eight "Rake's Progress" pictures fetched twenty-two guineas each. The six "Harlot's Progress," fourteen guineas each. The "Strolling Players" went for twenty-six guineas! O purblind connoisseurs! Dullard dillettanti! Still there was something for the widow; not her wedding portion—that seems to have been long

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ago melted away. Sir James Thornhill had been forgiving, kind, and generous after a time—two years—and opened to the runaway lovers his heart and his purse. But there was little to show for all that now. There hung on the walls various works of the dead hand. Portraits of the Miss Hogarths, the painter's sisters; they kept a ready-made clothes shop at Little Britain gate. Portraits of the daughter of Mr. Rich, the comedian; of Sir James and Lady Thornhill; of the six servants; and his own likeness, with his bull-dog and palette; besides these there was the great effort, "Bill Hogarth's 'Sigismunda,' not to be sold under £500;" so he had enjoined. Alas! who would give it? (At the sale after the widow's death it was knocked down to Alderman Boydell, for fifty guineas!) Indeed, it would be very hard to sell all these; and she did not. She clung to the precious relics till death relaxed her grasp, when the auctioneer's hammer made short work of the painter's remains, even to his maul-stick. But to live? There were seventy-two plates, with the copyrights, secured to her for twenty years by Act of Parliament. These were hers absolutely under her husband's will. Here at least was subsistence; indeed, the sale of prints from the plates produced, for a time, a respectable income. And then, too, there was the gold ticket of admission to Vauxhall Gardens (for the admission of six persons, or "one coach"), presented by the proprietor in his gratitude for the designs of the "Four Parts of the Day" (copied by Hayman), and the two scenes of "Evening," and "Night," with representations of Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn.

And the house at Chiswick was a possession of Hogarth's. It was not then choked up with buildings, but stood cosy and secluded in its well-stored garden of walnut, mulberry, and apple trees, with the head-stones to the poor fellow's pets—the bullfinch and dog Dick, who died the same year as his master; and a very old mulberry tree, stricken by lightning, and only held together by the iron braces made by his directions, perhaps applied with his own hands. How full of memorials of the dead painter! Pen-and-ink sketches on the panels of the wainscoted room on the ground floor; and the painting-room over the stables, with its large window, probably one of *his* improvements on first taking the house, looking on to the pleasant garden below. Doubtless the widow locked up the painting-room, and kept the key on the ring at her girdle. Years after, Sir Richard Phillips jotted down his memories of Chiswick—how he, a schoolboy then with his eyes just above the pew door, the bells in the old tower chiming for church, watched "Widow Hogarth and her maiden relative, Richardson, walking up the aisle, draped in their silken sacks, their raised head-dresses, their black calashes, their lace ruffles, and their high crooked canes, preceded by their aged servant Samuel: who after he had wheeled his mistress to church in her Bath-chair, carried the prayer-books up the aisle, and opened and shut the pew." State and dignity still remained to the widow; and there, up in the organ loft, was the quaint group of choristers whom Hogarth had so admirably sketched, led by the Sexton Mortefee, grimacing dreadfully as he leads on his terrible band to discord. A square, ugly church enough, with the great Devonshire pew—a small parlour with the roof off—half blocking up the chancel, a thing to be forgiven *then*, for the lovely Duchess sat there, and the sight of her angel head was surely enough to give new zest to the congregation's prayers and praises. A church such as Hogarth often drew, with its "three-decker" arrangement of pulpits, the clerk, the reader, and the preacher, rising one above the other, and, top of all, one of those old regulation massive, carved sounding-boards, which gave so queer a Jack-in-the-box notion to the pulpit, that dreamers in dreary sermons, heedless of George Herbert's counsel that if nothing else the sermon "preacheth patience," could not but speculate on cutting off the bar that supported the board, letting it fall, and so, as it were, by one process bottling up both preacher and preaching.

The house in Leicester Fields also remained: the house on the east side of the square, called the "Golden Head," with its sign cut by Hogarth himself from pieces of cork glued together, and gilded over. He often took his evening walk in the enclosure in his scarlet roquelaire and cocked hat, now and then, no doubt, casting admiring glances at his gaudy emblem. The Fields were only just merging into the Square. We learn that in 1745, the streets were so thinly built in the neighbourhood, that "when the heads of the Scottish rebels were placed on Temple Bar, a man stood in Leicester Fields, with a telescope, to give persons a sight of them for a halfpenny a-piece." Just as *we* are offered a view of Saturn's rings from Charing Cross! Hogarth's house now forms part of a French hotel. The lean French cook, staggering under the roast beef in the "Gates of Calais" picture has been amply revenged. The fumes of French ragouts incessantly rise, on the site where the cruel caricature was drawn.

It is hard to say when the widow's income first began to droop—when the demand for William Hogarth's prints slackened. They circulated largely, but their price was never high. The eight prints of the "Rake's Progress" could be purchased at Mrs. Hogarth's house, in Leicester Fields, for one guinea; "Lord Lovat," "Beer Street," and "Gin Lane" for a shilling each only, and all the others could be obtained upon like easy terms. It cannot be told when the bill first appeared in Widow Hogarth's window—"Lodgings to Let." But eight years after William's death there was certainly a lodger in the house in Leicester Fields—a lodger who could exclaim, "I also am a painter!"

Alexander Runciman was born in Edinburgh, in 1736. His father an architect, of course the baby soon began to play with the parental pencils. *That* is not remarkable—but he evidenced rather more ability than the average baby artist. At twelve he was out in the fields with paints and brushes, filling a sketch-book with unripe counterfeits of rocks, clouds, trees and water; at fourteen he was a student under John Norris, whom it pleased the period to regard as an eminent

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landscape painter. He was the wildest enthusiast in the studio—and there are generally a good many wild enthusiasts in a studio. "Other artists," said one of his comrades, "talked meat and drink, but Runciman talked landscape!" At nineteen he renounced further tutelage, and started on his own account as a landscape painter. He commenced to exhibit his works. Every one praised, but unfortunately no one purchased. The market seemed to be only for the show, not the sale of goods. The notion of the many seemed to be that Art was an absurd luxury, which only the very few could indulge in. A middle-class man would have been considered very eccentric and extravagant who in those days bought a picture, unless it happened to be his own portrait. There was some demand for portrait painting—*that* paid—if you, the painter, were nearly at the head of your profession. Poor Wilson had given up portraiture, and soon found himself painting landscapes, and starving the while. It was like keeping a shop full of nothing but boots too big to fit any one. So Runciman found quickly enough—and with characteristic un-reason abandoned landscapes and took to historical art, which, being in much less request even than landscape painting, rather enhanced and quickened his chances of starvation. Somehow he struggled on. At thirty it occurred to him that he had never been to Rome, and that fact had probably confined his powers and limited his prosperity. He packed up his things—an easy task—and, with a very small purse—that he should have had one at all was the marvel—set out for the south. He was soon, of course, on his knees, in the regular way, doing homage to Raphael and M. Angelo. There are always professional conventions; it was as necessary then for the artist to be rapt and deliriously enthusiastic about his calling as for the lawyer to wear a wig and gown.

At Rome he swore friendship with Fuseli. The Scot was the elder, but the Swiss the more learned. They had probably both quite made up their minds about art before they met, and what drew them together was very much the similarity of their opinions. Neither was liable to change of view, let who would be the teacher. Runciman no more took his style from Fuseli, than Fuseli from Runciman, and the unquestionable resemblance between their works was only the natural result of an identity of idiosyncrasy. They both worked hard together, making painstaking copies of the great masters. "Runciman, I am sure you will like," Fuseli wrote home, "he is one of the best of us here." No doubt Fuseli found him quite a kindred spirit—mad as himself about heroic art—possessed with like insane extacies—like pell-mell execution—like whirling, extravagant drawing—like wild ideas interpreted by a like wild hand, and a like execrable nankeen and slate tone of colour. Runciman returned in 1771, and proceeding to Edinburgh, arrived just in time to receive the vacant situation of professor of painting to the academy established in Edinburgh College, in the year 1760. The salary was £120 a-year. The artist accepted the appointment gleefully, and, had his knowledge and his taste been equal to his enthusiasm, few could have better fulfilled the duties of his office. Soon he began to dream of a series of colossal pictures that should make his name live for ever in the annals of art. The dream took form. There were but two or three men in Scotland who would even hear out the project. Fortunately he lighted on one of these: Sir James Clerk consented to the embellishment of his hall at Pennyciuck with a series of pictures from Ossian, by the hand of Runciman.

Ossian was the rage—quotations from the blind bard of Morven were in every one's mouth. True, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who loved to thrust his brave fist through a sham (though *he* was tricked in the Cock Lane business), had denounced the whole thing as an imposition "as gross as ever the world was troubled with." Dr. Blair wrote in defence, "Could any man, of modern age, have written such poems?" "Why yes, sir," was the answer—"Many men, many women, and many children." Macpherson wrote offensively and violently to Dr. Samuel, who replied heartily enough—"I received your foolish and impudent letter . . . . I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian . . . I thought your book an imposture. I think so still. Your rage I defy," &c., &c. What was all this to Runciman? He had no learning—he cared nothing for antiquarianism. He took for granted that Ossian was authentic. Many North of the Tweed looked upon it merely as a national question. Macpherson was a Scotchman, therefore it was the duty of Scotchmen to side with him. His condemners were English, and were jealous, of course, and wrong no doubt. Runciman was hard at work at Pennyciuck, painting as for his life, while all this discussion was going on, and Macpherson and his friends were striving might and main to produce an ancient manuscript anything like the published poem, and so confute and silence Johnson Goldsmith, Burke, Garrick and lastly Boswell, who did not even *pair* with the doctor on the occasion, though the question *did* affect Scotland. Runciman had sketched out and commenced his twelve great pictures. 1. Ossian singing to Malvina. 2. The Valour of Oscar. 3. The Death of Oscar, &c., &c. Who reads Ossian now? Who cares about Agandecca, "with red eyes of tears"—"with loose and raven locks." "Starno pierced her side with steel. She fell like a wreath of snow which slides from the rocks of Ronan." Who knows anything now about Catholda, and Corban Cargloss, and Golchossa and Cairbar of the gloomy brow? For some time the poems held their own, retained their popularity; their partizans fought with their opponents for every inch of ground, even though discovery was mining them. And some fragments found their way in a fashion to the stage. Is there not a living ballet master, not very young now, who owes his baptismal name to parental success in the grand ballet of "Oscar and Malvina, or the Cave of Fingal?" But this must have been years after Runciman. The poems had merit, and that floated them for a long time, but the leak of falsehood made its way—they sunk at last. And Macpherson? Well, if a poet will be a forger, he must prepare

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to be remembered by posterity rather for his fraud than his poetry.

He found time to paint some other subjects as well. An "Ascension" on the ceiling over the altar of the Episcopal chapel in the Cowgate of Edinburgh—a wild and ungraceful work according to Cunningham, speaking of it from recollection, though Runciman thought very highly of it. But he had patrons and critics very loud in their applause. In his picture of "The Princess Nausicaa and her Nymphs surprised at the river-side by Ulysses," one connoisseur detected "the fine drawing of Julio Romano," another, "the deep juicy lustre of Tintoret," and a third "a feeling and air altogether the painter's own," which last is probable. In 1772 he exhibited some pictures in London. At all events, there was no bill in Widow Hogarth's window then, for the lodgings were let, and Alexander Runciman was the lodger.

"She let lodgings for subsistence," so runs the story. The demand for William Hogarth's prints had nearly died out. Still they must have brought in some little income. But twenty years after his death the copyrights had expired—the poor woman's hope from this source was clean gone. She was then absolutely living by her lodgings, and it was not until three years more "that the King interposed with the Royal Academy, and obtained for her an annuity of forty pounds." Poor Widow Hogarth! Yet she would not sell her William's pictures left in his house!

Much of the untamed, unmanageable, heterodox nature of Runciman's art pertained to his life generally. Gay, free-thinking, prankish—with a tendency to late-houred habits that must have often scandalised his landlady—and a talent for conversation rare amongst artists, who, as a rule, express their thoughts better by their brushes than their speech; kind-hearted, sociable, never behind in passing the bottle, no wonder he gathered round him a group of eminent men of his day, most of them with attributes much like his own, who did not flinch from strong outspeaking, who were not shocked by many things. Kames, Monboddo, Hume, and Robertson knocked at the late William Hogarth's door, and paid their respects to Widow Hogarth's lodger. Did *she* ever stand before his easel and contemplate his works? Doubtless often enough when the painter was out firing off his smart cracker sayings, and making away with his port wine. And what did she think of his art? How different to William's! She could understand *him* always. There was always nature on *his* canvass, and meaning and common sense—there was always a story plainly, forcibly told. But Mr. Runciman's meanings were not so clear. What was all the smoke about, and the waving arms, and the distorted features, and the Bedlamite faces, and, oh! the long legs and the flying draperies? Surely draperies never did fly like that—at least, William never painted them so. And then—really this was too much—he, Alexander Runciman, in that house had presumed to paint a "Sigismunda weeping over the heart of Tancred," with William's treatment of the same great subject actually in the house! To bed, Widow Hogarth, in a rage.

Of course Runciman had *his* opinion about Hogarth and his art, despising both, no doubt, and agreeing with Fuseli in deeming him a caricaturist merely, and his works "the chronicle of scandal and the history book of the vulgar." It was so much nobler to pourtray wild contortions from Ossian, demoniac nightmares and lower region revelations, than to paint simply the life around they had only to stretch out a hand to grasp. Yet with all their talk, in the humbler merits of colour, expression, and handling, they were miles behind Hogarth. He has been so praised as a satirist, there is a chance of his technical merits as a painter being overlooked. One only of the "Marriage à la Mode" pictures, for all that is really valuable in art, might be safely backed against all that was ever done by both Fuseli and Runciman put together. Yet they looked upon him as rather a bygone sort of creature—a barbarian blind to poetic art. Well, even a greater William, the playwriter, born at Stratford-on-Avon, was considerably underrated a century ago. Could William Hogarth have seen Fuseli's works, I warrant he would have had something to say about them!

After a time, Runciman was back again at Pennyciuck. Perhaps his fervour about his subject had a little cooled, or the incessant discussions in regard to it undermined his faith; in fact, the Ossian swindle was getting to be in common phrase a little blown upon. His health was failing him; his mode of life had never been very careful; he fell ill; he neglected himself; he worked on steadily, but with a palpable failure of heart in the business. He achieved his task. Yet the painting of the great ceiling, to effect which he had to lie on his back in an almost painful position, brought on an illness from which he never fairly recovered. Some time he lingered, growing very pale and wan, and his strength giving way until he could barely crawl along. On the 21st of October, 1785, he fell down dead at the door of his lodgings in West Nicholson Street.

Four years more of life to Widow Hogarth—still, as ever, true to William and herself. Horace Walpole sought to buy forgiveness for his attack on the "Sigismunda,"—he called it a "maudlin fallen virago,"—by sending to the widow a copy of his "Anecdotes," but she took no heed of him or his gift. Four years more, and then another interment in the Chiswick sepulchre. The widow's earthly sorrows are at an end, and beneath the name of "William Hogarth, Esq.," they now engrave on the stone, "Mistress Jane Hogarth, wife of William Hogarth, Esq. Obit. 13th of November, 1789. Ætat. 80 years." In 1856, on the restoration of the monument which from the sinking of the earth threatened to fall in pieces, the grave was opened, and there were seen the "little" coffin of the painter and the larger coffin of his widow. There too was seen, literally, "the hand" Johnson wrote of in his projected epitaph:—

The hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew the essential forms of grace;
Here closed in death the attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face.

DUTTON COOK.

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THE DEATH OF ŒNONE.

I.

Now many a rolling month was gone,
  And years were past away,
And Paris he dwelt in merry Troy town,
  He and his lady gay.

The lady Œnone sate in her bower,
  Nursing her sorrow and teen;
Ivy and briony twined her round,
  And vine-leaves nodded between.

All pale and wan was that lone lady,
  And thrice she deeply sighed:
"'Tis long, 'tis long for a knight to be
  Away from his own true bride.

"But here yestreen came the wild woman,*
  That redeth things to come,
And up the mountain-side she ran,
  And away from her Trojan home.

* Cassandra.

"She spake me words so keen, so keen,
  And shriek'd one deadly shriek:
And now I know the town below
  Will fall by hand of Greek.

"And they will slay my traitor lord,
  Their hands in his blood they will wet:
Now, by my fay," said the lone lady,
  "I'll save my shepherd yet."

With that she clapt her lily-white hands,
  Her lily-white hands clapt she,
And to her came running her sweet young son,
  The boy was fair to see.

All men might tell that scann'd him well
  He came of a royal race,—
By the eyes below his forehead of snow,
  And the light of his god-like face.

Twice seven summers on Ida hill,
  And all with his lone lone mother;
And all with the goats and painted pards,
  For a sister and for a brother.

"Now hie thee, hie thee, my winsome lad,
  And tell your traitor sire,
The Greek will take Troy town so gay,
  And burn it in the fire.

"The wild woman she redd it to me,
  In sooth as I you say:
And yet there are days but two and three
  And the Greek will have his way.

"But tell him the wild wood twinkles green,
  And waves the tall fir-tree;
And the hills might keep a shepherd, I ween,
  That have long kept thee and me, my son,
  That have long kept thee and me."

II.

Lady Helen she look'd from a window down,
  Her face shone clear as the light:
"Now who comes walking thro' merry Troy town,
  A boy full fair to the sight.

"All men may see by his bearing free
  He comes of a royal race,—
By the eyes below his forehead of snow,
  And the charm of his god-like face."

"O lady, I come from Ida hill,
  In sooth as I you say;
And I would speak with Lord Paris:
  Fair lady, say me not nay."

"Lo, I will bring thee to Lord Paris,
  For thou art a comely lad;
And take this mantle thy shoulder upon,
  I doubt it will make him glad."

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She gave him a mantle so bright, so bright,
Her hands wove long ago :
"Pardy," she said, "he will love the lad
That I have engirded so."

Lord Paris lay in a chamber dark,
Apart from his Grecian wife :
He saw the very comeliest lad
He had seen in all his life.

He raised him up from his couch of gold,
He spoke the boy full fair ;
Ay me, and spied the mantle bright
That girt his shoulder there.

"Some trifle," quoth he, "she wove long syne
For her Grecian husband true ;
And this young lad that wears it now,
He shall it dearly rue."

With that he rushed upon the lad,
He aimed a deadly blow :
The straight young limbs] on the floor lay dead,
And life's blood ran therefro.

Then up and spake the Lady Helen,
"Lord Paris, now what have you done ?
The mantle I wove long syne for you,
And this was your sweet young son."

III.

They told his lone mother on Ida hill,
At the setting of the sun :
Never a sigh nor a shriek she utter'd,—
Of mother's tears there was none.

She looked with no word out over the sea,
Then when the day was done,—
"O gods ! come never more help from me
To the slayer of my young son !"

They buried the boy by salt-sea shore,
Waves came soothing his sleep ;
Lord Paris at eventide wander'd forth,
And laid him down there to weep.

Lame Philoctetès bent his bow—
Full well might he see him there lie—
Said, "Greet now brave Hector, Lord Paris, below,
For this hour thou shalt die."

He smote him right into the traitor heel,
Smote him there as he lay :
"Now bear me to Ida," said Lord Paris,
"With all the speed ye may.

"The lady Œnone hath cunning and skill,
Never leech so mighty as she ;
And if to save me she but will,
This arrow is harmless to me."

But the gods had heard her bitter prayer,
Then when the day was done :
And good came never more forth from her
To the slayer of her young son.

She look'd on him dying—the shepherd she knew—
And then she look'd on him dead :
"A false false-hearted man he was,
But he was fair," she said.

When the stars began to look out from heaven,
A corpse by his side she lay :
And down Scamander two silent ghosts
Slode into the evening gray.

H. M. M.

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SAM BENTLEY'S CHRISTMAS.

CHAPTER III.

When Mr. Sam Bentley returned from London after his visit to Miss Moore's establishment, he maintained a strict silence about his loss. He had several reasons for so doing; first, he felt that his loss would be the occasion of much joking against him from his acquaintances, and would lessen him in their estimation, inasmuch as he, being a Yorkshireman, had not been able to take care of his own; he had other and more cogent reasons arising out of his family arrangements. He was a great man everywhere but at home. He was a bachelor, and his maiden and sole surviving sister was his housekeeper, and her tongue was one of "the powers that be." Bentley had a very decided opinion that women should have nothing to do with business, and this might have inclined him to say nothing at home about his London adventures; but he also knew that if he spoke at all about the lost note he could not help telling all, and this would make a great disturbance. His sister, who considered it a disgrace to any family if the wife, sisters, or daughters were not the sempstresses for the male portion of the family, would be more vexed at the ordering of shirts than at the loss of the money. She would be insulted at a stranger doing for her brother, and for hire, what she alone ought to have done, and from affection. It was a wounding of one of her strongest prejudices. She was a woman of warm feelings, and little accustomed to control her temper. Her anger was not a sudden hot eruption, fierce for a few minutes, and then burnt out, but a long-continued smouldering irritation, which was displayed by constant "nagging" and galling invective, which Sam could not bear. It was not as the crackling of thorns under the pot, but as the steady burning of an ignited coal-bed. Consulting, therefore, his dignity abroad and his peace at home, he made no allusion whatever to his loss.

The only other inmate of his house was his nephew Henry, who had met with Susan, and been the unwitting cause of so much trouble to her. He was looked upon as the only recognised relative and heir of his uncle and aunt, and was in due time to enter into his uncle's business, and meanwhile was apprenticed to a woolstapler, that he might become better acquainted with the various qualities of wool. His uncle had originally been a working man, and had by his shrewdness, skill in business, and thrift, gradually improved his position until he had become one of the largest manufacturers and most wealthy men in the town. His increase of wealth had not been accompanied by any corresponding increase of luxury or display. He continued to reside in the house he had occupied when he first, on a small scale, ventured into business on his own account. He had no servant, all the household work being done by his sister. His dwelling consisted, on the ground floor, of a large flagged kitchen, which ordinarily served for all purposes of living, cooking, and washing, and of a parlour, or "the room," as it was commonly called, in distinction to the kitchen, which was styled "the house." The "room" was only used on extraordinary occasions, such as the "tide," or annual fair, and it was then left as soon as possible that the host and guests might gather round the kitchen fire, and enjoy their potations and pipes with greater ease in a more accustomed place. If the house had a fault, it was that it was too clean. It was brightly, painfully clean. The tin and brass household and culinary utensils which decked the walls and mantel-shelf were radiant in their polish. The fire-irons were kept mainly for show, for they were brightened up until a touch would sully them, and therefore they stood in state against the oven and boiler, whilst a rough bar of iron was appointed the poker for use, and had to submit to the brightening process.

At stated periods there was a general cleaning down, performed from a feeling of religious duty in preserving the tradition handed down from the good housewives of old, and certainly not because it was required by the accumulation of dust. Miss Bentley had only once been in London, and she had returned disgusted with the unheard-of negligence and want of cleanliness which she had observed in her lodgings, and with the wretched and, as she averred, poisonous quality of the fluid there called milk. She from that time always commiserated those who went to town, and all but prayed for them as being subjected to a sad purgatory. Her brother was proud of her for her notable qualities as a manager;—no cakes, pickles, or preserves were, in his estimation, to be compared with hers. She was, in her way, as successful as he was in his, and if there was one thing relating to himself in which he gloried it was that he had, from being a poor man, grown into a rich one without any help from others. He was proud of his money; he rejoiced in it; he handled it with gratification; he spoke of it without reserve or delicacy. He was suspicious of all approaches to intimacy on the part of others, believing that his money was the lure. On such occasions he would say to himself, "Sam Bentley, the workin' man, wi' eighteen shillin' a week, would hev' seen nought on 'em!" and then he would jerk his head up and give his sharp, sidelong glance like a sparrow on the look-out for the hawk, and with his usual nod of self-approbation of his own observations, he would continue, "It's not t' man but t' bone the dogs want." A thrusting of his hands into his pockets full of coins and a sweet jingling of "money in both pockets," would round off and give weight to his resolution to thwart all those roguish designs. Yet he was, in his way, liberal. Unasked, his charity would flow both in public subscriptions and in private gifts. He enjoyed in a large degree two pleasures connected with money which are most dearly prized by the men of his native county,—the pleasure of getting it and the pleasure of spending it free from the control, the advice, or the knowledge of others. When called upon to contribute towards any public charity, if those who solicited his contributions were of a higher social rank than himself, he would draw back and repulse their advances with plainness amounting almost to rudeness. He would not be dictated to by them —he would not have their superiority brought to bear, in any way, upon his conduct. They should not with smooth, roundabout speeches "come over him," or tell him what he was to do.

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If any of them hinted that he *ought* to subscribe, he at once closed the matter by the sharp, pithy answer: "Nobody helped me to what I hev. What's mine's my own, an' I'm not boun' to gi'e it unless I like." His pockets would give their loudest chaunting of confidence and defiance (like allied monarchs singing their Te Deum), and the sharp jerk of his head and a glance to the door would show that the interview was concluded, and his *ultimatum* given. He was convinced that in the estimation of the world his money was the best part of him. He entertained no inflated notion of his personal qualifications or attainments: on the contrary, he had a very low opinion of them. He knew that he was devoid of education, and had no talent except that of making money—which he considered a very easy thing to do. In his self-communings, after his advice or counsel had been sought by others, he would say, "Ay, Sam, thy money's thy wit; loise one an' t' other goes wi' it. A man's wit is what he has; t' lawyer's his wig, an' t' parson's his gown. There's no wit in a poor man." His wealth had not produced in him any of the vulgar pride which so often causes the man who has risen from the ranks to despise the grade from which he has come. He was still in heart and in manners one of the people, and he looked with undisguised and plain-spoken contempt upon such of his early acquaintances as had risen like himself, and had then assumed to themselves the style and haughtiness of those with whom they had nothing in common except wealth. After a visit to them, which he paid very seldom and reluctantly, he would, in allusion to the contrast between their luxury and their manners, say, "It wor war nor suppin' porridge out o' t' dye-pan."

His great "Boggart" was poor relations. He had no faith in their affection towards him. They were all to him plunderers, open or disguised. In his walks in the town, he would go a mile round rather than meet one, for with all his contempt for them he felt, as he expressed it, "that blood's thicker nor water;" and however much he might rail at them, he never left them without some more pleasant and substantial proof of his kinship. It was perhaps from a sense of his weakness on this point that he carefully refrained from giving his nephew any information about his relations. To this nephew he was indulgent in all respects: perhaps because he never thwarted his will. He was determined that there should be no drawbacks to his nephew's advancement in the world, or to his enjoyment in due time of the ease and pleasure which wealth can give. He should be able to take his place with the best in the land. His maxim was, "Th' getter a man, an' t'spender a gentleman," and he spared no expense in the education of his nephew. Still he was careful that no idle or extravagant habits should be contracted by him, and maintained a strict superintendence over him. Hitherto he had had little occasion to find fault. Henry was perhaps too fond of his books, too slow in acquiring the tricks of trade, and too full of unsettled notions to altogether suit his uncle, but he was admitted to be on the whole "a steady decent lad, wi' some queer notions."

From the time of Henry's last interview with Susan, there was a change in him which his uncle soon perceived, but which he could not account for. He came home at more irregular hours, he was abstracted and irritable, and sat by the fire for hours in moody silence. His uncle formed many an hypothesis as to the cause. He feared he had got into some pecuniary difficulty which he dare not confess, or that there had been some quarrel between him and his master. A little adroit inquiry of the latter satisfied him that this was not the case, but elicited the fact that Henry's attendance to business had of late been irregular and open to comment. Bentley was determined to find out the cause, and mentioned the matter to his manager, telling him to make investigations and report the result. In a few days the manager came to him and stated that he had found out that "Henry was after a mill hand," one famous in the town for her good looks.

If Bentley had had patience to listen on, he would have learnt that there was not that criminality which in the glow of his indignation he assumed there was, for the manager would have stated honestly the particulars of his discovery, and admitted that in his opinion no blame attached to the girl, or as yet to Henry. Bentley, however, started off in a mighty rage, vowing dreadful things against Henry and the girl, and swearing he would discard him and expose her. He went as quick as he could to the warehouse, where Henry ought to have been at work, and found he was not there, and that no one knew where he was. He had therefore to nurse his rage until evening, when Henry would return home. During the day he became, by dwelling upon the hateful subject, greatly excited, and communicated to more than one of his acquaintances the resolution to turn Henry adrift in the world if he ventured to show his face again. Idle words; the mere fume of a troubled affection, but which brought forth fruit.

At the time Bentley went in search of Henry, the latter was in search of Susan. He had past many weary hours in hanging about Mrs. Womersley's house in hopes of again seeing Susan; he had covertly made inquiries, all without success, and was despairing of again meeting with her, when, from a casual observation by one of his companions, he obtained a clue to her residence. He immediately went out to ascertain the accuracy of the information, and learnt that Susan was lodging at the low end of the town, in one of the dingy and not very reputable streets below the Old Church with a factory girl, who did not, even amongst her own class, bear the best of characters. This surprised him. He had formed a bright idea of Susan's purity and worth, which this fact seemed to destroy, and the soft beaming and transparent gaze which seemed to him to know no thought that man could condemn, or woman reprove, might be but a snare and a delusion. The thought was maddening. He could not give her up, and with this fearful doubt he could not seek her. The truth, be it what it might, must and should be known instantly. Instead of returning to his employment, he went into a neighbouring public-house to spend the few hours of the afternoon until the factories should close. He would

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wait for her—he would see her—and if she had changed so vilely a look would show it, and he would go and tear her from his heart.

His torture followed him into the inn, for soon after he had entered two young men came in and sat down within earshot. Their conversation was at first carried on in an undertone, but in a short time it became louder, and he then heard that they were speaking of Susan, or as they called her, "pretty Sue fro' Lon'on." The first words, which he heard distinctly, were: "I don't know 'bout that, but Bouncing Bess, who knows more nor a thing or two, says she cam' fro' Lon'on becos she had quarrelled wi' a fellow there, an' nearly killed him, an' so wer forced to run, an' that she has a sister in Lon'on that's quite a grand body."

"But what," said the other sceptically, "does Bess know 'bout her?"

"Why of course she lodges there. Her aunt turned her out one night becos she fun' her wi' a man in t' loining. Some fellow that wor goin' to tak' her to Lon'on again, nobbut she took up wi' another an' wouldn't go, an' so Bess met her walking i' t' street, as she left her aunt, an' not knowin' where to go, so she took her in, an' they'll hev' had fine doins ever sin."

"Then, who's her chap, now?"

"I don't know. Lots, I dare say—at all rates, if she's like Bess—she's a rum one, is Bess. She'll soon mak' her as bad as hersel'; but Bess says she's awfu'bad, an' tak's on sorely about—some trouble. I dare say it's what we may all guess, an' talks on goin' back to Lon'on. It's certain she's writ there, for Bess saw t' letter, nobbut she couldn't read."

This conversation ministered to Henry's excitement. He could bear it no longer. Their words filled him now with doubt, and now with indignation: he hurriedly left the house, and walked through the streets. He knew not what to do; there was a fierce passion flaming in his heart, which would not let him rest, and which he could not control. She had a sister in London, that he knew. She was going back to London. Once there, he should lose all traces of her. He might go and find out all there. As these thoughts were struggling into shape and consistency, he met one of his uncle's friends, who told him of his uncle's threat and anger. "Quite right," said he, and walked on. The decision was made. He would go to London, and find out all—he scarcely knew what he meant or wanted, but his uncle had rejected and cast him off, so if Susan were like his picturings of her, they would now be nearer each other in all respects.

When the factory bells rung out, he placed himself by the entry or passage to the court in which Susan lodged. It was within two days of Christmas. The night was bitter cold—a cutting wind, and the snow began to fall. He waited a long time before he saw Bess come. She was alone. Still he stayed, and felt the cold freeze up his strength and his limbs grow stiff. The snow fell thickly upon him, and still he waited. He heard a feeble step, a short, sharp cough, and then he saw Susan pass under the lamp. As she did so, she looked up, and he was shocked with the wretched and careworn expression of her face. In a moment he was by her side, and said:—

"Turn back, Susan, I want you."

A wan smile of irrepressible pleasure passed over her face, as she replied:—

"I must not meet you any more. You must go. I'm busy to-night."

"One word, Susan."

She stood patiently in the storm, as if resigned to hear what he wished to say, but anxious for him to go.

"Susan," said he, with a broken voice. "I have sought you daily since I last saw you. I have just heard that you have been blamed, and have suffered on my account. Tell me how I can make recompense."

"No way. I don't blame you. I think you meant kindness, but you should not have spoken to me."

"Oh, say not so. I could not help it. I think of you only."

"No, no: you must not. You must forget me. I am going away—to my sister—I must not stay here, good-night and good-bye."

"I will not leave you—I cannot. All else is as nothing."

"Remember who you are, and what I am. There can be nothing between us." She stopped, seemed suddenly to recollect something, and then laid her hand on his arm, and said. "You have not thought ill of me?"

"Never, never."

"And you would do something to please me?"

"Anything you can ask."

"Then go not home for a couple of hours to-night. I have a message from my sister to your uncle."

She walked on. He followed. She waved him back, but he still followed, until they were within the shade of the passage, and there in answer to her supplicating appeal, "You must leave me," he took her hand, raised it to his lips, and kissed it. As he did so he felt a tear fall upon it, heard her mutter "Good-bye," and was left alone. He loitered about until he saw her again come out, guarded her unseen to his uncle's door, and then saying, "Now for a messenger," turned back into the town, and walked towards the railway station.

When Susan knocked at Bentley's door she was answered by Miss Bentley, who called out to her to open for herself. When she had done so, and inquired for him, she was told that he was not at home, with a cross-question as to who Susan was.

"I work in the mill," was her reply.

"Then go to t' manager."

"But I have a letter for Mr. Bentley from London. It's about money. I must see him to-night."

Miss Bentley was by no means devoid of curiosity, and Susan's words were well calculated to awaken it. She called out. "Mak' thy feet clean an' come in."

When Susan pushing open the door came into the light she saw that her questioner was a tall, thin, wiry woman, between fifty and sixty years old. At a glance she observed the cleanliness, tidiness, and brightness of the house. On a large deal table which stood behind the door, and which

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was scoured until it rivalled in whiteness the clean cloth which covered one end, were currants, flour, and other ingredients for Christmas pies and cakes. Beside it was Miss Bentley, with tucked-up sleeves, busily at work. Before the large bright fire was a large "bowl" full of dough for spiced bread; from the oven came a simmering, and a rich flavour of good cheer pervaded the room. Susan stood timidly on the mat by the door, not venturing further in until she was invited.

Miss Bentley who was then inspecting and arranging the contents of the oven saw, as she turned back to the table, Susan standing in doubt, and the snow hanging on her shawl. "It's a bad night," said she, "heavy snow, shak' it off on the outside, and then shut t' door, an' come to t' fire."

Miss Bentley, without desisting from her labours, asked Susan, after she was seated, to explain her business. Susan told her briefly that she had a letter from her sister in London, and that it was about some lost money.

"Lost money," cried Miss Bentley, rolling out

(See page 18.)

the paste; "it's some of Sam's fond work again—where's the letter, my girl?"

Susan took out a letter. Miss Bentley came from the table, and with floury fingers, eagerly seized it. Susan, in her forgetfulness, had given her the letter written by Julia to her sister, as well as the one enclosed for Mr. Bentley.

Miss Bentley examined the letter addressed to her brother. Her fingers itched to open it, but her curiosity could not overcome her repugnance to opening a letter addressed to another. Without saying a word she put it in her pocket, and then, taking up Julia's letter to Susan, deliberately read it through. It did not give her much information as to the writer or receiver, for it had no address, and was signed "Julia;" it expressed sorrow for her sister's misfortune, hoped it would be a warning, assured her of continued love, of joy at the prospect of re-union, and then spoke of Mr. Bentley's visit, of the loss and finding of the note, of anxiety for its return, and for payment of her small account, as she was almost penniless, and the care of the note was heavy on her mind.

"I am not a good hand at reading writing,"

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said Miss Bentley, as she returned the letter to Susan, "an' don't exactly mak' it out, but it seems that Sam has not known how to tak' care of his money, an' haz been disgracin' himsel' wi' gettin' into debt an' dirt wi' a poor woman that hazn't a penny. What he wanted wi' her I can't imagine. I al'ays thought it would come to this. He shall know my mind when he comes in. The ungrateful beast." In the meantime she vented her anger on the paste she was making up, belabouring it with the rolling-pin, and beating it with her hands with a spirit and zest typical of the treatment which her brother was to receive. By-and-by, as she drew a tin full of mince-pies from the oven, fragrant, crisp and hot, and was passing Susan with them, she said to her, "Tak' one or two, my lass," and then saw that Susan was weeping. The warmth of the fire had flushed her face, her bright brown hair had, on one side, slipped from its fastenings and hung in long wavy curls on her shoulder. Her eyes were turned to the ground, and half closed, and thro' the long soft lashes the tears were streaming fast.

Miss Bentley put down her tin, and went at once to Susan, took her hands within her own, and fumbled with them until she found her pulse, and then muttered "Feverish—excitement—half-starved, too." Then, speaking to Susan, said sharply, but kindly, "What ails thee, lass?" Susan wept on. The contending emotions of the evening, added to her long struggle against illness and stinted food, to enable her to save money to return to her sister, had undermined her strength, and as she reflected, as she sat, that she was in Henry's home, an unregarded stranger amongst the things made dear to her by his life amongst them,—she was overcome. She was vexed and ashamed of her weakness, but she could not control her emotions.

Miss Bentley had hitherto scarcely noticed her, but as she stood beside her she was struck with the beauty of her countenance, and as she looked at her it seemed as if the sight was familiar to her, or like the suddenly recalled recollection of a dream—new, yet not novel; fresh, and yet as having the dearness of long acquaintance. "What's your name?" asked she.

"Susan Moore."

"Where from?"

"London."

"Oh!" and the little half-articulated sound was expressive as much of disappointment as of relief.

"Your sister's name?"

"Julia."

Miss Bentley's curiosity seemed satisfied, and the cakes in the oven claimed her attention. For a while she carried on her operations in silence, but kept glancing towards Susan, and then muttered, "It may be, there was a Julia and a Susan" returned to the charge, saying, "Thy mother living?"

"No," and this reference to her loss made her tears again gush out.

"Wert thou born in London?"

Susan brushed the tears from her eyes and tried to smile as she replied, "Oh, no, I'm a Yorkshire girl, born at Burley."

Miss Bentley threw down her half kneaded loaf, left the table, and standing by Susan's chair, said anxiously, "Thy mother's name?"

"I was called after some one who died young, and they thought I was like her,—an aunt, I think—but my mother's name was Martha."

"Why, lass," cried Miss Bentley, throwing her arms round Susan, and kissing her heartily, "thou'rt my own cousin. How strangely things come about, an' I've wondered what had become on ye, an' Sam, an ill-natured beggar—I've no patience wi' him—wouldn't let me find ye out, Susan, after my poor aunt. Thou'rt her very marrow, as like as twin cherries." Again, in her warm-hearted welcoming she kissed her. Her hand slipped down Susan's dress. She felt it was wet. "Stand up, lass," she cried, "what's this?"

When Susan moved, her cousin saw there was a pool of water where she had sat. The snow, which had gathered in her thin dress, had melted, and soaked through to the floor.

"Why, mercy, bairn, thou'rt wet through, an' scarce a thing on—I mun n't loise thee as soon as I've fun' thee!"

She hurried Susan up-stairs; hunted amongst her hoarded stores, and soon produced abundant clothing, which she insisted on Susan putting on until her own things were dried, and bringing out an old-fashioned rich blue silk frock, said to her, "We read i' t' book about t' killing t' fatted calf when t' prodigal cam' back, but I never rightly made it out, as a calf's a poor thing for a feast, but I do understand about t' best robe, so thou shall hev this on, an' as to ring on t' finger, somebody'll do that some o' these days, for thou'rt bonnie enough for ony on 'em. This frock wor made for Susan Bentley, thy aunt, an' let's see how thou suits it. Now, don't hurry on', I'll tell thee when to come down."

When her cousin left the room, Susan fell on her knees by the bed, and wept as if her heart would break. She was confused by the rapid change; excited by the thought that *he* was of her own family, that she was not so far removed from him as before, and alarmed lest he should return whilst she was there, and think that she had been waiting for him, or deceiving him by concealing from him the fact (hitherto undreamed of by her) of her relationship to him. In the midst of this tumult of feeling and agitation, she heard the house door open. Mr. Bentley had come in.

"Where's Harry?" was his first inquiry; "hasn't he been home?"

His sister, in a provoking tone, which, whilst it pierced and wounded, pretended to be considerate and restrained, replied, "I know nought 'bout Harry, an' I don't want to do. I've plenty to think on wi'out him."

There was a short silence. Mr. Bentley saw, from his sister's face, that something was amiss, and he waited for the explanation or explosion, whatever it might be. It soon came.

"I've gotten," said she, slowly and impressively, "some news for Sam Bentley."

"Out wi' 'em," said he, a smile accompanying his usual jerk, as if to help it to say that the hawk was going to pounce down, but he was ready for it. "Out wi' 't at once, Missus?"

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Miss Bentley was more than usually intent upon the elaborate finishing off of her pie-crusts, and continued to stand with her back to her brother, contriving to get a sly look at him without being perceived, as she replied, "But I'm sadly 'fraid, Sam, thou can't 'bide them. They're shocking bad news, Some 'at about a Lun'on lass."

"Hang it!" cried Sam, jumping up and stamping on the hearth, "bad news fly like t' wind—has thou heard it? An idle good-for-nothing! Could mak' no better use o' his time an' his brass than to tak' up wi' a common hand—a hussey—that's known all over t' town. Let him show his face here to-night, an' I'll thrash him within an inch o' his life, as sure as his name 's Harry Bentley."

Miss Bentley, at the commencement of this tirade, gave a cunning smile, and chuckled at the trap which she thought he had fallen into; but as her brother continued, she became puzzled to know his meaning, and when he finished by naming her nephew she turned round, and leaning against the table with a mixture of indignation and surprise, said, "What's all this rigmarole about? What has Harry to do with it? It's thee I'm talking about."

Bentley replied, "An' its Harry I'm talkin' on. He's ta'en up wi' a common factory-lass, and been spendin' all he has on her, got into debt an' dirt, an' he's out wi' her now. A hypocritical villain! If he comes here again, I'll turn him out!"

He soused himself into his chair, leaving his sister standing in the middle of the floor, rolling-pin in hand, lost in amazement.

"Thou may looik at me," continued Sam. "I tell thee it's true, Harry is a scamp—he's bad at t' heart. He wants to tak' her to Lun'on, an' they say he 's spent fifty pund on fine clothes an' things for her—he 's stol'n it if he haz."

"I don't believe it," said his aunt. "Ask him when he comes. He never telled me a lie. He'll speak truth if he speak at all. I'd very much sooiner believe that thou gav' somebody fifty pund when thou were in Lun'on. I know *thou* does such things. I wonder thou can hold thy head up when thou comes back, and can tell such fond tales about thy own flesh an' blood. I've 'bout done wi' thee. Here hev' I been toilin' an' moilin' for thee all my life, an' I know no more how things go nor t' engine-driver, nor so much. I daresay thou does talk wi' him at times. Thou says there's brass, but I don't know what to think 'bout it—I see little on it, but fine folk in Lun'on can hev' a fifty pund note like winkin' fro' Sam Bentley that can't thoil his own sister sixpence. Thou'rt on t' road to t' workhous' at last an' to auld Nick afterwards. I mun look out for a place soon. I've stopped wi' thee until I'm too auld for t' mill; what'll become on me I don't know, and thou won't care, or thou'd ta'en better care of thy money, an' not hev' thrown it about in that sinful way."

As Miss Bentley began, Sam settled himself comfortably in his corner-chair, pulled off his boots, put his feet in the best position for being comfortably toasted, lit his pipe, and determined to weather out the storm as usual, expecting it to be only an ordinary squall. The allusion to the note took him by surprise. His irritation on Henry's account made him impatient, and he was anxious that the matter might drop, or the conversation be turned back to Henry, and therefore when his sister paused to gain breath, he said:

"Thy tongue weaves fast, Nance; but it's light stuff, and not to order. What's t'use o' flytin' 'bout I don't know what, when Harry's makin' a fooil o' himsel' or some'at war for a trumped-up factory lass."

Without suspending her work to which she had returned, as soon as he began to speak, Miss Bentley replied:

"I won't believe it. He's not the lad to do 't. Tho' for the matter o' that, if he did, there's nobody to blame but thysel', who's set him t' example wi' that woman i' Lon'on. Thou said nought to me 'bout it. I wonder what devilry wor afoot then. Thou little thought o' them that's dead an' gone, or of t' livin' either, or thou would hev' gi'en an account of thysel' when thou cam' back. Thou 'st hev better paid thy debts, for I hear thou got sadly in debt up there."

Bentley could not bear this insinuation—it wounded him in the tenderest part. He thumped the table with his clenched fist until she ceased, and then shouted out:

"It's a lie! Hold thy tongue, thou blating calf! Who dare say that Sam Bentley owes a farthin'—that he does not pay everything as soon as it's due?"

"I dare!" said Miss Bentley, calmly stepping up to him, and shaking her hand in his face, "an' what's more, I say thou 's been dunned for it—that I've been asked for it. Now, be quiet, Sam, thy sister's been dunned in thy own house for thy debts."

He was infuriated. He jumped up, swore, stamped up and down the room, and savagely kicked aside whatever came in his way. His sister went quietly back to her occupation, leaving him to calm down at his own pleasure. A long series of violent gyrations and jerkings—in which the poor sparrow seemed to be beat down by the hawk—worked off his passion, and he returned to his seat and re-lit his pipe, spurting out occasional testy ejaculations and imprecations as parting shots. He longed to ask for an explanation, but he did not know what might be the extent of his sister's information, and so was afraid to open the subject. He hoped that she would resume her attack, but she pursed up her mouth and maliciously kept silent. In the calm which followed Bentley's burst of rage, he was startled by a loud noise as of something falling in the room above, and he eagerly asked:

"What's that? Is Harry up-stairs?"

Miss Bentley, who had for the moment forgotten Susan, now remembered her, and she hastily replied:

"No, Harry isn't. It's nought particular. May-be t' cat, or a winder open, or—it don't matter what it is."

The noise was occasioned by Susan. She had listened to the contention until she was greatly excited, and moving suddenly and incautiously she overthrew a chair. She had dressed herself as her cousin had desired, and yielding to the impulse of the moment and to the effect which her own smiling face as seen in the glass produced on her,

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she had carefully arranged her hair. The conversation which she overheard filled her with grief—she was unacquainted with the character and eccentricities of Bentley and his sister, and she feared there would be a complete breach between them; and besides this, and more clearly, more oppressively that anything beside, she understood that Bentley's anger against Henry was occasioned solely on her account—that that had led to the quarrel between them, and there, as she knelt weeping by the bedside, she vowed that that impediment to the restoration of Henry to his uncle's favour should at once and for ever be removed; he could never be anything to her; time became precious, he might return any moment, he must not find her there; she would explain all, she would justify him, and then go back to her old world of trouble and of labour.

Miss Bentley, when she gave her answer to her brother's last question, was standing facing the stairs, which with an open staircase came down behind her brother's chair. As she answered him she saw Susan coming softly down the steps. There instantly flashed across her a scheme by which she could alarm or astonish her brother. By a sign she stopped Susan, and then said to him:

"I tell thee, Sam, that if thou goes on as thou ha' been doin', thou'll sooin hev to go to t' workhouse or t' treadmill, I don't know which. Thou knows thou'rt in debt. I never fun' thee out till now, but I believe thou's al'ays been in debt. How much thou owes I don't know—maybe more nor thou can pay i' this world, but thy dun's here, an' thou mun speak for thysel'."

She beckoned to Susan to come forward, then tapping her brother on the shoulder, said, "Sam, get up, look thy dun in t' face, can thou say who it is, aye, my lad?"

Following his sister's pointing finger he looked round and saw Susan, in the antique blue dress, her long light hair floating like a glory round her pale and lovely countenance. His pipe dropped from his hand and fell down upon the hearth; in a voice of excitement and terror, he exclaimed, "Almighty goodness! what is it? My own dear Susan come back again! Oh, what dost thou want wi' me?" and shrinking in fear back from the figure, he covered his eyes with his hands and dropt back into his chair, and scalding tears streamed from between his fingers. Susan glided forwards, knelt by his side, put her arm round his neck, and said, in her sweet, ringing voice, "I am Susan, Susan Moore."

"Who art thou?" cried Bentley, looking up with wild excitement, and fixing on her his glowing eyes. "Who did thou say?" He turned inquiringly to his sister. She pointed to Susan and said, "Martha's daughter—Susan Moore."

He gazed at her half bewildered, sat some time absorbed in thought, his head resting on his hand. Then his looks brightened, a saucy smile ran over his face—the sparrow jerked about in defiance of the crafty hawk, for now he could unravel the mystery—Susan was Julia's sister, and from her had his sister derived her information. He could now re-assert himself; he coolly relit his pipe, and turning to Susan, said, "Thou'rt the pictur' o' thy aunt. If missus bad thee welcome, I say amen."

"Gi'e him the letter," said Miss Bentley, handing it to Susan. He hastily read it over, then crumpled it up in his hand, saying, "Aye, aye, I'm the man—it's all right—it will be seen to—all right."

Miss Bentley's thought and resolve were these: "Humph, Sam thinks he's master an' he won't tell me, but I'll get that letter an' t' brass an' all if I can."

A loud knock at the door prevented her from giving some audible expressions of her opinion of Sam's conduct. She opened it; a rough mill lad, with a most impudent and saucy expression on his face stood there, and in a loud voice that might be heard all down the street, shouted out, "Harry Bentley has sent me to tell ye that he's goan to Lun'on. I've just seen him off by t' last train wi' pretty Sue, an' so he won't be home to-night, wi' his compliments an' me own to t' master, an' a happy Christmas."

"Gone," cried Bentley, "an' it's my fault. In my passion I said to t' folks I met that I hoped he'd go to Lon'on, for I wouldn't hev him here again, but I never meant it, an' he's ta'en me at my word an' gi'en himsel' up to a wicked trash, an' he'll be lost and done for."

"Didst thou say so?" asked his sister lowly and slowly, "that thou'd turn him out for his first fault? How could thou do so to him? He never mistrusted thee, an' is trust to be all on one side? Thou'rt a hard-hearted money-bag, an' not a man, let alone a Christian; an' I tell thee, Sam, tho' thou'rt my awn an' me only brother, as there's a God aboon us, if any harm happens to my poor lad, I'll never forgi'e thee, never, an' I shall leave thee i' t' mornin', an' go an' seek him till I find him."

Bentley was frantic. He railed at Henry, at the supposed companion of his flight, and at his own hasty passion. Susan endeavoured to explain, but neither of them would hear her; they had no knowledge that she was acquainted with Henry, and her attempts were wholly useless. Bentley, as he stamped up and down, working himself into a greater rage, exclaimed, "Cursed be—"

"Hush," instantly cried Susan, interrupting him by pressing her little hand upon his lips, "Hush, no wicked curse on Henry Bentley—if you will but hear me—I know all—he is honest—he is blameless to you in this."

They turned to her with a vague surprise, scarcely crediting what she said; and Bentley, exasperated at her interference, fiercely asked, "What does thou know of him?"

In a low voice, but firmly and clearly, Susan replied, "It was me he sought. I would not hear him. It was me he wanted, but I would not listen to him because I am but a poor factory girl. It is for me that he has gone away. Oh, let me go back to my sister, far away from here, and let him come home again. Oh, cousin, let me go—I am a stranger to you and he is your own; let me go and never see him again."

They endeavoured to soothe her, and thereby comforted themselves. The sting was taken from their grief—Harry had left them, but not criminally, with no wrongful companion of his flight, and it was easy to conclude that he would make

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inquiries and might be heard of at Julia's shop. Susan was sent to bed, and it was then settled that Miss Bentley should take her up to London next day, when she went to fetch Henry back.

"An' as next day," said Bentley sleepily, "is Christmas, an' I shall be lost wi'out thee an' Harry, maybe I'll cam' up too; an' we can send Julia a bit o' some'at for dinner, an' keep Christmas there, if we find Harry an' Julia hasn't spent or made away wi' t' note."

"I fancy thou'll never see it again, but thou'st better come up an' looik after it; but thou al'ays said they were a bad lot, an' depend on't thou won't get thy note back again."

(To be continued.)

BEGGARS IN ITALY.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

There seems to prevail a traditional belief among the Italians, that all strangers who arrive at their shores are travellers *par excellence*, come in search of the pleasures and enjoyments peculiar to their country, and that the natives have consequently a just claim upon their generosity, if not even a prescriptive right to levy a tax upon them in the shape of alms and charity. Indeed, the beggar in Italy occupies an original page in the mendicity-history of nations. I do not allude here to the indigent old, infirm, lame, blind, sick, and cripples, who are met with in all countries of Europe, but solely to the idle vagabonds who prefer begging to working, because it is more easy and convenient, and to those who try to enforce their presumptive claim, not from want or necessity, but from sheer homage to the popular custom.

The children, of all ages, constitute by far the largest portion of that community, and it is these juvenile beggars in particular that prove a perfect nuisance and try the patience of the most patient traveller in Italy. At every place where he stops, either to enjoy the beauties of Nature or of art, he is sure to be surrounded by a swarm of these juveniles, who pursue their object with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. They are found in troops in the streets and in the fine walks round the place; and were you to give to each of them only a five-centime piece, your alms in that way would amount to more than a Louis-d'or per day.

In Piedmont, Lombardy, and Venice, they are neither so numerous nor so annoying; but in Central Italy, in the so-called (late) Duchies, the class has arrived at the climax of development, nor is it in the least checked in its vocation by either police or any other local authority. At every church—nay, in the church itself—at every public edifice, gallery, and even street corner or road that leads to some visitable spot, you encounter them hands open, and begging in a tone and language that frequently partakes of the character of an absolute demand. With admirable tact and cunning, they post themselves at the narrowest spot of an up-hill road, where the horses can proceed only at a very slow pace; there they thrust their hats into the very midst of the vehicle, and exclaim incessantly, "Povero infelice, Signor!" until you satisfy them with a gratuity. At a café at Leghorn, a good-looking and decently-dressed woman presented herself at my table for alms, after having despatched her four children, one by one, to me for the same purpose. At Florence, I was stopped in the street by several well-dressed men and women, who made some inquiries, or drew my attention to some notice or placard, after which they held out their hands by way of leave-taking, to claim the usual alien-tribute, called alms.

At the port of Leghorn, I found at every street corner a number of beggars with a sort of money-box in hand, which they continually rattled, and accosted the passers-by with the usual "Povero infelice, Signor!" I perceived by the sound, that each of the boxes only contained one single copper coin, the remainder having no doubt been taken out and pocketed as soon as they were thrown in.

I was one morning looking out of my bedroom window of the third floor in the hotel where I was staying, to enjoy the beautiful sight of the sea below me, when I was noticed by a cripple to whom I had unfortunately given on the previous day, in passing along the street, a few coppers. He soon recognised me, nodded with his hat to me, and indulged in all sorts of ridiculous gestures and grimaces, until I threw him down a copper coin wrapped in a bit of paper. This was the signal for him to fix his regular station before my window; he followed me, as soon as I made my appearance at the street door for a walk, upon his little truck, which he wheeled with his hands, incessantly exclaiming, "Monsieur, donnez-moi quelque chose!" (he heard me talk to the porter in French) until he got something out of me. But my ill-luck did not finish there. No sooner had I thrown down, in the first instance, from my window the copper coin to the cripple, than it was observed by some of the fraternity, and brought to the spot the whole beggar community of the quarter, men, women, and children, who, rattling, crying, singing, and throwing up their hats, made the spot a perfect nuisance to me, and obliged me at last to keep my windows shut, and forego the fine sight of the blue sea before me.

In the church of San Marco, at Venice, I saw a woman with a veil over her head, prostrated on the steps of one of the altars. She was wringing her hands and praying in deep devotion, and seemed to labour under great mental affliction. On my passing her, she half rose, and stretched out her hand for charity; I at once put some copper coins into it, which she immediately threw into the poor-box that stood nailed to a pillar a few steps from the altar, after which she returned and resumed her former position and prayers. I looked at her for some moments with an air of astonishment, which was perceived by a gentleman not far off, who then stepped towards me and remarked, "Don't believe, Signor, that this woman is poor; she is well off, and even possesses a house of her own, but she is a penitent, and in deep contrition here, daily, begs alms for the Holy Virgin." What added still more to my astonishment was the circumstance, that the informant did not himself hold out his hand for a gratuity for the information he had just given me, though it was uncalled for. I was actually surprised at his forbearance, recollecting that a few days previously,

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when on the Piazza della Signora, at Florence, I happened to ask a well-dressed gentleman my way to a neighbouring street; he at once offered to guide me thither, observing that he was going himself that way. Having reached the street, I was about taking my leave with a "Grazie, Signor," when he held out his hand for a donation, and I put a 20-centime piece into it.

The rough picture I have drawn above of the character and conduct of the beggars is, however, frequently softened by some mild and humane traits in the character of some of the younger generation. I was sitting before a café at Genoa, leisurely sipping my cup of coffee (the Italians can drink that beverage at any hour in the day), when a cripple, quite a child, approached my table for some alms; I gave him the four lumps of sugar remaining on the waiter or salver before me, with which he limped away to the three other cripples close by, still younger than himself, and put a lump into each of the ugly mouths of his companions, keeping one for himself. I saw by the likeness of their features that they were all brothers and sisters. He then pointed me out to them with the finger, and they looked so gratefully and smilingly at me, and smacked their lips all the while with the sweet food in their mouths, that I resolved to gratify them with the gift as often as they made their appearance. Next day I found them at their post before the café, and having received their four lumps, they moved away without asking for anything else.

On arriving at some of the villages which have acquired a name amongst the tourists for some architectural beauty or fine scenery, the whole population, men, women, and children, and even able-bodied and good-looking people, are out begging. They surround the unfortunate traveller in large numbers, each and all putting forth their hands for alms, and do not stir from the spot, despite all the "andante al diavolos" he may tell them, until he has complied with their demand. I went in company of a friend to Fiesole, near Florence, which commands a view of the whole of the Arno valley and the city of Dante, a scenery of unparalleled beauty. We were ten times stopped on the way, though but a short distance, by intrusive beggars, and my friend told me a story, how he had once, near Candenabbia, been stopped, within half an hour, six times by beggars in the very hottest mid-day hour, when the more decent of the fraternity usually keep their siesta. He had just come to the end of his story, when we arrived at Fiesole, and halted on the square before the Basilica, whence we were about to ascend the steep footpath leading to the Capuchin cloister, when we were in a moment surrounded by men, women, and children, each house furnishing its contingent of beggars, and in whose company we were compelled to ascend to the cloister. All had some straw-work and plattings to offer for sale. They would accept of no excuse or assurance that they were of no use to us. I was particularly pressed to buy for a franc a straw-plumage; I might present it, they said, to my Signora; I might stick it in my hat, or carry it in my hand as an ornament, &c., &c. But when they saw that all persuasive suggestions for purchase were unavailable, they turned beggars in the strictest sense of the term, held out their hands, and demanded their usual tax of alms. Not one of them accompanied their request with the customary "povero infelice," or even "povero" alone, but actually demanded a five-centime piece a head. We at last ransomed our freedom by handing for distribution to a black-eyed, pretty girl a few copper coins, and telling the others to go "al diavolo," at which they all burst into a loud, merry laughter, apparently well pleased with the "beggar's comedy" they had been playing.

CURIOSITIES IN NATURAL HISTORY.

There are a thousand curious facts and circumstances in natural history, in this and other countries, which escape being recorded either from their being thought too trivial, or from a want of a ready mode of communicating them.

For instance, it is well known to persons who have resided in Portugal, that the peasantry when they bring their eggs to market are so well aware, from their shape, that some eggs will produce pullets and others cock-birds, that they separate them when wanted to be set under hens, asking more money for those which will produce pullets than they do for the others, as pullets are in much greater request than cocks. This fact cannot fail of reminding our classical readers of the following passage in Horace, who, curiously enough, seems to have been aware—like the good women of Portugal—of the difference between eggs producing pullets and others of a different shape, hatching cocks only, and giving his preference to the former:

> "Longa quibus facies ovis erit, illa memento,
> Ut succi melioris et ut magis alba rotundis
> Ponere: namque marem cohibent callosa vitellum."
> Satyra iv. liber ii.

Which may thus be translated: Mind and serve up those eggs that are of an oblong make, as being of sweeter flavour and finer colour than the round ones; these, from being tough-shelled, contain a male yoke.

An interesting circumstance was lately communicated to me by an agreeable and hospitable family in Surrey, with whom I was on a visit, and who had previously resided for some years in Oporto. The fact was vouched for by three persons there present, all of whom had witnessed it.

A room in a house of one of the principal ecclesiastics in Oporto was set apart for the reception of a quantity of maize, or Indian corn, which had been thrashed out. It is well known that each of these grains of wheat must be at least as heavy as three or four grains of our common wheat. On visiting this room one day, its owner perceived a grain of the maize suspended from the ceiling of the room by a single thread thrown out by a spider, and which was, from time to time, gradually but slowly drawn upwards. Surprised at this very unusual sight, he invited several persons to witness it, and amongst others my three informants. What the motive of the spider was, in endeavouring to secure this heavy grain of wheat, and draw it up to its nest on the ceiling, I will not attempt to account for, as it is so contrary to the

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usual habits of these interesting insects; but it is a curious fact that a single thread thrown out from the body of a spider should be able to bear the weight it did.

It has long been a matter of doubt amongst naturalists as to the food of the glow-worm. Cuvier suggests that they are probably carnivorous, and it would appear, from recent observations, that he is right.

The larvæ of the glow-worm are very voracious in their habits, and it is now known that they feed on snails and not upon plants. It is not very probable that perfect insects feed much. If it does, it would probably be on some animal substance, such as decayed worms, &c.

The male glow-worm only is winged, and has two spots of bluish phosphorescent light on the belly. The greatest luminosity is given to the female:—

"To captivate her favourite fly,
And tempt the rover through the dark."

Some time after the female has laid her eggs, which are very numerous and large, spherical, and of citron-colour, and shine in the dark, the light disappears in both sexes. Glow-worms crawl slowly, and are able to shorten and lengthen their bodies.

It has been suggested that the phosphorescent light in these insects is for the purpose of attracting small flies to it, on which the glow-worm feeds. This is certainly a mistake, though flies have been observed to hover over the light. So strong is the light of another species of glow-worm—the *Lampyris noctiluca*, found under juniper, rose-bushes, &c.—that two of them placed in a glass give sufficient light to read by.

The male glow-worm hovers over the female in the twilight.

EDWARD JESSE.

WHAT?

SHE was working a slipper; but she didn't like *that*;
She sang a little melody, *that* wouldn't do;
She tried to read a little, then she played with the cat,
And then commenced a note—"Dearest, Why didn't you—?"
And then she tore it up, and then tried to keep still
And watch the spent sun till he dropped behind the hill.

He was reading a novel, but he didn't like *that*,
So he took down his fishing rod, *that* wouldn't do;
Then he whistled to his dog, then he put on his hat,
And *then* commenced a note—"Dearest, Why didn't you—?"
And then he tore it up, and then tried to keep still
And watch the spent sun till he dropped behind the hill.

The sun dropped out of sight, and she walked up the lane;
He too, quite by chance, of course, came along;
So they met, and they stopped: not a look would either deign:
Then he said—nothing, and naught had she to say.
At last he look'd up at her, and she look'd up too—
"Why *didn't* you—Dearest?"—"Dearest, why didn't *you*—?"

W. H. BOUGHTON.

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OLD FICULEA.

Of all the soul-depressing spots on the Roman Campagna (and of such spots there is no lack), the most depressing is perhaps the tract bounded on one side by the junction of the Tiber and Anio, and by the roots of Monte Gentile on the other. The very contrast which the traveller observes in the scene before him serves to heighten and deepen the black discontent that grows on him as he goes along. It is a speciality of all distant views to be enchanting, but the view that there bounds the horizon has a beauty passing even that of its fellows.

The fairest landscape the earth can show could not require a more worthy background than is there: so clearly do the blue Latin hills rise against the sky; so soft is the sunny beauty of their sides broken here and there by a ravine, or flecked by the shadow flung by passing clouds or by some taller peak beyond; so quiet are the villages and castles that crown the mountain spurs. In another direction a green fringe of wood near Monticelli stretches along in ever-varying outline as far as the lone Soracte, and onward till it loses itself on the sea-shore. In front lies the garden portion of the Campagna, veined by its ancient aqueducts and by the modern railway, the sharp lines of both which guide the eye to Tusculum and the Monte Cavi. There noble villas nestle in the ilex groves, and the sister lakes of Albano and Nemi are hidden in a setting of golden chestnuts. But when the traveller, charmed into expectant hope that this promise of loveliness is to be realised in the foreground, turns his attention to what immediately surrounds him, he finds that he has hoped in vain. A dreary expanse of parched grass, hardly diversified at intervals by corn-fields, is all that meets his gaze. Some trees near running water, and some scanty patches of verdure rather intensify than relieve the air of barrenness that hangs around. A few capacious farm-houses rising here and there over the plain, shelter the household gods of the *fattore* or steward, until the malaria drives his sickly children to the city or to the mountains. No other human habitation is visible, unless we choose to dignify by that title some conical sheds resembling exaggerated mushrooms in colour, and not unlike them in shape. These protect the shepherd from the passing storm. No vintage song is heard there; for the vine, uncouth and distorted though it be, loves to make a civilised soil the native country of its family of graceful pampini and clustering fruit. Silence is broken only by the lark at morn and even, and by the grasshopper which chirps its song all the hot day through. To be sure there are deep ruts worn into the basalt pavement of the old Roman road, and ruts in pavements are suggestive of iron-shod waggon-wheels and noisy traffic. But noise-suggestive though they be, these ruts of the pre-macadamite period are as powerless to break the prevailing sense of solitude, as are the fossil ferns of the pre-adamite period to bring before our eyes the grace of the living plants as they once unrolled their traceried leaves in some primeval brake. The noise ceased with the traffic, and that went away ages ago, when the waggons disappeared, along with the hands that had fashioned them. And yet, if the traveller would but remove the few feet of earth, heaped by time over the fields in which he is standing, he would find more than enough to counteract the influence of the desolation and dead silence that have soured him. He would find his feet resting on the ruins of cities, the foundations of which were laid before history was; the stones of whose walls were hewn by brawny hands, whose deeds are closely interwoven with the early vicissitudes of Rome. The scorched grass and drooping wild flowers would give place to costly mosaics, where art has created flowers of her own, whose imperishable freshness no dog-star may parch. The waters of the neighbouring rivulet, no longer scanty and stained, would spring clear into the air from many a courtyard fountain, and gurgle through long-forgotten conduits to the marble baths they once refreshed. For here formerly rose the walls of Fidenæ, Crustumerium, Nomentum, Corniculum, and Ficulea. This laying bare of the past, which no single traveller could effect for himself, has been done long since for all.

As far back as 1824 excavations were undertaken in this neighbourhood, and carried on with splendid success.

In 1856-57, they were resumed by the Congregation of the Propaganda to whom the place belongs, and a new series of discovery was inaugurated, which has brought to light many interesting objects connected with the city of Ficulea, the site of which had been hitherto unknown.

We are not going to give an account of the various populations that ebbed and flowed over this region, nor to examine whether the Osci or Siculi were the dominant race. But we shall pick up a few of the waifs and strays stranded by these tribe waves as they rolled in one after another, and from them endeavour to gain some idea of the aspect presented by the beach on which they broke. In other words, by help of the monuments brought to light in the excavation, we shall try and get a peep at the every-day life of the old Italian town of Ficulea.

First of all, the worthy Marcus Concius Cerenthus reads us a sermon from a stone erected by himself to perpetuate the memory of his own good works. He was charged with the duties of Accensus Velatus, and in consequence enjoyed the immunities belonging to the sacerdotal body. He acquaints us in his inscription that he had, of his own free will, paved a part of the hill, 340 feet long and nine feet broad, together with the foot-paths. Besides which, he had made the said hill easier for travellers by filling up the valley and lowering the top. If this excellent functionary could be translated into a corresponding modern official, his position in society would be exactly that of a town and parliamentary crier in holy orders. We are inclined to doubt, however, whether any one of his lay brethren of to-day would be willing to constitute himself a benevolent Board of Public Works full of as much zeal for the well-being of the Queen's highway, as was their reverend predecessor of the old Italian town. Need we wonder that Ficulea, blessed in the pos-

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session of such public-spirited, self-commemorating authorities, became a favourite summer residence for the worn-out statesmen and citizens of Rome? Cicero writes to tell Atticus of his intention to spend some days at his suburban retreat there. The poet Martial styles a nephew his neighbour twice over, since they lived close to each other both in Rome and in old Ficulea. What a venerable city! which in the days of Martial was distinguished by the epithet of "the old!"

Next come the boys and girls of the public schools. The Ficulensian territory had been given long before by the Senate to Appius Claudius, as a home for the crowd of hungry clients which had followed him up from the Sabine country. It is almost certain, therefore, that some of these school children were their descendants. If so, the old Claudian blood must have been strangely sweetened in their veins by lapse of time, so as to make possible the precocious burst of loyalty with which they greet the Emperor Marcus Aurelius in a tablet of thanksgiving. It was but little to call his majesty Sovereign Pontiff; to respect him as tribune, as consul; to address him as a most excellent and most indulgent Prince. These youthful courtiers give a retrospective character to their flattery by burning incense to his hereditary greatness. They salute him as the son of the godlike Antoninus Pius, the grandson of the godlike Hadrian, the great-grandson of the godlike Trajan, the Parthian, the great-great-grandson of the godlike Nerva. It would appear that emperors in those days lived to be called not so much the nephews of their uncles, as the great-great-grand-sons of their great-great-grandmother's husband. It may be that the lowest form boys of the Ficulensian school had been set to calculate according to the De Morgan of the day the precise amount of divinity enshrined in their Emperor. Given four imperial ancestors, each rejoicing in divine attributes, how divine must that emperor be who claimed descent from all four!

The stage upon which this goodly company of statesmen, poets, priests, youths and maidens played their respective parts, was not unworthy of their buskins and real life masks. The hilly road which the good priest had subdued, once crossed the little rivulet whose banks are now shaded by a few stunted trees. The excavators have laid bare close to these trees the pavements of what had been once luxurious bath-rooms. The masonry of the walls has fallen a prey to devastation and time, but the floors of four large apartments have escaped uninjured. In the first apartment are represented in mosaic seven baskets filled with fruit and flowers, with two birds of light plumage resting on the flowers of one of them, the other six being arranged in graceful order around. Outside all the vases and surrounding them runs a large circlet formed of leafy sprays, garlanded together, and relieved with gay colours all about. In each of the four corners chubby heads, with winged temples and swollen puffy cheeks, proclaim themselves to be the four winds. On the floor of the next apartment, Theseus and the Minotaur are engaged in deadly combat in the Labyrinth, the winding mazes of which, by a graceful treatment, form as it were a frame for the group depicted within. Neptune and Antiope figure in the third room; the fourth exhibits a man of colossal size, in a state of the most intense nervous agitation. The unearthly group of fantastic, uncanny, sea monsters that surround him, at once put us in mind of poor Proteus engaged in tending his unruly herd. The walls were coated with delicate slabs of the rarest marbles, with a zone of *rosso antico* above, the scattered fragment still remaining attesting the magnificence of the whole. A slab of *porta santa* is still to be found near the leaden pipes that conveyed the water to the baths.

But who were the inmates of this dwelling? Who were they to whose splendid ease these baths once ministered? What their tastes? their histories? their lives? To their tastes nothing beyond what we have described remains to witness, save a marble head crowned with laurel, two heads of aged women, and some crushed fragments of a large and exquisitely chiselled statue. Of themselves we know nothing. In this less fortunate than the very bricks of the walls, which still bear impressed upon them the mark of the furnace in which they were burned, the owners of this place have left no certain traces of themselves behind. There are, indeed, some handsful of ashes in the mortuary urns close by, but who shall say whether they belong to master or to slave? All that remains of the history of Ficulea and of its long career of activity is written in shattered mosaics, mutilated marbles, and human ashes. F. Carton.

WATER-PIPES AND FROST.

At Buxton there is much water, and a gentleman residing there, desirous of knowing how to prevent that water from bursting supply-pipes by the action of frost, has written for a specification of the plan indicated by me in a former paper.* Possibly, *apropos* of Christmas weather, a recipe after the manner of Mrs. Glasse may serve for others as well as my correspondent.

We all know that water in motion does not freeze unless under a degree of frost rarely experienced in England. Even in New York the proprietors of the Croton aqueduct enjoin the housekeepers whom they supply to suffer the water to run off as fast as it can during frost, in order to save the pipes from casualties. Now it is possible to attain sufficient motion without wasting the water, by simply inducing circulation by heat. When the ball-cock in the cistern is closed, the water in the pipe above it is motionless. At that point should be attached a small cistern of thin copper, containing, say, a quart or half a gallon of water, which may be a sphere like a ball-cock, or of any convenient form to apply beneath it a gas jet of sufficient power to heat the water and keep up a circulation. If this gas jet be kept constantly burning in frosty weather, the water cannot freeze, and the pipes will not burst. The small heating-cistern must, of course, be placed at the lowest point of the pipe.

W. Bridges Adams.

* See Vol. iii., p. 216.

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LAST WEEK.

Christmas has come upon us with a severity and rigour which could scarcely have been looked for after our experience of the last quarter. For nine months of the year which is now at its last icy gasp we were playmates of the Patriarchs who lived in the flood-time; since then we have been indulging in dreams of an autumnal Arcadia. After what we had gone through—Pooh! pooh! —winter with its hearty frost, and its red holly-berries; with its skating school-boys, and rosy cheeked maidens,—all these were visions of the past.

There was to be no more Spring—no more Summer—no more Autumn—no more Winter—but a sort of 'slab' mixture of the seasons—a Hecate's cauldron of jumbled opposites of the thermometer and the barometer. Old Christmas has come notwithstanding—just as in the days when you, and I, and all of us, good friends, looked forward to his coming, as we have since done to this or that bauble or counter in the game of life. They were good times those—but not better than times since—not better than times now, if we will rid ourselves of mawkish sentimentality—not better than times to come for all who have striven, amidst much stumbling, to do their duty here below. We look back at the 'good old times'—times present will be the good old times a quarter of a century hence—and that we may be able to think of them as such when we grow old and grey, let us all just now make a store of kindly acts, and warm sympathies with our poorer fellow-creatures. The Alderman in his providence 'lays down' port—let us all 'lay down' a few dozens of good deeds this Christmas, and we shall see how richly the thought will smack in our mouths twenty years hence, when the memory of them is somewhat crusted, and they are tawny in the flasks of Time. Oh! for the beeswing in a well-spent life!

Let not all such thoughts evaporate in mere emotion. Christmas has come with its joys for the thousands, and its bitter, bitter trials for the millions. When we poke our fires, London is not warm—but, on the contrary, exceedingly cold. For this week it is not our intention to trouble our readers much with the intricacies of European politics, or what Pall Mall calls the eventualities of the coming Session. The human race is not always and necessarily occupied with Parliamentary Bills, nor even with making shrewd guesses at what is passing in the dark caverns of Louis Napoleon's skull. There is something in the Journal of Life, besides the leading article. Therefore, if there be a passage in the Chronicles of Last Week over which we would linger, it is that description which has been given us of the homes of the rural Poor—illustrated as it has been by corresponding pictures of the destitution of London, and of our great cities.

There the evil is—what is to be done? Clearly promiscuous alms-giving is not the remedy—clearly one may be a subscriber to many societies, established on principles of the purest philanthropy, without much real benefit to anybody but the bland secretary and tidy matron. Fie, on this society work!—what slovenly Christianity it is!—what a lazy way of obtaining admission to Paradise as a Life Governor! What an easy thing it is to sign a cheque—what a difficult thing to get to the Heaven of good men! Yet would we not that our counsel should be given in mere empty phrases which do not point to definite action. Everyone who reads these lines knows well of a score, or of a dozen of his fellow-creatures to whom he might be of use if he would but give himself the trouble. We cannot furnish each of our friends with a list of her or his out-patients, but each of us has such a list printed in very efficient type upon his heart of hearts.

There is the old man who claims from us the tribute of respect—the old lady who is young again when the young honour her—the child craving for its frolic—and the poor starving creatures in the three-pair back, who would be happy with a blanket and a morsel of food. Can you fancy the "Pauper,"—that is the term of art,—who enjoys a well poked fire, as the late Lord Hertford would have enjoyed a *Suprême de Volaille?* Let us who are able-bodied, and in the prime of our strength, see what can be done for each one of these needy classes, for that one of our fellow-creatures who craves but for a smile, as well as for him who asks but for a crust. Above all things let us avoid thinking of the neediest amongst them as of "cases." To be sure we are all "cases" in one sense, and the best among us is a very doubtful "case" indeed; but the jargon is unsafe; it savours of the workhouse, and leads to hardness of heart. Once again we add, Old Father Christmas is here, not only with his jollities, but his terrors. When the faggots burn brightest, and the blue flame flickers clearest over that rich pudding which is so frequently concocted towards the latter end of the month of December—think of the Fleet stocking—think of the poor debtors for whom no puddings are boiled, for whom no crackling faggots give out their cheerful roar. Think, in short, at Christmas time of all who need sympathy and help!

And there are some amongst us just now who *do* need sympathy from every British heart. It had been our intention for this our Last Week to make no reference to political or to public events, as thinking that for Christmas week in every year there was a pause in all such matters. But the memory of our fellow-countrymen basely betrayed and cruelly tortured to death by barbarian hands in China comes between us and the innocent mirth of these Christmas times. For some there is no hope—for some hope has flickered down to a small and vanishing point indeed. Had they perished in fair battle for their country's cause, we should have mourned them less, but still it would have been, as Englishmen say when they clench their teeth—"all right." But the thought of Anderson and De Norman so foully murdered—and we fear of Bowlby and Brabazon and their companions, whom we can scarce hope to see in life again, comes across one with a shudder. It is as though some one had stepped over one's own grave, as the old superstition is. Christmas has come to us all—save to the afflicted families of these our unfortunate countrymen. What can we do to succour them?

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE house in the avenue was a handsome one, but the ground-floor was not used by the family of Mr. Urquhart. That portion of the mansion had been appropriated by its tenant to the reception of a chaos of models of bridges, viaducts, and the hundred and one specimens of tentative inventions dear to the civil engineer, the walls being moreover covered with more or less dingy-looking plans, some of which had germinated into grand works that had suddenly called into life the dormant energies of half a dozen previously stagnant provinces—had bridged streams that for centuries had impeded the progress of commerce—had joined in an indissoluble marriage cities that were in a condition of mutual hate or sulkiness, but which, united by science, learned to know and value each other's abilities. The nursery of these devices was a gloomy one as needed be, and withal a dusty, for what architect or engineer but proclaims an undying war to the domestic broom? It would have been a bad day for the she-menial in Mr. Urquhart's house when she dared to enter those stern vault-like rooms without his special order. The suite of apartments on the first floor comprised dining and drawing-rooms, and a pretty little boudoir furnished with almost lavish richness. On the next floor were the principal bed-rooms, and at one end of it, and over the boudoir, was the small chamber which Mrs. Lygon had desired might be assigned to herself. The sisters were admitted by Angelique, and in reply to Mrs. Urquhart's inquiry for Henderson, she was told that the latter had gone out to make some purchases.

The strictest not-at-home order having been given, the sisters were about to go up to the little bed-room, when Mrs. Lygon said:

"See whether my note is not here, Bertha."

Bertha shook her head, but Mrs. Lygon, passing through the rooms, and glancing at the tables in each, speedily detected the note lying on a chair in the boudoir.

"Here it is, dear," she said, with a smile.

Bertha looked at her earnestly for a moment, closed her own eyes as if in thought, and then repeated the gesture of disbelief.

"Let us go up-stairs," she said.

Mrs. Lygon followed her in silence, and they entered the daintily furnished little room, which

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was adorned with a profusion of the elegant nothingnesses with which a feminine hand can turn a garret into a fairy temple.

"This must be my retreat, dear," said Mrs. Lygon, seating herself and removing her bonnet and letting her beautiful dark hair fall in masses upon her shoulders. "Now, Bertha, sit down, and let us take counsel, for indeed we need all the wisdom we have, to save us in this peril."

"And the children, Laura? How selfish you must think me not to have said a word of them."

"Not a word of them now," said Mrs. Lygon, with a quivering lip. "They are well. God grant I may be allowed—I tell you we will not speak of them now," she repeated, struggling with her sobs.

Bertha gazed on her in astonishment, but seated herself as desired, and had there been a third person present the contrasted beauty of the two women would have been a sight worth his recollection on many another day.

"We must not be overheard," said Mrs. Lygon, rising to close the door.

"Leave the door open, dear. It is always the best way."

"Where has she been learning that lesson of caution?" thought Mrs. Lygon, returning to her seat, with a melancholy look at her sister.

"I will shut the doors of the further room," said Bertha.

She did so, and came back, giving a furtive look round the bed-room. The look did not escape Laura, who immediately and suddenly threw back the curtain of the alcove bed.

"What thoughts you put into my head, Bertha," she said, almost reproachfully.

Bertha smiled—but such a helpless smile!

"Now, Bertha," said Mrs. Lygon, clearing back her hair from her forehead, and speaking in a firm under-tone, "listen to me. We must bring this persecution to an end."

"O, if we could," replied poor Bertha, feebly.

"If we could," repeated her sister. "It must be done. Whatever price we have to pay for freedom from it, the price must be paid."

"I told you how I am situated," said Bertha. "Whatever money—" Mrs. Lygon laid her hand on the hand of Bertha.

"I do not know that I am speaking of money. I wish that money would do, for there is no sacrifice which I would not make to obtain it. But I have the solemn and deliberate assurance from the man's own mouth that he will not be bought off, and that he prefers exacting a supply from time to time. He distinctly told me that he would never cease to persecute you."

"I shall die."

"Bertha," said Laura, "I will hear no words of folly from you. I have come to France with the determination to save you, if it be possible, and you must not let your terrors and fears get the mastery over you. You must help me. Heaven knows that I shall want all the help I can have, in a struggle with the most detestable wretch, as I believe, in this world. Now, remember what is at stake, and be firm and rational."

"I wish I had your courage and spirit," sighed Bertha.

"I have neither courage nor spirit," said her sister, "except what may have come suddenly to me under the most dreadful pressure. I know myself too well. They will tell you at home—Arthur will tell you, that I am one of the most timid and easily led persons in the world, and that his calm head and strong heart are my stay and support. I say this to you, Bertha dear, because the same cruelty that seems to have given me strength to act ought to do as much for you, and because you must be true to me and to yourself. You will, I know?" she added laying her hand kindly on her sister's.

"I will do what I can," said Bertha. "But what either of us is to do is a perfect mystery to me."

"I do not say that it is much clearer to me," replied Mrs. Lygon, "but it shall be, before many hours are over. I have heard of a poor stag, driven into a corner by the dogs, becoming desperate and dangerous, and if ever there were a case when two women might defend themselves, it is our case. It must be done."

"What must," asked Bertha, astounded at the energy of the sister whom she had known from childhood as the gentle creature she had described herself.

"Whatever will release us, I tell you," replied Laura, in a low resolved voice.

"You begin to terrify me, Laura. Of what are you dreaming?"

"Dreaming is the right word," said Laura, slowly. "And we do things in dreams that we should tremble to think of, were we awake. We will call it a dream, but we will dream it out."

And she sat for some minutes silent and without moving eye or limb.

"Bertha," she said, after this strange pause, "ours is a case in which the right of self-defence against horrid wickedness leaves us free to use any means which may come to our hands. When honour and happiness, and not only our own honour and happiness, but that of those we love beyond all words, is brought into peril by such a miscreant as that man, I do not believe that anything we may do can be blamed. But let that be as it may, I have decided, or I would not be here, and I will be deterred by no fear, if our one great fear can be ended for ever."

"I can make you no answer, Laura," said Bertha, "I feel like a child in your hands."

"Answer me, then, as truly as a child would, dear. What do you know of his habits and associates?"

They spoke as if there was but one man in the world.

"Not much," said Bertha. "I see him but seldom."

"Ever in society?"

"Yes, and in society where I have been surprised to see him."

"Better than he is entitled to enter?—I mean if he were an honest man instead of what he is."

"In France, you know, it is not difficult for a gentleman, no matter what his means may be, to mix with a class that in England would not welcome a poor man, unless he were a singer, who came to amuse them, or something of that kind.

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But there is another class here into which it is very difficult for a man without position to get, and even there I have met him."

"And well received?"

"Sometimes I have thought not, and then at other times I have seen him received with such marked attention, with almost more than is usual."

"Do you know any of his intimate friends?"

"Not one. But I think—at least I have an impression, that they belong to an inferior class. I remember one day in particular—we had been driving in the Bois de Boulogne, and for some reason Robert ordered the coachman to go home through some streets I did not know, and so we passed him. He was standing talking and laughing with two villanous-looking men, and had his hand on the shoulder of one of them—they were evidently low persons."

"Bertha, you know what I said he had told me about your servant."

"Yes," said Bertha, uneasily. "It is not so."

"It is not what, dear?"

"He said—or hinted—at least, you understood him to say that I was in some way in her—her power. You could not have understood him rightly. It is not so."

"Whether it is so or not," said Mrs. Lygon, "and we will speak of that presently—whether it is so or not, that girl is in *his* power."

"No, no," said Bertha, hastily. "It is entirely without foundation—I mean your idea. She is a very good, honourable girl, and much attached to me, because I know her goodness."

"Bertha," said Mrs. Lygon, calmly, "I fear we shall not be able to work together. You are deceiving me."

"How? I deceive you, Laura! What do you mean?"

"You are a bad dissembler, Bertha, and I am glad of it. But you are very false to me now. I know that it is so—why not spare me the pain of proving it to you? I can."

"I do not understand you in the least," said Bertha, reddening.

"I suppose that my faculties are sharpened by danger," replied Mrs. Lygon, still preserving her calmness, "or I might not have noticed the uneasy looks which you have been casting that way,"—and she pointed—"while we have been speaking about him."

Bertha coloured, painfully, to her very hair.

"There," said her sister, "there ought to be nothing unkind between us. His spy is concealed in that wardrobe. Call her out."

Mrs. Urquhart burst into tears, and hid her face in her fair hands. Mrs. Lygon rose, and would have opened one of the wings of the piece of furniture in question, when the other opened, and Henderson stepped out.

She did not say a word upon the subject of her concealment, but, dropping a respectful curtsey to Mrs. Lygon, went over to the toilette-table, took a bottle of perfume, and brought it to her mistress, at the same time giving her a handkerchief, and, in short, tending her in as orderly a manner as if it were in obedience to a regular summons. Having done this, the girl was about to leave the room, when Mrs. Lygon stopped her.

"I wish to speak to you, with your mistress's permission," said Laura.

Henderson was all respectful attention.

"In an English village," said Mrs. Lygon, addressing her in a grave, kind tone, "there live an old couple who gave their daughter an education above her station, because they loved her better than she deserved. They had her taught French, and otherwise made her fit to be a lady's trusted attendant. They hope, some day, to see her again in their village, and to kiss her as the wife of some good, honest man—perhaps they hope to see her children growing up around them. It will be bad news for the old father, and worse for the old mother, when they hear that their daughter has become a street-walker in France."

Henderson's black eyes flashed out with fire at the last words, and her plebeian face became elevated in expression by the manifestation of her genuine indignation.

"It is false, Madame," she said, passionately.

Mrs. Lygon took her seat, and, sorely constraining her nature, forced her beautiful mouth into a smile of as much contempt as she could manage to assume.

The smile stung the girl to the quick, as it was intended to do.

"It is false," she repeated, "wickedly false. You may sit there smiling, Madame, but it is false."

Mrs. Lygon remained silent.

It was the best course, for in a moment or two the girl flung herself upon her knees in a passion of tears.

"You will *not* go and say that in Brading, Madame. I am sure you will not. For you do not believe it, though you say it. Perhaps it has been told you," she added, her eyes again flashing through her tears. "You have seen somebody who has told you that, and he is a villain incarnate."

A throb of pleasure—no, of hope—passed through Mrs. Lygon's frame, and sent the blood to her forehead. But she retained her self-command.

Henderson continued to sob.

"It is false, false," she repeated, swaying herself about.

"You had better leave the room," said Laura. "I have said all that I wish to say to you."

"Never, Madame,—I swear that I will not go from the room, nor rise from this floor, until you tell me that you will not carry such a story as that with you to England. Say you do not believe it, and indeed you may."

Mrs. Lygon pointed to the closet whence Henderson had come.

"Yes, yes, Madame—dear Mrs. Lygon—yes, that was bad, wickedly bad in me, and you must despise and loathe me for it, and you are right to do it. But not the other—it is not true. I swear it is not true," she said, clasping her hands with energy.

Need it be said that the Laura of England would have long since raised the girl from her knees, comforted her for the terrible word, and said what woman should say to woman, wrongfully accused.

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But not so the Laura of France. She had her own to hold against a deadly enemy.

"Do you think," she said, coldly, "that the word of a bad servant girl is to be taken against the word of a gentleman?"

Fire to powder. The girl sprang to her feet, clenched her hands, and was impotent to speak, through the potency of her rage.

Mrs. Lygon eyed her with a stern satisfaction. As for Bertha, she merely sat with her handkerchief to her face. It was one of the situations in which very weak people are simply out of court.

"The word of a gentleman," repeated Henderson, as soon as she could find utterance. "The word of a gentleman. No, Mrs. Lygon, he may wear fine clothes and go among fine people, as Madame has said" (she was far too frantically in earnest to think of affecting hesitation to use what she had heard) "but he is not a gentleman, and you gave him his rightful name when you called him by the blackest name you could put your tongue to. And yet you would believe him sooner than me because he is called a gentleman by those who do not know him. No, you will not, Mrs. Lygon, I know you will not!"

Henderson, thoroughly roused, came over to Mrs. Lygon, and again fell on her knees beside Laura's chair—actually ventured lightly to touch her hand. Had Laura played out her part thoroughly, she would have snatched away her hand as from contamination, but she did not do it, and the girl uttered a cry of triumph.

"Ah! you don't believe it—you do not, Madame, or you would not have let me do that; and if you ought to have believed it, never would I have dared. God bless you, Mrs. Lygon! God bless you! though it is not for me to say such a word."

And then came more tears.

"Mary Henderson," said Mrs. Lygon, and then the impetuous girl interrupted her, rising, however, and retreating to a decorous distance.

"Thank you, Madame, for letting me hear my own rightful name again. My name *is* Mary, and it was a bad time when I was fool enough to change it."

"Listen, then, Mary. You assure me, on the solemn word of a girl of character, that there is no ground for my believing you worse than you have shown yourself to-day?"

The girl clasped her hands together, and assented with a vehement oath, which, it being in the nature of an ordeal, might perhaps be pardoned, but need not be set down.

"I shall return to England almost immediately, and I shall visit Brading soon after. I should have been glad to carry back an account of you which would make the hearts of your parents rejoice. But that you have made impossible."

"But I will make it possible, Madame," cried Henderson, eagerly. "If you will let me, Madame, I will make it quite possible,—I mean if you will graciously let bye-gones be bye-gones. I know it is a bold thing to ask; but when a girl has been called a dreadful name—and I know, Madame, that it was put into your mouth, and let him that put it there look well to his comings and goings—"

Mrs. Lygon held up a finger.

"I beg your pardon, Madame," said Henderson, humbly, "for my low and dirty action. That is its right name."

"It is of your mistress that you should ask pardon," said Mrs. Lygon, watching earnestly the effect of the words, and pained, though not surprised, to see that the idea of Bertha's displeasure did not seem to impress the mind of her servant.

"And I do so, I'm sure," said Mary Henderson, but far less submissively than Mrs. Lygon deemed proper.

"I do not wish to hear anything," said Bertha, overcome by the whole scene, and helplessly shaking her handkerchief, as if to wave away all appeal.

"And as I say, Madame," continued Henderson, again addressing herself to Mrs. Lygon, "if bye-gones might be bye-gones, and never shall they be repeated by me, and you would let me make amends, I can do something, and may be more than a little, in bringing to you some knowledge which you wish to have."

"What kind of knowledge?" asked Mrs. Lygon, quietly.

"Ah! yes, Madame. That is indeed like a lady—that is truly good in you to take me at my word, and let byegones be byegones at once, and forget what I was doing just now. But it is me that must remember them against myself," said the girl, with a more softened expression of face than her features had seemed capable of wearing. "I won't say more than becomes me, but you ladies wish to know something about a man whom you hate, as I was going to say, but that I ought not to say to ladies. But I hate him," she added, with a look that left no doubt of her meaning, "and if I can do anything to bring a house upon his head, down it comes. And if I may not do it on account of others, I will do it on my own."

"I cannot say that your anger is wrong, Mary," said Mrs. Lygon.

"Indeed it is not, Madame," returned the girl, "and when I think what might have been the consequences, if you had gone back to England believing that wicked lie"—

[Which, it will be remembered, Ernest Adair had never uttered.]

"I could drive my nails into my hands, Madame. But I will have my revenge for my good name."

"I can hear nothing about your revenge, Mary. Try to live so that all who know you may discredit anything that may be said against you."

"And I will, Madame. But I will have my revenge first, begging your pardon for naming it again."

"Well, now, Mary, suppose you go down stairs. I shall have something to say to you presently, but I must first have some conversation with your mistress."

"Certainly, Madame."

And Mary withdrew, with a look which, while directed towards Laura, was chiefly expressive of a sort of grim gratitude, but which, as the girl

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turned to go, spoke most distinctly of a savage determination to wreak her wrong.

"Help comes when we least expect it, Bertha dear," said her sister, as soon as Mary had emphatically closed the most distant of the doors.

"I have no idea what you mean to do," said Mrs. Urquhart, who really seemed bewildered by the scene she had witnessed.

"No, I suppose not," said Mrs. Lygon.

"But you ought to be very careful," said Bertha, wisely.

"And I will," returned her sister. "Trust me, dear. Would you order something to be sent up to me, for I am growing rather faint, and let Henderson bring it?"

"Certainly, dear. I ought to have thought of it sooner."

People of Bertha's temperament have, it may be remarked, a habit of forgetting to think of the possible wants and comforts of others, but easily forgive themselves for what they euphuistically call absence of mind—some people save a good deal of trouble and expense by that convenient furlough. However, Mary Henderson's zeal made up for any slackness on the part of her mistress, and Mrs. Lygon was tended with the utmost care and consideration. Henderson had much to tell her, and something to hear from her.

CHAPTER XIX.

BUT Bertha herself was doomed that day to sustain, single-handed, an interview of a far more embarrassing character. To sit and witness her sister's triumph, in the conversion of a hostile spy into a useful ally, was not an exertion that drew much upon her mental resources; but, about two hours later, and while deeply musing upon the questions whether she should dress for dinner that night, and if so, what dress she should wear, Angelique brought in the card of Mr. Lygon.

Mrs. Urquhart's mind, suddenly recalled from her toilette, was in such a state of bewilderment that she had already issued the slightly contradictory orders to admit him, and to say that she was in the country, when she found herself holding his hand, and declaring how glad she was to see him.

Arthur Lygon was in no mood to be critical upon his reception. He had hurried to Versailles, and thought only of again seeing Laura. He scarcely allowed his hostess time to falter out her welcome.

"And where is Laura?"

Poor Bertha strove to put on a surprised air, and, with a heightened colour, was about to reply, when Arthur's kind feeling, united with his eagerness to meet his wife, hastened to save her from embarrassment.

"My dear Bertha," he said, taking her hand, and speaking low, "there is no need for any attempt at secresy. If I had been trusted sooner, I might have saved and been saved from great pain. But nothing need be said, dear, but this. Certain things—they need not be recalled"—and he looked away from her as he spoke—"have come to my knowledge, and my only complaint, as I have said, is that I was not trusted. Now, I have no complaint to make—*I know all.*"

With a gentleman's instinct, and in order to give his sister-in-law time to recover from the effect of such a communication, Lygon, pressing her hand kindly, crossed the room, looked from the window for a moment, and said:

"She is here, I suppose?" and he entered the little boudoir.

No, Laura was not there; but on the table was the note which she had sent to Mrs. Urquhart, announcing her arrival in Paris, and upon the writing the husband's eye immediately fell. He snatched it up, and smiled as he read it, and returned to the drawing-room.

Bertha was gone. Perhaps the best thing for the weak creature to do was to fly.

He was not surprised. For he had been pondering, of course, over the information which he had received, and it was by no means a pleasant thing to have to apprise a woman, who had hitherto been unsuspected by him, that he knew of the errors of her early life. He was glad to have cut the knot in the abrupt way he had done so, and he concluded that though Bertha would not remain to continue such a conversation, she had gone to communicate it to Laura, who, in another minute, ought to be in the room.

Three minutes elapsed—perhaps five—and then, regardless of all the conventionalities, Mr. Lygon ran into the dining-room, and, finding no Laura there, mounted the staircase leading to the bedrooms.

"Can she be afraid to meet me," he said, "Laura afraid of me!"

And he opened the first door that he reached, half expecting to find Bertha and her sister crying together, and one urging the other to lose no time in coming down.

No, the room, Mrs. Urquhart's, was untenanted.

His hand was on a second handle, when Mary Henderson stopped him.

"Mr. Lygon, sir. That is my room."

"Ah, Henderson, how do you do. Where is Mrs. Lygon?"

The girl's quick eye saw that he held his wife's note in his hand, and her quick brain instantly suggested that it was useless to affect surprise at his words.

"Why, did you not meet her, sir?"

"Meet her—where, where?" said Arthur.

"Which way could you have come, sir?"

"Straight from the railway."

"Ah, but which?"

"How should I know. What do you mean? Is Mrs. Lygon—— Stop. Don't be surprised, Henderson, but——"

Surprised or not, she saw the excited Lygon, breaking off short in his speech, rush in succession to each of the doors on that floor, and look into the rooms. He hastily penetrated into the little bed-room in which five minutes earlier he would have found his wife.

But she was no longer there.

Bertha had flown to Laura with his name upon her tongue, and the latter, certain that he would be stayed by no obstacle, had darted down a second staircase, Bertha following, but managing to say a word to Henderson, scarcely needed by her.

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"Mr. Lygon, sir, if you would only listen."

"Where is your mistress?"

"In the drawing-room, sir."

"She is not."

"She went there, sir, directly Mrs. Lygon went out."

"Where is Mrs. Lygon," demanded Arthur.

"Mrs. Lygon has only gone into Paris for the evening. I thought that you would have met her at the train, but whether she went by the right bank or left bank I am not sure, and you do not know which you came from."

"What do you say about the evening—where is she gone?"

"I—I am not sure, but Madame knows."

Again Arthur Lygon had searched the rooms, but the result may be imagined.

"Mrs. Urquhart must be in the house," he said, sternly, "and I must see her. Find her, Henderson."

"But she was here ten minutes ago," said Henderson.

"Where's Mr. Urquhart?"

"He is away from Paris, sir, there has been a railway accident, and he was sent for."

"Find your mistress."

He paced the apartments in a state of mind which may need no description.

"I cannot find Mrs. Urquhart," said Henderson, after delaying as long as she thought was safe. "I have not seen her since she said good-bye to Mrs. Lygon, and Angelique believed her to be here, as she was when you came in."

"Has she taken flight, too?" said Lygon, in passion.

Henderson was silent, the remark not being addressed directly to her.

"Do you say that Mrs. Lygon is expected here again to-night," he said, in a calmer voice.

Henderson, left without directions, scarcely knew what to say. If she replied in the affirmative, Mr. Lygon, evidently an unwelcome guest, would naturally desire to remain and await his wife's return. As contrary answer would make him still more determined to see Mrs. Urquhart. So, rejecting fiction altogether, she resolved on adhering to the truth, and stating that she did not know. This left him to decide for himself.

"Bertha might well desire to keep out of the way," he said to himself, "after what I had said to her. It would be strange if she did not. But why could she not have spoken of Laura? However, I am on her traces now, and I will not lose them again."

He put a variety of ordinary questions to Henderson, as to the time of his wife's arrival, the room she occupied, and her state of health, and then, dismissing the girl, he wrote a brief note to Mrs. Urquhart, in which he begged her to let him know when Laura was expected back, and her address in Paris.

"Get this into Mrs. Urquhart's hand as soon as you can," he said, "and if you have the answer ready for me when I call again in half an hour, this shall be doubled." He put a gold coin into her hand as he spoke, and went out.

But Mary Henderson had no opportunity of earning the additional wage which he had offered. The sisters were fairly away from the avenue, and Bertha had led Laura through an obscure part of the town, and into a quarter where an English stranger was not at all likely to penetrate. Nor for many gold coins would Mary Henderson, under the influences which then guided her, have done anything which could offend or embarrass Mrs. Lygon.

Arthur Lygon walked rapidly hither and thither, in the neighbourhood of the house, and though irritated almost beyond bounds at the chance, as he thought, that had prevented his meeting Laura, did not entertain an idea that she was voluntarily hiding from him. The girl had played her part so naturally and promptly, that Lygon had no cause for suspicion, while the disappearance of Mrs. Urquhart was easily accounted for. But he made his half hour a short one, and soon had his hand again on the bell.

"I am sorry to say, sir, that I have not been able to find Madame. How or when she could have gone out, I cannot think, but she is certainly not in the house."

"She must come in sooner or later," said Lygon. "I will wait for her."

"Very well, sir."

"Will any one be here to dinner?"

"No, sir," said Henderson, quickly. "Madame dined very early, with Mrs. Lygon.

"I shall wait."

He re-entered the drawing-room, and the faithful Henderson retired to consider how this new difficulty could be met. It was evident to her mind that neither of the ladies would return to the house while they thought Mr. Lygon was there. But where could they go? and how inconvenient to have to hurry out into the miserable Versailles. Perhaps, though, they might actually have departed for Paris. But then, what was to be done with Lygon?

A brilliant thought flashed upon her mind, and in another minute she, too, had left the house.

Lygon paraded the rooms in irritation, and yet scarcely knew how to affix blame anywhere. Accident had gone against him. But it is small consolation, in trouble, to have nobody to blame.

He had passed another hour in this state of mind—which made the period seem treble its length—when Mary came in again, in haste.

"A young man, sir, has come with a message."

"From whom?" said Arthur, eagerly.

"From Madame. Enter, Monsieur Silvain."

Arthur Lygon had not much attention to bestow upon the small, wiry-looking, intelligent Frenchman thus introduced, but at once demanded his news.

In brief, which was not the way M. Silvain told it (for he wished to distinguish himself in the eyes of his mistress), M. Silvain had been at the railway terminus, inquiring after some perfumery which he had ordered from Paris, when Madame Urquhart, to whom he was well known, had called him to her, and had requested him immediately to present himself at her house, and acquaint the strange gentleman from England that she had gone to Paris, following the strange gentleman's wife, and that he was, if he pleased, to come on to Paris also, and a letter should be sent to him,

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to the Hotel Marie, Boulevard des Capucins, telling him where to find them. M. Silvain was desolated not to have been able to come sooner, but his perfumery had not arrived, and he had been obliged to send a special messenger after it.

It was a well-learned story, but what is the use of a lover if he cannot learn anything his mistress orders! It was a bold falsehood, but what is the use of an ally who is timid? At any rate it sent Mr. Lygon away from Versailles.

(To be continued.)

THE SOLDIER AND SAILOR:

THEIR HEALTH.

IN former days it would have been a dreary task to describe the condition and prospects of our Soldiers and Sailors in regard to health. Neither the men themselves, nor society in general, knew that the perils of warfare and of wind and weather were less to be dreaded than those of disease in the barrack and the ship; but there was some general notion of the ravages of ship fever, and of epidemics in camps abroad. The Walcheren expedition in 1809 has ever since been regarded as an illustration of the very worst circumstances in which a body of soldiers can find themselves; but, till we had warning from the Crimean war, we were not fully aware that the calamities of the Walcheren expedition might be reproduced at any time, and that a mortality quite as needless, though less excessive, was always going on, wherever the British army was distributed over the world. We know all about it now; and this is the same thing as saying that such mischief can never happen again.

I can just remember the sending out of those forty thousand men to Walcheren, nearly the worst known place for marsh fever in the world: yet no precautions were taken, no special provision of doctors, nurses, medicines, and comforts was made, because it was to be a secret where the force was going. So the men sank down by hundreds in a day, among the slimy sands on which they slept, and the stagnant water, alive with insects, which was all they had to drink; and within three months there were only four thousand of the forty thousand men fit for duty. What reinforcements were sent, I do not know; and the records of the Walcheren camp are actually lost, for want of understanding the value of experience; but we are in possession of the astounding fact that, after the thousands of deaths on the spot, there were 35,500 of the Walcheren soldiery admitted into the hospitals at home, in the course of the next winter and spring.

The mischief did not end even here. Lord Wellington was conducting the Peninsular war at that time. All his resources were scanty—men, supplies, money, and everything; and yet he had, on an average, twenty-one men ill in every hundred. The poor fellows were not only useless but dreadfully burdensome. They could not be moved; they occupied healthy men in taking care of them, and they were a prodigious expense. How was it that nearly a quarter of his force was always ill? It was partly owing to the general ignorance of the management of health on a large scale; but it was yet more because the Walcheren patients were sent out to Portugal as soon as they were able to go. The voyage and the southern climate, it was thought, would set them up completely; but the first broiling noon or night dew prostrated them again; and they lay, as ill as ever, in every village along the march of the British army.

Where there is a constant low state of health, there is a constant low state of morals; and it is no wonder that the British soldier was, in those days, a rather disreputable member of society. It always hurt the national feeling, to say so: but it was undeniably true. Wellington's despatches show that *he* thought so; and he caused great offence in the army by the plainness with which he spoke in his public orders. The wonder would have been if the case had been otherwise. Sickly men, reckless of life because they do not expect to live, always do, and always will, make their short life what they call a merry one: and so our soldiers in the Peninsula, always brave in battle, were mischievous at other times—breaking into the wine cellars, and indulging in every kind of excess. The natural consequence of such conduct was punishment by the lash; and the consequence of that punishment was debasement and further recklessness, disease, and death.

This was not the way to make the British army a safe defence at home, or an honour to our country abroad; and in fact the evil reputation which has hitherto attached to the ordinary soldiery of all countries, was the lot of the English soldier half a century ago, and up nearly to the present time. Even at this day it is but too true that the scamp element is large in our army. All our soldiers are volunteers; and till very recently there have been drawbacks in the lot of the soldier which deterred thousands of men who would have been a great advantage to the national defence, while their proper place has been filled by worthless fellows who have entered the army as a refuge, or for swindling purposes. Even now the amount of desertion is shocking, because it shows how many thieves have got into the force. These rogues enlist, desert, and sell their outfit, and enlist again under another name. They are not only an affliction in themselves, but they deter good men from entering. They have seriously lowered the character of the whole force; and it will take some time to bring up the general character of the British soldier to a level with his reputation for valour. But the condition and prospects of the soldier are immeasurably superior to what they were five years ago; and there is no longer the excuse for recklessness that the soldier's life is of less value than that of others.

We may remember that, about a dozen years ago, there was a stir in the public mind about improving the mind and life of the soldier. We heard of a good deal of effort to supply the men with instruction in regimental schools, and with books and newspapers for evening reading. Much kind feeling was called forth, valuable suggestions were offered; and not a little good was really effected. If it had been only that the soldiers saw that their fellow-citizens cared for them, in peace as well as in war, the benefit would not have been small. But experience has since shown us that we had not then got hold of the right handle. The

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soldier must, like other people, have his life, health, and comfort provided for, before he can be raised in the scale of intelligence, morals, and manners.

The advantages of the soldier's calling would seem to be great. He is exempt from the anxieties which belong to uncertainty of employment and earnings; his wants are provided for with absolute certainty, in regard to food, clothing, and habitation. His money earnings, if small, are constant; he has not to go through an apprenticeship to his business, but receives pay from the hour when he begins to learn his work. Except in rare seasons of warfare, he is never overtasked; and, in those seasons, the novelty of travel, the complacency belonging to personal importance, the opportunity of distinction, and all the strong emotions which belong to campaigning, are much more than a compensation for toil; so that all real soldiers rejoice in the summons to go out to the scene of war. In case of wounds there is a pension; and there is now a long perspective of honours and rewards for military merit, open to the humblest member of the army. All these advantages failed, as we have seen, to attract the young men of the middle as well as the lower classes, while the discomfort of the soldier's life lowered the soldier's quality. Now they may have their fair effect, because the health and welfare of the profession are cared for as they never were before. Among mechanics, the rate of death has been a little more than 13 per thousand; but as soon as the mechanics turned soldiers, they died at the rate of from 17 to 20 per thousand, according to the places and circumstances in which they were appointed to live. Once more the turn has been taken; and, generally speaking, it is the soldier's own fault if his chance for life and health is lower than that of his brothers on the farm or in the workshop.

We are not yet in possession of the Barrack Report, which will tell us what has been actually done to improve the soldier's dwelling, and what more is recommended. Meantime, we all understand that the overcrowding of sleeping-rooms, and the consequent heat and bad air, are largely owing to the soldiers themselves. At least, it is plain that the men themselves lower the better sort of rooms to the level of the worse by stopping up all air-holes. The air becomes poisoned very soon, by the breath of the inmates; and this, by itself, may account for a considerable number of the yearly deaths in the army. There is henceforth to be such an inspection of every apartment in every barrack as shall prevent such poisoning through the lungs. It will not be in the power of any inmate to stop out the air; no more than the proper number will be put into any one room: there will be an end of the barbarous old practices by which bad smells are caused in barrack rooms; and a regular care of the drainage is already a matter of course. The Duke of Wellington was once appealed to by parties in the Tower who could not agree whether men or blankets should be put into a barrack which was excessively damp. The official who had charge of the blankets alleged that they must have the dry barrack because they would be ruined in the damp one; and the regimental officer said the same about his men, whom he considered the more valuable article of the two. The Duke agreed with him. In regard to damp barracks everywhere the question is now virtually settled, though there is much to do yet before our soldiers can be lodged as well as they ought to be, even at home. In India, Sir Charles Napier began an improvement in military building so remarkable that the soldiers persist in calling the new edifices Napier barracks. The reform is secure there; but there are several of our colonies still unfavourably distinguished for the mortality in the regiments stationed there. In Parliament and out of it such places must be watched till all our soldiers are placed high and dry, in well-ventilated barracks.

A provision is matured for our troops being better lodged in camp, and on the march, than any other army perhaps ever was.

Till recently, the choice of lodgings, or of the spot for encampment, was the business of the quarter-master, who had no concern with the health of the troops, but only with the supply of their main wants. He looked for wood and water, and for space enough; and if he found these, with ground which would bear the weight of the camp, he was satisfied. If the medical men saw reason to disapprove the choice, they could do nothing. They were charged only with the sick and wounded. They were not asked for an opinion; and they had no right to urge their views on the officer in command. If any one ventured to do so, he was likely to be told that when his advice on military matters was desired, it would be asked. All this is mended now.

It is recognised at present that an education which prepares doctors to deal with sickness and wounds is altogether different from one which teaches the conditions of health, and how to secure them. For the first time, the care of the health (as well as of the sickness) of the army is committed to a body of officers, properly educated for the purpose. The vague and comprehensive office of the army-doctor is now distributed among three functionaries. One order of inspectors and doctors takes charge of the sick and wounded, and the hospitals which contain them. Another takes charge of the health of the force, and is responsible for the good situation of the camp, unless the commanding officer sees reason to overrule the advice he is always to receive. The drainage, cleanliness, dryness, and wholesomeness of the ground, and the airiness and wholesomeness of quarters in towns, are in the charge of these sanitary officers. The third set take care of the statistics of the medical department of the army. They note all the facts of soil, climate, and local diseases: they keep the medical case books, and register the sicknesses under heads carefully arranged, and the recoveries and deaths. In a few years we shall thus know what the liabilities of soldiers are in various climates and situations, and what are the commonest diseases among a great body of men collected at home or abroad; and we shall no longer make our preparations at random, but, in each case, with a clear and intelligent aim. The army doctors are henceforth to go through the ordinary medical and surgical education first, and then to have an additional training to fit them to manage the diseases which most afflict armies, and

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the hurts which are received in battle. They are to study the diseases of tropical countries, and the epidemics which prevail in different places, as well as army surgery. Thus, when the soldier lands on a foreign shore, care is taken that he is put upon a good soil, sheltered from hurtful winds, sun, or damp, and preserved from stenches and other mischief. If he falls ill of any disease of the climate, the doctors know how to treat it, and have the proper medicines with them. If he gets wounded, he knows that the surgeons have not everything to learn, because gunshot wounds are rare at home, but that they have had a special training in treating hurts of this kind. Moreover, there are easy vehicles for carrying the wounded to the hospital, and all means on the spot for treating wounds, and rallying the strength of the wounded. All this is such a change from the old methods that the difference in the mortality of our armies is already very remarkable.

I need not spend space or time in telling the faults of the dress of our soldiers, up to a very recent date. A dress which compresses the throat, confines the chest and arms, and loads the head with a great weight, and galls the temples without shading the eyes, and pinches the feet, and makes the wearer cold in winter and hot in summer, and wears out as soon as possible, and gathers dust, and shrinks in damp; a dress like this has every imaginable fault, and scarcely a single recommendation; yet this has hitherto been the dress of the British soldier. He has not complained of it so much as might be expected. In fact, he has been rather vain of his tight coat, stiff stock, towering shako, and the knapsack which pulled at the leather belts across his chest. But if his English admirers could see him on the march or at work, they would find him less fond of his costume. They would see him unbuttoning, and throwing open or throwing off every article that had most distinguished him. Shako and stock have gone; the jacket hangs loose; the trousers are tucked up; and, moreover, the scarlet cloth has slit in half-a-dozen places, and the boots have burst at the sides, or are too stiff to get on and off.

We now know that the head must be well sheltered in all weathers and climates, and particularly in hot countries, without being loaded; and that the throat and chest must be free from pressure, and the feet well fitted with well-seasoned boots. Hence the reforms now in course of introduction. We are trying different caps and head-coverings, in India and everywhere. The chief of the department of army clothing has been studying the French methods of making everything that the soldier uses or wears, from the tent over his head to the shoes on his feet. Though the boots and shoes are made entirely by machinery, from the cutting out of the leather to the finishing stitches, every French soldier is fitted, and no French soldier has corns. The reason is that there are twenty-four sizes and shapes, out of which men of all dimensions can suit themselves. We are to adopt this method: and when we have done it, and become careful about our leather, we shall hear little more of our soldiers being foot-sore.

When we have ascertained what sort of head-gear, with its white covering, suits tropical service best, we shall not lose so many soldiers by sunstroke as we do now. Meantime, the new tunic in the place of the tight coat, the growing discountenance of the stock and the shako; the improvement in all materials; the good sewing by the machine; the increased use of flannel, and the careful superintendence of the washing of clothing and of the person, are all guarantees of a better state of health for the soldier than was imagined half a century ago.

The absurdity of feeding our soldiery on boiled beef, every day of their lives, as long as they were in the army, will scarcely be believed hereafter. We know better now. We know the mischief of giving men the same dinner every day; and we have obtained the advice of the best chemists as to the best diet for healthy men. By means of more knowledge and a better use of inventions, we can now give our soldiers a variety of meats, soups, puddings, and vegetables, such as they would not have enjoyed at home; and fresh bread, and good tea or coffee,—and all for the same money that the old system cost, or less. There can be roasting, stewing, and baking, just as well as the eternal boiling of old times. Thus may the modern soldier enjoy his meals, and keep up his strength on them, instead of being tempted to spend his money on dainties and drink.

With this enlargement of the dietary, another change, no less beneficial, has come in. Worse than overcrowded rooms at night, and disgusting food, and troublesome dress, has been the curse of the soldier,—the dullness of his life. People in ordinary life who pine for want of something to do and to care about, are subject to ailments which are called "the maladies of *ennui*." These are real diseases, though arising from moral causes. The brain wears upon itself, the nerves become disordered, and the various bodily functions are disturbed, just as in the case of a restless prisoner who is said to "eat his heart out" in captivity.

Soldiers in barracks, whether at home or abroad, have had some experience of this kind of misery. After parade, and after duly hurting their lungs by breathing the dust of pipeclay in dressing their belts, and then cleaning their arms, there was nothing before them but a dinner which they loathed, and parade again; and at night either a wet and cold guard, or the hot and pestilential barrack-room, crowded with hard-breathing sleepers. Drink, desertion, suicide, were the consequences of such a life; and it was on account of these manifest evils that the stir on behalf of regimental schools and reading-rooms began.

We are doing better now, and shall improve further. The most intelligent of the learners and readers were still helpless, outside their narrow range of exercises. When they went out to war, no one of them could make himself a shelter, or mend his clothes or shoes, or bake bread, or cook meat and vegetables. In adopting the new cooking apparatus, which has attracted so much delighted attention, the authorities have provided an excellent employment and strong interest for the soldiers. They are learning to cook as the soldiers of other countries do. Once having discovered the benefit of being able to shift for

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themselves in one respect, they naturally desire to extend their attempts. They are learning to provide a shelter and warmth under difficulties. When encamped somewhere or other in the summer, they practise all the arts of camp life,—keeping themselves dry and warm, killing and trimming meat, getting good meals, draining and cleansing the camp, taking care of the horses, and repairing accidents to their clothes.

This last year there was such a camp on the Curragh of Kildare. There was a chorus of complaints and pity that men should be encamped on such a place in such a season: but the real friends of the soldier contended that it was the best kindness to him to let him take the run of seasons and circumstances. If men and horses were so badly off as was reported, it was from bad management, for there were facilities for drainage and road-making; and every soldier worthy of his vocation would rejoice, as many did, in an opportunity of practising the arts of his profession, and putting his own courage, and skill, and endurance to the proof.

But what was the remark of foreigners who heard the grumbling? Their remark bears a close relation to our present subject. They said, "The English soldier is the best paid, the best fed, and the best clothed soldier in Europe, and is always grumbling. The fact is, he is spoiled. He can provide nothing for himself; and when once out of the routine of barrack-life, is helpless."

If the English soldier ceases to be helpless, we may hope that the profession in which men are better paid, fed, clothed, and considered, than in any other country in Europe, will not be so largely occupied as hitherto with scamps who get what they can, and then desert.

I read an anecdote lately * of military service in India, which explains, to a certain extent, the evil reputation of some of our soldiers, not in tropical regions only, but wherever they are too severely tried by dullness. Good officers in India encourage trustworthy soldiers in hunting in game regions, because all vigorous interests are of immense importance to men overwhelmed with *ennui*. The dullness of the hot season drives barrack soldiers, not only to drink, but to a kind of craziness. In order to get transported — that is, to get to Australia—the men of the Bengal army have affected insubordination to their officers. One after another threw a pair of gloves, or a cap, at the first officer he met. This went so far that the authorities announced that the punishment of death would be inflicted henceforth, instead of transportation.

The men disbelieved this. One of them threw his cap at a perfect stranger in the road,—judging him to be an officer by the gold band on his cap. It was an assistant-surgeon from Meerut. The surgeon was reluctant to give evidence, and did all he could to save the man; but the threat must be fulfilled, and the soldier was to be shot. The firing party took care not to hit him. In case of the aim failing, the sergeant's duty is to shoot the criminal with a pistol. The sergeant did his duty in this case; but he could not bear the thought of it, and made away with himself. He was found dead, floating in a well, a few days afterwards.

The natural comment on such a story as this is, that in other armies, the amusement of the soldiers is one of the institutions of the force; and Indian officers declare that any amount of money laid out in newspapers, illustrated periodicals, games, &c., for soldiers, in India and the colonies, would be well spent. These things are, in fact, medicine for mind and body.

At home, the dullness is likely to be cured through the universal agreement that soldiers should have the change and recreation which are necessary to all other men. In addition to schools and reading-rooms, and to the new variety of practising the arts of life, as far as the soldier is concerned in them, we may hope to see a great spread of those manly sports which are the best possible recreation for soldiers. The authorities are encouraging the introduction of cricket and other games. Gardening, also, will be gladly countenanced and assisted on all hands.

Now, here is a career which ought to be eagerly sought. To the foreign account of the indulgence which the soldier enjoys, we English can add the higher considerations which attend a calling in which every man is called, not by the stern voice of law and authority, but by his own free thought and feeling. With us, every soldier is a volunteer. We have no conscription; and we are supposed to pamper our soldiers, in order to keep up our force. Yet, if our numbers are kept up, the quality has not hitherto been what we desire.

I do not believe that money will avail,—mere high pay. It is far more probable that certain reforms, present and future, will do it. Of those reforms, the very greatest is, no doubt, the practical abolition of the lash, within this year. The man worthy to be a soldier is no longer liable to flogging. Flogging cannot be altogether abolished till the scamp-element is rooted out of the army; but fellows of that order only are now liable to it. The new plan is to reduce any offender to a *floggable* condition first; and this affords opportunity for reform, and even for return into the class which cannot be flogged. A respectable soldier will not sink into the degraded rank; or if, by some unhappy lapse, he should do so, he will rise again, and not subject himself to the further degradation of the lash. In fact, a respectable soldier is now no more liable to the lash than a man of any other calling.

As for other reforms, we may see what they are by looking at our forces in China. The health of our troops there is higher than the health of soldiers was ever known to be, unless in the last days in the Crimea, when our army was recreated, and brought into the finest condition. In China, our troops are well fed, well clothed, well managed in health, and well cared for when wounded. Of the sick, there are scarcely any to speak of. From the date of that spectacle, the military profession assumes a new and bright aspect for the private soldier, as well as for his officers.

The profession ought to show the very largest amount of health and strength. The members of it are picked men for physical soundness and vigour. The recruit cannot pass unless he has a firm and

* Dunlop's "Hunting in the Himalaya." Chap. 5th.

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straight spine, a chest that will expand freely, joints that will work well, eyes that will see well, a voice that will resound well, ears that will hear well, strong limbs, a distinct utterance, a healthy throat, supple hands, an arched foot, and so on. Even sound teeth and straight and supple toes are required; and all signs of old disease are a cause of rejection. Men who set out with bodily advantages like these ought to have health and long life, apart from the perils of the battle-field, which destroy a very small proportion of the soldiers who die.' There is every reason for confidence that the soldier will flourish henceforth. The causes of the great mortality are detected in course of rapid removal; and, as we see, there are already places to which we can point as showing the fine state of vigour to which the soldiery of England and her dependencies can be brought.

The state having done what it can, the rest will depend on the individual soldier. If he eschews excess of every kind, and indolence, he may pass a long life in comfort and vigour. If, moreover, he has a patriotic heart, or knowledge enough to be aware what it is to be at once a citizen and a defender of Old England, he may have a life of that higher order which is seasoned with a temper of heroism, and exalted by a severe spirit of honour. There is no reason why every private soldier and sailor should not be a "Happy Warrior," as well as a Wellington or a Nelson.

The reform in the Sailor's condition began many years before we took the lot of the soldier to heart. There can hardly be any one now living who could speak from observation of the penalties of a long voyage in the shape of vile smells in the ship, scurvy among the men, and mortality from ship-fever. It was long ago found possible to get rid of much of the bilge-water, and to clean and dry and air the berths, and to ventilate every place below decks, and to give the crews something else to eat than invariable salt beef and biscuit; and, lastly, to carry a preventive of scurvy in the form of lemon-juice. Now that preserved vegetables are becoming common, and meats are preserved otherwise than in pickle, and that it is found easy to have fresh bread, we may fully expect that the common diet at sea may be nearly as varied as that on shore. In the American navy there are several temperance ships which carry no spirits, except some brandy among the medical stores. Coffee is substituted for grog; and I have been assured by an experienced commander in that navy; that the health of the coffee-drinking crews is of a higher quality than that of grog-drinking crews. It is with a sort of wondering disgust that we think now of the scurvy-stricken ships' companies of old days, with nothing but hard biscuit and hard salt beef to eat, with their loose teeth and sore gums;—men actually rotting to death for want of a variety of food. We understand now what elements in food are necessary to the supply of the frame, and in what proportion they should be given; and most of these are so easily stowed, and keep so well, that there is no reason (though there is still some prejudice), in favour of the sailor going on to live on salt meat and biscuit, without any change. Part of the fault lies with Jack himself. He is an old-fashioned fellow, and sticks to old ways. Even our sickly soldiers in the Crimea had a notion that they did not like preserved vegetables, and pointed with contempt to the small dimensions of the compressed sort: but they learned their value at last, and found them a most effectual medicine and welcome luxury. So will Jack learn in time to prize several kinds of food, and modes of cookery, which will keep out scurvy; and sooner or later there will be, in ordinary cases, no more excuse for disease from faulty diet on board ship than anywhere else.

Jack likes to be clean. There are some nasty fellows in that way of life, as in every other; but, take our marine all round, the crews are above the average of men in cleanliness of person and lodging. This being the case, it is felt to be a great blessing that the chemists have given us a soap which will wash clothes clean in salt water. In old times, the crew's linen was never thoroughly dry, and never thoroughly clean, with all the washing and drying that could be bestowed upon it. Now it is real proper washing; and this, and the constant airing of the bedding, and the careful watch kept over the damp and dirt, lengthens the life of the sailor for many years.

The remaining evils are partly due to the calling itself, and partly to Jack's own folly.

The interrupted sleep of all seamen, from the commander to the cabin-boy, is injurious, and tends to shorten life. If it is so in the case of medical men on shore, it must be more so at sea, where it is the regular practice to take sleep in small portions, and at varying times. Two hours now, and four hours another time, and then two hours again, and seldom more than four hours at a stretch, is not a due supply for hardworking men. The plan may be the best practicable, on the whole, for the safety of the ship, and the welfare of the crew; but it cannot be called good for anybody's brain.

I need say nothing about trying climates and vicissitudes of weather, except to observe that as so many ships' companies have gone to the poles and round the globe, without loss of life from cold, heat, or storm, the lot of the sailor cannot be considered worse than that of other workers whose vocation is outdoor labour.

It is only in extremely long voyages that the dullness of the way of life can be complained of; and the few cases in which it might occur are met in such a generous and genial spirit by the authorities at home, and the officers on board, that the occasion causes more admiration than regret or pity. At the North Pole, or the South, in the midst of the Pacific, or when detained on remote stations for weeks or months together, amusements are introduced, as soon as there is danger of Jack's time hanging heavy on his hands. There is music; there is dancing; there are games; moreover, there are amateur theatricals. Nobody loves the theatre better than Jack, and very well does he usually act his part upon the stage. While the affair of a play is on hand, there is no dullness among the crew. In ordinary times and short voyages, the old fashion of story-telling answers as well as ever; and it probably always will, when it is too dark on deck to read.

Jack will become a reader too, before long, in

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the Royal Navy, if not in the Merchant Service. There are schools now for seamen as well as soldiers. There is also a much higher practice of observation, and of scientific study and reporting, in our navy than at any former time: and the humblest seaman may take an interest, and perhaps give assistance, in these matters, if he has intelligence and good taste enough to do so.

The great peril to his health—that which outweighs all others put together—arises from his own weakness. I need only refer to his too common behaviour on first coming ashore after a long voyage. He wastes his health in excess of every kind, and his money in silly extravagance, and his reputation in wild follies. He is sadly weak and wild sometimes in remote countries, where he may contrive to land; and the ship's surgeon gravely laments such opportunities of Jack's playing the fool; but nowhere is he more grossly imprudent than in the first place in England where he goes ashore. Who can tell how many of our promising young seamen have poisoned their whole afterlives by excesses for which there is no excuse?

Or, if our seamen believed formerly that there was some excuse for them, they cannot say so now. There are so many Seamen's Homes now open in our ports, so well-provided with comforts at an economical rate, and offering such advantages in their banks for securing savings at once, that a sailor who puts himself in the way of sickness and sorrow on his arrival at home can only hang his head in bitter shame. And there I leave him.

As for the wiser ones, who use the Homes, and take rational care of their health and fortunes, they will certainly admit that their lot in life is, on the whole, a good one. Sailors are generally and strongly attached to their profession; and landsmen can easily understand what charms it may have. It has also involved some hardships so serious, that we cannot wonder that some prejudice should hang about the service in the Royal Navy at this day. Instead of describing these, it is necessary only to point out the reform which is to begin on the 1st of April next. As in the army, it is only the lowest scamps who will after that be subject to the lash. Offenders will have a trial by court-martial on board, and the punishments will be more varied, and better graduated. The commander has power to judge and punish summarily in urgent cases; but crews will be protected from the hasty humours of ill-tempered captains, and be under the jurisdiction of a court, like landsmen. There will be no new license for them, but, rather, increased strictness against neglect of duty, desertion, and misconduct before the enemy, as well as bad language and misbehaviour at all times. It is for Jack so to conduct himself under the change as to afford no occasion to prejudiced persons to wish to re-establish the unchecked power of the lash.

I say nothing of the cruelties we too often hear of as practised on board merchant vessels by others besides American captains. A seaman who puts himself in the way of such treatment, when the Royal Navy is open to him, with all its security, its comforts, its increased pay, and its pensions and rewards, may get such redress as the law affords, but will not be so pitied as if he had not made a foolish choice of an employer. It has been quite true that the merchant service yielded higher pay; and it is always true that it takes Jack a long time to understand new arrangements: and thus it is that we have not nearly so many seamen as we want. But this mistake will be mended. The new advantages of the naval service will become known and believed in our ports, and discussed in our Sailors' Homes, and then England will have a body of defenders in her seas as full of health and vigour as they have always been of zeal and love for their country.

Harriet Martineau.

INDIAN JUGGLING.

The fort of Calcutta, commonly known as Fort William, is one of the most splendid and convenient military establishments to be found in any quarter of the globe. It is very spacious, and somewhat resembles the Tower of London, in that it consists of various streets and squares, adapted for different military purposes. On all sides it is guarded by a high and strongly-built rampart, which is surrounded in its turn by a broad and deep fosse, over which are placed drawbridges, leading to the principal gateways. Arrived in Calcutta, a raw griffin, of course I went to inspect the lions, and, among others, the fort.

The fort is often the scene of animated festivity, from the presence of native jugglers, renowned for their surprising skill and dexterity. The performances of these strange people have been so often described, that I shall only make mention of a few, for otherwise I might tire the reader. One of them struck me as being curious from its having a strong resemblance to the feats recorded in sacred history, as having been performed by the magicians of Egypt, in the time of Moses, and in the presence of Pharaoh. Indeed, as it is well known that the Hindû tricks have been handed down from the most distant ages, from father to son, there is little wonder that such a similarity can exist. The particular trick alluded to, is the apparent conversion of a brass coin into a snake. The juggler gave me the coin to hold, and then seated himself, about five yards from me, on a small rug, from which he never attempted to move during the whole performance. I showed the coin to several persons who were close beside me, on a form in front of the juggler. At a sign from him, I not only grasped the coin I held firmly in my right hand, but, crossing that hand with equal tightness with my left, I enclosed them both as firmly as I could between my knees. Of course I was positively certain that the small coin was within my double fists. The juggler then began a sort of incantation, accompanied by a monotonous and discordant kind of recitative, and, repeating the words, Ram, Sammu, during some minutes. He then suddenly stopped, and, still keeping his seat, made a quick motion with his right hand, as if throwing something at me, giving at the same time a puff with his mouth. At that instant I felt my hands suddenly distend, and become partly open, while I experienced a sensation as if a cold ball of dough, or something equally soft, nasty, and disagreeable was now between my palms. I

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started to my feet in astonishment, also to the astonishment of *others*, and opening my hands, found there no coin, but to my horror and alarm (for of all created things I detest and loathe the genus) I saw a young snake, all alive-oh! and of all snakes in the world, a cobra-di-capello, folded, or rather coiled, roundly up. I threw it instantly to the ground, trembling with rage and fear, as if already bit by the deadly reptile, which began immediately to crawl along the ground, to the alarm and amazement of every one present. The juggler now got up for the first time since he had sat down, and catching hold of the snake displayed its length, which was nearly two feet;—two feet all but an inch and a half. He then took it cautiously by the tail, and opening his own mouth to its widest extent, let the head of the snake drop into it, and deliberately commenced to swallow the animal, till the end of the tail only was visible; then making a sudden gulp, the whole of the snake was apparently swallowed. After this, he came up to the spectators, and opening his mouth wide, permitted

us to look into his throat, but no snake or snake's tail was visible: it was seemingly down his throat altogether. During the remainder of the performances, we never saw this snake again, nor did the man profess his ability to make it re-appear; but he performed another snake-trick, which surprised us very much. He took from a bag another cobra-di-capello, and, walking into the centre of the room, enclosed it in his hands in a folded state. He waved, or shook them for some time in this condition, and then opened his fists, when, hey! presto!—the snake was gone, and in its place appeared several small ones, which he suffered to fall from his hands, when they glided, with their peculiar undulating movement, almost like the waves of the sea, about the floor.

I will notice one or two more of the surprising performances of these wonderful jugglers of India, and the reader will perhaps have had enough, and will be glad to turn to some lighter or more genial piece; for "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

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While staying in Madras, before coming home, a party of jugglers came forward on one occasion to act publicly in the yard of the barracks there. Many hundreds of people, of all kinds, different ages, both sexes, and various denominations, including the soldiery in garrison, assembled to witness the exhibition, and some little temporary arrangements were made, to enable each and every one to see and hear conveniently. The leader of the jugglers, who were all, of course, natives of Hindústan, requested the commanding officer to place a guard of men around the scene of display—a precaution which was adopted, and which proved a very wise one. The floor of the court, be it observed, was composed of sand,—fine, well-trodden. On this ground, then, after some preliminary tricks of an inferior kind, one man was left alone with a little girl, the latter seeming about eight or nine years of age. Beside them stood a tall, narrow basket, three or four feet high, by little more than a foot in width, and open all the way up. No other object, animate or inanimate, appeared on the ground. After a short period, spent by the man in conversing with the little girl, he seemed to get angry, and began to rail loudly at her, for the neglect of some wish of his. The child attempted to soothe him, but he continued to show an increased degree of irritation as he went, at length lashing himself into such apparent fury, that the foam actually stood upon his lips, and being naturally rather a *monstrum ingens*—that is, possessed of an exceedingly unprepossessing face, he looked, to the white spectators at least, as like a demon escaped from Dante's Inferno, as might be. Finally, his rage seemed to reach that boiling point, just capable of anything, and seizing hold of her, he put her beneath the basket; or, rather, he inverted the basket completely over her person. She was thus hemmed in, and entirely at his mercy. Having thus disposed of her, in spite of the child's screams and entreaties, the man drew his sword (Tulwáh), which was as bright and polished as the surface of a Venetian mirror of a few centuries back, and he appeared as if about to wreak some (further) evil on the object of his ire; and after some moments, during which he talked to the child and to himself, as if justifying his anger, he did actually at last plunge his sword down into the basket, and *draw it out dripping with blood, or at least blood-red drops.* The child's screams were piteous, and heart-rending in the extreme, but all, all in vain; for the man plunged his dripping weapon again and yet again into the basket in which she was confined. As he did so, the screams of the wretched victim became fainter and fainter by degrees, quivering and quavering like the last few whispers of a dying breeze; till at length they almost entirely ceased, and then, as every one sat horror-stricken and breathless, and scarcely knowing where to look, or which way to turn, then, a faint, low sigh, drawn out like the expiring note of an Æolian harp, was distinctly heard by every one in that hushed assemblage, till it too, ceased, and all was still—still as an Indian noon-tide; stiller and yet more still,—still as death. The child's voice was hushed for ever; was hushed in the lullaby of death.

For a moment, "silence reigned supreme;" but for a moment though, for as the rage of the hurricane, the blast of the tornado, succeeds the sweltering heat of the noon-day, so rushed the excitable Irishmen of the 8th Regiment upon the wretched murderer; for believe it a mere trick they could not—they would not; they thought it nothing but a piece of cold-blooded, deliberate, diabolical butchery. Well was it for the juggler that the request for a guard had been granted by the officer commanding; else, nothing could have saved him. All the exertions of the guard could hardly prevent the excited soldiery from rushing into the arena, and tearing the man limb from limb; they ground their teeth with rage, and cursed every bone in the juggler's body; even the officers (and I among others), whose better education and experience made them necessarily less open to such feelings, grew pale with uneasiness. Mark the result of all this.

When the man seemed to have carried his rage to its utmost extremity, warned by the looks of the soldiery, that it would be as well to close the exhibition without delay, he raised his bloody sword for a moment before the eyes of the assembly, and then struck the basket smartly with it, which, falling over on its side, left exposed the place which it had before covered. Conceive the dismay and astonishment—the unbounded astonishment of the spectators, when in place of the expected corpse of the little girl, which every one present fully expected to see there, for the echo of her expiring sigh seemed still to float tremulously in the air, we saw—guess reader! but you will not guess right, if you guessed for a week of Sundays. Well, then, we saw nothing—a blank, an empty space, void of substance, animate or inanimate; bare, bald as a true believer's head. Nothing but the flat sand of the court-yard. No vestige of dress, or any other thing to indicate that the girl had even been there. The amazement of the beholders was, if possible, rendered more intense, when, after the lapse of a few seconds, the identical little girl came bounding from the side of the court-yard—it seemed from among the spectators' feet—and clasped the juggler round the knees, with every sign of affection, without the slightest marks of having undergone any injury whatever. *Credat Judæus Apella, non ego*, you say, or ought to say, incredulous reader, but though stranger than fiction, it is none the less true.

Mind, this was not performed in a room, or on a stage, like that of Professor Anderson, the Wizard of the North, replete with contrivances, and pitfalled with trap-doors, no! no!! then it would have been an easy feat; but this was an open court-yard, as well known (or better) to the spectators, as to the performers: the feat performed in the centre of a court, every point of the circumference of which was crowded with spectators, who never for an instant took their eyes off the performers. As to the notion of a subterranean passage, the very nature of the ground put that out of the question; and besides, that nothing of the kind existed was made plain to all who chose to satisfy themselves on that point, by looking at the scene of the performances when

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they had closed. Every one was sure that the child had been put below the basket, and that she did not get out of it in the natural way: but she did get out, and how? I cannot say, though there can be no doubt that it was accomplished by some skilful manœuvre.

Such are a few, a very few of the surprising feats which these jugglers perform, and many still more wonderful there are, which I may have a chance of communicating at some future period to the reader; they are the result of surprising art, address, or contrivance; and for such the natives of India excel the whole world.

L'Envoi.—Reader, if you have been amused with this little anecdote, thank my deceased friend, not me. I am but the mouth-piece of one speaking from the tomb. We may meet again—*si fata velint.* If so, *au revoir.* If, however, the fates are unpropitious, why then, adieu!

F. SWANWICK.

UNDER THE FIR-TREES.

A HARVEST ROMANCE.

"HA, MARIAN! well met, fair maid! Where roaming this bright morn?"
The maiden, with a sigh, replies, "My Lord, to lease the corn."
Her hair with blossoms wild bedeck'd, her cheek with blushes dyed,
She stands a very queen of flowers, yet downcast as a bride.

"Come Marian, my love, with me; nay, why so bashful now?
This scorching sun will deeply tinge the whiteness of thy brow;
The coarse, harsh stubble of the fields these little hands will spoil;
My village beauty was not born to suffer heat and toil.

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"Come, fairest, come, why linger still? Such rude employment leave;
Beneath the fir-trees' welcome shade, we'll wander as at eve.
Have you that happy hour forgot—my murmur'd vows and sighs?
Dear Marian, turn, and let me read my answer in thine eyes!"

Fair Marian at his bidding turns; they pace beneath the trees,
Whose tall and tender columns wave and mutter with each breeze.
But those sweet eyes are filled with tears, the blush forsakes her cheek.
"What is it troubles Marian so? Speak, little maiden, speak."

But Marian, resting on a bank, looks down and thinks awhile;
The handsome noble, lounging near, looks on with careless smile.
No sound disturbs the solitude but labour's distant hum:
Impatiently at last he cries, "My sweetest, art thou dumb?"

Then, hands clasped loosely round his arm, upturn'd her pretty face,
Fair Marian says with earnest air, yet full of modest grace,
"The words you whisper'd me last night, and once we met before,
Were best unsaid—must be forgot—and we must meet no more.

"Nay, hear me, while I tell you how, in listening to those vows,
With joyful heart methought I heard the waving fir-tree boughs
Say, as the soft wind through them sang, 'Such fond words must be true.
Ah! happy, happy Marian! he loves and loves but you!'

"We parted—homeward went your steps, but mine here linger'd still,
Lest other eyes should guess what hopes my flutt'ring bosom fill;
But as I mused, another song the trees sang in mine ear,—
Ah, simple, simple Marian! Doubt, maiden, doubt and fear!'

"Then askèd I my sinking heart—Can such change be in life?
The daughter of the labouring man become the noble's wife?
Inured to earn my daily bread, the child of want and care,
Can such as I the gems of wealth be ever meant to wear?

"Then askèd I again my heart,—But could my lord mean guile?
Would one so great as he deceive poor Marian with a smile?
The untarnish'd honour of his house, his name be all forgot?'
So mournfully the branches waved, I trembling fled the spot!

"And through the long and wakeful night still sounded in mine ear
The soughing of those fir-tree boughs,—'Doubt, maiden, doubt and fear!'
My lord, I have no more to tell, my inmost thought you know."
But now her falt'ring voice in vain essays to bid him go.

The young man listened with his head bent down upon his breast.
He answered,—"Little friend, forgive this sad and sorry jest;
In seeing you so beautiful, I have been much to blame,
For trifling with so pure a heart, regardless of your fame!"

Bending yet lower, that fair face he once more looks upon.
"Forgive—forget me, Marian." One kiss, and he is gone!
Faintly, more faintly falls his step—it dies in far-off grove,
And with it fades the maiden's dream, her first sweet dream of love.

Up, up, there is no longer time here grievingly to stay;
For in the fields ask many tongues "Where Marian is to-day?"
The griefs and cares of poverty must workfully be borne;
But Marian's tears fall thick and fast, while leasing in the corn.

Louisa Crow.

SAM BENTLEY'S CHRISTMAS.

CHAPTER IV.

After Mr. Bentley's visit, Miss Julia Moore carried on her business with varying success, varying only in the degree of smallness, like the fluctuations of a wind-blown pool, and unlike the refreshing swell and growing strength of the flowing stream. Her stock remained on her hands. Her capital was, in every sense, fixed and stationary. It would not "turn itself over," which, when rapidly performed, is the proper gymnastic exercise by which capital grows from weakness to strength—from leanness to plethora. Her sister's letter was not very cheering, but was satisfactory to her in enabling her to get rid of the note which had from the first been a burden to her, and which was now in her gathering difficulties becoming a temptation. After writing to Mr. Bentley she waited impatiently for the reply, which should instruct her how to dispose of the note, and—which was of equal importance to her—put her in possession of the sum due to her from Mr. Bentley.

It was now the day before Christmas, and she had received no answer. The next day her rent was due, and her means were inadequate to discharge it; on that day, too, her sister would come up from the country, and Julia had wished to have something of Christmas cheer for her, in humble imitation of the hospitality and profusion of her native place. She and Miss Manks had pinched, contrived, and consulted to accomplish this, and had at last to confess that their feast would be of a very meagre kind, and would require unbounded fun and merriment to give it anything of a festive character.

It was a wretched day. Snow clouds hung thickly over the town, darkening the air, but only occasionally dissolving into flakes which fell

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heavily and slowly, and half melted as they fell, turning to a cold, chilling sleet, soaking quickly through boots and clothes, and giving all the discomfort of a snowfall without any of the bracing, clear, enlivening influence which usually accompanies it. The frost seemed reluctant to come and unwilling to go. Julia was dispirited by the weather, for on such a day she could look for little or any business. As she watched the lagging and irresolute snow-flakes, she said in allusion to the legend of her native place relative to the snow, "The witches in Greenland must be as down-hearted as I am, for they pluck not their geese heartily, nor plump down the white rain feathers as if they were pleased with the coming year, but slowly and lazily, like the mocking Barguest that robs the beef and spoils the pudding. Ill luck betides somebody:

Bonnie north wind blow,
Send us the Christmas snow."

About noon a young man entered her shop. He was quite unsettled what he wanted. Julia immediately concluded that as it was Christmas he wished to make a present, and was not particular as to what he purchased. She hinted this to him, and he admitted that her opinion was correct.

"To a lady?" she suggested.

"Yes—why—not exactly—to a young girl."

"We," replied Julia, "in trade generally call them all ladies."

"That in my opinion is not exactly correct," replied the young man, evidently more inclined to talk than to buy; the latter, however, was what Julia wished him to do, and she therefore inquired about the age and other particulars of the girl, and the nature of the present he proposed to make. He replied by giving a glowing account of a lovely face and shape, and then asked:

"Do you happen to know any girl of that kind?"

Julia could not but laugh as she replied:

"Not except in a book—I have known very pretty girls, but your description is too good for any of them. What would you like to take?"

She placed before him collars, ribbons, cuffs, embroidery, and all the various articles of feminine use or wear which her shop contained. He turned them over, tossed them about, quite unable to appreciate their good qualities, or to make a choice, and at length looking up at Julia, boldly and frankly, as if growing conscious of his awkwardness and gaining courage to be more open, said:

"You will oblige me by picking out a few

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things—such as, if you had a sister, and were going to give her a pleasant surprise, you would choose."

Julia began to make her selection, and he then somewhat timidly asked, "Have you a sister?"

Julia's face brightened, for the question recalled to her the happy thought that to-morrow her sister would be with her, and she smilingly replied, "Yes, I have."

"Of course you live together?"

Julia did not approve of the inquiry being pushed so closely, but as she was in a cheerful mood, and had apparently a good customer, she would answer it. She did so, coolly saying:

"Not yet—she comes from the country to-morrow, and then we shall live together."

Her customer fidgetted about as if he was impatient, so Julia hastily finished her selection, and said: "Any of these will do—not too expensive if she be a poor girl—not too coarse if she be not."

He scarcely looked at them, but said moodily, "What's the price for the lot?"

Julia could scarcely believe it was true. She reckoned up the prices, and replied, "They come to five pounds, sir."

"Wrap them up." He put down the money and took up the parcel, and loitered as though there was something else to be done, and then abruptly said, "Is your sister's name Susan?"

"It is."

"And she's coming from Bradford, where she's been working at a mill?"

"Yes; but how do you know this, sir! Who are you?"

Julia became not only interested but also alarmed.

"Stop a bit," said he. "You sent a message lately by her to my—to a Mr. Bentley?"

"Yes: are you come about the note?"

"No, no—I know nothing about any note, and I want to know nothing about it, or anything else," said he, growing red in the face, and hot with tremulous excitement, "except about Susan. It's through me that she got into trouble—and—and I must know—" He stopped a moment, and then hurriedly said, "It's no matter, I must know—they talk about her before she left London, and I've come to know—is she a good, honest lass or no? There, it's out, whether ye like it or not. My uncle, that's Mr. Bentley, has turned me out, but I don't care if—ye know what I mean—I can't say it, but for Heaven's sake speak truth, and I'll be satisfied."

"Then you," replied Julia, contemptuously, but without passion, "are Mr. Henry Bentley, and you have met my sister, have persecuted her, I may say, with your attentions, which have been both to her and others of a suspicious kind. You have tried to lead her astray;—don't speak, sir,—I repeat you have tried to lead her astray, driven her from her friends, injured her character, and—" Julia could no longer control her passion, her eyes flamed, her voice deepened and quivered, "and after that you dare to come to me, and insinuate vile doubts as to her conduct, and repeat wicked calumnies. Leave the shop this instant!"

He impassionately entreated to be heard—he would explain, he would apologise, he would retract—anything, if she would but hear him. It was in vain; her passion was lord of the hour, and Henry was driven ignominiously and dejected from the shop.

This incident would have given Julia much food for thought had not her reverie been cut short by the entrance of another customer. Julia's hopes rose,—trade was certainly improving. There might, after all, be good cheer for Susan to-morrow.

The fresh customer was a thin, spare woman, who came straight to the counter, asked for what she wanted, selected it without delay or comment, handling the goods in a manner which showed that she was fully acquainted with their quality and value, but, at the same time, scrutinising Julia very closely without being observed. She paid for her small purchase, took a minute survey of the shop, and then said to Julia:

"Some time ago ye had a customer who lost a note—one Sam Bentley o' Bradford, an' ye sent him word about it—here's your letter to him, an' that other paper hes t'number an' all particulars o' t'note, an' I've come for't."

Julia replied that she had the note, and would gladly give it up, but she was not free from doubt about the right of her present visitor to claim it.

Miss Bentley (for of course it was she) replied:

"Ye see I ken all 'bout it. He cam' in an' had a button set on, an' he finished by orderin' shirts, which I should never hev forgi'en him but for other troubles; but Sam's t'first of t' family that had 'em made but by his own woman folk, tho' in a manner it's some'ut of t'same now, nobbut he didn't know, so it's more good luck nor good meanin' as lawyers get to heaven—but I've forgi'en him, though I'm his ain sister, an' by rights oughtn't to hev done so, but it wor sore again t'grain, an' if it hedn't been for his bein' put out 'bout Harry——"

Julia interrupted her at once.

"Do you mean young Mr. Henry Bentley? If so, he's been here a few minutes ago."

"I wor comin' to that. Of course he's been here, an' he'll be dawdling about, an' he'll hev seen me come in, nobbut he were flayed, an' daren't let himsel' be seen. He's crazed, an' they say it's 'bout a factory lass that he brought up to Lun'on wi' him last night."

"They came together!" cried Julia, pale and trembling with anxiety.

"Why so they say. I didn't see 'em, but ye know it's like enough. Mill hands hev no souls ye know, an' are of no use, nobbut to work for their maisters an' to sin on their own account. If ye'll find t'note I'll be goin'."

Julia leant down resting on the counter, and with struggling sobs and tears, exclaimed piteously:

"Oh! Susan, Susan!—my poor sister! Would thou hadst died!—anything but this!"

Miss Bentley looked at her most sorrowfully, and, gently stroking her head, endeavoured to cheer her by saying:

"Don't tak' on so. It mayn't be true, an' I

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know that what folk say isn't al'ays gospel nor believed by theirselves. So cheer up. I'm sure Harry will be in here again. Gi'e him this bit of a letter, an' don't fret. We'll make it all right some way, nobbut gi'e me t' note as I mun be goin'."

Julia endeavoured to compose herself, and, with a sorrowful look, took out the bank-note, saying:

"Take it and go. It has brought me nothing but sorrow."

Miss Bentley, as she left the shop, clutched the note with delighted fingers, and muttered:

"I wor determined to hev it before Sam cam', but she wouldn't hev gi'en it up if I hadn't rapped at Susan. It wor too bad, but Sam shan't see it again; I'll hev my revenge now, if he nobbut don't frighten t' poor lass again."

When Julia's sorrow had abated, and she was able to review the matter with some degree of calmness, her confidence in Susan returned. She then thought it was singular and rather suspicious that Mr. Bentley's sister (if indeed she were his sister) had not recalled to her recollection what she had, in her distress, forgotten—namely, the sum due to her from Mr. Bentley for the shirts. Whilst pondering on this she observed Henry Bentley loiter past the shop-door, and then back again, casting wistful glances within. She beckoned to him, and on his going in, gave him the note left for him, saying: "The person who left this has made me wretched by what she has told me. I cannot bear to think it true; but if it be, bring her home at once. Oh! is it true?—did you come alone? or did you——" She paused for his reply, but he, being confounded with her agitation and perplexed with her questions, knew not what to say. She misinterpreted his silence, and in a voice of utter anguish implored him, "Oh! where is my sister? Give her back to me! Where—where is she?"

Henry was not in a mood to be trifled with, and he was irritated with this question, which seemed to mock him; he had come for no other purpose than to find out Susan, and to ascertain where, who, and what she was, and the only source to which he could apply—her sister—had, in the first instance, driven him out of her shop, and now, forsooth, asked him where Susan was!

He was put out of temper, and grumblingly replied:

"I came to tell you all about it, and you kicked me out. I shall say no more to you about her," and then walked suddenly out of the shop.

This was "confirmation strong" of all Julia's worst fears. All the merriment and joy of the blessed Christmastide were now no more for her. Dashed from her were the pleasure of the long-schemed surprise and the anticipated delights of the great holiday and festive assembly of scattered families, drawn together in a sweet and joyous participation of customs hallowed by the memory of their parents, and beautified by the hope that the glad tradition would be handed down by their children so as to keep for ever—long as the earth should roll around the sun—undimmed and unforgot the mingled recollections and hopes which fill all hearts as they welcome the advent of Christmas. Bleak misery, desecrated affection, and the inconsolable bereavement, worse than death; the falling into sin of the beloved; the ever-gnawing pang of doubt; the dread of gazing on the dearly-cherished face, the old familiar countenance, lest it should turn from the loving gaze oppressed with shame and loadened with guilt. These must now be the Christmas guests of her heart, gibe at her intended joy, and turn even her prayers into heaviness and anguish of spirit. Those who hurried along the street, in the cold and wet, had happy looks and merry voices, as though they caught the radiance from afar of the coming happiness. She heard their gaiety and merriment run over in superabundant congratulations and mutual good wishes, as friends or acquaintances met, and she saw their hearty joy displayed in closely clasped hands, in glowing countenances, and in happy smiles. But, to her, all was an empty fearful mockery. She hated to look upon it. The light of her heart had gone out—the star of her hope washed away by a terrible raging sea. Would that it were night that she might hide herself from sight, and in secret weep for the sister "that was not!"

But other troubles awaited her. In a short time Mr. Bentley came in, glowing like a peony, both hands thrust deep down in their usual quarters, and performing their usual chinking duet. With a quick nod and jerk over his shoulder towards the street, as if to say that he had left the hawks abroad, he went up to Julia, pulled out his hand, and, giving her a hearty shake, said: "Come again, like Dame Gurnett's pig. Glad to see thee. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year. Miserable day. Trade any better? Humph. Old stock, I see."

Julia could not reply to him. Her heart gave a jump when he came in, and whispered fear and trouble came with him.

"Got thy letter, lass; much obliged to thee, an' called for t'note."

"I've not got it, sir?" replied she, with trepidation.

"Not gotten it!" shouted he, with the most incredulous look, and a long whistle, as plainly expressive of contempt and disbelief as any words could have made out. The hands were again busy, and the jerk came towards her telling her most unmistakeably to prepare for the hawks of the law.

"I've not got it, sir," repeated Julia. "An hour ago a woman, tallish, thin, sharp-featured, bright-eyed, dressed in black, came with my letter to you, and said she was your sister, and had come for the note, which I gave to her."

A long, low, prolonged whistle, and a sudden ceasing of the moneyed duet, was Bentley's answer to this, and he, with great difficulty, prevented himself putting his thoughts into words, and blurting out, "Egad, Nance hes do neme, makin' me stop for ould Dame Womersley that she might get t'brass. She's got t'blind side on me." Checking himself from thus committing himself, he said, with assumed sternness to Julia, "Then of course thou's gotten my note and her receipt for t'brass."

Julia was struck at once with her want of

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caution, and perceived the strong case which might be made against her, and her voice shook as she replied, "I've neither. She made me wretched with what she told me, and I forgot to keep the letter or to ask for a receipt."

"Dost thou think I'll believe that story? Thee a Lon'oner, an' a woman of business. Tell that in t'stable an' t'horses would kick thee brains out. It won't do for me. I mun hev my note."

"Indeed, sir, I tell you the truth. If you will not believe me, do as you think fit. I am weary of life. My heart's nearly broken." She wept aloud. Bentley was moved. He was satisfied that his sister had obtained the note, and that to carry the matter further with Julia would be cruel. Still he scarcely knew what to say. He was freed from the dilemma by Julia, who said, "Mr. Bentley, your sister—for she must have been your sister—told me that my sister, Susan, had been led off by your nephew, and had come up to town with him. Is it so? Tell me where she is, that I may go to her, and I care not what you do to me."

Bentley turned away from her, shrugged his shoulders, and shook his head, as if he had a wager to outnod a mandarin. "That's too bad o' Nance," muttered he. "She's war nor me now. Women al'ays are." Then, facing Julia, with a chuckling laugh, which sounded to her like the rejoicing of a fiend, said: "Whoever said that said a lie. Harry is a big scamp, and a disgrace to any decent family, an' I hev done wi' him, at least when I've fun' him, an' he has come to Lon'on about Susan; but he cam by himsel', for she stopped at our house all night, an' she'll be here to-day."

Julia's heart and looks thanked him, and not her voice. Her great tribulation was passed. All else was trifling compared with this unutterable grief. Christmas *would* bring her sister—her only joy—who would return to her as innocent, as good, and as love-worthy as ever. She cared for no danger, no difficulty, now.

At this moment a dapper-looking man, with an air of importance, entered the shop, and when he saw Bentley, said, in a polite voice—which, however, scarcely disguised his contempt—"I beg pardon. I hope you will be prepared for me to-night," and then withdrew, without waiting for a reply.

"Who's that cockney fellow?" asked Bentley.

Julia replied, "My next neighbour and landlord. He wants his rent, as he's about to leave."

"Humph!" growled Bentley, and his glance again hopped all round the shop, now on the top shelves, and then step by step down to the floor; up again with a merry chuckle, and fluttering round the window, flew out of the door with a loud laugh.

Julia was at a loss to understand what he meant to do; and, full of perturbation, waited his pleasure.

"I've no objection," said he, seeing her troubled look, "to gi'e a bit of time to mak' up t'money, an' I'll call on thee to-night at home when Susan comes, an' we'll talk it over. Cheer up, my lass, I shan't hurt thee."

He darted out, and Julia saw him for a considerable time afterwards walking backwards and forwards in front of her shop and the adjoining one, examining them as intently as if counting the bricks, or expecting a sudden conflagration, and heard his bursts of laughter ring out as some merry thought seemed to strike him.

There was no doubt about it. He *was* merry. He *was* thoroughly happy; and these were his cogitations and exclamations as he walked up and down: "Thou'rt a soft-liver'd fool, Sam. But she took it so badly. Nance shouldn't hev said Susan had gone wi' Harry. Confound his stupidity, I'll baste him when I catch him. A likely shop, but a snivellin' rogue. I'll get that chap i' t'city to tackle him. She'd do, then. By George, I'll finish it off. Poor lass, I thought I should hev split 'bout Susan. If she'd nobbut known she wor all the time at t'Circus gettin' donned out —wi' Dame Womersley—what an old cat that is —whatever mad' me bring her—aye, an' mak' her come, I can't tell, an' she will hev that Susan's one o' t'lost, now when she's just fund." He finished with a regular peal of laughter, hailed a cab, and went Citywards.

To return to Miss Bentley. When she called in Oxford Street, she left, a few doors below Julia's shop, the cab which had brought her from the railway station, and which was loaded inside and out with hampers; and on her return from seeing Julia, and obtaining possession of the coveted note, she drove to the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road, to the address given by Susan, as that of Julia's lodgings.

On inquiring for them, she was shown into a small dingy room. "I'm come to stop wi' her," said she to the surprised and open-mouthed landlady, "so get my things in."

Miss Bentley at once took off her bonnet, shawl, and wrappers, and, looking round, saw much that to her was disgraceful and unendurable. She ran the nail of her finger along the rim of the panelling, and brought it out covered with dust, and then said to the landlady, in a sharp voice, "Don't ye call that shameful? I've no patience wi' muck in-doors. Get some boilin' water an' soap an' brushes, an' see if ye can find somebody that knows how to clean. Do ye hear? Don't stand gapin' there, but look sharp; it isn't fit for Christians."

The woman hurried off, and on her return found Miss Bentley with her dress rolled up, her sleeves tucked up, the carpet rolled together, and the little furniture huddled in the middle of the room.

"Tak' 'em all away," said Miss Bentley, sweeping her hand round, "an' mak' up som'at like a fire."

Marvelling what wild creature had taken possession of her house, the landlady obeyed in silence, and Miss Bentley was soon busy with practically instructing two charwomen in the art of cleaning down. She was occupied with this when Henry, in accordance with the instructions left for him by his aunt, came in. She ran to him, and shaking a wet brush in his face, and plenteously bedewing him with its contents, said, "Oh, Harry, Harry, it wor foolish an' wicked on thee to mind Sam's short temper, when he's done so much for thee. It would hev broken his heart

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if it hadn't been for Susan, who's a relation, we find. He's mighty savage yet, but he'll forgi'e thee if thou promise to gi'e her up an' come back."

"Aunt, I can't give her up."

"Well, well, lad, but thou mun, for Sam says he'll hev nought to do wi' neither on ye if thou don't, an' he al'ays keeps his word when he shouldn't. But thou shall see her again. She'll be here to-night, an' I mun hev t'place tidied up a bit. It's a sad hole. Oh dear, I wonder how folk can live at all in Lun'on. We mun hev some evergreens, an' mak' it look some'at like home." She then gave him directions to get what she wanted, and continued: "I shall pay Sam out for his deceit. I've got his fifty-pund note, and thou mun get it changed. It's stopped, an' so thou mun go to t'agent, an' then get what I've tell'd thee, an' bring me t'change, for I mean to spend it all. He shan't see a penny on't; an' there's chairs, an' tables, an' spoons, an' everything to get;—t' poor lass has nought at all, an' look here," continued she, taking some bits of card from her pocket, "I've fun these."

Henry looked at them, and then said, "What are they?"

"Thou may well say that, lad; we know nought about them at our house; but she'll been forced to part wi' all her sheets an' linen an' good things. I mun get them all back."

Henry hastened away, delighted with his errand, and with the prospect of seeing Susan, and as to the rest, in imitation of his uncle, whistling down all thoughts of trouble.

Miss Bentley, with great bustling and exercise of voice and hands, at length got her staff into working order. She had at first a wild notion of having the room re-papered, but was obliged to give it up for want of time, and then called the landlady to inquire for additional rooms. She found there were two which she might have, but the landlady was sulky, and showed signs of rebellion. This rather gratified Miss Bentley, who, however, took no notice of it, but gave directions for her hampers to be carried into one of the empty rooms, and proceeded to unpack them. As they were emptied, the astonishment of the landlady grew beyond bounds. There seemed to be no end to the stores of good things which were produced from them—a huge ham, a fat goose, hares, game pies, mince tarts, loaves of spiced bread, unboiled plum puddings, a huge piece of beef, cakes, and bottles—a prodigality of edible wealth. Last came a large can of milk and a pot of butter. "Good honest milk," said Miss Bentley, "such as ye never see here;" and then, observing the landlady's two children, sallow-faced but bright-eyed, who had crept up to the half-opened door, and were looking longingly at the good things scattered around, she continued, "Poor things, it would be a treat for them," and pouring out a large jug full, she passed it to them, then casting her eyes around till they fell on a pile of mince pies, she cried to the children, "Hold out your brats, for some'at good." The children stared at her, but did not stir.

"Drat 'em," said she, "they don't even understand plain English—what helpless things Lun'oners are!" and suiting her action to her words, she took up their pinafores and filled them with pies, and then muttered, "They'll mak' 'em poorly, they're too good for 'em, but it 'ill be more like Christmas." She then made her selection of viands for the Christmas dinner, for which she set apart the huge piece of beef, the goose, a hare, game pies and puddings.

When Henry returned, he had a cab laden with holly, laurel, larch, and ivy, and a large "Yule log," tied on the top. Nearly an hour passed whilst he and his aunt transformed the dull room into a bright verdant arbour, full of "Christmas" in every corner and on every side. He was then dismissed with positive injunctions not to return until nine o'clock, and Miss Bentley then went out to make her purchases of furniture and other articles, and to enjoy the spending of "Sam's fifty-pund note."

Meanwhile the day passed, and at last evening came, when Julia closed her shop, and walked homewards with Miss Marks, to whom she hastily communicated the day's adventures. Their talk ran almost entirely on Susan, but Julia's thoughts were mixed. She could not but fear that she was liable for the note, and her inability to pay her rent troubled her. Both chattered pleasantly together until they reached the house. They were surprised by the littering of green leaves and of straw which lay around the door, and by seeing a knot of excited children in front of the window of Julia's room. Looking up, they were astonished to see a strong blaze of light shining through bright red curtains "where no curtains used to be."

"We can't have made a mistake," said Julia; "what can it mean?"

Miss Manks could not even venture on an explanation, and they hurried into the house. When they opened the room door, they started back in astonishment. "Oh, how beautiful," cried Miss Manks. There was a bright cheerful fire, which filled the grate, on it a log of wood, spluttering, cracking, and hissing, and sending long tongues of flame and coruscations of fire up the chimney, and glittering and flickering on the green boughs, blushing among the holly berries, casting a rosy glow on the snow-white cloth which covered the table, in the middle of the room, and glancing and sparkling on the shining cups, glittering spoons and knives, that were interspersed amongst the many dishes of meats, cakes, and pies. By the fire sat a stranger, who rose as they entered, went to Julia, flung her arms around her neck, and then Julia saw it was Mr. Bentley's sister who hugged her, kissed her, and told her that they were cousins, and bid her sit down and be happy. The words sounded in her ears, but the meaning scarcely reached her brain. She was bewildered. She could not speak for the throbbing, the dancing of her heart. Again the kind voice spoke to her, the loving hands were busy unwrapping her from her outdoor coverings. "Aye, lass," it said, "thou'rt my own cousin. We fun' thee out thro' Susan, and we fun' Susan thro' Sam's fifty-pund note, and we've come to bring her home—if anybody can hev a home in Lon'on, an' to fetch our lad back, an' to keep Christmas together, as we

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did when thy mother was a child. That's right, lass, cry on, it'ill do thy heart good, an' then thou can tak' a cup o' tea till supper's ready."

"Where is Susan?" was Julia's sole inquiry, as it was her only thought.

"She'll be here soon, wi' Sam. But didn't Sam storm when he fun his fifty-pund wor gone? Never heed him, I've served him out, a mean, deceitful beggar, as he al'ays wor."

A loud knock at the door, the cheerful voice of Bentley, the pattering of lighter feet, and then, he, Mrs. Womersley, and Susan, were in the room. Susan ran to her sister, and those were tears of joy which then fell on each other's cheeks in their close and sisterly embrace.

When their emotion had subsided a little, Mrs. Womersley and Miss Manks were severally and duly introduced, and they gathered round the fire—all except Miss Bentley, who was continually coming and going, as she superintended some important culinary process.

Another knock, and Henry entered. He looked doubtfully round, shrunk back as he observed his uncle, but brightened when he saw Susan.

"Come in, Harry," said his uncle, "I hevn't forgi'en thee, but we'll hev that out another time, we won't spoil Christmas Eve wi' that; but thou rascal," continued he, his irascibility getting the better of his resolution, "if ever thou plays that trick again, I'll be ——"

"No, no," came hastily in the clear, sweet voice of Susan, "you promised me you would not." The reproof checked him, and he said no more.

Henry could look at or notice no one and nothing but Susan. She was dressed in mourning, good in quality, correct in cut and fashion, and arranged with taste. She was no longer the factory girl, but apparently of a rank higher than his own. Her face was beaming, nay, sparkling with joy. She was lovelier than ever, but, alas! farther than ever from him. He sought to catch her eye—he could not. He spoke to her. She answered coldly, and evidently and intentionally avoided him. He grew sulky and taciturn. The mystic preparations of Miss Bentley were now complete. Basins of hot, smoking furmity stood round the table: in the middle was a ponderous cheese, flanked with loaves of spiced bread. "Come to," said she, in general invitation, "we'll keep Christmas right, Sam, as t' old folk did, in good Yorkshire fashion, tak' your furmity, cut the Christmas cake and cheese, and then for oysters, pies, lambs'-wool, grog, snap-apple, or what ye will. God bless all these things, both to our bodies an' souls, for I believe Christmasing is good for both, an' brings goodwill to us all."

In the midst of the glee which followed, and in which all joined except Susan and Henry, who grew more and more reserved and moody, another knock was heard. It announced Julia's landlord, who inquired not for her but for Mr. Bentley. When he came in, he appeared altogether surprised at the scene before him. "Hev ye the letter?" asked Sam. He produced one, which Bentley took and read, muttering to himself as he did so. It was from Bentley's city agent, who had, at his request, been down to Oxford-street to ascertain if the bearer was intending to leave, and if so, to form some estimate of his stock. It stated the approximate value, assuming the statement of quantities and quality to be correct, and concluded by saying that the bearer was obliged to leave, and discontinue business.

"Well, sir," said Sam, when he had finished reading, "I'm Yorkshire." The man bowed.

Sam continued, "An' of course I'm fond of a bargain, but in this case I can't treat mysel'—I've no time for't to-night. I see your stock, fixtures, goodwill (not worth a groat) an' all, is worth 'bout 2000*l.*, ta'en as it stands." The bearer of the letter and owner of the stock blandly remonstrated and expostulated—the value was considerably higher.

"Don't speak till you're asked," thundered Sam, highly displeased with the manner of his visitor. "It's worth that, an' not a penny more, an' that by instalments—one down, one at six, an' one at twelve months—discount the instalments at say seven an' a half, an' it's worth that, knock off all stock not accordin' to list, an' I'll tak' it.

The owner of the stock hesitated. Sam's temper had been warmed by his potations during the day, and as he expressed it, he "was not going to stand any nonsense," so turning fiercely round, he said, "It's a bargain, or it isn't—ye needn't stay—ye see we're busy—a small family party. If you'll tak' it, go to t' city, and ye'll get your brass, and tell him to knock that trumpery partition down." A jerk of the head towards the door and a nod dismissed him.

Julia was wondering what Bentley was intending to do, when he suddenly jumped up, jerked his head as though he intended it to follow the stockowner, and with his eyes twinkling with fun, said to her, "I hate poor relations, an' I've gotten one in thee. I can't abide them. They're a disgrace both ways, so I'm determined to be rid on 'em. I don't mean to gie thee a penny, but I'll lend thee enough for t' new shop, at five per cent., good security on all there is—so fill my glass and say nought about it. I hate thanks wor' nor poor relations."

Julia's heart was full. Miss Manks looked upon Bentley as a prodigy of benevolence. Julia spoke of the greatness of her obligation. Sam stopped her. "It's nobbut a flea-bite. It's nought at all, but if thou wants to tak' a weight off thy mind 'bout it thou mun tak' Dame Womersley here, for as she's thy aunt, she'll be turning up a poor relation some day, an' she'll keep house for thee, an' keep t'men away, except they be o' t'raight Chosen lot: an' thou can tak' that round-faced lass besides thee into t'shop to help thee—nobbut don't say that I've done it to do thee good, for I ain't; it's 'cause I don't like to hev a poor relation."

Julia would not be gainsayed, but would express her thanks, when Miss Bentley interrupted her by saying to Bentley, "Thou thinks thou's done a fine trick, but I tell thee thou hesn't got thy fifty-pund, an' what's more—it's gone. I've spent it all but three or four pund, an' I've bought all these things; an', Julia, they're my Christmas-box to thee, an' I hope thou'll never tak' thy things thou knows where. I've fetched 'em out, though I wor raight shamed to go into a pledge

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shop. Thou mun hev been in a sore way. Here's t' odd change."

She gave to Julia the balance of the money. Julia ran to her and kissed her heartily, and then turning the money over in her hand, looked at Miss Manks. Miss Bentley saw her look, and whispered to her, "If thou likes. It's raight to mak' her share good fortune as well as bad." Julia joyfully threw her arms round Miss Manks, saying, "Jane, here's my present for you." And then turning to Bentley, said, "You must let me give you something in return, and accept the shirts which everybody forgot to pay for, and you must let your cousin Julia be the only one who can say that her rich cousin did not pay his debts, for ye owe me for the buttons yet."

Miss Bentley spoke out before her brother could reply, and said to him, "Sam, here's another lass here, poor Susan; as I tell'd thee, she's no better nor she should be—it would be a shame if she wor—but she's a good an' a bonnie lass, and she's a poor relation too—what on her?"

Sam quickly replied, "I've said my say 'bout her. She took my lad fro' me, an' wi' her I've nought to do."

Mrs. Womersley had long been itching to interfere, and she now cried out, "Sam Bentley, there's nought so stupid as a man that's said his say, he's wor' nor a dumb beast. I tell thee it wor thy lad's fault; he took her character away, an' took her through me, an' if she be one of the Lost, more reason to gi'e her good things i' this world, else it wouldn't be fair; an' so it's thy duty to mak' him mak' amends."

Sam hastily interrupted her by saying, "I've made my mind up, an' so less ye say the sooner ye'll hev done, an' I'm not goin' to talk wi' Dame Womersley on Christmas Eve 'bout what's my duty or isn't my duty. I'm goin' to enjoy mysel', an' hope she'll do the same."

Mrs. Womersley had no longer any doubt as to the ultimate destination of Sam Bentley; and, drawing herself up, folded her arms on her breast, and maintained a dignified silence.

In the awkward quiet which succeeded this outbreak, the sudden clang and crash of the church bells, as they heralded the fast-approaching midnight, when they would ring in the returning Christmas, sounded thro' the room. They listened to it in silence. Unnoticed, Susan left the room. Sam pushed back the curtains, and threw open the window "for a sniff of fresh air." The night had become sharp and frosty. Silently, but fastly, the snow was falling, casting its white coverings on the housetops, and on the yet busy streets. As Julia looked upon it, it symbolled to her the burying of all her woes and griefs, and the spreading of a beautiful veil over all the things which had annoyed and troubled her in her struggles for a livelihood. As Susan watched the falling snow, she felt the cold fear, the vacant dread fall, as snow upon her breast, and to her it imaged the death and desolation of her dearest hopes, her fondest affection. To Sam it was a familiar picture, recalling many, many years of toil and of enjoyment. Then came the crash of sound which spoke the midnight hour. Christmas had begun. Miss Bentley immediately put out the Yule candles, to be relit to light in the New Year. Her brother turned to her, kissed her affectionately, saying in a voice expressive of manly emotion, "Nance, lass, we never missed this, on this night, sin' we were bairns together. Happy Christmas to thee, an' to all. Harry, my lad, shake hands; I mun forgi'e thee, as it's Christmas day."

A tap at the door, and an inquiry, "Who'll open for Christmas?" * Mrs. Womersley was about to open the door, but Miss Bentley pushed her aside, saying, "That's my job, not thine, in this house," and opened the door. Without it stood Susan, her shawl over her head, in factory fashion, and the snow flakes thickly hanging round it, as when she first stood at Bentley's door. "I've let Christmas in for you," said she, with a faint smile, "and may it be a merry one, and bring you all a happy New Year."

They sat down by the fire, lighted only by the glowing log.

Bentley bid Julia and Susan come and sit on either side of him, and then spoke thus: "It's five-an'-thirty years this day—mind it's Christmas Day now—sin' your mother wor married. I wor there, an' I know we were merry, as lads could be. I rattled two penny bits in my pocket that day, an' I got a drop—twa or three drops—too much, an' I lost my pennies, an' I said I'd never get drunk again, an' I never hev; but I think that I shall treat my resolution to-night. I then hed 'bout twelve shillin' a week, an' now, putting one year wi' another, an' samming 'em all up, an' dividin' 'em all equal, I mun hev put away 'boon ten thousand pound every year. It's easy makin' brass when ye once begin——"

"Raight, Sam," interrupted Mrs. Womersley; "it's same as dirt, so long as ye don't care about being clean, an' run in t'muck, it'll keep gatherin' on ye: but go on."

"An' now what I'm going to say is this, that I mad' up my mind I'd never divide my brass; it's my own to do as I like, an' I'll hev one, an' I'd give it all to that one, an' that wor Harry, but he's left me; but if he like to come back, an' gie up t'lass that took him away, he shall still hev it all. What does he say?"

Before Henry could speak, Susan said to him, "Henry, go back; forget me and go home."

Henry's face worked nervously, and his voice failed him at first. He came to his uncle, put his hand on his shoulder, and said, "Uncle, I am glad you forgive me, but I won't deceive you again. I cannot promise to give up my first, my only love, so keep your money—keep it, only don't forget me or condemn me."

Sam jerked up in the old fashion, nodded to Henry, saying, "That's honest, Harry; thou mun go an' work for thy livin' now;" and then turning to Susan, he continued, "Now, Susan, as he won't hev nearly a hundred thousand pounds, wilt thou? It all goes in a lump, an' it an' thy face may mak' a duchess on thee some day. Wilt thou hev it, and promise to hev nought to do wi' Harry?"

Her voice was low but distinct, as she replied,

* In Yorkshire it is considered an important matter, as affects the new year, who first enters on Christmas morning, and the door kept closed until an acceptable person comes.

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"No, I could not promise;" and then her face was hidden on her sister's lap, and her sobs alone broke the deep silence.

"Bravo! lass an' lad too," cried Sam, patting her on the head; "ye're of t'raight sort, but a couple of young fools, that don't know what brass is;" and then turning to Julia, said, "They think there's nobody else for it. With thou hev it, an' me wi' it. We could carry on bravely?"

Julia laughed loudly and merrily as she replied, "No! no husband for me. I'd rather make a fortune than have one given."

Sam roared with laughter. "A sensible lass! I've hopes of thee. Come here, Susan." She went and stood by him. He continued, "Thou mun let me tak' care on it while I live, but here, tak' it in a Christmas kiss." The hearty smack echoed through the room. "Now, what will thou do wi' it?"

"Henry," whispered she.

In a moment he was by her side, and his arm round her. She held up her face, saying, "Take it all back."

Sam danced up and down, slapped Henry on the back until he winced, poked him in the ribs, and cried, "A sweet kiss that; rather a heavyish Christmas box; nearly a plum, and a bonnie sweetheart into the bargain. Sit down, lad, and Nance, bring out t'wine. We'll hev bumpers round, an' drink to t'new couple. Wait a year or two, lad, till we mak' a lady on her, if brass'll do't, and then, by George! we *will* treat resolution."

A DAY'S DEER-STALKING WITH THE CHAMPION OF THE RIFLES.

How very beautiful is an autumn in the highlands of Scotland! The air is so light, the scenery so magnificent, the colouring of the hills so gorgeous; and then how enjoyable everything is—the pic-nic parties—the rides on the hill ponies—the boating—the fishing—where all, old and young, are determined to abandon all care, and to be thoroughly happy. But this season, I, for the first time, was admitted into that paradise of sportsmen, a Deer forest.

A lovely day in the beginning of September found Ross and myself slowly ascending the steep side of Craig Ryrie. We spoke little: deer-stalkers never speak much until the noble stag lies low. Having gained the ridge of the hill, we were proceeding towards the Corry where we expected to find deer, when we saw a perfectly fresh track of a stag, going in the direction of Corry Valagan. We retraced our steps, crossed to the opposite side of the glen, and after many unsuccessful searches with our glasses, at last spied the stag, lying in the west side of the Corry, close beside a burn which runs down from the top of the hill. This burn we took as our mark, as we should have to make a long round, and lose sight of the ground. We had a weary climb up the hill;

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sometimes we were completely buried in heather, which was so high as often almost to hide us from each other. Then there were old stumps of trees, over which we got several tumbles, hidden as they were by high brackens and young birches. At last we reached a sort of terrace, along which we walked till we came to the burn I mentioned, as being our mark for finding the stag.

Here we halted, and took a refreshing draught of wine and water, to steady our nerves. After receiving a little instruction from Ross as to what I should do and not do, for I was quite a novice in the art of deer-stalking, we proceeded cautiously down the dry bed of the burn, till we came to a bank from which we could command all the ground around. Ross peeped over it, gazing carefully till he caught sight of the tips of the stag's horns. He then drew his head slowly back (abrupt motion must be avoided when in sight of deer, as it attracts their attention), and in the lowest whisper informed me that the stag was not more than one hundred yards off, lying almost straight below us, but that he thought we might get a little nearer still by crawling, or rather sliding down, with a serpent-like motion, feet foremost, through the heather. This we did, and most cleverly was it executed, for the stag was full in our sight the whole time, and I was trembling with anxiety lest he should see me, as I managed the sliding in a much more awkward manner than my experienced friend. However, as I said, we accomplished it; a good deal to my surprise, I confess, though Ross seemed to take it as a matter of course. We were now hid by a little bush of birch, about seventy yards from the deer, and intending to wait till he should rise. However, he seemed in no way inclined to oblige us in that respect, so after waiting an hour in almost one position in a swamp, I got completely wet and tired, and made signs to Ross to fire. He whispered to me to shoot the stag through the backbone. This however I declined doing, as I had not sufficient confidence in myself to attempt such a difficult shot, and implored him to take the shot. He would rather have waited till the stag rose, but to please me, he raised his rifle to his shoulder, and the next moment would have seen the stag rolling over and down the hill, *but* somehow, while lying in the wet moss, the water had touched the nipple of his rifle, and snap went the cap, but the powder in the nipple going off like a squib at last ignited the charge in the barrel, and he having still, with great presence of mind, kept his aim as well as the circumstances would admit of, when the shot went off, instead of the ball going towards the moon, as it generally does in similar cases, it struck the stag within two inches of the backbone, but as we were so immediately above him, it merely cut the skin. The stag at once bolted up, and galloped down hill as hard as he could go. Ross's second barrel missed fire. I had my single Purdey, and forgetting wet and fatigue, followed the stag; for not having seen us, he, after galloping down hill a short distance, turned and trotted quietly along the side of the hill. I had to go my best pace keeping above him, and out of his sight. After going in this way some distance, he disappeared, and I thought my chance of getting a shot quite hopeless, when suddenly I caught sight of him trotting down hill among some very rough broken ground. He was about a hundred and fifty yards off. I whistled, and he stopped for a moment, to ascertain from whence the sound came. I instantly raised my rifle, took a steady aim, and fired; the shot was answered by the welcome *thud* of the ball as it struck the deer. He staggered down the hill a short way, and then stopped behind a hillock. I determined to make sure of him if possible, so quickly loaded, fired, and shot him through the heart. He fell instantly, and proved to be a very large stag, certainly twenty stone weight, and with a very fair pair of antlers.

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LAST WEEK.

THE LAST WEEK of LAST YEAR is at an end, and yet another bead has slipped through the fingers of Time. As far as this nation is concerned, the year 1860 has not been marked by any very noteworthy events; and happily so, for these are generally calamities. The notches which the historian cuts on his tally-sticks mean the Great Fire, the Great Panic, the Great Frost, the Great Plague, the Great War. His skill fails him when he is called upon to describe a period of peace and prosperity. Last year there has been no Indian mutiny, no foreign war worthy of the name, no domestic agitation, no scourge of sickness; no Crimea, no Reform riot, no Cawnpore, no cholera. As we look back to the chronicles of the weeks in which the pulsations of English life are recorded, it would seem as though the year 1860 might most aptly be described as the year of rain. The clouds were in our debt—indeed they were some five years in arrear, and as they were honest clouds, and not Directors of Joint-Stock concerns, they have met their liabilities to the last shower. Oh! that Colonel Waugh, and the pragmatic gentlemen who preside over banking concerns in Glasgow and Aberdeen, would take a lesson from these conscientious vapours, and descend in the form of refreshing Dividends upon the parched hearts of their shareholders! There was a time, however, during the last year, when the rain had well-nigh drowned our crops—the hay crop in particular was in imminent danger. In various parts of the country the younglings of the flocks perished in great numbers, and we were looking forward to the occurrence of a national calamity such as would have "adorned the pages" of the future historian. The sun peeped out at this critical moment, and the hearts of our farmers and our photographers were glad. Still, even as it is, the price of forage and fodder stands at a very inconvenient height. Corn, too, is sold at rates which might have given occasion to intestine broils in this country, when cold Julys and watery Augusts voted with the majority in the House of Commons. Human fatuity has ceased, in this country at least, to be an element in short crops. A few more words about the weather. Our meteorologists are in a state of astonishment at the intensity of the cold towards the conclusion of last year.

Mr. E. J. Lowe wrote on Christmas Day to the Editor of the "Times," and forwarded to him the results of his observations. It appeared that on the previous day, December 24th, there was the most extraordinary cold ever known in England. On the morning of that day the temperature at four feet above the ground was 8 degrees below zero of Fahrenheit; and on the grass, 13·8 degrees below zero, or 45·8 of frost. The writer adds that the Trent was full of ice, and in a few hours would be fast frozen over. He mentions, as a whimsical illustration of the intensity of the frost, that he had just seen a horse passing with icicles at his nose three inches in length, and as thick as three fingers. LAST WEEK the Thames was frozen as we have not seen it since the terrible winter of 1854-55. On Christmas morning there were floating crystals in the air. It stands on record that, during the retreat from Moscow, crystals such as these added severely to the sufferings of the struggling, perishing soldiers as they staggered gloomily onwards in the direction of their French homes which they were never to see again. Sir Robert Wilson makes very particular mention of this fact.

This is the season at which every one amongst us who has fire and candle, food, shelter, and clothing, should give a thought—and more than one—to the sufferings of the Poor. Is it not astonishing that, although by the law of England means are provided for affording shelter, and a certain rough sustenance to wholly destitute persons, and although private charity has also contributed so largely, and to so many institutions for the relief of suffering humanity, the poor of London have suffered such extremities of misery LAST WEEK? Logic and sentiment, political economy, and a far diviner science have equally broken down; and the sufferings of the poor in London have been extreme. In many of the Unions the Workhouse test indiscriminately applied is more for the purpose of checking solicitation, than for the detection of imposture. "Come into the House, or starve!" The wretched creatures are so blind to the political necessities of the case, and so dogged in their misery, that they take the "Relieving Officers" at their word,—retire to their garrets or cellars, throw a ragged rug over their children who lie shivering on a heap of shavings, and in innumerable instances suffer everything short of death—in some cases death itself—rather than enter 'the House.'

These facts are perfectly well known to those who have inquired into the true history of the back-lanes and blind-alleys of London. Are we therefore to give up the principle of the Poor Law, and to return to a system which would in the course of a few years have reduced the nation to beggary? Surely not. But, on the other hand, there are exceptional cases, in which great severity of weather is combined with great depression in particular trades, in which the sternness of the principle might be relaxed with advantage, until the pinch is passed. The consequence of our consistency is that in London persons of any degree of human feeling pay their poor rates twice over without any guarantee that the money disbursed for the second payment is distributed in a proper manner. Those memorable lists in the "Times," which record the donations to this or that Refuge or Home, are the rider to the Poor Law. The thing is of course in practice an impossibility, but can any one doubt for a moment that if the enormous sums contributed annually to the support of charitable institutions were lumped in with the sums raised under the Poor Law, and judiciously and honestly disbursed amongst the poor, we need never more feel a chill come over us as we sit by our cheerful firesides, and think of our poor fellow-countrymen who are cheerless and cold. The endeavour to carry out such a theory in practice would of course be a mere delusion. It is only suggested to illustrate the working of the Poor Law when too sternly carried out. It may be added that if we could succeed in breaking down that feeling of self-respect and independence which induces the poor to keep out

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of the House at all hazards, the advantage would be a very questionable one in a national point of view.

What does become of those enormous sums which are annually contributed to charitable institutions? It is not too much to say that a very uneasy feeling is growing up on this subject;—with the exception, perhaps, of the cases of our great hospitals. Where the wisdom of parliament and the charity of individuals has made such ample provision for the poor and destitute of this metropolis, it is too bad that our feelings should be so constantly harrowed up by tales of distress; and still more by the consciousness that all we hear represents but a portion of the misery actually existing during seasons such as the present. He would do the country good service who would look carefully into the matter, and tell us how the expenditure of these charities is directed, controlled, and checked. Meanwhile, as above all things it is desirable to avoid vain declamation, and the idle cant of philanthropy, the best recommendation we can give to our readers is to be upon the watch for the misery which may fairly come under their notice, and to relieve it as best they may. He would not have spent his Christmas ill who had enabled two or three poor families to tide it over the starving time until employment is again forthcoming. It is much to be feared that the sufferings of the London poor have formed a gloomy back-ground to the Christmas merriment of LAST WEEK.

The subject has been canvassed again and again by every British fire-side, but still we cannot pass over in absolute silence the Chinese intelligence which reached England in the last days of last year. Politically it is well enough. We may fairly hope to be rid for ever of those Chinese wars which seemed to be as completely a part of our institutions as November fogs, or a fight with the Kaffirs once every five years. The prestige of that old semi barbarian Court at Pekin is at an end. Henceforward the Emperor of China and his Privy Council are to us much the same as the former King of Oude, or the actual Sovereign of Nepaul. We are of a higher race, and of a higher civilisation, and the proof of the assertion is to be found in the results of the collision between China and Europe. The sacrifice of thousands of lives has been the consequence of our deference to the susceptibilities of our sentiment-mongers. Let us ask from the Chinese, and take from the Chinese, only what is just, and let us weigh this by an European, not by a Chinese measure of justice. We do not want their territory—we do not want to be their masters, as a planter of South Carolina is the master of his slaves—but we say that a section of the globe so important that it affords means of support to one-third of the human race, shall not be sealed up against the remaining two-thirds. The late Dr. Arnold was the first public writer of any note, who had the courage to blow to the four winds the old fallacy that a parcel of savages had the right to block out the civilised races of mankind from a fair and fertile island or continent, about which they were running naked and useless. Providence never intended that the fable of the Dog in the Manger should be the great parable for the instruction of the human race. It may be presumed that China—according to the cant phrase—is now opened, and it will be our own fault if it is ever closed again. The Chinese difficulty has turned out in practice to be even as one of those palaces inhabited by a wicked necromancer of which we read in Ariosto. It is apparently surrounded by moats and drawbridges—guarded by monstrous shapes which brandish the most terrific weapons, and by dragons which belch forth poisonous exhalations from their uncouth jaws. Who is to get in there? Nobody save the peerless knight who will not look behind him. Hundreds come and try the adventure, but they are not peerless knights, and they do look behind them, and are lost. At last a young straightforward gentleman in chain armour, who has only one idea in his head, and that one connected with a young lady who is a prisoner in the castle, puts his lance in rest, and charges full at dragons, giants, moats, portcullises, and all the necromantic arrangements, and hey, presto! they fade into empty air. Nothing remains but a beautiful damsel coyly eager to "crown the flame" of the enraptured young man. This has been just the history of our Chinese wars. We have been ever looking behind, when we should have ridden a course with single mind at the very stronghold of the Delusion. Let honour be given where honour is due. Where our statesmen and diplomatists failed, one private Englishman hit upon the true solution of the question, and in season and out of season hammered away at it, till he had fairly battered it into the minds of his countrymen.

The capture of Pekin is the practical illustration of Mr. Wingrove Cooke's Chinese letters to the "Times." *Sic vos non vobis* is an old motto where public affairs are in question. The goal is reached, but nobody now thinks of the man who was the first to point out the way. Would that the satisfaction had come to us without alloy! The thought of our murdered countrymen who are now sleeping their last sleep in the Russian cemetery at Pekin is so bitter that it even poisons our feeling of relief at being at last delivered from the old Chinese incubus. There must be something terribly true about such an emotion as this when it thrills throughout a nation. The murder at Hango Sound did more to embitter our feelings towards the Russians than the deaths of all our countrymen who fell in the open field and in honourable fight. It is so with this wretched Chinese story. Years must pass away before we think with common patience of these cruel, half-barbarous men who took the lives of our poor countrymen in so wanton and so stupid a way, after the infliction of torture which one shudders but to think of. The names of Anderson and De Norman, of Bowlby and Brabazon, will remain for years to come watchwords of hostility and irritation between ourselves and the Chinese. Meanwhile, some reparation has been exacted. The poor victims have been buried with military honours. The Chinese or Tartars have been compelled to attend at the ceremony as mourners—and amongst them ceremonies are more considered than in Europe. An indemnity of 100,000*l.* has been exacted for the families of the murdered gentlemen. The Emperor's palace has been sacked

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and destroyed, and some thousands of the Tartars or Chinese have been killed in fight. Never was there a more treacherous and foul murder—never has a murder been more severely expiated. It is to be hoped that when the Emperor's advisers see clearly the consequence of San-ko-lin-sin's crime sharp punishment will fall on the original offender. What more can be done now? We must store away this sad thought with our recollections of Hango and Cawnpore, and endeavour as well as we can not to confound the guilty with the innocent.

Last Week brought no solution of the Italian difficulty. The fleet of the French Emperor still blocks the Sardinians out of Gaëta. The troops of the French Emperor are still in occupation of Rome, and intervene between the desire for Italian unity and its fulfilment. Shrewd guesses are made at the true meaning of the riddle propounded by the Sphinx at Paris. Let the guessers beware; for the fate of all who have hitherto presented themselves, and have failed in finding out the true solution of the Napoleonic riddle, has not been very promising! All we know is, that for the time being it is not the will of the most powerful Sovereign on the continent of Europe that Italian unity should become a fact. Had the fleet and army of Sardinia—in other words, of Italy—been permitted to act in concert before Gaëta, that stronghold would long since have been reduced. The prolongation of the siege tells with terrible effect upon the future destinies of the Italian Peninsula. Time is given to the agents of the young Bourbon to organise insurrectionary movements throughout the various provinces upon the terra firma lately subjected to his rule. The military power of the North of Italy is exhausted in these operations in the South: what if fresh hostilities should break out between the Italians and the Austrians during the coming spring? There is no colourable pretext for the French occupation of Rome: for the interference of the French Emperor before Gaëta there is not the shadow of justification. It seems to be admitted as matter of notoriety that the partial realisation of Italian unity hitherto achieved has been most unacceptable to Louis Napoleon, and that Gaëta is the answer to the various acts of annexation. This may be: it is also possible that he shrinks from finding himself face to face with the Roman difficulty. As long as Gaëta is besieged—but not captured—any extreme decision upon the Roman question may be adjourned.

We probably give the French Emperor credit for more forecast than he deserves. One of his especial qualities—and surely a king of men could scarcely have a higher one—is his faculty of deferring action, or even significant speech, until opportunity is his own. Thus it was he acted when he was President; thus he acted when the Pope refused to crown him Emperor; thus he acted to the Czar Nicholas, who turned the cold shoulder upon him as an Imperial *parvenu;* thus he acted with regard to the Austrian Court, which shrunk from a close alliance with him. If we look at his antecedents, we must consider him as the most expert fisher in troubled waters of our time; and now he is in a position when he can keep the waters troubled, and wait the event. It is much to be feared that, during the coming spring, we may receive intelligence of events in Italy which may give us all sufficient cause for anxiety. This Gaëta business has an ugly look. Not only has the assistance afforded by the French Emperor to Francis II. given time to his partisans to organise resistance, but it has also enabled Mazzini and his party to obtain such a hold over Lower Italy as may seriously affect the character of the next elections. Already it is rumoured that Count Cavour meditates a temporary retirement from power under the convenient pretext of illness. Taking matters at the best, it seems likely that Louis Napoleon is resolved that the Italian nation shall not receive independence from other hands than his own.

But it is not only in the Old World that the ancient land-marks are tampered with. Already from the other side of the Atlantic we have received strange reports of such excitement in the United States, that a dissolution of the Union is spoken of as a possible—almost as a probable event. Italy is seeking for unity—the North Americans for a rupture of the band by which the various states are held together. The work of George Washington, and of the original founders of that great Northern Confederation of the American States, which was one of the greatest political and social experiments ever tried upon the surface of the planet, appears for the moment to be in shrewd danger. It is scarcely credible that the thunder-cloud which is just now hanging over the heads of our transatlantic brethren should not disappear without inflicting the threatened mischief. Both sides have so much to lose by separation—so much to gain by union—that they will surely find some compromise which may reconcile their minor and adverse interests. The bone of contention is this wretched, and ever-recurring question of slavery, and the immediate pretext for the dispute is the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the Union. Were the States separated to-morrow into a Northern and a Southern Confederation—the Northern Section would be to the Southern, even as the Canadas are at the present moment to the entire and undivided Confederation. What would become of the Fugitive Slave Law when the slaves might make good their escape into the Northern States, even as they do at the present moment, through a thousand dangers, across the British frontier? If the Southerners would set this matter to rights in the only manner which they judge to be in accordance with their interests, they could only do so by open war, and actual conquest of the Northern States—upon the supposition that the Union is dissolved. Men now in middle life are well aware what the invariable termination of the American tornadoes has been, after an infinite amount of threatening and bluster. Great Britain has had Boundary disputes, Oregon disputes, Fishery disputes, and Right of Search disputes with the United States; and although hostilities from time to time appeared to be imminent, common sense in the long-run has ever obtained the mastery in the United States. The only wish of Englishmen must be for the prosperity and happiness of the great Confederation.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XX.

LETTER FROM ARCHIBALD VERNON TO CHARLES HAWKESLEY.

"*Canonbury Square.*

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"I AM sure I do not know why we see so little of one another, except that having carefully examined the map, having discovered that between your new house and my Patmos, there is exactly distance enough for an agreeable and healthy walk, and having solemnly agreed with myself that duty and pleasure alike enjoined my coming to visit you at the earliest opportunity, I have not found that opportunity. With your merciless business habit, you will harshly demand what on earth I have to do that should prevent my putting on my hat any fine morning, and marching across to Maida Hill. This stern question I might find it difficult to answer—and yet not difficult, only you hate long letters, and I cannot write short ones. You will, I foresee, hand this over to Beatrice, with instructions to find out what her father wants, and tell you when you come out of that hermetically sealed study for the glass of sherry and biscuit that are to fortify you for another onslaught upon some less fortunate author, another act of the new comedy, another chapter of the forthcoming novel, another column of proof that some king of the earth ought to be promptly deposed. My dear multifarious son-in-law, I want you to be good enough to read this letter for yourself.

"Thank you much for the books. Indeed I ought to have thanked you long ago. I have not read them, but Beatrice's pretty paper-knife has been at work on them, and I propose to begin them one of these days. I hear you, sir, and procrastination is a long and sonorous word, and is also the thief of time. Never mind. Let me go on in my own way. I admire, but do not envy you regular men, who do everything at the proper time, and are always to be relied upon. I got my notions of literary labour before the new type of author came out, and I am now too old to change my habits. Perhaps, if I had been more of a man of business, I should have been dating to you from my own villa, and sending you this letter by my own servant, instead of writing from a boarding-house, and hoping that the maid will not omit to stick on a penny stamp when it shall please her

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to take my epistle round to the post-office. But if I am not a man of business, I have been made what I am by the discouragements of life, and by the oppression of people who resolutely set themselves to keep me down. Had my wife's aunts been less bigoted, and had they advanced a sum to get me out of my troubles, I might have been heard of more advantageously, for I own that I do not find that the men who make great successes in these days are my superiors in handicraft. I hear you again, sir, and egotism, though a shorter word than procrastination, has almost as classical a sound—

[At this point in the letter, Mr. Hawkesley looked up, and in answer to a curious glance from his wife, observed:

"Only autobiography at present, but he wishes me to read it all."

"Dear old man!" said Beatrice, "and so you shall."]

"The papers, Charles, are very full of interest—

["I wish he had to find subjects for leading articles," grunted the journalist.]

—and it is my opinion that a very important crisis is at hand. [Another grunt.] When we look at the condition of the Western World, it is impossible not to perceive that there is an upheaving among its populations, both in the northern and southern continent, which must ere long result in some remarkable events. If we turn to the East, and inquire—

["You are skipping, Charles; you are not reading it all."

"My dear child, am I to be kept from my desk to inquire into the Eastern question?"

"Why, you were writing about it yourself yesterday—you told me so."

"Nothing of the kind. I said the Great Eastern question."

"It's all the same. No, but do read it, dear, when he asks you."

"You really merge your conjugal in your filial duty, Mrs. Hawkesley. But let us see."]

—and inquire what will be the ultimate destiny of the interesting nations on the seaboard of the Mediterranean, I cannot but be struck with the utter indifference displayed by the world in general upon a topic of such magnitude. For my own part, I have quite made up my mind that the shores of the tideless sea will be the scenes of some very extraordinary events in the time that is coming, and I wish that you, who have the ear of the public, would write more strongly and urgently than you do. I observe with regret, that you and others are far too prone to accept existing things as if they were in themselves good; and that in place of denouncing much that you are convinced is evil, you are inclined to exhort people to make the best of things as they are. This policy is entirely erroneous, and there must be a general tempest-sweep throughout Europe before society can hope for regeneration.

["I am sure the dear old thing writes very beautifully," said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"Who's a denyin' on it, Betsey Prig?" returned her husband. "But one has heard all this before from him. It is a regular manifesto—a Vernon Gallery of contemporary history. What is he meditating?"]

"I have been thinking of writing to the managers of a literary institution in this neighbourhood, to inquire of them whether, in the event of my making up my mind to prepare some lectures on the existing state of Europe, they would be inclined to negotiate with me for their delivery.

["Thinking of writing to inquire whether if—come, that is worthy of Sir Robert Peel, deceased."

"Tell him so, dear, that will please him, I know. He used to speak highly of Sir Robert Peel. Was it not Sir Robert Peel who said every man had his price?"

"Sir Robert Walpole said something like it."

"O yes, it was Walpole. But he was a Prime Minister, I know."

"Quite right, my dear."

"If you laugh, I will box your ears. I am sure it was a very good guess."]

"If I decide upon writing, I shall ask you to give me your opinion upon the terms, and the best way of dealing with the subject, for I have not had much experience of such matters; and, indeed, if you would not mind taking the initiative, and writing in your own name to ascertain about it, and arrange, I should have nothing more to do except—

["Except to ask me to write the lectures."

"I am sure that he does not mean that. And if he does, you will just not do it, dear. You have a great deal too much work on your hands as it is," said Beatrice.

"Likely to have, while people spend unheard-of sums on bronzes," said Mr. Hawkesley, glancing at a little figure on the mantelpiece.

"You great story-teller!—it's worth five times what I gave for it, and the man said that Lord Corbally would jump at it."

"There is no Lord Corbally, so his gymnastics must be indefinitely postponed. But we won't re-open that question, the figure is lovely, and was very cheap, and I am delighted with it."

"Now, I will just change it to-morrow," said Beatrice.

"Pray don't, or I will buy another—be awfully cheated—get something you don't like—and refuse to say where I bought it. Listen to your father, if you please."]

"There is, however, no immediate hurry about this, and indeed it might not be altogether amiss to wait, and see what results from the negotiations which I find are likely to be set on foot about the Archipelago, and which I shall watch with very great interest. So we will let this subject stand over until I can see you on it, and explain my views more fully.

["So all the letter, thus far, was unnecessary."]

"I do not know, indeed, that I should have written to you to-day (for I have picked up a very curious tract, dated 1790, upon the French Revolution, and I am very anxious to finish it), but that I have received a letter which has caused me very great uneasiness.

["What is that, dear?" said Beatrice.

"Well, it cannot be much to alarm one, when he

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brings it in after the Mediterranean question and the French Revolution."

"But that is his way. It always was. He would talk about a dozen things before coming to something serious. It was not levity, but he always disliked to touch anything at all disagreeable."

"So do I," said Hawkesley, putting his arm round his wife's waist, and reading on.]

"Uneasiness. I had not heard for a long time from Laura, nor have I had any of Walter's scribble, which he is so fond of sending to grandpapa. But I did not think much of this, for I am not the best correspondent in the world, and I may not have answered their last despatches.

["That would not have prevented Laura from writing to him," said Beatrice.

"Of course not. His mentioning it is only another instance of what you were just saying,—his dislike to get to the facts."]

"I had fully intended to go over to Gurdon Terrace this week, and see after them all, but it has been very hot, and my light coat had gone to be mended, and one thing and another interfered. But last night I received a letter—

["Last night, and written at once. It must be something to have stirred him to such promptness," said Hawkesley.]

—which I had better enclose to you instead of recapitulating its contents.

["Where is it?" said Beatrice. "Let us read that at once, and hear his comments afterwards."

But there was no letter enclosed.

"Just like him," said his daughter. "Just exactly like him."]

"When you have read this, return it to me, with your own ideas as to what it means, or what should be done. As for the 'impending evil,' and the 'duty of watching over Laura's children,' the language is perfectly incomprehensible to me. You may, perhaps, make a better guess at its meaning. Has there been any epidemic about Brompton? I regret to say that I have not paid the attention that I ought to the interesting and valuable reports of the Registrar-General, but that functionary frequently makes allusions to diseases of a painful character, and the details grate upon my nerves. You may, very likely, be better informed than I am, as I know that you frequently write upon sanatory subjects. If anything of this kind is the case, I think that you should at once send or write to Laura, advising her to remove into some other neighbourhood. I could wish that she liked this district, as I am sure it is healthy, and she would be near me, which would be very convenient to me, but this I would not unduly press, though you might more properly urge that consideration.

["I'm sure I shan't advise her to go and bury herself at Islington," interjected Beatrice. "But I cannot think what he is talking about. How ridiculous to leave out the only important thing."

"I will send over for the letter he intended to enclose."

"Yes, do. Stop, I will go myself," said Beatrice. "You will not be going out? I will not stay there ten minutes. Is there anything else?"

"Not much. He hopes that we will attend to the matter directly, and let him hear soon."]

"I shall write to you again very soon, and with love to Beatrice, and kisses to the children;

"Always yours affectionately,

"ARCHIBALD VERNON."

"Beatrice," said Hawkesley, "go by all means, and do not lose any time in getting back."

His wife instantly detected a certain gravity in his tone.

"Charles. Why do you say that?"

"I will tell you. I do not think I am giving way to a mere fancy, or I would keep it to myself, but is it not odd that neither Arthur nor Laura sends us a line from the country?"

"That has crossed my mind. But I told you what Price said."

"Yes. But however interested they may be about the condition of their friend, and I cannot make out, after all, who it is that is so ill, one of them might have written. I wonder whether Price has heard."

"Send there, while I am gone to Canonbury."

"I have a good mind to walk over."

"Well, if you can spare the time, do; and tell the boys to come to-morrow."

"I cannot well spare the time, and yet I should like to know. It is so unlike Lygon not to send a line."

"Perhaps the lady is dead."

"Very likely, and we are fidgeting about nothing. But I confess that I shall be pleased to hear that all is right."

"But what *can* be wrong, dear?"

"I do not know. But the letter which your father meant to enclose has followed so closely upon some vague thoughts of mine—however, dear, put on your bonnet, and I will send for a cab. I will not go out until you return."

"I was only inclined to be angry with papa for his carelessness, but you have put that out of my head," said Beatrice. "You have not heard anything?" she said, earnestly.

"Would I have kept it from you, darling?"

When Mrs. Hawkesley reached Canonbury Square, she found Mr. Vernon comfortably reclined upon a sofa, reading the newspaper. Robed in his dressing-gown, and slippered, and with a handsome smoking-cap upon his head, the slight and refined looking old gentleman rose to salute her with a very kindly smile.

"You did not expect me, papa?"

"Indeed, my dear child, I did," he said, pleasantly.

"After what you sent, you mean, papa?"

"And after what I did not send."

"What is this letter, and how could you forget it, when it was so important, papa?" said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"I did not forget it, my love. I was about to enclose it, when it occurred to me that if I did not put it in, I should certainly have the pleasure of seeing you here as soon as possible, and so I kept it out."

"Leaving us in such a state of uncertainty. What is it? Where is it?"

"Impatient as ever, my dear. It is in my

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desk in my bed-room, for one has no private room here, and in the fine weather I write at my window, which gives me a view of the trees."

"Will you get it, or shall I run up?"

"I believe that the room is being arranged by the domestic—."

"What does that signify, dear? Please get it."

"I know you of old, my dear, and that to obey is the least trouble where you are concerned," said Mr. Vernon, leaving the room with another smile.

He returned in a few minutes, declaring himself unable to find the letter, at which announcement his daughter's impatience was manifested with little restraint.

"Not find it, papa—you cannot have half looked."

"Yes, dear, I have managed to mislay it. The fact is that we— I mean myself and two gentlemen who are staying here—got into an interesting discussion last night, and perhaps we grew too warm, at least they did, for I will never affect to be only half in earnest on subjects of political importance. We separated in some heat, and—"

"But what has a ridiculous political squabble to do with an important letter about Laura?" said Beatrice, irritated. "Never mind that; tell me who the letter was from, and what was in it."

"My dear Beatrice, I wish you would emulate your husband's calmness and patience."

"He was as angry as myself that you had left out the letter, and would have been more angry if he had supposed that you had done it on purpose. But what is it—you can tell me what was in it. Who was it from?"

"That, my dear, I certainly cannot tell you."

"Why not?"

"Because it is anonymous."

"Oh, an anonymous letter," said Beatrice; "that is a relief."

"I don't understand why, my dear—"

"Yes," said Beatrice, impetuously, "because any one who could send an anonymous letter is a creature whose words are not worth a moment's attention, except to find him out and punish him."

"I do not feel entirely with you, my dear," said Mr. Vernon, blandly; "I think such a view is common-place and even coarse. I can quite understand that a person may be desirous that a fact should be known to another person, and yet may not wish to be known as the informant. If, of course, he states falsehoods, he is an unworthy person, but in simply laying a truth before another, and yet remaining shrouded, he may only wish that the truth should be looked at, abstractedly, and without the colouring derived from the other's possible opinion of the writer."

"An anonymous letter-writer is a wretch," returned the prompt and unconvinced Mrs. Hawkesley; "and to think of such a one writing to you about Laura? What *did* he say, papa?"

"You beg the question of sex, my dear; but from my own impression of the letter, which I much regret to have mislaid in the way I was about to explain to you, I am inclined to think the writer was a lady."

"Not a lady, certainly. A woman, perhaps."

"Waiving that aristocratic distinction, my dear, I would say that the hand was very neat, and of the kind which is usually supposed to denote education."

"And the words?" asked Mrs. Hawkesley, compressing her lips, and filially trying not to be in a rage with the author of her being. "What were they?"

"I will not affect to quote them accurately, but the main point was what I mentioned in my letter. I was recommended to watch over Laura's children, as some danger—as a heavy evil—was impending over them."

"And that was all?"

"No. I was further advised to visit Gurdon Terrace, and endeavour to ascertain, if possible, where Mrs. Lygon had really gone, as the writer had very good reason to believe that there had been an endeavour to place everybody on the wrong scent—or something to that effect."

"I must have that letter, papa, directly, if I ransack the house from top to bottom with my own hands. How very wrong in you not to have sent it us."

"I do not know where else to look for it, my dear. And I may as well add," he said, with some firmness, "that if I could lay my hand upon it at this moment, I do not know that I should feel it my duty to give it you."

"I am sure you would. Charles would do his utmost to have the writer traced out."

"For that very reason, my dear, I am not clear that I should not be betraying the confidence of a person who had written to me with the best intentions."

"What, and accusing Laura of deceit!"

"I do not read any such charge, my dear. The allegation is that there is deceit somewhere. Were the accusation more specific, I do not know that I ought to hand over the writer to the unreasonable anger of others, even though they are members of my own family."

"I have no patience with such hair-splitting, papa."

"I am aware, my love, that patience is not exactly your forte, nor do you seem to have cultivated it much."

"How can you speak so coolly, when such a charge is made against Laura? She is all truthfulness, as you know. Do you mean to say that you in your heart believe that she is gone anywhere but where Arthur says she is? I never heard anything so wicked in all my life."

"I have no means of forming any opinion on the subject, my dear. I am very little consulted by my children as to what they do, and I cannot tell what Arthur's course in life may be. Perhaps he has got into difficulties."

"I am sure he has not," returned she, indignantly.

"As upright men as Mr. Lygon have done so," replied her father; "nor need you repel the suggestion with so much violence."

"You make me quite angry, papa, when you talk in that wild, fanciful way, at the same time imputing the worst things to the best people whom you know. You do not care what you say. Was it all a fancy that the letter hinted something

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about the neighbourhood being unwholesome, or an epidemic being about,—what was it you wrote?"

"No, there was a word in the note that put the idea into my head. I cannot positively say that there was anything to lead to a definite impression on the subject."

"It was only a wild guess of yours, then? But, papa, you must really have that note found, or I shall have to ask Charles to come over and convince you that he must have it. In Arthur's absence Charles is bound to see after his interests."

"I shall be very happy to see Hawkesley, my dear, and to argue with him on that or any other subject. In the meantime you must allow me to take my own view of what is right. If there is anything of truth in the letter, why not act upon the information, in any way that circumstances may dictate, without reference to the writer herself."

"You are actually defending the wretch, and making yourself a party to her accusation."

"No, my dear, I am only refusing to permit my natural feelings as a father to predominate over my sense of justice to a fellow-creature."

"Well, papa, you will hear what Charles thinks about it; but it is very unkind of you to place me in such a position. I have to go back to my husband, and tell him that my father takes side with a cowardly, anonymous letter-writer, and has more regard for this skulking creature than for the feelings of his own children."

There were tears in her eyes as she spoke, and the heart of the father began rapidly to soften. His theories seldom stood long in presence of the sorrow of those whom he loved.

"Nay, Beatrice, my dear, you are quite wrong, and you do me much injustice. I do not think you ought to avail yourself of my affection to induce me to act unfairly."

"It is not unfairly," said his daughter, seeing her advantage, and taking his hand. "And I am sure you would not make us all unhappy for the sake of a malicious stranger. Get me the letter, papa dear," she added, giving him a kiss.

"You are going to be so angry with me," said Mr. Vernon.

"Angry, papa dear? You know I am hasty and apt to say anything that comes to my tongue, but I never mean to be unkind. Forgive me if I spoke rudely, as I know I did." And she gave him another kiss.

It completed her victory, but the victory was not a very profitable one. Mr. Vernon began to look rather foolish, and he said in a sort of whisper,

"What if I cannot give it you?"

"I know you can,—I know you can find it if you like, dear."

"Well," said Mr. Vernon, "if I had it, I would give it you with all my heart; but the fact is, Beatrice, I knew that though my views were right, yours would conquer, and in the fear of that I—I burned the letter."

And he had done so. But may it be supposed that our readers have some idea whence the letter came?

Not until Mrs. Hawkesley had signified an affectionate forgiveness of his act was she allowed to depart, and though she could not help giving him what she described as a good scolding, the father is not unhappy who, in these days of liberty and equality, has never heard more unkind language from his child.

CHAPTER XXI.

AGAIN did Ernest Adair and the girl Henderson meet in the little room at the inn at Versailles. But this time the manner of the master was entirely altered. He neither threw himself upon a chair, nor had he recourse to his favourite cigarette, but the moment that Henderson entered the room, he signed to her to close the door; and, then, approaching her hastily, he addressed her almost with sternness.

"Now, say at once what you have to say. My time is precious." The girl's manner was as much changed as his own. Instead of employing the petulant, half-defiant tone in which she had resisted or resented his questions on the former occasions, Mary Henderson was as submissive and respectful as if he had been her lawful master, demanding from his own servant an account of her doings.

"Will you ask me anything, or shall I speak without?" she said, almost humbly.

"Both. Tell me your own story first, and then answer what I ask."

"I managed to hear a conversation between Madame and her sister."

"Only one?"

"It was impossible for me to hear more, and I do not think that they have had any more."

"Don't talk to me about impossibilities. The other thing is more to the purpose, and what makes you say that they have had one talk only?"

"Because Mrs. Lygon did not see her sister again until bed-time, and then Madame was not in the bed-room with her for more than two or three minutes."

"What! Not see her at dinner?"

"There were visitors at dinner, and Mrs. Lygon had a tray sent to her own room."

"Was she ill, or only anxious to avoid strangers?"

"I did not hear anything about her being ill. She ate her dinner, I know."

"Very right to notice that. I shall make you valuable in time. Mrs. Lygon evidently wishes not to be seen here. Well, now, go on. What was their conversation?"

"It was partly about yourself, Mr. Adair."

"Not improbable. Well. They spoke bitterly of me, abused me, called me fiend, as you did? Tell me. I can bear it."

"They said that you were ad man."

"Quite right. Go on."

"When they dropped into whispers I could not very well hear, because I was a good way off; but I had no difficulty in understanding that you have been making Madame give you a great deal of money, and that you want more."

"Come, I see that you are telling me the truth," said Adair. "That is an accurate report of an accurate statement."

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"Madame does not know how to get more money for you."

"Well," said Adair, listening intently.

"Mrs. Lygon has not got much."

"Go on, girl."

"But," said Henderson, "they agreed that the money must be raised in some way."

"Sensible and practical women."

"They mentioned various plans for raising it, but none of them seemed to suit, for reasons which I could not well make out. But there was one way which they seemed to agree would do if some things could be got at which they called—I did not know the name, and I wrote it down afterwards—"

"Good girl."

She took a scrap of paper from her pocket, and glancing at a pencilled word, said,

"Yes; do you know what *coupons* are?"

"Most certainly."

"Well then, they are to be got at, and as I made out, they are to be handed to somebody who will pay money for them. And this is to be given to you."

"With any conditions, did you hear?"

"Oh yes. You are to be asked to live in London."

"Unheard-of cruelty. You are sure of that?"

"Yes, I suppose—indeed, Madame said something about gambling, and I suppose that they want you to be out of the way of it."

"There being no gambling in London. That is very thoughtful and provident of the dear ladies."

"I do not think that it was out of any kindness to you, but because it is wished to put you out of the way of people who cheat you and send you to worry Madame."

"Did they say that?" said Adair, and a flush of anger for once showed itself on the pale features. He could bear all the abject humiliation of his position, all the self-contempt, even the taunts of such persons as Henderson and his other tools, but he was wretched at being described as a dupe of cleverer scoundrels. "They said I was cheated?"

"Yes," said the girl, with woman's quickness, perceiving that she had managed to sting him. "Mrs. Lygon laughed at the idea of your being any match for the Frenchmen, and said that it was hard that money, got with so much difficulty, should be lost clumsily."

"You are lying," said Ernest Adair, quickly.

"You had better listen for yourself, if you doubt me," replied Henderson, with a touch of her natural petulance. "I beg your pardon, but indeed I am telling you the very words."

"It may be so. It had better be so. Well, and in case I do not choose to live in London, what do they propose?"

"Nothing was said about that, and I suppose they think that you are in such a desperate condition that you must accept the money."

"Ah! I have impressed that pleasant belief on them, then? And who is to obtain these coupons?"

"Madame."

"And the other lady is to use them?"

"I think so."

Adair turned round upon her, and gazed in her face for some moments. Her eyes met his steadily for the first few seconds, and then she dropped them from before his fixed look, and said:

"I have angered you, and learned some of your secrets, but it was not my fault; you put me on the business."

"You have not angered me in the least, I assure you," was his reply. "On the contrary, you bring me very good news, and you shall not fail to have your reward when I receive mine. By the way, I suppose that we shall both have to wait some little time."

"Madame was urgent about making haste."

"And the other was not."

"She is so calm and reserved, I can hardly make her out."

"How did the conversation end?"

"Madame was to get the—the—things as soon as she could."

"How you forget the word, although you took the pains to write it down, which so fixes a thing in the memory. Are you sure that you have the right word?"

"Quite right, quite right."

"Look again."

"I know I am right."

"Look again, I say."

Somewhat more slowly than seemed natural, Henderson took the paper from her pocket, glanced at it again, and was about to replace it.

"Yes, I said so, coupons."

He snatched her wrist, and though her hand closed on the paper, he forced open her fingers and took the paper.

"How absurd you are," he said. "Where my interests are so much concerned, is it strange that I should desire to be rightly informed? Are you ashamed of my seeing your way of spelling a French word—and has not Silvain completed your education?"

He looked at the paper as he spoke.

"Yes, you were quite correct," he said, gently, "quite."

She rubbed her wrist, with an expression of pain, and the tears came to her eyes.

"What, was I rough? Nay, I cannot have hurt you. I should never forgive myself. There, there, don't be angry. You have done your mission admirably, and I repeat to you, you shall not lose your reward. Well, I need not detain you. I will send for you when I want you again. Take that napoleon, and buy a ribbon for the pretty wrist I have so ill treated. And do not expose me to the wrath of Monsieur Silvain."

He pressed the coin into her hand, and opening the door, rather urged her departure—she this time seemed inclined to linger.

When she had gone, he fastened the door, and examined the scrap of paper carefully.

"That is not the scrawl of a lady's-maid," he said.

Then from an inner pocket he took out two or three letters and compared their writing with that on the paper he had seized.

"Time has passed," he said, "and hands alter.

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But I believe that it is hers. And they are laying a trap. Henderson was to remember the word, and it was written down for her, before she was sent with the pretty story. What do they want me to believe? That Madame means to rob her husband's strong-box of some valuable documents in order to pay me? But, on the other hand, why should she not do it? The scheme would be a very sensible one. But that infernal scrap of paper; and why would not the girl give it me? Let me balance my convictions."

A business which the reader will gladly leave him to perform alone.

(To be continued.)

THE HEART OF VOLTAIRE, LIVING AND DEAD.

IT sometimes happens that after a man has lived out his life in tranquil obscurity, little noticed, little known, beyond the circle of his own family, friends and acquaintances, his taking his place in the tomb assigned him, after an easy and natural death has made it his fitting abode, so stirs the ashes of other men long dead, perhaps half-forgotten, that these last become for the moment resuscitated; their names are once more pronounced by a generation born since they were buried; men speak of them as they were spoken of when their bodies were yet freshly interred (though, it may be, with greatly modified views of their natures, merits, and characters); forgotten or unknown anecdotes concerning them are recalled, repeated and listened to with interest, and the phantom thus accidentally evoked, once more frets its little hour upon the stage, till some richer or more pressing interest rises, and allows it once more to glide, silently and unseen, into the tomb where it had passed so many years in oblivion.

Not long since, in France, expired the Marquis de Villette, the owner of considerable possessions in that country. A fanatic devotion to the French Bourbons seems to have been the only remarkable characteristic of this gentleman. The language of his letters to the remaining representatives of that doomed family, and of his correspondence concerning them, far more resembled that of an impassioned lover, or the enthusiastic devotion to a saint, than the words of the adherent, however faithful, of a family which, whether taken individually or collectively, appears, to common mortals, little calculated to inspire such entire devotion; and in his will, he desired that the last epistles he had received from the Comte de Chambord and his mother, with locks of their hair, should be enclosed in a flat gold box, and securely screwed to the ribs immediately over his heart.

So far, so good. France and her government had no objection to any amount of sentimental reverence offered by M. le Marquis de Villette at the shrine of his proscribed idols. In them he worshipped "an idea," and he who now sits on the throne of that nation has shown, too much, by his own august and ever-to-be-admired example, his respect for "an idea," and the lengths he will go to maintain it, for those in authority under him not to hold such motives in the highest consideration.

But when M. de Villette abandoned the ground of the ideal, and came to that of solid fact, represented by so many acres of field and forest, by so much gold, silver, and precious stones, the affair was placed on an entirely new footing.

M. de Villette being childless, and conceiving that he might not have very long to live, directed, by the will which contained the sentimental dispositions already alluded to, that the bulk of his property, with all the benefits therefrom accruing, should be placed in the possession of M. de Dreux-Brézé, bishop of Moulins.

Now as M. de Dreux-Brézé was known to entertain the same feeling, though in a somewhat modified form, for the representatives of the late dynasty, as M. de Villette, it was considered by those interested in the matter of the heritage that this nominal bequest to the bishop was a mere blind, and that the real heir who was to enjoy its benefits was the last male descendant of St. Louis.

Such a destination, at least, being declared by the collaterals, who would, in the ordinary course of events, have profited by the succession, and the bequeathing of landed property in France to a political exile being forbidden by the law of the land, a trial ensued in which all the eloquence of Maîtres Marie and Berryer was called into play.

Who should possess the domains, the forests, the châteaux, the biens meubles et immeubles of the deceased? Such was the question debated between the pleaders within the court; while without, a few, mostly literary men, or elderly men of studious habits, cultivated tastes, worshippers of the French demi-god, esprit, began to moot the (to them) far more interesting question concerning a piece of property descending from the preceding Marquis de Villette to his son, just deceased.

This possession was the Heart of Voltaire, preserved in a marble urn.

What had become of the relic? Who owned—who claimed it? inquired these men. What was the precise history of it? of its preservation, its vicissitudes? asked the men—not to say women—of the later generation, who had heard, more or less vaguely, of the existe[illegible] of such relic, but

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who, till their attention was thus directly called to it, had cared little to inquire further into the details concerning it.

Then came forward some few of the literati, and of the worshippers of the demi-god above alluded to, and from their notes and their souvenirs, and from the anecdotes handed down to them by previous chroniclers, or by the lips of those men and women of a former generation in whose footsteps they trod, they gave such details of the life and death of Voltaire, and of his Heart, living and dead, as for awhile to make the dry bones live again in men's minds, and place before the eyes of the children of the nineteenth century the image and presentment of the Philosopher of Ferney, as he appeared to their grandfathers in the eighteenth. From these and other sources, the present writer has gathered together some details that may not be without interest.

It is hardly likely that we English should regard Voltaire from the same point of view that the French do, even setting aside the grand point of his religious and moral theories. The quality that he possessed, perhaps beyond all other men, that of esprit, is a quality before which every Frenchman bows the knee, and he who possesses it in the largest measure, is, by an inevitable consequence, considered the first of men. In England, the thing that is *especially* meant by esprit (though the term is also used generally), is rare, and we have for it no synonym that I know of; neither of the words wit nor humour precisely embodying the idea. In Ireland it is much more frequently found, but certainly the country where the quality exists in the greatest perfection, though even there it is not largely disseminated, is France; and whosoever is richly gifted therewith may cover with it more sins than any amount of charity that could be bestowed on him.

With us it is otherwise. We are not deficient in our appreciation of esprit, when we find it; but we regard it as a secondary, not a primary quality; as a means rather than as an end; a man must have something besides esprit, and something higher than it, to command our reverence, admiration, and esteem.

A *persifleur* amuses us, but we have no notion of making him

Our pattern to live and to die,

whereas in France a first-rate *persifleur* is the perfection of a man of esprit.

Now Voltaire, being the Prince of Persifleurs, was in France considered a *great* man, a title which no Englishman would accord him.

He laughed at everything, except, indeed, at what was truly risible, in the career, pretensions, and tragi-comic ending of "la sublime Emilie," Marquise du Châtelet, and the tremendous parody between himself and St. Lambert that followed her death.

At seventeen, being already the friend of Ninon de Lenclos, and "très recherché," as we are told, "in this enchanted world of gaieties, songs, petits vers, and comédies de société," he composed, amid this atmosphere, so favourable to serious study and conscientious labour, his Œdipe. It was represented on the stage, and the young poet entered yet higher in the ranks of the great world in the following manner.

The Maréchale de Villars inquiring who was the young man who bore the train of the high priest, was informed that it was the poet himself, the author of the piece; she desired to see him, and he was brought to her box, from which period he became the constant guest of the Maréchal and Maréchale de Villars.

Mighty was the success of Œdipe. Sully, the Marquis de la Fare, the beaux-esprits, the bas-bleus, and the grand monde flocked thereto, and showered on the poet praises and attentions; the Prince de Conti wrote thereon a highly complimentary and extremely mediocre copy of verses. One of those who, in a spirit of intense admiration, relates to us the career of "le jeune Arouet," informs us that he desired to be at once Homer and Corneille, and in the same passage relates that as he composed la Henriade, "Il riait avec son poëme, aussi bien qu'avec sa tragédie," which promised well for the fulfilment of such an ambition.

We in England,—and, I am inclined to think, the poets of ancient Greece resembled us in this respect,—find it a little difficult to comprehend the notion of sitting down to write an epic poem and a Greek tragedy "en riant."

Be that as it may, it appears that there were times when Voltaire (he was eighteen when he commenced the Henriade), seemed to have had moments over it when he was not in a laughing humour, for it one day cost the president Hénault a fine pair of ruffles to rescue the MS. from the fire, where the author had flung it in a pet.

From thence triumph succeeded triumph. He wrote Brutus, Zaïre, l'Enfant prodigue, Mahomet, &c. This last work he dedicated to the Pope, Benedict XIV, who replied in a Latin letter to his "son" Voltaire.

Then came Mérope, in which the tears of Dumesnil aided powerfully to produce the success which Voltaire himself thus records:—"The seduction of the piece went so far, that the pit clamoured to see me. I was sought in the hiding-place into which I had crept (not, friend Voltaire, without having taken care, we must believe, that the niche in question should be known beforehand to the seekers!), and taken by force (!) to the box of the Maréchale de Villars, with whom was her daughter-in-law. The pit were wild: they shouted to the Duchesse de Villars to embrace me, and so violent was the outcry, that she was forced to yield, by order of her mother-in-law. Thus I was kissed publicly, like Alain Chartier by the Princess Margaret of Scotland; only he slept, and I was wide awake." I should think so, M. de Voltaire!

The fame of his genius having extended beyond the shores of France, Frederick II., later surnamed the Great, invited him to his court. Thither he went, with what result most of my readers are acquainted.

He amused himself, taking the bitter with the sweet, enjoying the latter, lightly glossing over the former, forgetting, and in that way pardoning, even the gravest indignities to which he was subjected; and after his arrest at Frankfort, by order

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of the Roi-Philosophe, he recommenced a friendly correspondence with the monarch, and occupied himself in the most good-natured manner imaginable in correcting his verses.

The fact is that Voltaire's natural bias of character found itself so completely at home in the age, country, and environments in which he lived, that it cannot be matter of surprise that, with such natural tendencies as his, they should become developed in the manner and to the extent they did.

He was born with an extraordinary amount of esprit; esprit of the bright, light, keen, mocking order; with little depth or breadth of view, much vanity, extraordinary expertness and adroitness, no reverence. He was especially easy-going, good-natured,—even generous and highly charitable on occasions;—not spiteful, notwithstanding his singular epigrammatic powers, amiable to those about him; a man easy to live with, always preferring to glide out of a quarrel, a difficulty, a danger, to running his head against it.

And such qualities were, among those with whom he lived, considered invaluable. That he had little faith in God or man; that his morals were of the laxest, that he only cared for truth inasmuch as it could be proved, and satisfactorily and willingly accepted as such by those people, and that its acceptance or assertion on his own part was not likely to lead him into trouble; that he had no earnestness, no devotion, no true heroism,—what was all this to men and women who laughed at such characteristics as proofs of weakness, folly, Quixotism? Is it likely, is it possible—that possessing such qualities as he did, and having them considered as the greatest and most precious a man could own, he would undervalue them, or seek to raise himself to a higher standard?—or that when his faults,—even his gravest sins, so far from being considered in that light, were such as were daily committed, tolerated, even applauded, in his own circle, he should be troubled with any remorseful sense of them, any idea of the necessity of reforming them?

What can be more significantly characteristic of the man and of the time than the fact that not long after the production of his epic, his great tragedies, his history of Charles XII., &c., we find him busily engaged, in company with Rameau, the musician, M. de la Popelinière, the fermier-général, and Madame de Pompadour, in composing, for the fêtes of the marriage of the Dauphin with the Infanta of Spain, a spectacle de cour, in which the decorations, the music and the ballet played the chief parts!

The Queen of France, Marie Leczinska, was so great an admirer of his talents that she admitted him to her intimacy, and gave him a pension:—what then? "He had the *happy chance*," writes one of his panegyrists, "to please her Majesty the Queen, and to please the favourite (Madame de Pompadour) at the same time." And through the same favourite he intrigued, might and main, to obtain from "Trajan," Louis XV (!) titles and honours, but was fain to content himself, *faute de mieux*, with the modest appointment of gentilhomme de la chambre to the king,—who turned his back upon him!

And while he wrote poems, tragedies, histories, epigrams and court entertainments, his hard shrewd head was busily and most successfully employed in making his fortune.

He speculated in the funds, traded with America, and for years was a victualling contractor for armies. At Ferney, "l'auberge de l'Europe," as he was pleased to call it, he received men and women of every sort of celebrity; he corresponded with kings, queens, princes, philosophers, with the Empress Catherine of Russia, and the Pope Benedict. An active life, truly, and one strangely occupied and organised.

The Du Châtelet episode filled up fifteen years of his life. Fifteen stormy years they were, yet borne with a fortitude worthy of a better cause.

Marvellous are those records of Voltaire's mode of life in connection with the "Sublime Emilie," —her perfectly trained, altogether accommodating husband, D'Alembert, St. Lambert! What scenes, when Urania came down from the stars, and shrieked and stormed, and brandished knives in the merest Xantippe fashion: the while this French eighteenth century Socrates bore all with, we cannot say, Christian resignation.

What journeyings, when it pleased the Marquise to change her quarters, in quest of other scenes, other excitements, other homage! What absurd and disgraceful humiliations he supported from this elderly, pretentious, gambling, shameless shrew and termagant! In what terms he records the last, and, as it afterwards proves, the fatal event of her life! All these details paint not merely the individuals immediately concerned, but the state of morals and manners then existing, in a way that goes far to explain the peculiarities of Voltaire's life, writings, and how it was that he and they held the place and exercised the sway they did. His grief for the loss of this wonderful woman is displayed in a manner no less characteristic of the times, when "taste," and "the rules," were held to be the sole conditions of poetry—

L'univers a perdu la sublime Emilie,
Elle aima les plaisirs, les arts, la vérité:
Les dieux, en lui donnant leur âme et leur génie,
N'avoient gardé pour eux que leur immortalité.

Strange, that the greatest persifleur, the keenest mocker, perhaps, of any age, should have been utterly blind to the long series of parodies, follies, vices, basenesses, and preposterous vanities that composed the existence of this god-gifted woman, whose loss not only he and his friends, but the whole universe, were to feel as a breavement.

With regard to Voltaire's attacks on the Christian religion, the subject is one far too weightily momentous to be entered on here. But this much we may say. In the first place, it was impossible for a man of Voltaire's character, turn of mind, mode of life, culture and surroundings, to have anything like an idea of the real spirit, foundation, and tendencies of Christianity; nor had he ever regarded the question in anything but a doctrinal and polemical point of view, and with that essentially French democrat principle of changing, destroying, treating with hatred or ridicule things that nought but an infinite feeling of love, reverence, and

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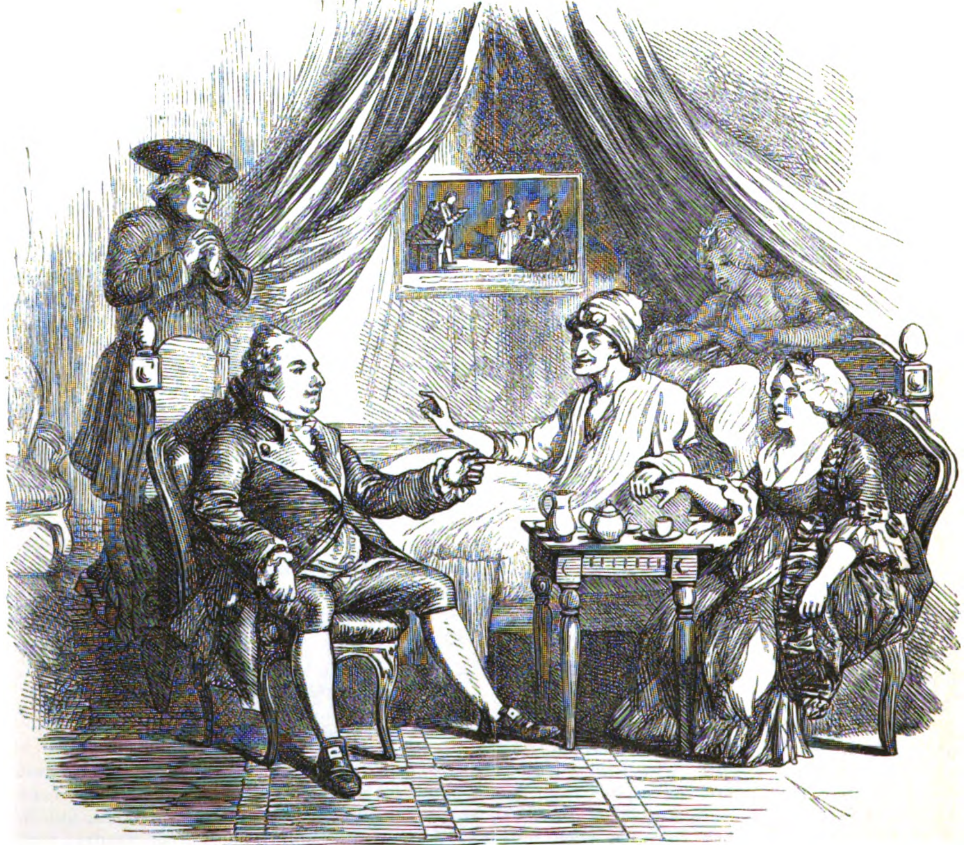
humility, could ever make in any degree comprehensible. In the second, be it remembered what face Christianity, so called, had presented on the continent through many centuries, and still presented in Voltaire's time. Where vice the most atrocious, tyranny, indolence, avarice, and the constant effort to keep men's minds down to a level of brutish ignorance and stagnant demoralisation were the common characteristics of the ministers of what Voltaire and nearly all France with him, were accustomed to regard as the Christian religion.

"L'homme propose et Dieu dispose." After many years' sojourn at Ferney, where, doubtless, some of Voltaire's happiest years were spent, and where he meant to lay his bones, it pleased his niece, Madame Denis, an elderly dame, yet withal sharing the sublime Emilie's much-to-be-admired love of pleasure, and some of her thirst for conquest, to decide that he should bend his steps once more towards Paris; and in such glowing colours did she represent to him what his reception there would be, so ceaselessly did she dwell on the subject; in short, "she so teased him, and she so pleased him" in the matter, that on the 5th of February, 1778, Voltaire, at the age of eighty-four, took his departure from Ferney, accompanied by Madame Denis and his god-



Voltaire at Breakfast at Ferney.

daughter, "Belle-et-bonne," the Marquise de Villette, and turned his steps towards Paris.

"Le bruit seul de son départ," writes the panegyrist before alluded to, "souleva dans tout Paris une acclamation universelle. La ville entière se prépara à recevoir son héros, et de la Rue Saint Denis aux plus nobles maisons des grands faubourgs se faisaient sentir les avant-coureurs d'un triomphe éclatant."

At four o'clock in the afternoon Voltaire arrived at the house of the Marquis de Villette, in the Rue de Beaune. He was wrapped up in a vast pelisse; on his head was a large woollen wig, surmounted by a grey squirrel cap, beneath which could be seen little but his eyes, "vifs et brillants comme deux escarboucles."

Crowds arrived to visit him, and grands seigneurs, court beauties, friends, strangers, bourgeois, littérateurs, actors and actresses, celebrities and nobodies, elbowed each other in the desire to see and to hear the illustrious hero, who had for each a smile, a compliment, "une parole aimable, un doux regard." Hardly was he recovered from the fatigues of his journey, and from the somewhat oppressive homage of his admirers, when, always with an eye to business, he set about preparing for the stage his "Irène," which he wished to see brought out at the Théâtre Français.

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The day but one after his arrival, he received a deputation from the Academy, with a petition that he would be present at the approaching meeting of the assembly. At the same time arrived the *semainiers* of the Théâtre Français, submitting, as it was the custom to do to the king, the programme of the entertainment, at which was to be played Cinna, for the benefit of a grand-nephew of Corneille, and humbly requesting his presence.

On the 17th of February arrived a fresh deputation of the artistes who were to play in Irène. He replied with perfect ease and grace to the solemn speech prepared and addressed to him by M. Bellecour, their leader. On the 18th, fatigue and illness rendered it impossible to him to attend the representation of Cinna, given in his honour, but despite all remonstrance, he received Franklin, Madame Necker, the English ambassador, and others, who all cried "au miracle!" at the brilliancy, lucidity, and àpropos of his conversation. On the 19th, it was absolutely necessary to close the door to the crowds of visitors who arrived, entreating for a look, a word, a touch of the hand of their divinity, and the intimations from Marie Antoinette and the Duc d' Artois, that the Queen requested his presence at a spectacle de la cour, and that the Duc would be happy to see him that evening at the Comédie, were powerless to give him even the amount of health and strength necessary to avail himself of them.

And Heaven knows what the gentilhomme ordinaire de la chambre du roi would not have done to set himself well at court! "Et pourtant le roi ne veut pas me voir!" he exclaimed in bitterness of spirit, when, in the midst of all these triumphs, M. Pigal, sculptor to the king, came to inform him that his Majesty had consented that he should execute a statue of him for the Academy. For two days he was confined to bed, utterly worn out with this constant strain on body and mind.

Yet not then, nor for many of the brief days he had still to live, does the idea seem to have occurred to him, even put interrogatively,—Is this Death that comes so near?

On the 22nd took place two curious scenes. In the morning Franklin brought his young son, and Voltaire *gave him his blessing!* in the names of "Dieu, liberté, tolérance." At mid-day, M. de Villette ushered in "un grand vieillard de grande apparence, décoré du cordon bleu et de toutes les beautés de la vieillesse"—no less than M. le Maréchal de Richelieu, arrived from Versailles "to embrace the poet who had so flattered him in his life."

An eventful and a suggestive, though not an edifying sight—that of those two wily, wicked, worldly old men, standing each on the side of a yawning grave, towards which they were tottering, stretching hands to each other across it, with smiles and compliments and courtly speeches, as though it had been a bed of flowers, and they met in their own and in the world's golden age to congratulate each other on their and on its happiness and virtues!

The next day, Voltaire, engaged in a further revision of Irène, had not dressed himself, but sat in his dressing-gown, having forbidden access to whoever might come. A coach entered the court-yard. The rustle of silks, the tapping of red heels, ascended the staircase—stopped at the door; "On n'entre pas!" cried Voltaire. "Sauve qui peut!" said the Marquis de Villette, "c'est Madame Dubarry!" "Non, non!" protested Voltaire, in high trepidation, "elle est trop belle et je suis trop vieux!—she is dressed, and I am undressed; she has her rouge and her patches, and I am not shaved! Send her away—tell her I am dead!" In vain: "Ami Voltaire," said a little sharp voice at the door, "Ami Voltaire, ouvrez moi, je vous montrerai patte-blanche! Ouvrez-moi, nous parlerons de nos beaux jours!"

Could Voltaire be deaf to the voice that had charmed his sovereign? He opened his door. He took in his old withered trembling hands the yet beautiful little ones that had once, in a spurious fashion, touched a sceptre,—that ere many years should pass would be clasped in vain and agonised supplications to the executioner. And there the somewhile courtier and the royal courtezan sat down together to talk frankly and without unnecessary retinences over the delights of those "beaux jours" of vice, vanity, flattery, and corruption!

Then arrived Sophie Arnould, the glittering actress whose bon-mots are to this day repeated over all Paris. "Bruyante et très attifée," she came in, kissing the poet on both cheeks. He presented *to her*—the Marquise presented to the actress of not doubtful reputation! "Belle-et-bonne," to whom she laughingly addressed an equivocal compliment, at which those present "riaient si fort," that the Marquis, entering at the moment, anxiously but vainly demanded the cause of their mirth.

The end of February brought with it an augmentation of Voltaire's weakness and sufferings, and those around him began to see "the beginning of the end." In the midst of all, two ideas seemed chiefly to occupy his thought: the success of Irène, and the coldness of the Court,—of the king, especially. And these are the dying preoccupations of a "great man!"

He had now adopted the sour-grapes tone with regard to his non-reception at Court. "After all," he said, "though the king would not see me at Versailles, I know well enough what would have happened to me, without having put a foot there. The king would have said, laughing,—a loud, foolish laugh—'M. de Voltaire, have you good hunting at Ferney?' the Queen, with a fine salute, would have talked to me of the theatre at Ferney; Monsieur would have asked me what income Ferney brought in; Madame would have recited four or five lines of Mérope; the Comtesse d'Artois would have stammered I know not what, and the Comte d'Artois would have talked to me of the Pucelle." Poor consolation, and rather late arrived at!

The malady continuing to make alarming progress, the priests arrive, and on being denied admittance, threaten to break open the door. The abbé Gautier, sent by the curé of St. Sulpice, is allowed to enter, and is well received, but on attempting to press the matter of confession, is requested to "call again." On the Mardi gras

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arrives l'abbé de Latteignant, the ex-chansonnier, "un vieux pécheur, converti de la veille," and who comes, reciting prayers, and repeating his *confiteor* aloud, "pour convertir M. de Voltaire."

Such a hubbub does the newly-converted saint make, that ere he enters the room, M. de Villette, Tronchin the physician, Lorry, the second physician, Madame Denis, rush to the rescue, and the abbé is hustled out, protesting.—"A ces causes," writes the chronicler, somewhat obscurely, "the invalid passes a tolerable night; he eats an egg, he drinks un doigt de bon vin: il est tout réconforté d'avoir bien dormi." And thereupon he dictates to Wagnière, his secretary, the following declaration as to his religious faith:—

"I declare, that being attacked for four days with a spitting of blood, at the age of 84, and being unable to drag myself (me trainer) to church, M. le Curé de St. Sulpice has kindly added to his good offices by sending me M. l'Abbé Gautier; I have confessed to him (a falsehood) and if God disposes of me, I die in the holy Catholic religion in which I was born, hoping of the divine mercy that it will deign to pardon all my faults, and if I have scandalised the church, I ask pardon of God and of her.

(Signed) Voltaire, 2nd March, 1778, in the house of M. le Marquis de Villette, in presence of the abbé Mignot, my nephew, and M. le Marquis de Villevieille, my friend."

This little matter happily disposed of, he instantly proceeded to far more important concerns, and demanded Irène, "à grands cris." He began the arrangement for the distribution of the tickets, of which he desired to have a hundred and fifty, and received the chevalier or chevalière d'Eon.

The 24th of March was the day fixed for the first representation of Irène.

Voltaire did all that man could do to collect strength, to be present on the occasion: but in vain; already the approaching Death was beginning to master him,—had his clutch on that Heart which saw yet stranger vicissitudes dead than living. But, obliged, as he found himself, to give up this triumph, he kept messengers hourly on the wing between the theatre and his sick chamber. He insisted upon knowing what portions, what tirades, what lines, had produced the most effect, and as it was told him that the passages against the clergy had been highly applauded, "he was enchanted," writes his admiring biographer, "to know that they compensated for the unfortunate effect his confession had produced on the public!"

The piece was *not* successful, which in no way hindered M. Dupuy, the husband of Mademoiselle Corneille, from coming hot-foot at the end of the fifth act, to announce the most brilliant success, adding that the Queen had written several of the lines on her tablets. And the dying old man exclaimed, "Allons! I must think of my Agathocles!"

Two days later, buoyed up with excitement and gratified vanity, he went out in his "char de l'Empyrée," a sky-blue coach, studded with stars, dressed in the grande toilette of the preceding reign; a red velvet coat, lined with ermine; an immense curled wig, black and unpowdered, surmounted by a square, crown-shaped red cap; in his hand a dainty cane. In this wig his emaciated face was so buried that little could be seen but his eyes "qui jetoient des flammes." "Bref, il était tout joyeux, tout charmant, même égrillard."

The poor little moribund old man, with his *sprightliness!* What a picture!

Then came the last earthly triumph, the scene that was so immediately to precede the dark disgraces which were to be heaped on that poor wornout body, denied Christian burial, laid by stealth in a stolen tomb.

On the 30th of March, or, as some say, the 1st of April (mark the ironical significance of the date), he proceeded in his starry chariot, by invitation, to the Academy, where were assembled all the members, moins the clerical ones, with the exceptions of the Abbés Millot and Boismont. The Academy in a body advanced before this its oldest member. It placed him in the seat of the director, after having by universal acclamation named him director for the April quarter.

From the Academy Voltaire proceeded to the Théâtre Français. "It was then that his triumph really commenced. An enormous crowd, cries, hurrahs, tears, extended hands. He was carried into the theatre, and there was an inconceivable spectacle of all that Paris possessed of renown and splendour: the bust of Voltaire was raised on a pedestal, to the sound of fanfares, trumpets, and drums, and this bust was embraced by all the comédie with infinite transports. The entertainment consisted of Irène and Nanine (also a piece of Voltaire's), but not one listened to the poetry; every one was greedy only to see the great old man."

Then came the final triumph. As soon as the hero of the evening appeared in the box of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, opposite to that of the Comte d'Artois, a cry arose of "La Couronne!" and Brizard, the actor, came and placed it on the grande perruque à la Louis XIV.

"Ah, Dieu! vous voulez donc me faire mourir!" cried the old man with tears; and, taking off the wreath, he presented it (why, it is hard to say), to Belle-et-bonne. She in her turn resisting, the Prince de Beauvais once more placed it on the head (or wig) for which it was intended.

On leaving the theatre, it was with the greatest difficulty that he could be got through the crowd: even the Duc de Chartres (afterwards Egalité) and the Comte d'Artois, though they kept somewhat aloof, contrived to witness the exit, and the people were near taking the horses from the carriage, and drawing it home themselves.

"Vous voulez donc me faire mourir!" Full of prophecy was the expression.

The violent strain and excitement proved more than the object of such homage could, with his aged and enfeebled frame, endure.

For two months more he lingered, tottering on the borders of the grave, and on the 30th or 31st of May, expired tranquilly.

So much for Voltaire's last days of life. Let us now turn to his first days of death. There is no occasion to moralise, or to repeat sage reflections on the subject.

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Never, perhaps, did a tale so carry its own moral on the face of it.

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,

was, as soon as cold, refused a burial by the Archbishop of Paris. The Academy, addressing themselves to the brotherhood of the Cordeliers, to say a mass for the soul departed, the fraternity, though "peu scrupuleux," says the account, and ready enough to do as they were requested, replied that they regretted to have to refuse the Academy, but they had already received express orders not to pray for M. de Voltaire.

The Academy then addressed themselves to the Prime Minister, M. de Maurepas. The cynic, whose sneers were mere aperies of the sneers of Voltaire, replied that *his conscience* opposed itself to the accordance of any funeral honours, adding that there would be no great harm if the people of France should be persuaded that M. de Voltaire had been carried off by the devil. At the same time the Government issued orders that no writers should mention him in their books, newspapers or conversations, and that in no theatre should any piece be represented that could in any way recal him to the minds of the people.

And while these things were going on, the poor corpse was unburied.

At last, to escape public outrage, the Abbé Mignot, nephew of the deceased, and some of his friends, determined to inter the body in secret. In the middle of a dark night (already M. de Villette had had the heart removed, with a promise to preserve it at Ferney), silently, in fear and trembling, they took the uncoffined corpse from the bed where it lay, dressed it in a dressing-gown and night-cap, and placed it in a carriage, propping it up to represent an invalid, who was being taken into the country for change. Then they turned their steps towards Romilly-sur-Seine, where stood the abbey of Scellières, of which the Abbé Mignot was Abbé Commendataire.

Picture that night journey! No longer the old man, "en grande toilette, tout charmant, tout égrillard," parading in triumph the streets of Paris, in broad daylight, with eyes "qui jetoient des flammes;" but a poor, weary worn-out corpse, covered up in a dressing-gown and night-cap, being stolen along bad country roads in the stillness and darkness of night, to escape insult and outrage; helplessly jerked about by the movement of the vehicle, the mocking smile on those lips replaced by flaccid formlessness, the "flames" of those glittering eyes extinguished for ever and for ever!

Arrived at the abbey, the body was buried with the least possible movement and ceremony, and there, as might be supposed, it would be allowed to rest in its stolen tomb. Not so, however. Next day the Bishop of Troyes wrote to the Prior of Scellières, forbidding the body to be buried in hallowed ground. The Prior replied that it had been buried twenty-four hours previously at the entreaty of M. l'Abbé Mignot, councillor of the grand council, Abbé Commendataire of the house, "who showed us the consent of M. le Curé de St. Sulpice, signed by that pastor — that the body of M. de Voltaire might be transported hither, *without ceremony*. He showed me, as well, a copy collated by the same Curé of St. Sulpice, of a profession of the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman faith, which M. de Voltaire had made under the hands of an approved priest, in the presence of two witnesses, of whom one is M. Mignot, our abbé, nephew of the penitent, the other a gentleman, the Marquis de Villevieille. Besides these, he showed me a letter of the minister of Paris, M. Amelot, addressed to him and to M. de Dampierre d'Hornoy, nephew of the Abbé Mignot and grand nephew of the defunct, by which those gentlemen were authorised to transport their uncle to Ferney, or elsewhere."

At Ferney Voltaire's happiest, and, on the whole, we may say, best days were spent. There, where he lived so long, where he did so much, where he was visited by hundreds of Europe's celebrities; where everything, imagined or constructed by him, was so intimately and personally associated with him, he ought to have died. Such had been his intention. He had built there, beside the theatre, a chapel, and a tomb for himself half in the church, half in the churchyard.

"Et les malins," he said, "vous soutiendront quand je serai là, que je ne suis ni chair, ni poisson, ni dedans ni dehors," thus anticipating M. de Maurepas' suggestion on the subject.

Voltaire left Ferney, with a very considerable income, a large sum of ready money, and his pictures, plate, furniture, books, &c., to Madame Denis. Hardly had they come into her possession when she sold Ferney to the Marquis de Villette, and wrote to propose the library to the Empress of Russia, who purchased it, writing a most flattering letter addressed to "Madame Denis, la nièce d'un grand homme qui m'aimoit beaucoup."

Having sold the château, the land, the furniture, everything, in short, even to the private letters and papers of her uncle, the lady having probably heard something vaguely about the removal of his heart, but having been too much occupied with the arrangement of her property to occupy herself sooner in the matter, began to make inquiries thereanent. Learning that it was in the hands of M. de Villette, who proposed to take it to Ferney, she got in a rage, and threatened to resort to the most peremptory steps to reclaim the precious relic.

Touching this matter, a number of the "Mercure" of the day gives the following letter, signed by Voltaire's other relatives:

Monsieur,—A report, accredited by certain foreign papers, having spread in Paris that the heart of the late M. de Voltaire had been taken from his body in order that it might be made the object of especial obsequies, we, his nephews, his nearest male relations, and consequently charged with the care of his funeral, declare, as we have already done in a public protestation, placed in the hands of M. Dutertre, notary, and signed by all the parties interested, that neither the will of the late M. de Voltaire nor any writing proceeding from him indicate that he ever desired that such extraction should be made in favour of any person whatever, nor of any monastery or any church: that we never consented thereto, nor meant to have consented; that the written report of the opening and embalming, placed in the hands of the same notary, makes no mention of this pretended extraction, that

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there appears no act proving it; that, under such circumstances, what might have been undertaken in this respect would be absolutely illegal; and that what might have been taken from the body of M. de Voltaire without any of the indispensable formalities would not be fitted for any funeral honours. We beg of you, Monsieur, for the interest of public order and truth, to insert this assertion in the next Mercury. We are, &c.

(Signed) Abbé Mignot, Dampierre d'Hornoy.

This document, not remarkable for either straightforwardness or style, seems to have put an end to the controversy, and allowed M. de Villette to retain possession of the relic.

The Marquis, whose whole character may be judged—nay, which probably posterity would never have had any other opportunity afforded it of judging—by his conduct with respect to this matter, having purchased Ferney, swore that it should never leave his family, and thereupon called a sale of all the furniture. He vowed to erect a splendid monument to the heart of Voltaire, and "he arranged in a closet a sort of little tomb in glazed earthenware, or rather the remains of a stove, worth about two louis, and stated that in this fine monument he had placed Voltaire's heart, *which is not there now.*"

Above this splendid mausoleum he inscribed the following line:—

"Son esprit est partout et son cœur est ici."

and when he had changed, overturned, sold, and dispersed nearly every trace of the late inmate, M. de Villette let Ferney to an Englishman, persuading him that he had left him the heart of Voltaire in the earthen stove.

Some years later, the Marquis de Villette's fortune was seriously affected by the bankruptcy of the Prince de Guéméné, and this period of trial was marked by violent revolutions in his mind. At times he would be seized with highly devout fits, during which the heart of Voltaire, in the marble urn which contained it, would be driven from cellar to garret: these moods would change to philosophical ones, whereupon the relic was brought forward once more, and treated with every honour. Finally, the Marquis arranged la chambre du cœur in the following manner:—"This room is ornamented not only with the portraits found in the château, but with those of the various most illustrious personages whom Voltaire celebrated. Benedict XIV., Ganganelli, Quirini, Fénelon, are on one side; the ladies de Sévigné, de Lambert, Tencin, Geoffrin, de Boufflers, du Deffand, de Genlis, opposite these prelates. The other side is the canton of the beaux esprits—Saint-Lambert, Chatellux, Thomas, Tressan, Marmontel, Raynal, de Lille. Below the portrait of the last is written: 'Nulli flebilior quam tibi, Virgili.'—The friends are the nearest to the heart."

How long the heart remained there, and when and why and whither it was removed, seems still an unfathomed mystery.

During all this time the body of Voltaire, which was to have been removed to Ferney, remained in its obscure tomb in the convent. But when in 1790 the abbey was sold and the monks dispersed, a question arose concerning it, and a year later four commissioners arrived at Romilly-sur-Seine, charged to transport the remains to the Pantheon. They were conducted to Paris in the most unceremonious manner, and while the conductors stopped to refresh themselves at a disreputable inn, the coffin, left at the door, was opened, and the embalmed body exposed to view.

The face appeared perfectly calm, as if in sleep, but at the contact of the air, it fell in, and nothing distinguishable remained.

What has become of the heart no one seems to know, nor do those who might be supposed to be specially interested appear to care.

At all events, no claim, no mention of any kind is made of the relic in the trial where all else relating to what were the possessions of M. de Villette is narrowly discussed and warmly disputed; and though the question has been several times put forth since the occurrence of the trial, which took place some three months since, I am not aware that any answer has been given.

Innumerable were the epitaphs composed on Voltaire at the period of his death, some rabidly malicious, others raising his name to the seventh heaven, most of them agreeing in the points of affectation and mediocrity.

Here is one attributed to Rousseau, falsely, I believe, not only from the poverty of the verses, but from the small probability that they would have been written during Voltaire's lifetime, which, in the event of their authenticity, must have been the case, as Jean-Jacques died before him:—

"Plus bel-esprit que grand génie,
Sans loi, sans mœurs et sans vertu;
Il est mort comme il a vécu,
Couvert de gloire and d'infamie."

"O, Parnasse!" writes another "poet," who, probably, had studied the style of the sublime Emily's epitaph:—

"O Parnasse, frémis de douleur et d'effroi!
Muses, abandonnez vos lyres immortelles:
Toi, dont il fatigua les cent voix et les ailes
Dis que Voltaire est mort, pleure, et repose-toi!"

All things considered, we may, I think, reasonably hope that the universe is consoled for the one loss, and that Fame has dried her eyes, and being sufficiently rested from her fatigues, has found employment since the death of the other.

That Voltaire was not occasionally actuated by noble and disinterested motives, we need not for a moment affirm or believe, witness the instances of his conduct in the cases of Calas, Servins, la Barre, &c. He himself wrote, perhaps, not at the moment, insincerely:—

"J'ai fait un peu de bien; c'est mon meilleur ouvrage."

But that applause, the public voice, the gratification of his vanity, and a narrow and no way elevated fame were the objects he habitually toiled for, and regarded as a sufficient reward, are facts yet more evident.

Witness, among others, the anecdote of the Café de Procope.

When he brought out his Sémiramis, instead of waiting with dignity to study its effects when time might have been given to judge of these, he, on the night of the second representation, borrowed the dress of a doctor of the Sorbonne, consisting of cassock, long cloak, black stockings, girdle, and bands, not forgetting even the breviary. On his

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head he wore an immense wig, unpowdered and unkempt, which nearly hid his face, and surmounted it with a shabby old three-cornered hat, and proceeding to the Café de Procope, while the play was yet in progress, he called for a small roll of bread, a *bavaroise*, and the Gazette.

This café, which stood opposite the Comédie Française, seems to have borne some humble resemblance to Wills's, and one or two other London coffee-houses of nearly the same period, though bearing a more exclusively theatrical character; for there, we are told, "had been held for upwards of sixty years, the tribunal of these self-styled aristarchs, who fancied they could pass judgment without appeal on plays, authors, and actors." And to the judgment of such a tribunal, on the *second* appearance of his work, was Voltaire satisfied to submit himself! and up till eleven o'clock, at which time the self-constituted critics had dispersed, did he sit there in silence, spectacles on nose, pretending to read the Gazette, and drinking in every word of praise or blame, as if on the breath of this gang of idlers depended his fame or obscurity!

The affair of his "Confession" speaks for itself, especially followed, as it was, by his delight that the applause given by the multitude to the passages against the clergy in Irène, produced not many days after, should *do away with the bad effect of the Confession on the public!*

Of the same spirit smacks his never-ceasing mortification at the coldness of the king and court, whom he pretended, individually, to despise; but not till all hope, of softening or winning them to receive and notice him, had departed.

But, perhaps, in a little speech to d'Alembert, is more epigrammatically expressed than anywhere else this passion of his for general applause.

"If you meet," said he, as d'Alembert was quitting Ferney, after a six weeks' visit, "any *dévots* on your way, tell them that I have finished my church; and if you meet any *gens aimables*, tell them that I have finished my theatre."

MARGUERITE A. POWER.

THE DYING HEROES, FROM UHLAND.

THE Scandinavian swords rose midst the host,
Like billows toss'd;
And in the moonlight, on that bloody plain,
The noble twain,
Mightier than all, amidst the dead and dying,
The beauteous Sven and aged Ulf were lying.

SVEN.

"Oh, Father! must I, in my youth's bright day,
Thus pass away?
No more a mother's hand my locks of gold
Will fondly hold;
No more my love, whilst other maids are sleeping,
Will watch for me—her sweet eyes dim with weeping."

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ULF.

"She'll deeply mourn—yet still in dreams with thee
Will ever be;
And be consoled, for soon will that sad smart
Break her true heart;
And then in Odin's halls, whilst mead is quaffing,
The maid thou'lt meet—the golden-tressed and laughing."

SVEN.

"Ah! would that I had won myself a name
Of deathless fame!
To my forefathers equal could I prove
In war and love.
Neglected now the harps are silent lying,
Whilst thro' their strings the mournful breeze is sighing."

ULF.

"Now near and nearer draws, in floods of light,
Walhalla bright—
Those high imperial courts, whence bolts are hurled
That shake the world.
Soon, with the good and great from us departed,
We there shall rest, for ever joyous-hearted."

SVEN.

"Oh, Father! wherefore call me hence away,
In youth's bright day;
Ere yet brave deeds on many a battle-field
Adorn my shield?
Ah! shall I, 'midst those true and mighty spirits,
Obtain the place which my high courage merits?"

ULF.

"Yes! there is One who to each noble deed
Will give due meed,
And crown the man who for his country dies
Beyond the skies.
Rejoice—rejoice—the vanquished foe is flying!
Heav'n opens—see! 'tis there our goal is lying."

A. L.

THE FAN.

Some seventy years ago no name stood higher in commercial repute at Havre than that of Duravel. The founder of the house had just died at the time when we commence the story; but though the designation was altered from "Claude Duravel and Sons" to "Duravel Brothers," public trust was unshaken even by envious conjecture. For Claude, the elder of the two sons, had for some years managed the business, and nothing could exceed the caution and withal enterprise of the transactions of the house under his direction, save the uniform and splendid fortune which illustrated them. The Duravels, in short, were a proverb for their sterling character, their munificent liberality, and their rare luck. In this last regard, indeed, they might be said to bear a charmed life. If their vessels were attacked by English privateers, some opportune fog or friendly sail was certain to deliver them. If they suffered shipwreck it was sure to be on the outward voyage, and owing to their ample insurance the underwriters were ever the greatest sufferers. They weathered panics bravely. No fraudulent clerks undermined them, and failure seemed to be averted from the houses they trusted. But though the vessel was launched so auspiciously, and observers saw no change, all was not as of old in that responsible-looking counting-house. Between the two brothers, Claude and Jerome, there was a great disparity of years, and though the special characteristics of the younger were not developed in his father's life-time, the two were widely different in disposition. Claude seemed never to have been young. The closest observer could recal no lapse into frivolity, no wild-oat-sowing in his grave and regular progress through a series of inferior posts to the headship of the house. In person, too, he was the counterpart of his father, whose portrait, with its thin lips, sharp profile, projecting forehead, and iron-grey hair, might have been easily mistaken for a representation of his namesake and successor, as was likely, Jerome, who had been brought up entirely with his father and brother, bore a family likeness to them; but there were every now and then discernible traces of a fiery and passionate temper, venting itself in vehement outbursts of wilfulness. Inconsistent and irresolute, however, he usually abandoned of his own accord the object for which a short time previously he had been eagerly battling. The face of Jerome, too, belied the character of a man of routine; for though he had the pointed features of the two Claudes, his mouth was full and sensuous, and his eyebrows were connected or met—a peculiarity of which Goethe, in his description of the profligate Meyer, has rightly noted the effect.

The two brothers resided in the same house, a large and *grandiose* hotel, situated in a garden profusely adorned with statues, bath-houses, balustrades, and fountains, in the Italian style, and called after their name. For four years after the father's death they continued unmarried. No differences were ever reported to have taken place between them. But things were not destined to flow long in this quiet course. One evening at a public ball given to celebrate the most brilliant victory of the First Consul, Jerome was introduced to a certain Madame Corisande de Cardillac, who had lately appeared in the gay circles of Havre. Rumour, "painted full of tongues," told strange stories of the lady's career in the capital. Certain it was she dressed magnificently, coquetted mercilessly, played extravagantly, and consequently was the last person with whom a prudent man of business should have connected himself; but no less certain was the fact, that within six weeks from the Marengo ball she was married, *with the consent and approbation of Claude*, to Jerome Duravel. . . . . The explanation of the puzzling words which we have put in italics is short and simple. The elder brother "consented and approved," because he could not help himself, for Jerome had no sooner made the acquaintance of the all-fascinating Corisande, than he began to play largely. The circle into which he was introduced consisted of reckless men of pleasure. He was elated with the lavish flattery which they bestowed upon him, and tempted to stake enormous sums on the spinning of the roulette ball, or the hazard of the cards at lansquenet. At first the result was invariably the same. The friends of Corisande always lost, and the merchant always won. After awhile the luck changed, and after

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the change it set in so uniformly against the merchant that he grew desperate. Then the lady herself came to the rescue, and undertook to play for him. As if by magic, the rouleaux of gold and the piles of notes passed over to her side of the table. In short, the conflict was the old one of practice and craft against ignorance and simplicity, and the former as usual won. Though she had at first, however, undertaken to play for him, the merchant was not richer for his handsome partner's gains. His petitions for his own winnings were of necessity made with a smile, and were adroitly laughed off as jests. The appetite of the Parisian for costly presents was insatiable, and Jerome found himself hopelessly involved, and after a little equivocation and evasion confessed the whole truth to Claude. At that moment, for the first time for thirty years, the house was in a critical position. Money was of great importance. One plan alone appeared feasible. The lost wealth might be regained by an alliance with the winner of it, so Corisande was married "with the consent and approbation" of Claude to Jerome Duravel.

But the partner who had once tasted of the rapture of hazard was not to be bound down again to the comparatively tardy work of legitimate traffic. The elder brother had exacted a pledge from him that he should never enter a gambling-house, or stake more than a certain conventional number of francs on a game of cards; but all this foresight was in vain; the wily Madame Duravel acquiesced readily enough in these arrangements, and even advised the elder brother to insist on taking from the younger the security of the promise, but the subject matter of their operations only was changed. The funds were substituted for the cards. Instead of gambling they speculated. . . . .

To the cold and calculating temper of the wife, the most monstrous risks hardly gave any excitement. The agonies of expectation, the reactions of wild hope and profound despair, inflamed the impetuous temper of the husband like fiery wine. Under false names and through numerous agents, they bought in and sold out of the funds, and for some time the star of Corisande was in the ascendant; but, after a while, the narrow and scarcely perceptible which separates enterprise from rashness was crossed. They ventured more and more recklessly. Failure succeeded failure. The politics of the day were full of surprises. A superstitious trust in the fortune of Napoleon had been almost the only guiding principle in Corisande's creed, but long after this was proved fallacious the devotee clung to her faith. Meanwhile, entirely ignorant of the events which were happening under his eyes, Claude Duravel continued to attend regularly at his office, to direct the legitimate transactions of the firm; to dictate its foreign correspondence, and to watch the fidelity of its servants. Since the sudden marriage the brothers had lived much apart. Jerome and Corisande still occupied a suite of apartments in the Hotel Duravel, but they seldom saw the head of the house, save at stated times. It had been an important point in Madame's policy to secure the good opinion of Claude, and considering that she had to overcome almost the strongest prejudices of his nature, she succeeded amazingly. He had viewed the alliance at first with horror, but when such large accessions of wealth were offered to the firm thereby, he was a little softened. His life was too secluded for him to hear the shameful rumours which were afloat about his sister-in-law. He held gamblers in sovereign contempt, but then those were gamblers who lost. He could not choose but honour luck so brilliant and conspicuous as that of Corisande. These things being so, the hostility between the two took the gentler form of wary neutrality, and wary neutrality insensibly glided into a courteous, if not a cordial relation before many months were over. Madame Corisande was fascinating enough to all; how can one wonder then that when she set her mind on pleasing the attempt was successful?

So things slipped on for five years, all externally calm and secure, but in that time none can tell the strange vicissitudes of anxiety and exultation through which Jerome passed!

Suddenly, one morning, in the October of 1804, a strange and startling report spread over Havre! It was caught up, and passed like lightning from lip to lip. Amongst the merchants and people of leisure alike it was the theme of the hour. They had had political subjects enough to discuss that year, but neither the murder of D'Enghien, nor the change of English policy under Pitt, nor the assumption of the title of Emperor by him who had long wielded imperial power, created half so lively an interest in the good town of Havre, as these tidings about their great merchant. They were so romantic, so contradictory, so mysterious! Sometimes people shuddered over the report as that of a murder; at other times they quaked lest their Crœsus should prove a fraudulent absconder. Again, some deplored it as a suicide, while a fourth party settled the merchant's fate by whispering the magic name of Fouché. All was uncertainty and conjecture, but one fact—Monsieur Claude Duravel had disappeared, and was nowhere to be found. The authorities, and the missing man's relatives who investigated the affair, could only glean very scanty particulars. On the morning of the 18th of October, the unfortunate man had been at the counting-house, as usual. He had looked exactly as he generally looked, and had done his work in precisely the accustomed manner. About four o'clock he went home, dined alone, as his brother and his wife were out of town, after dinner sat reading for an hour or so. Later than this there was no decided information. One of the servants, an under-gardener, thought he had observed him pass through the orangery, but was not positive. It was certain he rang the bell for the dessert to be removed, and the footman who answered the summons was the last person who swore to seeing him. Jerome and his wife made every effort to find the lost. Large rewards were offered to the person who should discover any clue, however slender. The lake in the grounds was dragged. The vessels leaving the port were searched. The haunts of desperadoes in the city thoroughly scoured. But money, time, and diligence were all wasted. The police

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left the matter as they found it, an unsolved enigma!

And so, after the usual time, public interest cooled. The house of Duravel stood as firm as ever, so the idea that pecuniary embarrassment had anything to do with Claude's disappearance was proved to be baseless, but after a time it was given out that Jerome's health would not allow him to take an active part in the management. Personal friends hinted that his illness, a nervous complaint, was principally caused by domestic chagrins. From some cause or other, he aged rapidly. At last he withdrew from the business entirely, and left Havre with his wife. The first news of them was that they were at the baths of Lucca, since, as his physicians prescribed a warm air, and Jerome was both a connoisseur and an artist, Italy had two recommendations. A second report stated that the husband and wife had separated by mutual consent. This story caused a little gossip amongst their old friends, but the absent are soon forgotten, and their names were hardly ever mentioned.

Twenty years are passed, and we stand in one of the best private-boxes in the grand opera at Paris. The performances are under the patronage of royalty, and the house is in a blaze of costly jewels and gay uniforms. It is a bewildering thing to know to what quarter to look, for everywhere there are distinguished men and beautiful women. Here a bronzed veteran, newly invested with a marshal's *bâton*;—here, his breast glittering with stars and cordons, a renowned diplomatist; ambassadors from St. James's, Vienna, Madrid, and fifty other courts; beauties from all the salons of Europe. Quaintly attired envoys from barbarous states. As ever, the house is the great spectacle, and the box wherein we have taken our stand a special focus of attraction. Not from the splendid rank and dazzling beauty of its occupant, but from her extraordinary reputation for wealth and political influences. Time has worked great changes in the face, yet those who were present at the Marengo ball, at Havre, would recognise in the painted, and powdered, and essenced dowager the features of Corisande de Cardillac. Two or three special favourites only are admitted into her society, but with these she exchanges repartees, jests, satire, criticism. She is one of the autocrats of the world of art; her bouquet is anxiously looked for by the débutante, for thirty more will follow it. To-night all notice that she is in unusually good spirits.

"Look at old Madam Duravel! How many modern ladies will look as she does at seventy?" is one of the staple remarks of the evening.

We said "the house is the attraction;" but it so happens that, on this particular night, the stage is also watched with unusual interest, for it is the first night of a new opera and a new singer. The success of the piece has been decided. A duet in the first act would have secured the acceptance of the work if nothing had remained behind, but the maestro has been prodigal of his resources, and each scene supplies some new gem. The new singer is as great a success as the new opera, and old favourites are called before the curtain to receive new ovations.

"Everybody seems bent on surpassing themselves to-night. V——, X——. All magnificent."

"Yes! I have been amusing myself by watching the faces of the audience. Nobody looks critical."

"Except that sour-visaged man holding a lady's fan in the next box."

"Yes! What an unhappy—— But there is the bell."

The curtain rises. One of the veterans of the lyric stage opens the act with a song. It is a marvel of correct vocalisation. The house is in a new excitement. The dowager is in an unusual difficulty;—she has flung away all her bouquets.

"That rose out of your neck, Eugenie," said the lady to a lovely girl who sits next her. "I never heard Z—— in such voice; and, for the first time in his life, he acts as well as he sings. Quick,—that rose, child! He will value it more than all the bracelets from his Majesty's box, I know."

The girl blushed and hesitated. Madame Duravel in an instant divined the cause; "O, *somebody* put the rose there, did he? How naughty of me not to remember it. Well, I suppose a bracelet must go. Why,—*Mon Dieu!* I have given that little rogue of a danseuse my emeralds already."

"You must tell Z—— to-morrow, Aunt; that will do as well."

"O, no! He must have something from the Duravel. What! No bouquets, ladies!—no bouquets, gentlemen! I shall have to throw my fan at him, I protest. Where is it, child? It has 'Alexander's Feast' painted on it, and he will fancy the compliment intentional!"

The looked for fan, however, could not be found at the moment. The compliant cavaliers sought in vain under play-bills and opera-cloaks.

Suddenly a strangely deep voice, close in the lady's ear, uttered the sentence:

"Will *this* fan serve the purpose, madame?"

The speaker was the grave-looking man, whose grave face and persistent gaze had annoyed the dowager a moment before.

He leant over from the next box and presented an open fan. Madame Duravel gazed at the toy he tendered her for a space, wherein you might perhaps have counted sixty; then her face grew too ashy white, for the artificial glow on her cheek to be of any avail. Her eyes stared with a hideous fixity of gaze, her jewelled fingers clutched her dress like the hands of one in the death-struggle. She uttered a strange harsh shriek and fell down senseless on the floor. All crowded round her. The gentlemen would have made way for Eugenie and the attendants, but the dark man kept close to the insensible body of Corisande. There was a few hurried cries of alarm. Some fancied a subtle poison had been administered in the fan, and called out for the arrest of the person who had presented it. Cries of "silence!" arose from all parts of the theatre. The actors stopped, and at last—though not till some time had passed—the

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group of people in the Duravel box succeeded in bearing the dowager to a lobby. There strong convulsive fits seized her; and after in vain trying all the means of recovery, which the ability of half a dozen of the first Parisian physicians who chanced to be amongst the audience could suggest, she was carried to her hotel . . . . Directly the stiff fingers of the prostrate woman released it, a gentleman, whose curiosity overmastered his fears, picked up and examined the fatal fan. Its handle was ivory, of curious workmanship, and on it was a picture of an Italian-looking bath-house in a garden. Beneath the landscape were inscribed the initials "C. D.," and the date "October 18th, 1810." There was nothing about the gift, apparently to excite the extraordinary emotion which it had been the means of evoking!

All Paris next morning was busy with various versions of the accident to the autocrat of the fashionable world. As twenty years before in Havre, rumour, romance, and exaggeration, fastened themselves on the name of Duravel. Some said the veteran coquette had fainted at the sight of an old lover. Some attached themselves to the first theory of a mysterious poison, and saw in the affair a tragedy worthy of Brinvilliers or Borgia. Others hinted that the celebrated gambler had been arrested for debt. These and a dozen other fictions occupied the salons during the mornings, but, about noon, truth began to rise to

the surface from the bottom of the well, and it became known that the gentleman with the harsh voice—the giver of the fan—was an officer of justice acting under instructions, and that Madame Corisande Duravel, who had partially recovered her senses, was, at that moment, under examination at the Bureau of the superintendent of police, and that the charge against her was murder!

The sequel must be stated in a few words. The day before the scene at the Grand Opera a poor man miserably dressed and apparently worn out with a long journey on foot arrived at a low cabaret in the Faubourg St. Antoine. He engaged a bed for a few sous. In the night he was taken dangerously ill, and raved in such a wild and incoherent manner that the other lodgers demanded that he should be turned out. The landlady, however, was more humane, and sent for a priest. There was some delay in procuring one, and in the meantime an officer of police called at the cabaret to see after some other lodger. The person he wanted was hiding in the same room as the delirious man, and the officer when engaged in securing the one overheard the outcries of the other. He was struck by some few words which the poor wretch repeated over and over again, especially by his mention of a fan which he wanted to present to Madame Duravel, for the name of the Dowager had been mixed up with more than one plot, and she was herself, though perfectly unconscious of it, under strict surveillance. Though the ravings of the old man were vague and contradictory in the extreme, the practised detective contrived to elicit that it was the dearest wish of the dying man's heart to present the fan

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which was wrapped up in his ragged little valise to the celebrated queen of fashion. The officer reported what he had heard to his chief, and by his instructions took the fan from the old man, dressed himself in evening costume, secured a box next to the Duravel, and in the manner we have described carried out the old man's wish. Very different from that which was anticipated was the discovery thereby elicited. They expected to detect some semi-political, semi-mercantile intrigue, and fancied the presentation of the fan a signal for some experiment on the funds. It really was the spell to give voice to a conscience long dumb—the key to unlock a fearful mystery! It had been proposed to confront the lodger at the cabaret with Corisande, but he breathed his last an hour before the examination was to have come on. His pocket-book, in the front page of which was written the name "Claude Duravel," contained a diary, partly written, partly expressed in symbols. But from a few intelligible sentences the superintendent was enabled to put such questions to Madame Duravel as made her imagine him in possession of the whole truth, and led to a full confession of her guilt. Soon after her marriage she had speculated, as we know, most recklessly. There was no way to meet the claims upon her husband save to appropriate the money of the firm; this could not be done without Claude being a party to it, and Jerome, always a coward, was afraid to confess the truth to him. The demands for money grew each day more and more pressing. A fiendish idea possessed the adventuress, and the execution followed quick on the conception. She and her husband left Havre for a neighbouring watering-place, but returned secretly after proceeding half-way: they knew the habits of Claude, and timed their return so as to meet him in a secluded corner of the shrubbery. His brother struck him down with a heavy iron bar, and the wife buried a knife in his breast. They concealed the body in the disused bath-house near the orangery.

After the crime the two had lived a wretched life, the woman perpetually dreading lest her husband's conscience should prompt him to some rash revelation. She had therefore laboured to get rid of him, and had succeeded in her object. He had for awhile depended on the supplies of money liberally forwarded on the condition of his keeping out of France; but at last he had become superstitiously fearful of receiving the wages of guilt, and had professed to toil for his bread. He had possessed, as we know, some talent as a painter, and had sustained himself by ornamenting hand-screens and fans. As a self-imposed penance he had painted one with the scene which was charactered in his memory in indelible lines, and he had hoped that he might by suddenly presenting this to his more hardened accomplice, alarm her into confession and repentance. It was, however, ordered that this new Clytemnestra should not escape with the punishment of conscience and the penances of religion. Public indignation, indeed, scarcely allowed the authorities to go through the forms of justice. Strong guards of chasseurs and gendarmes were required to restrain the mob from tearing the prisoner to pieces as she proceeded to and from the place of trial. The people waited in breathless excitement the answer to the message sent to the authorities at Havre. At last it came with all its fulness of confirmation. The stones of the bath-house had been removed, and beneath a mass of rubbish since accumulated were found the mouldering bones of a human skeleton.

Two days after the receipt of the message, Corisande Duravel was guillotined.

THE MONTHS.

JANUARY.

WHAT would not my boys give for the acquaintance of a weather-prophet? There are three kinds of Januaries; and the pleasures of schoolboys' holidays depend more on which of the three we are to have than on any other general condition whatever.

There is the mild spring-like January, sure to be partly occupied with rain, but pleasant, in its way, for the rest of the time. The days then begin with a soft yellow sunshine, tempting us to long walks, during which we say, one after another, how like spring it is. We hear the wren and the titmouse singing in the hedges, and see the linnets swarming about the bushes, and the larks in flocks in the stubble fields. The grubs are all out on such days, feeding on the springing corn, and on the green part of any roots left on the soil. The worms come out and go in in the pastures, and on the sides of ditches. The misselthrush whistles; the blackbird shows himself in picking up his full meal among the creatures which the noon warmth brings out. The nuthatch chatters, and the robin enjoys himself among the remaining berries in the hedges, though less important than usual, because so many other birds are abroad. The kingfisher exhibits a bit of gay colour above the brook, and is gone before we have seen half enough of him. The gnats go on with their mazy dance above the water, without caring for us. The pastures do not look very green; but there are horses gallopping in them, to stretch their limbs; and the calves are let out in the middle of the day. If there is a bit of grass in better condition than the rest, the ewes, big with young, are getting a bite there, in a quiet way. We hear the ploughman giving his orders to his horses on the other side the fence, or we see him and his team moving slowly along the hill-side, and leaving a track of brown fallow behind them. Here and there a dilatory cultivator is still sowing his wheat.

On the hedge banks the grass is dank and shabby; but there is chickweed in blossom, and the clusters of primrose leaves, among the roots of the hedgerow timber, look firm and healthy; and here and there we find a bud or flower,—very pale, and rather wet, and generally torn or imperfect; and then we agree that we had rather wait till March at least for primroses. The coltsfoot is in flower, and the winter aconite: and the early moss shows brilliantly green beside the draggled and faded grass. The hazels show their young catkins; and the buds on the honeysuckles are full, and even green. One can scarcely tell the colour of the sky, it is so veiled with yellow haze from the sunshine: but, if we stay out long

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enough to see the sun go down, the eastern sky shows the palest blue, and the western the palest green of the year. The evening star comes out almost the moment the sun has disappeared; and its mild lustre is as beautiful as on a summer night. When the bat flits before our faces, the boys again observe that we are having no winter, and that they do not believe they shall have their skates on once during the whole holidays.

This weather, with its south-west wind, is pleasant in its way; but it is not the seasonable January that we like best; and we are obliged to remember that the cold weather will come after the boys are gone back to school; or, if it does not come at all, it will be a bad thing for the year and its crops. The soil will miss the frost, and there will be a world of trouble with vermin.

We relish sunshine, to begin with, on a proper January day; but we like it to light up a very different scene. There should be a thick natural blind of white frostwork on the window-panes,—so thick that Harry has to breathe himself out of breath before he can make a space large enough to see out of; and then, the spikes of ice close it in again in a few minutes. His sisters look anxiously to their flower-stands behind the drawing-room curtains, lest the hyacinths and primulas should have suffered from being near the window. If it is as cold to-night, they will put the curtains between the flower-stands and the windows. We see the gardener visiting his cabbage-beds, as soon as it is light, to see how his vegetables get on without any covering of snow. He did hope, as he told me last week, that the snow would come before the frost; but it has not. He makes up his notion of the benefits of snow from the two applications of the word *starve*. People are starved with hunger and also with cold; and, as snow protects plants from cold, he supposes it protects them from hunger, and insists that snow is the most "nourishing" thing for them that can be. He is therefore only half satisfied with our doings when we cover rows of vegetables with spruce boughs or straw. It is better than nothing, he admits; but it does not "nourish" like snow.

The boys were out before it was light, throwing down the first hot water of the day on the great slide in the yard, where there is a convenient corner for the purpose, admitting of an ample career. As they have this and sundry other opportunities among the ditches of the neighbourhood, as well as on the park mere, I expect them to help me in chipping up and cinder-strewing any slides which may appear on the causeway, or in the road, where elderly people, and children, and horsemen, and carts will be passing all day. The housemaid is busy rubbing off every speck of rust from every pair of skates in the house. In spite of the bitter north-east wind, we have to bear the breakfast-room window open for a time, that Harry may attend to his pensioners, the birds, who can get nothing out of the iron soil on such a day. He is so bent on giving them some of his own bread and milk, that we let him try; and he soon perceives that dry bread crumbs are better, as the spoonful of bread and milk is immediately frozen into a lump, which the birds cannot manage. He finds the chaffinches rather rude to the robins, and the sparrows pert as usual; but the two blackbirds are really tyrannical. He wants to send them away till the others have had their fill, if that could be done without putting the whole levée to flight. We advise him to lay out a good handful, and shut the window, leaving the creatures to settle their own affairs. Being assured that blackbirds, like other creatures, stop eating when they have had enough, he consents: but he stands watching; and we know, by the impatient tap on the pane, when the blackbirds are there again.

Fishes have their claims as well as birds, he admits; and when his brothers are going to make an air-hole in the pond, he goes with them, lending his little help to batter the ice with the iron bar which he could not lift. How the fish can live in such a cold place is past his comprehension; but, if the frost last long enough, he will see them so far alive as to come to the hole to be fed. We promise to try to show him something more wonderful. There are leeches in the pools on the moor; and if we can find a shallow pool, frozen completely through, we shall find leeches inclosed in the ice, like flies in amber: and if gradually thawed, they will exhibit a very good state of health. He is impatient to be off to the moor; but his father and brothers must have their two hours' skating first. He is to help the gardener now, and next say his lessons; and then we will all go together for a long walk on the moor.

The gardener supposes, as regularly as such a frost comes round, that we shall soon be hearing of the market gardeners "down there" (near London) making a show of themselves,—walking in procession, with a bunch of black vegetables dangling from a pole for a banner—to beg charity. He "don't like the idea of those frozen-out gardeners; for, if they knew their business, there is plenty for them to do, in frost as at other times." Their ground ought to be trenched before, to benefit by the frost, and the fruit-trees dug round; and then there is the forking and breaking the surface in the noon hours, whenever the soil is soft enough; and the spreading the manure: and there is much time required in seeing that there is warmth enough everywhere in the greenhouses, and the pits and the frames; and the airing of everything at proper times;—quite enough, all these together, to fill up the short days. He is sorry for them when hailstones demolish their greenhouses and frames; but they might deal with such a thing as frost without humbling themselves to beg. It is impossible to convey to him what the scope and character of market gardening for a metropolis are, and what the peculiarities of demand for vegetables are in the midst of a London winter; and he is therefore hardly aware of his own advantages in a position where, happen what may, he cannot be frozen out of home and bread, and into debt and hunger, or the workhouse.

The skating company on the mere is much like every other skating company on every lake or large pond in the country. There are the ladies in chairs on runners, wrapped in furs, and propelled by husbands or brothers over all the smooth parts of the surface. It is wonderful how they can bear sitting still, or facing such a north-east wind.

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General Jackson,—not the most jocose of American Presidents,—advised a foreign lady not to take the trouble to go sleighing on a New England winter day. He could tell her how to do the thing without leaving the premises. She had only to sit still in the porch, with her feet in a tub of ice, with an attendant at each side, to ring a bell at one ear, and blow the bellows into the other. He omitted the considerations of the landscape, the rapid motion, the merry companionship, and the difference between the dinner-bell and the musical tinkle of harness bells. But in our park, the ladies on foot have all the advantages of the occasion, except the gliding motion of the ice-chair, while exercise is requisite to enable them to bear the keenness of the wind. After having seen what everybody could do, from the squire's sons who skated geometrical figures, to the cottager's little one who could tumble down and get up again without crying, we finally start on a brisk march to the moor.

As we leave the concourse in the park behind us, we remark the sharpness of every sound. The shout and the laugh from the throng, the striking of the church clock, the crack of the waggoner's whip,—all have a metallic tone which is peculiar to such a temperature. Some customary sounds are absent, too. The mill is stopped, we see as we pass. Prodigious icicles are hanging from the water-wheel. Everything that should wave and wag in the air is still. Every twig is encased in ice; and even the hips and haws that remain shine red through glass. If we switch the hedge as we pass, we send a shower of shivered ice down to the ditch, and the birds rush away, frightened at the clatter. The cattle seem to be the most perplexed. Surely they must have had drink given them at home; yet some are snuffing about the pond in the field where the blue surface looks like very still water. Their breath wreathes along the surface; their noses flinch from the cold; but they try again, and then look round them with a pathetic low of complaint. Off scamper Ned and Charley to break the edge for them; and we are half a mile forward before they overtake us.

They find us talking of a frost-music, which I consider the most moving of all Nature's melodies. I was once belated in Canada, on a fine winter day, and was riding over the hard snow on the margin of a wide lake, when the most faint and mournful wail that could break a solemn silence seemed to pass through me like a dream. I stopped my horse and listened. For some time I could not satisfy myself whether the music was in the air or in my own brain. I thought of the pine forest, which was not far off: but the tone was not harp-like; and there was not a breath of wind. Then it swelled and approached; and then it seemed to be miles away in a moment; and again it moaned, as if under my very feet. It was, in fact, almost under my feet. It was the voice of the winds imprisoned under the pall of ice suddenly cast over them by the peremptory power of the frost. Nobody there had made air holes, for the place was a wilderness; and there was no escape for the winds, which must moan on till the spring warmth should release them. They were fastened down in silence; but they would come out with an explosion when, in some still night, after a warm spring day, the ice would blow up, and make a crash and a racket from shore to shore. So I was told at my host's that evening, where I arrived with something of the sensation of a haunted man. It had been some time before the true idea struck me; and meanwhile the rising and falling moan made my very heart thrill again.

After this, everybody wants to listen at the pools on the moor; but even our most rapid frosts falling on our broadest sheets of water, cannot produce that Canadian music. There is always some margin or chink left, and the freezing process is more gradual. So the lads all propose to go to Canada, by-and-bye.

We find a pool that harbours leeches; and we obtain two or three leeches preserved in ice. They are packed in ice and moss, to try their fate in Harry's hands. There is still some running water, we find,—the little spring-head that I have never seen stopped; and there we find wagtails still hopping about and balancing themselves on the slippery stones.

If we could spend twenty-four hours here, and see without being seen, we might get a view of almost every living creature that dwells within a wide circuit;—of all, I mean, who must drink to live. To such a runnel as this, not only do all the birds of the woods, and the hedges, and the furrows, and the reeds come to drink; not only these and the cattle and sheep and dogs, but the wild creatures from the earth, and the water, and the air;—all that are not in their winter sleep, or kept at home by man, resort to the running waters last spared by the frost. Hence, as my wife reminds us, the gifts of woodcocks and snipes that come in after some continuance of seasonable weather in January; and hence also, the girls add, the influx of pet birds, and dead and dying birds, into all the cottages round in a sharp midwinter.

The country-boys, whose proper work is stopped by the frost, turn sportsmen in their way. They lie in ambush with net or sieve near such a spring-head as this, and clap their apparatus down upon their victims. It is almost a relief to hear of bird-pies, at such a time, instead of seeing the little prisoners die off from mismanagement. Certainly, if we enjoy lark puddings, other people may relish pies of other small birds; but, on the whole, one would rather the whole company of little birds were left to try their chance of getting through the winter. We, at all events, shall let them sip at their spring, and go and come in peace.

This bitter cold weather is the time for the wild creatures to show themselves boldly. We have not to tremble within our own doors at the howling of the wolf, as many inhabitants of foreign countries have. There the mountaineer, or the farmer among the moors, or, as now in Virginia, the settler among lapsed plantations, hears the wild howl from the rock or the waste, and knows that the creature is savage with hunger. We have not to fear for our own throats, when out in such nights, but we have to keep a keen watch over our young animals, and especially the poultry. Foxes, weasels, strange dogs and cats intrude

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themselves in such seasons when their various kinds of prey are in hiding. The pullets have begun to lay; and their eggs are very tempting to their enemies.

The turn of the thieves comes when the snow has fallen. Every track and tread is known; and no creature in hiding, if not winged, can escape, after going abroad over new-fallen snow. Every hollow in a tree or a hedge, every refuge in a stack, or a drain, or a cluster of rocks, is discovered and routed out. The rat-catcher is summoned with his dogs and other apparatus: and a farmer should be a good-humoured man, to look on while the vermin is driven out of his stacks and barns. It is enough to make a man cross to see how much of his hard-won produce has gone to feed and fatten a barrow-load of foul thieves like these. He makes a great clearance of them now that the chief part of the mischief is done.

He cannot find in his heart to stop the compensating process—that of obtaining game by tracking in the snow — though the law forbids the practice, in fear of the extirpation of the races. Hares and rabbits are seen on more tables than at any other time of year. The deer are kept within hail by making them comfortable within certain limits. There is food strewn for them in the most sheltered wood-paths: and the keepers pass

from stack to stack of the fodder laid up at regular stations, forking out the food, and seeing that the cisterns are neither empty nor frozen.

We have seldom to wait long for the snow when the weather is so cold as I have said. As we descend from the moor, we see the sky becoming dark and heavy to windward,—the air seeming to thicken there from minute to minute. Nobody is very sorry that snow is coming, though some would perhaps put it off for just a very few days, for the better prosecution of skating. Not a few wish the snow had come before the hard frost. Here it is, however, sure to do much good.

Yet, it appears to me, there is some admixture of undefined dread in many minds with the welcome given to a genuine snowfall. The question is, when will it stop? This is the question, spoken or suppressed, uppermost in the minds of dwellers among hills, or in the north country.

This is the occasion on which we have to learn to go without news, to wait for our letters, to undergo the inconveniences of non-intercourse beyond our own parish. On looking out in the morning, we find as much snow piled up as window-sill and ledges will support; and the sashes must be opened at top. Man and boy are everywhere sweeping tracks to coal-sheds, dairies, and entrance gates. There is no post at breakfast. After breakfast every householder goes out upon his roof, with assistants, and clears the gutters, and throws over all the snow he can reach into the middle of the road or street, before the traffic of the day begins.

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In quiet country places it takes a few days' treading to make the snow-paths pleasant for walking: and if the fall is renewed, those who are able to stay at home do not think of stirring abroad. This is all very well for people who are under no particular anxiety, and who have warm and pleasant homes, and plenty to do and to think about; but the case is a very trying one to lonely dwellers in rural districts, and to travellers and their families. My wife says her mother never got over the impression of the great snow of 1814, when the children were too young to know anything more than that something terrible was apprehended. Their father was on a journey in the north, on business; and he was not heard from for three weeks. At last, fourteen horses dragged the mail-bags through one snow-drift, in Northumberland, of miles in length, and sixteen horses through another in Yorkshire, longer still; and a handful of letters arrived at once. In the interval the mamma was crying; the confidential maid was crying; the snow filled up the window-panes so that the children could not see out; and it was impossible for them to attempt a walk. The sky was leaden-coloured. There was silence in the parlour: and in the kitchen there was a dreary chill, from the snow being set to melt within the fender. Dim notions of their father being all alone in the snow, haunted them, or of his being lost on a wild moor. No wonder their mother looked grave through life, when a heavy snowfall was coming down.

In a lone house, I have known a young couple snowed up on the only night of the year when their only servant was absent. She was on a visit, and was to return the next morning. It was so dark that master and mistress overslept themselves. They heard nobody stirring, and no hot water appeared. When they found how late it was, there was no fire, nor any means of making one. The master doubted about reaching the coal-house; for the snow was piled higher than the house door. He tunnelled a way through, and, after a world of trouble, they got a fire and tea There was very little food in the house, as the servant was to bring a supply. They could do nothing but wait; and the sensation was of being stifled, as they were nearly enclosed in a snow hive. The butcher's man, in the middle of the day, observed the state of affairs, and found the maid crying desperately, at the nearest point of approach. She was soon restored to her kitchen and her duties: but the little household naturally watched the snow clouds very closely from that time forward.

Far worse is the trial at the upland grazing farm. It is a troublesome day to the women in all old-fashioned farmhouses, for the men are driven indoors, and they are sadly in the way. They close in round the fire: and if they do not get to disputing and being rude, they go to sleep, or drawl, and prose in the tiresome manner of their kind. Too often they drink. A very narrow sort of people are out of their place, in short; and they are disagreeable. But it is a dreadful time if any one of them is missing, or if there is reason to fear for the stock. The farmer himself, the shepherd, and any who will go, turn out into the falling snow, with tools and food, and lanterns and matches. No landmarks are visible, except a hill-top or some tall tree. The dark figures of men and dogs are watched from home, as they move slowly over the white tract. There is to be a light placed in a certain window, from the time it begins to be dark. Then follows the dreary waiting: and the return is sure to be more or less sad. The sheep cannot be all safe under such a burden of snow as this; and there is much to fear for the men. If the men come home safe, it is still dreary work. If the sheep are all dead, that is ruin, or something like it. If two or three are dead, of a small flock, they are sure to be pets, or to be thought so now; and there is the difficult task of carrying food to the survivors, and making them a shelter till they can be brought home. It is a melancholy way of spending a night,—digging out sheep, finding some stark and stifled, and the survivors needing to have their legs chafed before they can stand, and their stomachs filled before they can travel;—and all to be done by the wan light of a lantern, in a bitter wind, and among moving drifts, or a steady fall of snow. When two or three flockowners join company, they may set out more cheerfully; but they may find their sheep dead by hundreds,—perhaps not one left alive for anybody. In such a case, there is a wistful lingering,—a hope in one or another that two or three of the victims may yet be breathing somewhere under the snow, near at hand; and when they turn away at last, and sink into the drifts in the absence of any path, they feel as if they did not care to get out again. They would as soon go to sleep in the cold for ever as not, for they are ruined. They love their flock; and there the poor things lie dead! Life is a blank now; and the looking forward into life makes them sick at heart. They cannot see, as their friends might, that they will cheer up a little when they have got home, and told the news, and had food and sleep: but it is too true that many a man has been sunk in his fortunes for life by the calamity of a single snow-storm. As the arts of life improve, such misfortunes will be precluded. Meantime, there are cheerful aspects of a season of snow.

The gardener is pleased: and over wide tracts of wheat the snow not only shelters the young plant from the bitter frost wind, but, by enclosing it, prevents the radiating of its heat. The snow yields capital sport, too. Not only Liverpool merchants on their Exchange carry on a lively snow-ball war, and all boys, in all towns and villages, are at it all day long, when they can get out of doors; but there is the grave and exciting business of modelling in snow. In one place a man is built up,—a giant, if possible, and with limbs and nose so managed as that they will stick on till the frost binds them. Elsewhere it is a ship, or fortress; or Robinson Crusoe's island. Little children, who are more romantic than skilful, can at least dig themselves a cave to live in as outlaws, for the rest of their lives. As for me, my pleasure is in the colouring of the snow, as much as anything. I love to see it lying in little ridges on the tree boughs, bluish against the yellow afternoon sky; or, as I really have seen it in January,

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with the actual appearance of a tract of some red-hot substance, on a mountain ridge which received the full light of the sinking sun, no longer visible from below.

This second phase of January is by far the best. In the midst of it, we find ourselves, as is fitting, in the very coldest part of the year. Some wise people tell us that the 12th is, on the whole, the proper day to feel the extremity of English cold. We find the wind generally in the north or north-east, and the rain diminishing, after diligently replenishing the springs since September; and the days are not only lengthening, but becoming brighter while they last. The mists do not so completely fill the air, but rather float in horizontal sheets in the valleys, and lie low on the plains. In a mountainous country, one may now see the singular spectacle of a complete filling of a valley with pure white mist, that looks like a floor to walk upon. The opposite hills seem to be within a few yards, so that the very resident is puzzled, till some wooded knoll or rocky promontory shows itself above the surface, and helps to rectify the proportions of the scene.

If the third phase should follow, there is an end to the pleasures of the time, as far as they depend on the weather. If the wind goes round to the south-west or south, after the snowfall, we have rain and a rapid thaw, and (owing to our mismanagement) those disastrous floods which cost us so many lives, so much health, and so much food every year. Every country-gentleman who, like myself, has witnessed floods, and their causes and consequences, for a long series of years, is sick of the very thought of them. Not one inundation in fifty is at all necessary: and most of them are wantonly incited. I have observed how they have increased in my time; and I grow more and more disgusted every year at the apathy with which the nation sees the churchyards filling fast in flooded districts, the land turning into a swamp behind weirs, the banks of rivers falling in, the channels filling up; and all the land on both sides sending down streams through thousands of drain-pipes, while nothing is done to provide main channels and outfalls adequate to the relief of the land.

As a stir is at last making to obtain aid from the law, I will say no more now. The experience of last January, with its vicissitudes of weather, reflecting the peculiarity of the whole winter of 1859-60, ought to be enough to warn us against ever again allowing rapid and extreme alternations of weather to do us more mischief than is unavoidable. It should not be in the power of a speedy thaw after snow to lay under water more than a very small proportion of the soil of Great Britain; but while we let our low-lying rivers swell to the level of their banks in ordinary weather, and descending streams choke their own channels, we must expect drowned lands, diseased cattle, damp dwellings, the sweep of the fever, and a rheumatic and consumptive labouring population. If the passing-bell is always mournful, it becomes more and more so as age teaches us how wilfully and wantonly many are sent to the grave. On a winter afternoon, when earth and sky are grey, and there is not a speck of cheer in the whole landscape, except, perhaps, the red spark and yellow smoke of the forge below, the toll of the passing-bell strikes upon the heart. If we know it to be an aged person who is gone, the emotion is far from painful: but the probability is that some one has been prematurely cut off, through ignorance and apathy of some kind, when not from guilt; and this month the sound is singularly pathetic. The bells have but just rung in a new year of human life when, from the same steeple, comes the notice that some one has already dropped out of it.

There are some regulated pleasures this month; as the Twelfth Night celebrations, Plough Monday, and the holiday hunting from the Squire's mansion. We see the shops gay and tempting with Twelfth-cakes, and all manner of garnishing. We see the rural labourers, in old-fashioned districts, feasting and dancing to celebrate the first act of tillage for the new year. On dry mornings, when a touch of frost edges with rime the brown oak leaves and the green laurel, or the shining ivy, we hear the well-known tramp on the resounding road, and see the scarlet-coated gentry converging towards the meet; and great is the fun when every lad who has a pony, and every bird-boy who can command a donkey for an hour, scampers off to swell the rout.

Thus the weeks pass. Those which are packed most full of holiday pleasures must come to an end: and then is heard upon the road the other well-known tramp,—that of the coach team which conveys schoolboys in their season to the station whence they start for school. There is no use in dwelling on the parting, or on the dullness of the house for the rest of the day when Ned and Charley are gone.

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Goodbye, strange year, so fierce and yet so tender—
So hot with battle and so blind with tears;
To-day is thine, to-night the Almighty Lender
Resumes thee back into the timeless years:
Goodbye!

Not in a waste of sheeted snow thou diest,
Nor 'mid tumultuous echoes of the deep:
Grey placid evening folds thee where thou liest,
And modest airs caress thee into sleep:
Goodbye!

How calm a death for such insatiate warrior!
But sternest souls and maddest in the fray
Oft, ere they float beyond life's viewless barrier,
Reveal to love their chasten'd eyes, and say
Goodbye!

So, leave a blessing ere thou part for heaven;
Tell the fond earth she is not always thus;
Let some kind spirit with the morn be given,
And not to her alone, but ah, to us—
Goodbye!

To us, who long to go where thou art going,
To rise from self, and be for ever free;
To see the land with milk and honey flowing,
And say to memory, as we say to thee,
Goodbye!

Arthur J. Munby.

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LAST WEEK.

THE death of the King of Prussia is not an event of any political significance. For many years past this Sovereign had been morally and intellectually dead, and the Government was exercised by his successor—now King of Prussia in name, as he had long been in reality. The daughter of Queen Victoria is one step nearer to the Prussian throne. We ought to like the Prussians better than we do, inasmuch as we have so much in common with them : but the fact seems to be that this is one of the cases in which public considerations materially interfere with private feeling. The vacillating and selfish policy of the Prussians has from time to time been of serious injury to Europe. They have been almost worse than open enemies—they have been uncertain friends. There is a straightforward, honest stupidity about the Austrian Court which almost approaches to genius. The proof of the assertion is the actual existence of the Government of Francis Joseph. In his day, and in the days of his predecessors, the capital of the Austrian Empire has been upon more than one occasion in the hands of a foreign enemy and of an insurgent people. The Hapsburghs have had to fight for their lives in Hungary. and, in fact, only retain possession of that kingdom by the grace of a neighbouring Sovereign. But the other day they were beaten out of Lombardy, and the system of alliances and satrapies, by help of which they retained in their hands dominion over the Italian Peninsula, was shattered to atoms. Despite of all this, the young Hapsburgh remains true to the traditions of his House, and neither for fear nor favour will he consent to shape his course according to the necessities of the time. Soundly beaten in Lombardy, and with the thunder-cloud hanging over Venetia, he maintains the military and police system in Hungary as rigorously as though his exchequer were full, his subjects faithful, and his hands free. He is casting cannon, keeping up the *matériel* of war in the Quadrilateral, and violating the pledged faith of the Empire by giving a forced currency to paper money after the most solemn promises that no measure of the kind should ever be adopted. The scraps of constitutional powers which he offers occasionally to the notice of his subjects have certainly not found favour in their eyes, but, on the contrary, have rather inflamed the existing discontent. For all this—save in the matter of the Concordat—he will not budge an inch; but for aught that is known appears resolved to maintain the system of his predecessors, even at the risk of adding another and even a more significant name to the long list of banished and wandering Kings. We detest the tyranny of Austria, but we do not therefore look upon Prussia as the fitting implement for the regeneration of Germany. The *Junker*, or aristocratic party, is more powerful—less under the influence of public opinion at Berlin than at Vienna—and the Court at Sans Souci is more completely in the hands of these unlucky advisers than the Court at Schönbrunn.

What change may follow from the elevation of the Regent to the throne, it would be premature to predict; but certainly the actual King, during his tenure of office as Regent, did not display any very violent sympathy with the popular party, or with liberal ideas. There is just a hope that, though, whilst shining by merely borrowed light, he was unwilling to modify or interfere with the system of his predecessor, still, now that he wears the crown himself, he may adopt a wiser, because a bolder and more liberal policy; but the hope rests upon a very insecure foundation indeed. What the Regent was we know—what the King will be we must guess. It is a pity to write this—it is a greater pity that it should be true.

The late King of Prussia seems to have been, in many respects, a counterpart — though a refined one—of our own James I. He had the same exalted notions of the kingly power,—the same belief in the kingcraft as the first of our Stuart sovereigns. True, that in place of the Scotch dogmatism and pragmatic self-conceit of the first James, the chief characteristic of his mind was a kind of metaphysical dreaminess. This only amounts to saying that he was a German, in place of being a Scotch pedant. No doubt, after all due allowance has been made for the different epochs of history during which the two sovereigns lived, the German was a man of more refined and cultivated intellect than the Scotchman, and of a far purer moral life; but in the essentials of character they were the same. Had the German been Rector of the University at Bonn or Heidelberg, and the Scotchman Provost of Aberdeen, the probability is that each would have acquitted himself respectably enough of his duty in life; but, as kings, they were decided failures. Great hopes were entertained of Frederick William IV., when in the year 1840 — being then a man forty-five years of age—he ascended the throne of Prussia. During the days of his Crown-Princedom he had emphatically enunciated liberal ideas, and, as it was then supposed, only wanted the power to carry them out in fact. The brilliant, fickle, dreaming, over-educated Sovereign, was not destined to be any exemption to the usual rule that the Liberal Heir Apparent invariably turns out the Conservative King. Twice this was seen amongst our own rulers since the House of Brunswick have been called to the Three Kingdoms. George IV., as Regent and King, could not have turned a colder shoulder upon Fox and Sheridan whom he had loved and fondled as Crown Prince, than did Frederick William upon the advisers and companions of his earlier days. His schemes for the liberal regeneration of Prussia, after they had remained for seven years as mere dreams, finally obtained consistency in the ridiculous constitution of 1847, so shortly destined to be swept away by ruder hands than any which have yet wielded a German sceptre. The Provincial States were convened in one assembly at Berlin, and there was to be a house of peers in whom should be lodged the small instalment of real power of which the sovereign could make up his mind to divest himself.

A freer and more independent parliament sat in London in the days of Queen Elizabeth than was convened in Berlin in the year 1847. That

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terrible 1848 with its barricades, and mobs, and street-firing, soon put an end to that delusion, and the poor King of Prussia, who, but a few months before, had been dreaming of a constitutional government, after the fashion of the middle ages, might have been seen riding about the streets of Berlin, and fraternising with the mob, pretty much in the same way as Louis XVI. had done before him with the Poissardes and Sans-culottes of Paris, after he had been dragged away from Versailles. The meeting of the Frankfort Parliament followed. There was a time when, despite of all his mistakes, and all his humiliations, Frederick-William might, to all appearance at the time, have been the ruler of a free and united Germany; but he had neither the resolution, nor the ability,—not even the wish —to seize time by the forelock at so critical a moment. Called upon to make his choice between the princes and the nations, Frederick William deliberately made his election to remain true to his own order, and to defeat the liberal movement in Germany. He would not consent to be the nominee of his people unless the choice was ratified by the assent of the princes, and it was not very probable that they could be induced to endorse their own degradation. Frederick William gained for them that which was all-important for them as matters stood—time. Windischgratz and Felix Schwarzenberg were not men to lose so golden an opportunity; and the revolution was defeated in the south of Germany, whilst Frederick-William was talking fustian and prating about Schleswig-Holstein in the north, to the grief and astonishment of his own subjects and of Europe. The various States gravitated back to their former condition of subjection to the old despotisms, and of freedom in Germany there was an end for another twenty years. It would be idle here to do more than allude to the closing acts of his reign. Prussia was humbled to the dust before the arms of Austria in the affair of Hesse Cassel. She was made the laughing-stock of Europe on the question of Neuchâtel. The King had thought and energy to spare for the foundation of a bishopric at Jerusalem; but when he was called upon to bear a decisive part in that great struggle of the nations, which was finally played out in the Crimea, he was again found wanting to the occasion. It is now notorious enough that had he heartily united in counsel with England and France, that dreadful contest might have been averted, and with it the humiliation of Russia. As far as his Russian friends were concerned, he might in all probability have saved the Emperor Nicholas from a premature death, and the legions of Russia from annihilation.

The military power of Russia for aggressive purposes was broken for one generation at least; and who can tell how much of that internal agitation, which is now fermenting throughout Russia, is not due to the fact that the great military machine was thrown completely out of gear by the results of the Crimean war? That was the way in which Frederick William served those whom he wished to serve; but he generally contrived to order his affairs with such dexterity, that he inflicted the utmost possible amount of injury upon everybody, combining this happy result with the deepest humiliation of his own nation. The worst feature in his moral character was the inveteracy with which he united with the retrograde party in hunting to death the unfortunate liberals on the Upper Rhine, when the revolution had been suppressed—that party, of which, but a short time before, he himself had been the chief!

On the whole, when we look to their history since 1815, a European Liberal may well be pardoned if he doubts whether the Germans are fit for political liberty. Italy, enslaved as she has been for centuries, will in all likelihood be free before the country which so long oppressed her has shaken off the masquerades of the middle ages, and the dreams of the professorial chairs. Had the people been ripe for freedom, it is impossible that two such golden opportunities as 1830 and 1848 could have been so wholly thrown away as they have been in Germany. The Belgians and the Sardinians have put the Germans to shame; the Hollanders we always knew to be a more practical and efficient race. At the present moment, from the Rhine to the Russian frontiers—from the Baltic to the Alps—there is not a vestige of freedom to be found. The Prussians in particular, with some miserable show of constitutional government, are known to be ground down by the police, who trample under foot at their own arbitrary pleasure all guarantees for liberty and property.

In Saxony, again, it was but the other day so foul an aggression was perpetrated upon the person of a Hungarian refugee that a simultaneous cry of indignation was uttered by all civilised nations save those who speak in the German tongue. Even the Austrian Emperor shrank from concluding the foul business in which the King of Saxony had borne part. Such things are done, and the Germans have tolerated them now for well-nigh half a century—can the Liberals of Europe look at them otherwise than with despair?

What the coming spring may bring with it we know not; but it would be much to say that the nations have been reassured by the few words spoken by the French Emperor at Paris to the diplomatic body on New Year's Day now just past. Louis Napoleon looks forward to the maintenance of peace in consequence of the perfect agreement and harmony which reign among the sovereigns of Europe. The contrary is notoriously the case. Never since the fall of the first Napoleon was Europe more signally divided into two camps. Never did what Prince Metternich used to call "a war of ideas" appear to be more imminent. It is utterly impossible at the present period of the world's history that Austria can renew the scenes of carnage and oppression in Hungary and Lombardy which marked the resumption of her dominion in those provinces after the last great revolutionary struggle. Nor is there anything to denote that the Emperor and his advisers have abandoned the traditional policy of the House of Hapsburgh. Such being the case, we rather hope for a peaceful year than expect it.

For the moment, however, we are content to adjourn all our anxieties about the future destinies of Europe. Let the shadows—even the shadows which warn us of coming events—be shadows, for

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just now we are concerned with a terrible fact. On Thursday of Last Week, intelligence was received in England that by a decision of the Canadian judges we were to be made the agents of the Southern Slave-holders in the United States. The Fugitive Slave Law was to be applied to us. The infamous decision in the Dred Scot case was to apply to us. The municipal regulations connected with slavery, which hold good not in all, but in some of the United States, were to apply to us. The famous boast that English soil would never more be outraged by the footsteps of a slave—because with his first gulp of English air the slave was free—is now to be a boast indeed, unless order be taken in the matter. The British nation will answer the challenge, and lift up the gauntlet which has been cast down before them, as with one voice and with one hand. Come what may—this thing shall not be. This is no dispute about a boundary, or an Oregon question, or a fishery, or a distant islet; but in it is involved a principle which is more precious in our eyes than fortune or life. British hands must never wield the scourge, or knot the halter for torture, or stay the slave who has endeavoured to escape from his hard bondage, even if, peradventure, he has shed human blood in the attempt to recover his freedom. Upon such a point we will have no half-measure or compromise—it must not be. What is it to us if a slave-owner, or his agent, who throws himself across the path of a fugitive slave, and compels the unfortunate man to slay him in self-defence, has been stricken to the earth? There let him lie. His blood does not cry to us for vengeance. It is not for us to appease the ghost of him who would have hunted his fellow-man to destruction, because he tried to escape from bonds and torture.

The decision of the Canadian judges is technically wrong, as well as an outrage and a blasphemy against that great common law of Nature which existed before statutes were passed, or treaties agreed upon between nations. Even if the choice were forced upon us of whether we must violate the national faith, or sin against that great canon of Nature which obtained the force of law when man and his fellow first drew the breath of life upon this earth, let our choice be for the lesser, not for the greater crime. As matters stand we are not driven into such a strait. We have bound ourselves by treaty with the United States to give them back their murderers — amongst other offenders—in return for our own; but the question remains—who is a murderer? We are not bound to accept the definition of the United States Courts upon such a point. We are ready to give up all persons who would be considered murderers in the dominions subject to British rule, and in return we only ask for the extradition of those who would be regarded as murderers in the United States, as well as in all civilised nations. We deny the right of the United States to screw up a minor offence, or indeed an act which in no wise bears the character of murder at all, to the degree of a capital crime, and then to force their arbitrary definition upon our acceptance. As our judges read over the affidavits and depositions from which they are called upon to infer the probable guilt of the prisoner, they must read them over, not piecemeal, but from the first word to the last. They must consider whether the offence charged would have amounted to the crime of murder in the dominions of Great Britain. Here are the very words of the treaty, and of the Canadian statute upon which Chief Justice Robinson grounded the decision which, unfortunately, was adverse to Anderson, the fugitive slave. "If a person be charged with the commission of murder, piracy, arson, robbery, or forgery within the United States of America, and 'charged upon such evidence of criminality as *according to the law of the place where the fugitive* or person so charged *shall be found* would justify his apprehension and commitment for trial, *if the crime or offence had been there committed*,' he may be apprehended, and his case is to be heard, and considered. If, on such hearing, the evidence be deemed sufficient by law *to sustain the charge according to the laws of this province*," the fugitive is to be given up with the usual solemnities, and in the usual way. Such being the law—here are the facts. On the 28th of September, 1853, in Haward county, in the state of Missouri, the coloured man Anderson—so it was charged—wilfully, maliciously, and ferociously stabbed and killed one Seneca T. P. Digges. Anderson was a runaway slave, Digges was endeavouring to arrest him, and it is not contended that Anderson could have escaped capture at the hands of Digges otherwise than by striking him down. We pass over all technical objections to the contents of the depositions, although in the opinion of Mr. Justice M'Lean—one of the judges who considered the case—these were sufficient to warrant the prisoner's discharge. Assuming that Digges held a lawful warrant, or was properly authorised by the law of the United States, to arrest Anderson, and that Anderson slew him whilst endeavouring to effect his escape, this would be a *primâ facie* case of murder. But as the judges read on they would find that Anderson was a runaway slave; and as, according to the law of the place in which he had been found—namely, Canada—the existence of slavery was not recognised, his apprehension was unlawful. The prosecution was, above all things, bound to show that the apprehension, or intended apprehension, was lawful, and according to law—which, in Anderson's case, by British law and the law of Canada, it clearly was not. If we once permit ourselves to be ousted from this view, any foreign nation with which we may have an extradition treaty may foist on us twenty arbitrary definitions of the crime of murder, and compel us to be the reluctant instruments of their tyranny.

What would become of the political refugees on our shores if this adverse doctrine should prevail? Great Britain would soon be found emulous of the recent infamy of Saxony. After all, it is less disgraceful to give up a Hungarian refugee to the tender mercies of the Austrian Emperor and his police, than to deliver a fugitive slave into the hands of a Missouri slave-owner. We await in extreme anxiety the arrival of the next mail that we may know if the appeal in Anderson's case has been allowed.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER a fruitless search for the hotel mentioned by Silvain, as that at which a letter would be left for Mr. Lygon, the latter, whose nature was unsuspicious, endeavoured to retain the belief that a hasty message had been misunderstood, and that the Frenchman had accidentally directed him wrongly. But the sorrow, the excitement, and the irritation which Arthur had gone through since his wife's departure from England began to tell upon him, and some darker thoughts than he had ever before admitted to his mind took the place of the frank and unsuspecting feeling with which he had been in the habit of receiving the statements of others. The transition was unfortunate for his own happiness, for a nature like his, once warped, often proceeds to subtleties of distrust and suspicion which tinge subsequent life with a gloom that no conviction can ever entirely dispel. The steel once tarnished may be polished never so carefully, at times the spots will re-appear upon the blade.

He lost little time in returning to the avenue.

Expecting that Mrs. Urquhart might be denied to him, he had made up his mind not to leave the house again until he had had an interview with her. But her part had been assigned to her, and Lygon was at once admitted.

Bertha rose, gave him her hand, and spoke before he had time to address her.

"Arthur, what must you have thought of my unceremonious flight?"

"I might understand that, Bertha," he said, almost sternly, "but not the absence of another, whom I come back to seek. Where is Laura?"

"That is what I have to tell you, but pray do not agitate me, for I am very ill."

"You have only to answer a question."

"First I must tell you that Henderson is out of her wits with alarm at the terrible mistake she

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has committed. She caused her French lover, Silvain, to deliver to you a message that was never intended for yourself, and which must have taken you to Paris on a useless errand. The blunder was, I believe, his rather than hers, and the message was for a friend of Mr. Urquhart's, a gentleman who has been hunting him up about some railway business."

Lygon looked at her with a keen glance.

"It matters little, Bertha. All I want at this moment is to see Laura. Where is she?"

"She has gone into Paris—Henderson says that she told you so."

"Where in Paris?"

"I am not to tell you."

"Bertha, what kind of an answer is that?" said Lygon, turning white with anger.

"You may frighten me to death," said Bertha, crying, "but I can make you no other."

"Is it—do you dare to tell me—that my wife has given you this injunction."

"I do not say that, but I am not to say more."

"Bertha, beware what you are about! The woman who lends herself to help a separation of man and wife incurs an awful responsibility."

"It will all come right," sobbed Bertha; "but do be patient."

"Are you mad, Bertha? Patient, with a wife whom I loved better than my life, suddenly abandoning her home and her children, and hiding herself from me, as if she were criminal? I command you to disobey any orders, and tell me where my wife has gone."

"You—you have no right to command me," stammered Bertha.

"No," said Lygon, more calmly. "That is true. But Robert Urquhart has a right, and he shall exert it."

The tone of his voice was merely expressive of determination, but Bertha's conscience read menace in it, and she suddenly sprang to his side, and fell on her knees.

"No, no, Arthur. For God's sake, spare me. He will kill me."

"What can you mean?" replied Arthur Lygon, astonished.

"Nay, I know what *you* mean," said Bertha, clutching at his arm. "You came here prepared to use your power."

"My power," repeated Lygon, in sincere bewilderment.

"You told me that you knew all," said Bertha, agitated. "But I implore you, Arthur, spare me."

Lygon's mind was too painfully filled with his own trouble to comprehend hers for the moment. But as her meaning dawned upon him, he raised her from the ground, and said—there was both indignation and kindness in his voice—

"I am ashamed to understand you, Bertha. More ashamed that you should be able to think such a thought of me."

"You do not mean to reveal to Mr. Urquhart—"

"Silence, Bertha, for very shame! What have I done to deserve such a question? Why, have I not found my only comfort in believing that Laura has foolishly come over here in order to serve you in some mysterious way, and what other belief could make me forgive her wild step? I wish to know nothing but where I can find her. Tell me that."

"If I refuse, you will call on Robert to compel me?"

"You will not refuse."

"Indeed I must."

"And your reason for refusing?" said Lygon, trembling with passion.

"That I must not say."

"Bertha, I will have an answer, even if I am driven to demand it through your husband. I will ask him for nothing but that simple answer. It will be your own act if he, in obtaining it for me, asks why Laura has come here."

"She did not come on my affairs," said Bertha, in an undertone.

"What!" cried Lygon, fiercely. "Nay, you are not speaking truthfully," he added, in a gentler voice.

"You have a right to insult me," said Mrs. Urquhart, piteously.

"Neither right nor wish," was his reply, "but you must not play with my feelings. Let me hear the truth from you."

"So you do. It is not on my business that Laura has come over, but on her own. I swear it to you."

"Be it what it may," said Arthur, "I am upon her traces, and I must find her. There is no time for soft language, Bertha. I must know where she is, and I once more demand it of you."

"You will compel me to speak," gasped poor Bertha, terrified. "There is no kindness in your voice now——"

"Nor in my heart, nor will there be until I am satisfied."

"He will kill me," muttered Bertha.

"What is this madness?" he replied, angrily. "You are only asked to give up a secret that you have no right to keep. Five words between us and we part for years. Tell me what I ask—but beware of deceiving me again."

"Again?" said Bertha, looking up at him with tearful eyes.

"You are talking to gain time," said he, impetuously. "Do you think I believe that your adroit servant made a blunder in the message? Now, the truth."

"Laura is on her way back to England."

"To her home?"

"I do not know."

"Am I to believe this?" said he.

"Shall I swear it to you?"

"No," said Arthur, with a certain cynicism of tone which struck on the heart of Bertha.

"I understand you," she said. "You *think* that—that an oath would have no terror for me. But you are wrong, and I am telling you the truth now. Laura is returning to England. You cannot follow her to-night, for the last train has left. Look at the paper for yourself."

"Mrs. Urquhart," said he, with a strong effort suppressing all manifestation of feeling, "I must hear more from you. I have a right to ask more, and whether that be so or not, I do ask more. My own heart furnishes me with excuse for aught

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that may seem harsh, and I can bear to be trifled with no longer. Tell me the business which brought my wife to France."

"I do not know, I do not know," repeated Mrs. Urquhart.

"That must be false. You have no secrets between you."

"This is one, Arthur. If I made a guess I might deceive you, which I have no wish to do——"

"Well," said he, thinking a gleam of light might be afforded him.

"It may be—I almost suppose it is—something about my father."

"About Mr. Vernon?"

"Yes. When he came over to France during his troubles, he was engaged in a dark plot against the Government. I never understood it, but there were oaths and secrets, and the police knew all about it. From what Laura has said, and it was very little, I think that she has been summoned on a matter of life and death, but more I know not. I do know that she has accomplished her business, and is returning."

"I have no means of knowing whether you speak truthfully or not; but remember, your story will be tested in a few days."

"Do not threaten me until you find I deserve it."

"It will then be too late for threats," said Arthur Lygon. "Remember that; and if you are withholding the truth from me, you have still an opportunity of setting yourself right."

"I have told you all I know," said Bertha, "except Laura's address in Paris, and that would be of no use to you, because she will have left before you could reach it."

"That is true," said Arthur. "Still give it me, as proof that the rest of the story is true."

Bertha took a card from among several that lay in a China basket, and gave it to Lygon. He saw that it was a woman's card, with an address, and placed it in his pocket.

"There are no more trains," Bertha repeated. "You will stay here to-night, though it will be sad for you, Robert being away, and my being so ill. But we will make you as comfortable as we can."

"I thank you, Bertha, but no. I shall be off by the earliest train, and it would disturb your household. I will sleep in the town here, and trouble no one. Farewell. If you are behaving loyally to me now, I shall have an opportunity of saying to you—or, better, of showing you that you retain a friend, although——"

"Although Laura will be ordered never to see or correspond with me again."

"I am too much in the dark to speak of the future, but no one as yet has had a right to call me a harsh judge. What I may be under disloyal treatment, I know not."

"If you knew all, Arthur, you would indeed pity me."

"Indeed I do, and should, if I only knew that you were a wife who dares not tell her husband every thought of her heart. I do indeed pity you, Bertha."

"Laura tells you every thought of hers," said Bertha, holding his hand.

"I believed so. I believe that she will do so. When I believe that she ceases to do so I shall have no wife. Farewell, Bertha."

He pressed her hand, and went out into the now lovely summer night.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN Mrs. Hawkesley had departed on her visit to her father at Canonbury, her husband, after making short work with the end of an article in which the House of Hapsburg was strongly, yet affectionately, recommended by him to set itself in order at the earliest opportunity, started for his walk to Brompton, to visit Laura's children. But a man must mind his own business, more or less, whatever may be happening to his friends, and in the Park Hawkesley encountered the manager of one of the pleasantest of the London theatres.

"Stand and deliver!" said Mr. Aventayle. "I see a manuscript in your pocket, and of course it is the piece you have promised me so long. This is not exactly in your way from Maida Hill to the theatre; but perhaps you were going to read out to yourself *sub tegmine fagi?*"

"This is not a manuscript," said the author, laughing. "Do you think I would trust myself with valuables in solitary places where managers and such like walk about? This is a kaleidoscope, which affords you a good opportunity for introducing an appropriate quotation—

'Each change of many-coloured life he drew.'"

"But he—meaning you—did nothing of the sort. There's no getting anything out of you. I suppose you do not care about money."

"Not the least. If I take it, that is only for form's sake. I write purely to do my fellow-creatures good."

"Do me some, and give me a good piece," said Mr. Aventayle. "We want it particularly, just now."

"Just now I am particularly busy, my dear Aventayle."

"Of course you are. But, come, promise, and then I shall get it."

"I cannot say, to a week, when I can take it up."

"I don't want you to say to a week—say it to me. *Laughs*," added Mr. Aventayle, mockingly quoting a stage direction.

"If you can make such epigrams as that, you might write your own pieces," said Hawkesley, "and not try to demoralise me by giving me such work. But walk with me this way, that's a good fellow, for I have a call over yonder to make."

"What, at the French Embassy? Going to ask the Ambassador for the loan of a few French plays," laughed Aventayle, a gentlemanly and accomplished man, out of whom not even the troubled politics of management had been able to make what the necessity of self-defence makes of a good many of us, both in and out of management. They walked on in companionship.

"Nonsense apart, Hawkesley, I should be very glad of a piece from you just now. We are getting capital houses to the *Bright Poker*, and long may they last; but I want to be ready with something else the moment that flags."

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"I can't write Bright Pokers. I am a moral man, and the father of a family."

"There's nothing immoral in our piece, come, young virtuous. You have not seen it."

"I have, three times."

"More shame to you, if it isn't correct. Shows your real nature. But the fact is, there is not an objectionable word in the whole thing."

"No. But the plot is simply an illustration of how a married woman can conceal a disgraceful intrigue by the most enormous lying."

"Ah, and don't she lie well? But it's a French notion, and French morals are admitted *duty* free."

"Very neat, but proves nothing, except, as I say, Aventayle, that you ought to write your own pieces."

"I prefer paying you. And I don't pay badly, do I, come?"

"No, on the contrary. But let us see, you have been debilitating your company, haven't you?"

"No such thing; so there's not that excuse for you."

"I saw in a paper that Mrs. Dumbarton was leaving you."

"Well, she doesn't attract, and she doesn't play half as well as she did."

"You thought differently at Easter."

"Certainly, because she was then coming to me, and now she's going away. If she comes back at Christmas, I shall be prepared to think about her as I thought in March, namely, that she is a capital actress, and a very disagreeable woman. That is the only change in my company, Hawkesley of Maida Hill."

"No, no, Salter told me that Miss Pinnock was leaving you."

"Salter lied. Miss Pinnock some time ago got from her Catechism to her Marriage Service, and the result may detain her at home for a moon or so, but she will be quite ready to play your young lady. Any other mean excuse for not getting to work?"

"Well, I'll look up some jottings I made for a piece, and let you know whether I see my way in it."

"You will do nothing of the kind," said Aventayle, taking out a memorandum book. "You will state to me here, with your foot upon your native park, and your name McHawkesley, what day I am to receive the first act. Now, let me write it down."

"You shall have the first when you have the rest. They say women and fools ought never to be allowed to see anything in an unfinished state, and though you are neither woman nor fool, I have a prejudice for extending the rule to people who have to get up a play."

"My dear fellow, I should not think of looking at your manuscript until I got the whole of it. But I like to have an instalment under lock and key. When will you hand over the whole?"

"Don't tie me down, that's a good fellow. I'll not lose time."

"Will it be a full piece?"

"Yes, I will use as many of your stars as I can, never fear."

"None of your scoffs. It is the best company in London, which is the reason, Mr. Hawkesley of Maida Hill, why I apply to the best author to write for it. Give me an idea of the scenery, and I will set Vister to work."

"Well—first act, before a gentleman's country-house."

"Manly sports on the lawn, greased pole, and leg of mutton, running in sacks, and all that. Or, I say, take it into Scotland, and let the tenants be putting the stone, tossing the caber, and so on. The Highland dresses will look well."

"Keep such things for your pantomimes, sir, and don't seek to degrade the drama. Upon second thoughts, I don't mind some targets, and girls in archery costume, only your girls are such guys."

"I tell you that you don't know the company. Little Fanny Tudor is as pretty a girl as is on the stage, and then there's Maria Lincoln, come, and Julia Greening, come, and Loo Fennell, come. If those girls are guys, I wish it was fifth of November all the year round."

"I forgot your resources. Well, make a pretty house, and a lawn, and have Fanny, and Maria, and Julia, and Loo taught some shooting, and I will let you know about the second act as soon as I can."

"But make it as great a contrast to the sunshiny lawn as you can. You couldn't lay the next scene down a coal-pit, could you?"

"And end with an explosion of fire-damp, and call the piece 'Davy's Lamp.' Thank you."

"Hm," said the manager, "many a good word is spoken in jest, and if I don't have a fire-damp explosion before long—never mind. Do you copyright the suggestion."

"No, I present it to you."

The manager, with a look of affected solemnity of the most awful description, made a note in his pocket-book.

"By the way," he said, closing it, "I have something else to say to you, which is also of a professional kind. I have had a piece sent to me by a man whose name I never heard, but the drama is full of good stuff, only crudely put together. I have a strong notion that it would do, but it wants manipulation. Would you give it a look over, and see whether you agree with me. If you would do the necessary work to it yourself, of course it should be worth your while, but, anyhow, look it over."

"Send it me. Who's the man."

"His name is Adair. Probably a *nom de plume*. But he is a very smart fellow, and has a genius for 'situation.' Also he writes a beautiful hand, which is more than can be said of every friend of mine."

"Distrust any man who writes too good a hand, that is, a hand in the least degree better than mine."

"I shall be happy to distrust him; but if you think as well of his piece as I do, I shall also be very happy to play it."

"Then you can give me a couple of months longer for mine."

"Not an hour. If you were ready to-day, I would underline it to-morrow, and I will on

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Monday, if you will give me the title. There is confidence."

"Assurance, you mean," said Hawkesley, laughing. "But I'll think of you. I am going to call in Gurdon Terrace, on some little people."

"Will you like to give them a box?" said the good-natured Aventayle. "I dare say I have got one."

"Sorry you have any to give away; but I will take it notwithstanding, as they are too young to be hurt by your bright poker. Thanks."

They parted, and Charles Hawkesley went on to Lygon's house.

"Uncle Charles!" cried Fred with a great shout, as his friend entered. "Walter," he bawled at the top of his lungs, "Here's Uncle Charles!"

Walter was immediately heard jumping down stairs half-a-dozen at a time, with intermediate lumps at the landings.

"Easy to see that mamma and papa are away, Master Walter, by the way you come down. How are you, my boy?"

"Oh, all right," said Walter. "How's Aunty?"

"Very well. Will you come to us to-morrow, and spend the day?"

"I will," said Fred, promptly.

"Who asked *you*," said his uncle, laughing.

"I had rather not come, uncle," said Walter. "Papa and mamma might come home while I was away."

"And don't you think they could bear to wait for you till night?"

"Yes," said Walter, his eyes filling with tears, "but I couldn't bear to wait for them."

"My boy, I dare say it is lonely for you," said Charles Hawkesley, taking his hand, "but of course they will soon be back."

"Have you heard from them yet, uncle?" said Walter, anxiously.

"Well, no; but the reason for that of course is, that as they must be coming home so soon they don't think it worth while to write. Don't you think so, Price," he said to the domestic, a very respectable and kindly-looking woman—just the person to be left in charge of children, and extremely unlikely to invoke any form of Bogey to aid her.

"That would be a very good reason, sir," she said. "Could I speak to you for a moment?" she added.

"Certainly, Price. I'll come to you boys directly; stop here in the dining-room," said Hawkesley, and he went into the little room with the servant.

"I beg your pardon for taking the liberty, sir——"

"No liberty, Price. What can I do?"

"You said you had not heard from master or mistress, sir."

"I have not, nor has Mrs. Hawkesley, and I thought that Mr. and Mrs. Lygon might have returned, and I walked over to see. Anything wanted that we can do?"

"I hope you will not think me overbold, sir," said Price, closing the door, "but there are some very strange things going about, and I would not for the world they should come to the ears of the dear children; and if you did not think that my mistress would be back soon, and it would not be putting you out of your way, it might be best for them to stop at your house with their cousins."

"That was what I came to tell them, but certainly not for any reason like yours. What do you mean, Price?"

"You have heard nothing, sir, about my mistress?"

"Nothing, except that her father accidentally mentions in a letter that he has not heard of her, or from Walter, lately."

"That's Mr. Vernon, sir?"

"To be sure—who else?"

"And it was he," said Price, "who came here late last night. I judged as much from the description."

"Came to see the children?"

"No, sir, they were in bed, and I had gone out to get some things in. Mr. Vernon came in a way very unlike a gentleman—I mean he rang the servants' bell, and when Eliza answered it, he only said he wished to know if all was right. She did not know him, and thought there was some trick of a thief, so she very properly put the chain up, and let him speak across it. He asked some curious questions which she did not quite understand, and said we were to write to Canonbury, which gave me the clue."

"But there is nothing to be uneasy about in that. He evidently did not wish to alarm anybody, but wanted to satisfy himself. He is an odd man, but very kind-hearted."

"I cannot see why he should ring the servants' bell," persisted Price.

"Perhaps he took it for the visitors' bell."

"Maybe, sir, but I cannot say I like appearances," replied the domestic. "However, that would not be much, one way or the other, and I should not have felt it my duty to speak about it, if it had not happened to tally, as I may say, with what you said."

"But you spoke of strange things, Price. There's nothing very strange in a grandfather coming to inquire after his grandchildren, ringing the wrong bell by mistake, and frightening a girl who did not know him."

"No, sir, there is not. But I wish that was all. The tradespeople in the neighbourhood have heard something else, and it has been brought to me. I only wish it could have been kept to me, and I know I used that language to Eliza, for repeating some of it, that a woman should not use to a young girl unless she richly deserves it."

"I know well, Price, that you would be as much vexed at any false rumours that affected the house of your master as he himself could be."

"I hope so, sir, for he and my mistress have been as kind as kind could be to me, and mine I may say, for Mr. Lygon got my half-brother Henry a place on the railway, and as for my mistress, when I was ill, no sister of her own could have been better nursed. And there ought to be a law for making people hold their tongues, unless they can prove it," said Price, getting a little confused in her usually excellent English.

"Prove what, Price?"

"Sir," said she, in a lower tone. "I don't

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believe a syllable of it, and if it were true, there is something at the bottom that we know nothing about, but I believe it to be all a wicked lie. But some of the tradespeople that we deal with have had a hint that Mrs. Lygon will not come back."

"I should like six words with any of them who have dared to circulate such a slander," said Hawkesley, "and you will tell me their names."

"It is very strange, sir, that three of them should all have heard of it at once, that is Turton, the baker, and two others. But what is strangest is that Watkins, the grocer, should have heard it, because we have dealt with him only for about ten days, and my mistress has been there only once, with Miss Clara."

"That would certainly look as if—but, Price, you may speak frankly to me, indeed it is your place to do so. What do you understand to be meant by 'not coming back?'"

"Well, sir, people who like to spread such stories are generally cowardly as well as base, and take great care what words they use that may be brought against them. I dare say that if my mistress were home to-morrow, as I heartily hope she may be, and anything was said to one of the tradesmen about the report, he would pretend to be horridly shocked at being accused, and swear that he had never dreamed of such a thing, and very likely want to punish any poor servant who had mentioned what he said. But a good deal can be said without many words. I am ashamed to repeat such a thing, sir, but the story is that Mrs. Lygon has gone off with a gentleman."

"Run away from her husband?"

"It comes to that."

"What scoundrels these fellows must be! One wonders that their own interest does not shut their mouths."

"I thought of that, sir, but it seems the notion is that Mr. Lygon will give up the house and go away, so there will not be much more to be got out of us. But not a shilling from this house shall be spent in any of their shops again, unless my mistress chooses to do it after she has heard of their slandering tongues."

"Well, Price, you know as well as I do that the story is a confounded and malicious lie, and we will think hereafter about punishing those who have dared to spread it. Meantime, you had better adhere to what Mr. Lygon told you, and say, from me if you like, that as there is no change in the condition of the lady whom your mistress went to visit, she has to remain in the country."

"That I certainly will, sir, and gladly."

"And for fear such a notion should reach the children, I will take them back with me. Send them over a carpet-bag to my house with what they will want for three or four days. I trust that their mother will be back, before that, to see after them."

"It would be too bold in me to ask you, now I have told you everything, whether this news breaks on you for the first time, sir?"

"Price, you are a faithful and trustworthy person, and deserve every confidence I can place in you. Your mistress has no more gone away with a gentleman, in the sense in which these rascals use the word, than you have, but I have a reason of my own for thinking that she has made an enemy of a very bad and malicious person, who has somehow heard of her absence, and takes advantage of it to spread lies. When the time comes, we will punish that person in a way that shall satisfy everybody. Meantime, we must be prudent."

"My mistress have an enemy! I am sure, sir, that she has never done anything to deserve one."

"Never, but that is no rule, Price."

"I will pack the carpet-bag for Master Fred, sir, and Master Walter, if he will go."

"What makes you think that he will not wish to go?"

"You heard what he said, sir."

"Ah, yes; he is a very good affectionate lad, but he must not stay moping here, especially under the circumstances."

Mr. Hawkesley intimated to the boys that they should accompany him to Maida Hill. Usually such an announcement from him was a subject of exultation, for in addition to the enjoyments of his cheerful house (one in which, as Mr. Vernon had written, there was a hermetically sealed study, which prevented Hawkesley from being the terror and bugbear of everybody who played a tune or laughed a laugh during the author's hours of work), the evening was often made brilliant by a visit to some theatre, and the still more exquisite delight of a manly supper with uncle at some oyster-room or other place of terrible Sybaritism.

"Would you take Fred, uncle?" said Walter, "I had rather stay at home."

"My dear boy, your parents would much prefer your coming to us."

"They have not told you so, uncle."

"No, my dear Walter. But you must be quite sure that your aunt and I know what would please them."

"I think you only say it in kindness, uncle, because you think that we are dull here. Fred is, and I wish you'd take him off; but I am not dull at all, and I am writing out something that I know papa will like."

"But you can write at my house as well as here—better, as you have said more than once, sir, don't you recollect?"

"Ah, that was in the days when this house was happy," said Walter, bursting into a paroxysm of tears, and throwing himself into his uncle's arms.

"When this house was happy," repeated Charles Hawkesley, holding the sobbing boy kindly, and striving to calm him. "Why, this house has always been happy, and is going to be happy for many a long day to come. What can you be thinking of, Walter?"

"Will she ever come back?" faltered Walter, shaken with his agitation.

"Mamma. Why, of course she will. What has put such a strange idea into your head? For shame, Walter. It is a baby's question when its mother goes out of the room, not the question of a schoolboy who reads Eutropius."

"Whisper, uncle," said Walter, clutching Hawkesley's hand convulsively, "and don't let little Fred hear. A boy I know told me that it was all about London that mamma had run away."

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"And where did you hit that boy?"

"Aha!" said Walter, with a sort of spasmodic laugh, and a proud smile through his tears; "he was thirteen, but that didn't help him, uncle. I blacked his eye, and as for what he got in the mouth, look here," and he showed his knuckles, which were still bleeding.

"Sent him down, I hope."

"He fell down and wouldn't get up, and I kicked him soundly. I hope it wasn't cowardly, uncle, to kick him when he was down, but it wasn't my fault that he wouldn't get up. A butcher said it was right," added the boy, pensively and gravely.

(To be continued.)

A RUN UPON THE CHESIL BANK.

IN a previous Number* we took occasion, while describing one of the chief breakwaters now in course of construction on our coasts, to advert briefly to the beach of the Isle of Portland, or, as it is locally named, the "Chesil Bank." Those of our readers who did us the honour to make one of our party on that occasion will remember that we promised to give some additional details of this remarkable bank at a future time; may we hope they will not be disinclined to accompany us once more while we endeavour to fulfil our pledge?

Presuming, as in duty bound, the day to be fine and breezy, that we have left the little town of Weymouth some four miles behind us, given a parting glance at those very common objects of the shore with which all sea-side visitors and admirers of Mr. Leech are so well acquainted, paid our halfpenny at the "ferry-bridge" which unites the beach and the mainland, and crossing, we stand ancle-deep in small pebbles. Dismiss from your mind at once, dear reader, all your commonly received ideas of the general peculiarities of a beach if you would understand what this one is like; let Brighton, Hove, and Eastbourne fade from your recollection; banish Folkestone and Hastings, Ventnor and Sandown, from your thoughts: we tread no common pebbles. Before us is a steeply sloping wall of shingle rising some thirty feet above our heads, and, almost washing our feet; the calm ripple of Portland Roads breaks on this hither slope of the bank. Struggling with many slippings and sinkings to the summit, another sea stretches out before us, downwards towards which again the beach gently slopes. We stand upon a comparatively narrow isthmus of pebbles, the sea landlocked and quiet within, white, restless, and limitless without. At about a mile to our left the beach strikes the island of Portland, and is rapidly lost in its cliffs, while towards the right it trends away ten miles or more from where we stand, the grey brown tint of the stones about us gaining a ruddier hue as they recede, till in the middle distance the shingle looks like a long dull red line parting the blue and white water; gradually this too becomes more aërial and refined, till it is finally lost in a reddened haze on the view horizon.

Strolling as well as the nature of the ground will permit us towards Portland, we soon become aware of a sensible increase in the dimensions of the bank; its height and width become greater, and the pebbles larger and larger as we advance. In the opposite direction the reverse of this takes place; the beach dwindles slowly mile by mile, and we need only walk far enough to find the big stones dwarfed to the size of eggs, then marbles, and, lastly, gravel and sand at the Eype rocks some two miles beyond Bridport. It would probably take any one of our party many weary marches over this treacherous heavy ground before he could tell, within a long, long way, the position in which he stood upon the bank by reference to the size of individual pebbles; yet in days of high duties instead of French treaties, when profits on contraband goods were large and smugglers many and cunning, the experienced crew found plainly marked milestones in every pebble even in the darkest nights, and could tell within a very little at what distance from the island a run had been effected.

The independent position of the beach is by far its most striking feature, continuing, long after its novelty has ceased to astonish, to suggest the inquiry, How came this pebble isthmus cutting the blue bay in half, and leaving Portland perhaps the most problematic island in the world? For we suppose that, judged by the standard of Goldsmith or Johnson, the term is misapplied. If an island, to be truly worthy of its name, must necessarily be completely surrounded by water, then is Portland a peninsula; if, however, it is sufficient for the attainment of insular dignity that a patch of cliff, some seven miles long by three miles wide, should be detached from the mainland by an intervening space of five miles of blue water bridged only by a thin streak of beach, then do we set both geographer and lexicographer at nought, and dub their technical peninsula a practical island.

The interest of this little philological difficulty does not last us long in the immediate presence of the "previous question," How did these pebbles get where we see them? Did they rise one fine day bodily from the bed of the sea, and form the bar by some sudden cataclysmic effort? Then, too, setting aside this problem for a moment, we face another equally puzzling question. Where did they come from? We have been many a time over every inch of the white cliffs of Portland; we have seen them from above, from below, and from the water; we have examined the published geological sections of the island, yet nowhere within its boundaries have we been able to discover a single stratum from which the stones about us could have been derived. They are for the most part chalk flints, with an admixture of darker-coloured pebbles from some older formation than the island sufficient to give the reddish tinge to the bank. Let us fare forth for a long imaginary ramble with two or three representatives of the general contents of the beach in our pockets, and try to track them to their original source. Recrossing the ferry-bridge we find the mainland to be a continuation of the oolitic strata of Portland, and following the coast line we pass Langton, Abbotsbury, Burton, and Bridport, with the same

* See Vol. I. p. 67.

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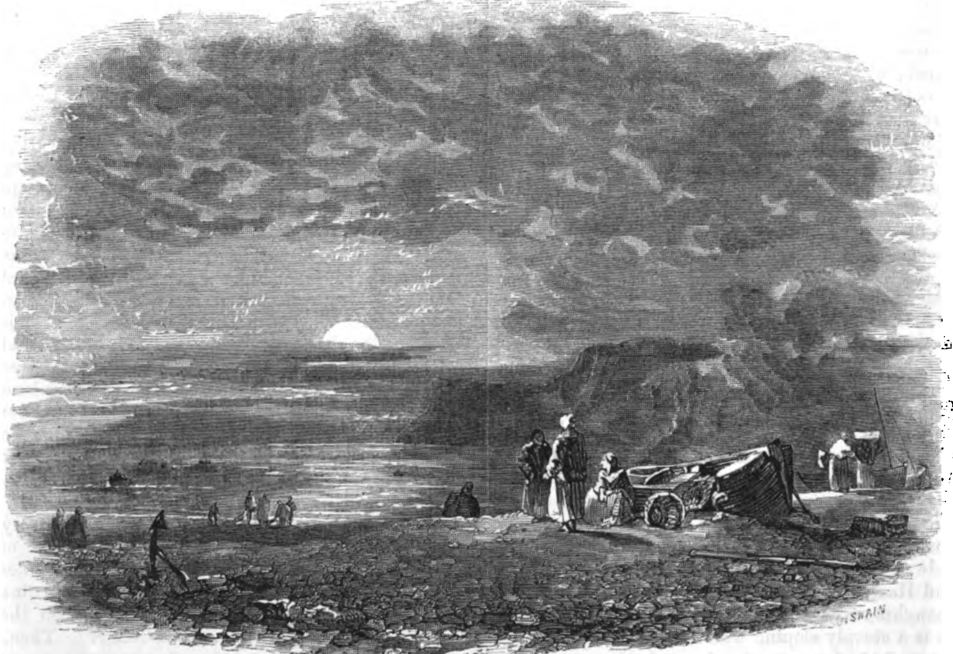
or allied formations beneath our feet. On to Lyme Regis, with its famous liassic strata fruitful in fossil monsters, but barren of either of the objects of our search. Already we have travelled twenty-five miles from our starting-point, and have not found so much as a single flintstone.

At last, between Lyme and Axmouth, we come upon chalk and green sand extending almost to Sidmouth, and yielding flints in abundance. We have reached the great storehouse of this material from which the Chesil pebbles have been derived; and this is the nearest possible point from which the greater part of the bank can have come. But the reddish-brown pebbles, where are they? Not much farther ahead. Leaving Sidmouth, we enter the new red sandstone, and moving still westward we shortly reach the pretty little village of Budleigh Salterton. Our march is done, and we halt upon a beach of which every pebble is more or less a counterpart of the specimen we brought along with us. The sandstone crumbling year by year, attacked by gales and washed by water, drops on the shore an inexhaustible supply of these red-brown stones whose travels begin only in the fall from the parent rock, and end upon the strange isthmus thirty miles away. Matter, like man, plays many a part before it leaves the world's stage. The flint and the sandstone pebble are dug up again for modern uses by that inexorable utilitarian Nature, after a measureless period of repose which has succeeded their last appearance. Both have helped at least once before to line the shores of a primeval ocean with red beaches such as those of to-day, for both come to their work rounded



Fishing by Moonlight off the Chesil Bank.

and waterworn, marked unmistakeably with the badge of their previous employment æons ago.

Now, if the diligent reader will take a map of England and glance at the towns we have named, he will see that we tax his powers of faith somewhat largely when we bid him believe that every pebble which rolls beneath the feet of Portland fishers has crossed the West Bay, performed a journey varying in distance from thirty to forty miles, and been finally arrested where we now stand. Such, nevertheless, is the fact, and the south-westerly gales which blow upon these coasts throughout almost the entire year, are the immediate agents in the work: these, sometimes slowly, sometimes rapidly, as calmer or rougher times prevail, clear out ton after ton of pebbles from the localities mentioned, and roll them along the shore; the exodus o stones going on until some obstacle crossing the path of the prevailing wind arrests their progress:—this obstacle is found in the Chesil Bank.

But how (formidable a barrier as it now is) did it first become so? Why, when once started, did the pebbles stop, thus suddenly arrested in mid-ocean? The reason is very simple, although not obvious. From Portland to the mainland there runs at a few feet above the low-tide level a bank of stiff clay covered up deep in pebbles now and hidden from all observation less searching than that of the boring-bar; by this the travelling stones were first checked and accumulation begun. Through how many circling years the winds and waves have been about their task we know not, yet it is not probable that this action is a very slow and lingering one; the sea, which can patiently gnaw century after century at some

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refractory rock which falls at length, can prove itself a quick worker on occasion. At times there come fierce gales with their attendant heavy ground-swells. As the quick waves strike the beach the hollow roar of rolling pebbles marks each receding column of water; masses of shingle are scoured away while the hurricane lasts: one night of this fierce work will carry back into deep water from two to three and four millions of tons of stone, yet these, on the return of calmer weather, will all be thrown in again in the course of very few days. We have chosen a bright summer day for our visit, a day when the West Bay is lazily flinging in its five or six waves per minute; when white-sailed yachts and tall ships slide between us and the horizon; when the gulls are wheeling peacefully about their nests among the cliffs, and all Nature suns herself and rests. The mention of ground-swells, however, reminds us of times when storm instead of sunshine has tempted us with its grandeur, and we have crouched here behind the fishermen's semicircular rough stone curtains erected for protection, holding fast on while the hard rain and blinding spray struck the face, striving to see, through the mist-darkened shadows of a November afternoon, the mad sea wrestling with the cruel wind. At times like these the Chesil Bank is not a place of the pleasantest associations; the long ridge of stone breasting the channel rollers becomes with every storm a strong protection or a deadly danger to the seaman's life, just as it happens upon which side of it his ship lies. A terrible place for stranded vessels is this red beach when the south-wester is fairly loosed; at such times the waves which fall in here are terrific,—one breaker alone falling full upon a vessel of large size, which had driven on the bank, has been known completely to destroy and break it to pieces. Terrible as such a lee-shore is, however, some very remarkable escapes have happened here. The 23rd of November, 1824, for instance, was made memorable on all this coast by a night of severe storm. On that night a small sloop bound for Portsmouth found herself unable to "fetch" Portland Bill, and lay at the mercy of the gale, with the certainty of stranding upon the beach before her. With death imminent, which no human effort seemed able to avert, the captain tried one last desperate venture for life. Abandoning the vain attempt to make an offing, he put the vessel's head straight for the bank. Thus with sail upon her, the howling wind driving her at speed towards the shore, the dark November night around her, she held on a steady course. During the few minutes which elapsed before she struck, the hard tense silence of suspense reigned from stem to stern; there was nothing more to do now but wait with the grim quiet courage of sailors the coming blow. One chance for life remained, and only one. A lucky wave might lift the craft with way upon her high above the deadly hammer of the breaking seas; so it proved: just when the black shore showed close through the night, one huge roller took the little vessel, aided by her momentum, rapidly onward and upward almost to the very crest of the beach. How the grip of that painful silence loosened, and what a thankful cheer rang out against the gale as with comparatively little damage the good ship Ebenezer settled down, with her keel deep in the pebbles, out of the reach of anything more dangerous than the spray flung at her from the disappointed surges!

But we have digressed considerably, while as yet we have not exhausted the interests of the bank itself.

It seems odd here—as indeed it does on any beach—to find that an inversion of what we should naturally consider to be the order in sizes of the shingle from low-water line upwards takes place. The biggest pebbles are always highest up, lining the high-water mark. Now, having already shown that the pebbles are brought to shore by the action of the water, the inference seems clear that this element would be so far like most other bearers of burdens that it would take the first opportunity of dropping the heaviest portion of its load. We should expect then to find the large stones at low-water and the gravel at high-water line; this is precisely what does not take place, for we all know that it is towards the sea we must walk to come upon the finest portion of a beach. Here this is strikingly apparent; the shingle diminishing very regularly in size as we descend the slope.

We account for the paradox thus: when an advancing wave throws down upon the shore its load of pebbles and retires, it is evident that the discharged freight will lie more or less closely packed just in proportion to the size of the stones which compose it; that sand or gravel, for example, will form a comparatively flat floor over which the following wave will roll the larger pebbles, until the smallest among these have packed into one another with sufficient approach to a level surface to permit the water to pass over them without any great tendency to move them further forwards. The largest sizes, however, can never lie so closely together but that enough of their surface will remain exposed to allow of their propulsion by a wave of very ordinary force; hence their travels will not end till the sea, like a successful Sisyphus, has lodged them at high-water line.

This law, which is in force on all beaches, has a perfectly gigantic exemplification at Portland; for not only is it here true of the slope comprised between tide-marks, but its action is extended throughout the whole length of the beach. It has previously been mentioned that both the general dimensions of the bank as well as the individual sizes of the shingle diminish from the island to the Eype Rocks: it seems natural to suppose that the gravel to the westward has been derived from the large stones east, presuming these to have been driven from east to west, and ground smaller and smaller with every mile of their progress. But the winds to whose efforts the existence of the bank is due, blow, as has been shown, from the opposite quarter to that which would be required for this result, and the rule just stated furnishes the true explanation of the difficulty. Large stones and small are brought together to the beach, and whether between tide-marks or along the whole length of the isthmus, it is the rolling of the larger pebbles upon the smaller in

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the manner shown, which in the course of ages has produced the perfect sorting that we see.

The black boats which dot the bank at intervals throughout its whole visible extent attracted the attention on our arrival; huge and unwieldy as they look at close approach, they are picturesque enough, even in the deserted condition in which they have stood all the morning with their bows looking toward the West Bay. Everything on board is neat and snug, with no sign of present use or movement about them. A stranger's innocent ignorance might be pardoned for supposing that they were beached and done with for some time to come; that work was over, and no fish in the offing. A crowd of men and lads, however, of the true fisherman type, come running along the beach, and form groups around each boat in our neighbourhood. Something is evidently in the wind. It may be worth our while to get near a crew, and rest upon the clean pebbles while we watch them. How listlessly the men loll about in various attitudes of repose. A few oldsters—lookers-on like ourselves—sit apart in knots calmly chatting, while the lads, true to their instincts, are skylarking about the beach. Each of these groups in their way forms a strong contrast with the keen-eyed look-out, who stands alone high up upon the shingle, with quick eyes fixed seaward. For a quarter, or perhaps half an hour, the whole keep thus, when, at a signal from the watcher unmarked by us, every figure starts into action; the young ones run for a few moments rapidly towards the boat, but the older hands almost immediately resume their lounging postures. We turn to a neighbour to ask the reason for this sudden change, who points to the adjacent boat, which we see has been beforehand with our friends, and is already on the water. "First come, first serve," is the rule upon the beach; and hence the returning inaction. No long time passes, however, before all are alive again; another signal from above, and the two stout lads, already in the boat, seize the bow-oars. Some six men fall in line on either side with hands upon the gunwale. A shout! a bend of the muscular backs, and she glides grating rapidly over the pebbles, the men running at her sides till her bows touch the water; on the instant the bow-oars are dipped and her head kept seaward, while, with her momentum still upon her, the launchers have flashed knee-deep through the waves, and with one quick spring together are over the side, clasping each an oar. The steersman shouts, "Give way!" the blades dip, and, settling down steadily to their work, the crew soon leave the shore behind them.

The afternoon closes while we sit waiting the return of the boat; at length she nears us, borne on the summit of an advancing wave; the rowers back her towards the beach, a rope is flung ashore, and now pull together men, and jump eager boys from her sides, waist deep in the water to help her onward; lay the oars crosswise upon the pebbles; once more together with a will, and your craft is high and dry.

And now for the fish. Bobbing up and down with every ripple, a semicircle of cork-floats tells us the position of the net; the busy crew haul upon the lines, and every minute the dancing curve lessens in diameter. Women have come upon the scene, and creels are countless. Flash! A single white belly glistens in the moonlight; the corks come closer and closer; fish after fish shows his glittering sides above the water, and in a minute more the red pebbles gleam with their living load; thousands upon thousands of jumping and writhing mackarel are lying on the bank, while men and women rush, creel in hand, upon them. Picking and sorting, though profitable, is poor work in a picturesque point of view, and we leave our fishermen busy at their closing labours; not, however, without a tribute to the courage, endurance, and skill these men have often shown in other work than their immediate calling. When the dark times of sea life come, when the moonlit water of this placid evening has become the deadly foe with which to struggle for the dear life, then has many a shipwrecked sailor had cause to thank God for the bold and hardy life and training which have helped to make the beach fishermen ever ready to brave danger, or, if need be, to face death when the need arises.

We have said nothing of, nor will our space allow us to do more than briefly glance at, the water on the inner side of the bank. This, after passing Ferrybridge, changes from an open bay to a creek, having the beach and mainland for its respective shores. At Abbotsbury the creek widens into a seeming lake of large size. Here there is a swannery and duck decoy, while the water is the resort of wild fowl innumerable. Over the wide flat shores of the mainland the rudely built swans'-nests lie thickly scattered: these are deserted now, but a stray egg here and there tells of addledom and blighted parents' hopes, while hard by the brood of brown cygnets, essaying a first swim, speaks of successful sittings. At the right season too, if fond of wild fowl, we might find pleasure in watching the water black with coots, terns, and duck, or follow behind the sheltering curtains of the decoy the knowing tactics of the little dog who is so valuable an ally to the seductive tame birds. To all these things together, with the bank of whose chief points of interest we have endeavoured to give some general idea, we bid farewell, trusting that our tramp over the pebbles has not tired our reader's mental legs. In these days of Alpine clubs and muscular science, it may seem presumptuous to speak of physical fatigue in connection with any explorations short of a hitherto unattempted glacier; still, to those having scanter summer holidays at command than the happy fellows who can spend their six weeks among the Upper Alps, we can strongly recommend for geological and zoological interest, for picturesque beauty of a very singular and unusual order, as well as for a right down hard day's march, a run upon the Chesil Bank.

DANIEL PIDGEON.

NIOBE.

(FROM THE GREEK.)

WITHIN this tomb no corpse was ever laid,
To hold this corpse no tomb was ever made,
But tomb and corpse in one are here display'd.

E. A. BOWRING.

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THE FATE OF TAN-KING-CHIN, A BRITISH SUBJECT.

The following narrative of a tragedy which occurred at Amoy, in 1851, will not be uninteresting to the English reader, now that so much attention is directed to Chinese cruelties. It is one of many acts of barbarity and insolence perpetrated by the mandarins, known only to the few concerned in them, and passed over almost unnoticed by the home government; yet to the encouragement which such mistaken forbearance or supine neglect has given to the Chinese, may we in great measure justly attribute the present war.

I went up to Amoy early in December, 1850, to keep house for my brother at the British Consulate. Several Englishmen of distinction returned to Hong Kong, just before my departure northwards, after sojourning some time at Amoy. They had experienced much courtesy, had freely visited the objects of interest in the city, and met with every consideration from the Chinese authorities, so that I little dreamt that the peaceful and friendly relations, which seemed to exist between natives and foreigners, were likely to be broken during my proposed stay at Amoy. The first fortnight passed happily enough, and I found never-failing interest and amusement in rambling through the populous and picturesque city. Amoy is built upon an island, and is said to contain nearly a million of inhabitants. Like all Chinese cities it is surrounded by a wall, which in this instance is so massive and broad, that four or five men can walk abreast upon it. There are numerous gates, not only in the walls, but also in the streets; these are shut at six o'clock in the evening, and strictly guarded, though not so rigidly, I believe, as at Foo-chow, where, when once closed, they are not opened even for the Viceroy.

The British Consulate is placed outside the walls of Amoy, upon a spot chosen with a view (though a mistaken one) to health. No position could well have been more unfortunate, for it is two miles from the European Hongs, which are situated upon the sea-shore, and the city lying between the two, communication might at any moment be cut off.

One day, towards the end of December, my brother and I went to call upon Captain ——, who was confined to his house by illness. As we passed through the corridor which led to his room, we heard a low monotonous voice reading aloud, and, listening, caught some sentences from one of Sir Walter Scott's novels. The reader was evidently a foreigner, from his peculiar accent, but his command of the English language was remarkably good, the only slip in pronunciation which we heard being once when the word "chess" occurred, and was transformed, somewhat to our amusement, into "cheese." When we entered the room we saw a grave-looking young man in a Chinese dress, sitting, with an open book in his hand, by the sofa upon which lay the invalid. Upon seeing us he rose, and with a low bow left the room. Interested by his intelligent countenance, I inquired from Captain —— whom he had found capable of reading English so well, and was informed that the person in question was a Straitsman, born at Singapore, a registered British subject, and employed by Captain M'Murdo, Messrs. Jardine's agent, as an English clerk.

"Moreover," added Captain ——, "he is a Christian, a quiet, well-behaved fellow, a distant relation of the military mandarin in command at Amoy; his name is Tan-King-Chin."

On the third of January, 1851, we were all electrified about nine o'clock, A.M., by a message sent from Captain M'Murdo to the consulate, claiming the protection of Mr. Sullivan, the consul, for his servant Tan-King-Chin, who at four o'clock that morning had been carried off by an armed force under the command of the Chinese Colonel-commandant. At least eighty soldiers surrounded the house of their victim, and forcing an entrance through the roof, captured the man, and carried him off to the yamun of the Taoutae, the newly arrived Intendant of Amoy. Mr. Morrison, the interpreter, and the vice-consul, proceeded at once to this official, to demand the prisoner as a British subject. On arriving in the presence of the Taoutae, they presented the proofs of registration, but the mandarin flatly denied the truth of their statements, and said that Tan-King-Chin had confessed himself a Chinaman. In vain the English officials urged the fact of registration, and promised that, were the prisoner guilty of any proved crime, the consul would cause him to be punished. Their efforts were without success, and they returned to the consulate.

Upon this, Mr. Sullivan and the rest of his staff donned their uniforms, buckled on their swords, and proceeded in state to the yamun of the Taoutae. We watched that little band depart with beating hearts, for though brave was their bearing, their numbers were few, and we could not tell what might be the issue of this interview. When they entered the presence of the Intendant, the consul at once demanded the surrender of the prisoner. He met with a blank refusal. Nothing daunted, he persisted in his demand, brought forward the Register Book of the consulate, wherein was the entry. He proved that the Straitsman had been registered twice, once in July, 1849, again in March, 1850; he urged that he was in the employment of an Englishman at the time of his capture, and promised, first in words, then in an official letter which he wrote and sealed in the presence of the Taoutae, that were Tan-King-Chin really guilty of any conspiracy against the Chinese government (which was the alleged excuse for his arrest), he should be tried and punished by the British representatives.

When the conference had lasted about three hours, the commandant, Colonel Tan, made his appearance. He was a smooth-faced, oily mandarin, who had always affected intimacy with foreigners, and to him Mr. Sullivan appealed, requesting him, as a friend, to try and persuade the Taoutae to deliver up the unfortunate man. Colonel Tan appeared to yield to his entreaties, and conversed for some minutes in a low voice with the Intendant. He then told Mr. Sullivan that both he and the Taoutae would lose caste and influence with their people if they gave up the prisoner in that yamun, but if he and his com-

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panions would return home, Tan-King-Chin should be sent to the consulate about an hour after their departure. For some time Mr. Sullivan hesitated, fearing lest this offer should prove a mere ruse to gain time to send the man away from Amoy; but when at last the Intendant agreed to give a written guarantee, sealed in due form, that the prisoner should be sent to him at half-past six that evening, he gave way. There was nothing in the manner of the mandarins to excite suspicion, and the English officials, considering their point gained, returned to the consulate about five o'clock in high spirits at their success, which they laughingly attributed to their swords and cocked hats. When my brother related this scene to me, I exclaimed, "Why did you not bring him with you? I feel certain the man will never come back alive?"

"Nonsense," replied he, laughing; "why we have the written promise of the Taoutae, so let us have dinner at once, that we may be ready to welcome him when he arrives. He certainly has caused us some trouble to-day."

We sat down to dinner, but a sad foreboding filled my mind, and though my brother did his best to appear careless, I saw that my words had roused his suspicions; that he was anxious, and listened for every sound. The windows were wide open upon the court-yard of the consulate, and I kept glancing out into the darkness. About twenty-five minutes to seven I saw some torches pass, and exclaiming, "There he is!" I started up and went to the window, where my brother joined me. A chair was borne into the yard, accompanied by an officer and torch-bearers. The officer delivered the card of the Taoutae to one of the servants who was standing by, and when his men had set down their burden, they all fled from the consulate, as if the Angel of Death had pursued them.

My brother rushed into the yard, and, going up to the chair, said, "Well, Tan, you are a lucky fellow, and may be very thankful that you are safely back in English custody."

No answer.

Startled and alarmed, Mr. T—— put his hand into the chair. Alas! my mournful forebodings had been too true. The Taoutae had indeed sent back Tan-King-Chin, *but he was dead!*

The English consul, who had some friends dining with him, came hastily down stairs, and, calling for lights, had the roof of the chair torn off, for it was one of the small common ones, and only thus could the body be got out. A little warmth still lingered near the region of the heart, and two medical men who examined the corpse agreed that he must have been dead about an hour. Hideous marks over the legs, ancles, and spine, and other parts of his frame, told too well the sufferings which had destroyed the life of this strong and healthy young man.

I cannot describe the horror and excitement which this foul deed caused at the consulate. Here was a British subject, acknowledged to be such by the Taoutae and Colonel-Commandant, taken from his home, and deliberately murdered in cold blood; whilst, to crown the insult, his dead body had been sent into the yard of the consulate (which every Chinaman would consider pollution), and the deed was stamped as the act of the Government by the official card of the Taoutae.

We all felt that the sword of death was suspended over our heads. No help was at hand. Even with the merchants, whom Mr. Sullivan summoned to a council, the English scarcely mustered twenty-five men. The brig-of-war stationed between Amoy and Foo-chow was on a cruise to the latter place, and it seemed as if the opportunity of her absence had been chosen for the perpetration of this outrage. The gates of the consulate were shut, arms were looked up, cleaned, and loaded, and then a long and anxious consultation was held as to the steps to be taken in this emergency. Mr. Sullivan dared not send an official letter to recall the "Serpent," for fear of exciting the attention of the Chinese, so one of the merchants wrote a business letter, and under cover of "some opium pigeon," the news of our peril was sent off express to Foo-chow.

At last, when every precaution was taken, my brother came to my room, and we talked over the dreadful occurrence, and our own danger. I asked him whether he thought it probable that the Chinese would fall upon us that night. He looked very grave and sad as he answered,

"We are in the hands of God. He alone can take care of us."

The great dread of death, death so horrible as a Chinese massacre, overwhelmed me, and I trembled as I laid my head upon his shoulder.

"Never mind," whispered he, "I will shoot you before the wretches shall touch a hair of your head."

Oh! my countrymen and countrywomen who live at home in comfort and security, whose quiet stream of existence is scarcely ever ruffled by a single breath of fear, think what the life of those must be who go to distant lands to serve their country, and face danger in such dreadful forms, that such an assurance as this should be consolation!

That night passed heavily indeed. My brother dragged a mattrass into the ante-room which led to my chamber, and lay down there with his sword and pistols beside him; but sleep seldom visits those to whom forgetfulness would be a boon.

The next day an inquest was held upon the body of the murdered man, and evidence was taken as to the cause of his death. The following facts came out during the inquiry. Tan-King-Chin was beaten cruelly in the presence of the Taoutae twice before nine o'clock. Upon being questioned after the first application of the torture, he asserted that he was a British subject, but after the bamboo had been used a second time, his agony drew from him the confession that he was a Chinaman, and a member of one of the secret societies which plot against the mandarins. About noon the poor man was seen by his cook, who had also been made prisoner; he then appeared life-like, and not much the worse for the torture he had undergone. Between one and two in the day, the cook heard him taken from the cell, which adjoined his own, and after that knew no more about him. The day following that upon which the inquest was held, some valuable information

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was given by a Chinese watchmaker who had been mending a clock at the Colonel-Commandant's on the day of the murder. He saw Tan-King-Chin brought there from the Taoutae's at 2 P.M. alive and well. The colonel was dressing to go to the Intendant's, when a messenger came to say that the English consul and his staff were already there demanding the surrender of the prisoner. The unhappy Straitsman was at once taken into the yard and continuously beaten with bamboo rods. In vain, in his agony, he appealed to the Colonel-Commandant, first as a British subject, then as a relative of his own, their surnames "Tan" being the same. The mandarin mocked the dying man, and caused the torture to be repeated till death ensued. Now from this it was evident that the Taoutae sent orders for his murder whilst he was holding a conference with the consul, and only appeared to yield to the demands of the latter when assured by the Colonel-Commandant, who had come from the fearful scene, that life was almost extinct. No suspicion of such treachery crossed the minds of the English; the demeanour of the Chinese authorities forbade it. Had such an idea presented itself to the consul's mind, there is no doubt that he and his companions would have gone to the prison, and at all risks endeavoured to save the poor man. Well, indeed, it was that no such attempt was made, for it was afterwards ascertained that during the interview the Taoutae's yamun was surrounded by soldiers, and an idol carried round and round. There can be no doubt of the fate of that little band had they tried by force to rescue the victim from the hands of his murderers.

Oh, how wearily the time passed during the following seven days and nights! Gongs sounded in the city, muskets were fired, the "tiger" soldiers were paraded daily; additional Chinese troops, to the amount of three thousand men, marched into Amoy. Everything was evidently disturbed and warlike. The whole of the consulate was commanded by the city walls, and we might have been shelled at any moment. But it is in hours of danger like these that Englishmen display those attributes which have won for our race the respect of the world. Not a symptom of fear did the members of the consulate show. Much against my wish my brother went freely into the city, and when in my terror I wanted him, at least, to leave off his laced cap, which marked him as an official, he laughed, and said our only chance of safety lay in preserving a firm and fearless attitude.

Minutes lengthened into hours of anxiety when he was absent from my sight, and when he returned unscathed I almost felt as if I received him from the dead. We watched the flagstaff which would signal the approach of the "Serpent" till our eyes were sore with looking, and our hearts were sick with hope deferred. The vessel came near before we knew of her arrival, for she grounded in trying to cross the bar of the Consular creek, but her intrepid commander, Captain Luard, though uncertain as to what might have befallen his countrymen, rowed on shore, and, being well acquainted with the locality, came by a short cut across the hills to the consulate. When he strode into the court-yard in his heavy boots, armed to the teeth, the herald of our succour and safety, some of us wept for joy.

It was little likely that the Chinese, though so numerous, would provoke the shot and shell of the brig, for they are as cowardly as they are cruel; and after the painful suspense which we had undergone, we were thankful indeed for the sense of security we enjoyed in the presence of that small vessel of war.

A full account of this tragedy was sent to the home government, and we indulged in confident speculations as to the result. We felt that though we were few and far away from our native land, her powerful arm would reach even the ruthless authorities of Amoy, and demand ample atonement for the insult offered to her, in the cruel murder of one who had a just claim to her protection.

Vain hopes! Of this vile deed, committed with a full knowledge that the victim was a registered British subject, done in daylight under the authority of the Chinese Intendant, *no notice was taken, no satisfaction or apology ever demanded.* Something, I believe, was said about the impropriety of the man wearing a Chinese dress, but as even missionaries often adopt it as more convenient, this could form no excuse.

And now, when blood and treasure are being freely poured forth in the far East, in our endeavour to establish lasting and satisfactory relations with the Court of Pekin, may we not justly attribute some portion of the difficulties which meet us at every step, some of the sufferings of our lately captured countrymen, to the impression of our supine forbearance given to the mandarins by the unavenged fate of Tan-King-Chin? P.

RAPHAEL AND MICHEL ANGELO.

THE family Farnese had built a splendid and costly villa on the bank of the Tiber, and Cardinal Farnese, on succeeding to its possession, requested Raphael to undertake the fresco-painting on the walls of the *salons*. The great artist for a long time refused the task, but his Eminence having won the intercession of the *Fornarina*, Raphael consented, and promised to employ all his talents in the work, under the condition, however, that none should be allowed to look at it before its completion.

It is well known that the rivalry existing between the two artists had at last degenerated into actual jealousy, and that there were at that time not a few among the connoisseurs at Rome who preferred the grace and beauty of Raphael's paintings to the powerful productions of the gigantic genius of his rival. Michel Angelo was aware of the fact, and his excitable and haughty temper often betrayed him into malicious tricks against Raphael. When the villa paintings were in course of rapid progress, nothing else was then talked of at Rome. Some spoke with enthusiasm of the "Banquet of the Gods and the Union of Psyche;" others were inexhaustible in praise of the beautiful "Galatea," while each and all expressed a desire and curiosity to know what Angelo would say of them.

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All these rumours and praises of a work that nobody had as yet seen, and few only knew by name, having reached the ears of the jealous Angelo, he swore by Dante's "Inferno" to use all the means in his power, fair and foul, to obtain a glimpse of the work in the villa, and to injure it beyond redemption. At that period Raphael was so enamoured of his *Fornarina* that he spent whole days in her company, and never dreamt of taking up his professional brush, while he hardly ever made his appearance at the villa before noon-time. One morning Michel Angelo rose early, disguised himself as an *acqua vitario* (spirit-hawker), took a basket filled with biscuits and *liqueurs* to the villa, where his cry, "Liqueurs, liqueurs!" soon brought down from the ladders within all the masons and labourers who were still employed in the interior of the structure. They opened the front door and invited the seller to bring in his wares. Leaving his basket in their hands, Angelo made his way to the *salons*, and, passing from room to room, he took a rapid survey of the various paintings, but remained fixed with admiration before the yet unfinished "Galatea." Observing an empty spot in the centre of the picture, he took up a piece of charcoal, mounted the scaffold, and drew in the vacant space a colossal head of Jupiter. He then left the villa by one of the side doors, forgetting his basket and wares in the fullness of his mischievous joy. At noon Raphael appeared, and no sooner had he caught sight of the magnificent head of Jupiter in the centre of his "Galatea," than he exclaimed, "Michel Angelo! Michel Angelo!" and left the villa never to re-enter it. The work remained unfinished by him, and the mischievous head is still preserved under a glass, and excites the admiration of artists and *connoisseurs*.

IPHIS AND ANAXARETE.

The olive-groves, clothing the dusky hills,
Loomed dimly through the gathering gloom of night,
And the spent waves that broke below the town
Plained moaning in the darkness.
Dank and cold,
The dead pale night lay heavy on the earth,
When through the gusty streets of Salamis,
Thus, long and long ago, a lover cried,—
"Sleepest thou, love?—*my* love? I call thee mine,
Nor dread the flashing of thy haughty glance
May blast me for the words. I fear no more
Thy scorn; for 'tis the last time I shall plead
For pity to a heart that knows no ruth.
My spirit is bowed low. Accurs'd am I,
Else sure my love had touched thine icy heart.
Perchance the gods, the jealous pitiless gods,
Resent that I should worship at a shrine
Not theirs, and with thy hate have punished me.
Yet have I sought with prayers and offerings
To win their aid!
Oh, why art thou so cold!
True, I am poor and low, and thou art fair
As she who on Mount Ida won the meed
Of beauty from Œnone's faithless love,
And royal art thou, sprung from Teucer's line;
But, beautiful and proud as thou may'st be,
Remember that love-guided Dian came
To the lone hill where young Endymion slept.
And I have spent my life in loving thee,
My queen, my love!
My dreams are all of thee!
I see thee ever as I saw thee first,
Amid the bright procession of our maids,
Bearing the sacrifice to Venus' shrine.
I see thy little sandalled feet, thy curls
Floating below thy zone, thy gold-hemmed robes
Showing the beauties of the shape they veiled.
Rememberest thou when the red bolt of heaven

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Shattered the temple, and the flames rose high;
And those who loved thee best could but implore
That Heaven would send the aid man dared not give?
Who braved the raging fire, the blinding smoke?
Who fought with Death to save thee from his grasp,
Or, being conquered, die embracing thee?
Oh, girl! one hair from thy flow'r-crownëd head
Is dearer than all boons apart from thee;
Yet thou dost hate me! Well, 'tis past, 'tis past!
And nevermore upon thine hour of rest
Shall plaint or prayer of mine break.
Nevermore
Beneath thy window, through the long lone night,
Shall I pour forth my heart's wild misery.
Never again shall laughing youths and maids
Point mockingly and flout me as I pass,
For cherishing a love that is despised.
My steps shall follow thine no more, no more!
At game or festival thou shalt not need
To hold thy perfumed garments, lest my hand
Should touch them covertly; so be at peace—
My death shall make atonement for my life.
No answer yet? The sobbing of the sea,
Borne on the moaning wind along the streets,
Is all I hear; no eyes look down on me,
Save the cold eyes of heaven—the far-off stars.
Not colder or more distant they than thou.
Farewell! I have a mother, old and weak,
Who loved me as they love whose lives afford
But one sole object they may call their own;
And in the madness of my worshipping
I have forgotten that I was her all.
Perchance she may upbraid thy cruelty,
And ask thee for the life so dear to her,
Which thou didst trample 'neath thy dancing feet.
If thus, be gentle to her agony.
And now, sleep on, sleep on, till morn shall break
And bring thy bridegroom with his joyous train,
To deck thy door with garlands.
Welcome, death!
I cannot live to see my idol shrined
Amid the Lares of another's home—
The mother of his children."
Silence fell.
The sad low voice was hushed, and the night waned,
Till o'er the hill-tops came the shivering dawn,
And the stars melted in the bright'ning skies.
But when the east was robed to greet the sun
With gold and crimson, up the stony street
Came glad young voices and impatient feet
To greet the destined bride; and when they came
They found what *had been* Iphis, and *was* now
A ghastly thing to pale the brightest cheek,
And haunt the dreams of many a night to come;
But she whose pride had brought him to his doom
Smiled coldly on the rigid upturned face,
Crowned with the dewy curls of gold-bright hair;—
And with that smile the punishment of Heaven
Fell on her warm young life.
Old legends tell
That on the shore of Cyprus is a rock
Warring with winds and waves for evermore;
And to this hard, cold, sea-worn monument
The wrath of Jove changed her whom Iphis loved.

MARY C. F. MÜNSTER.

"BRING ME A LIGHT!"

A GHOST STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF RABY."

MY name is Thomas Whinmore, and when I was a young man I went to spend a college vacation with a gentleman in Westmoreland. He had known my father's family, and had been appointed the trustee of a small estate left me by my great aunt, Lady Jane Whinmore. At the time I speak of I was one-and-twenty, and he was anxious to give up the property into my hands. I accepted his invitation to "come down to the old place and look about me." When I arrived at the nearest point to the said "old place," to which the Carlisle coach would carry me, I and my portmanteau were put into a little cart, which was the only wheeled thing I could get at the little way-side inn.

"How far is it to Whinmore?" I asked of a tall grave-looking lad, who had already informed me I could have "t'horse and cairt" for a shilling a mile.

"Twal mile to t'ould Hall gaet—a mile ayont that to Squire Erle's farm."

As I looked at the shaggy wild horse, just caught from the moor for the purpose of drawing "t'cairt," I felt doubtful as to which of us would be the master on the road. I had ascertained that the said road lay over moor and mountain—just the sort of ground on which such a steed would gambol away at his own sweet will. I had no desire to be run away with.

"Is there any one here who can drive me to Mr. Erle's?" I asked of the tall grave lad.

"Nobbut fayther."

I was puzzled; and was about to ask for an explanation, when a tall, strong old man, as like the young one as might be, came out from the door of the house with his hat on, and a whip in his hand. He got up into the cart, and looking at me, said,

"Ye munna stan here, sir. We shan't pass Whinmore Hall afore t'deevil brings a light."

"But I want something to eat before we start," I remonstrated. "I've had no dinner."

"Then ye maun keep your appetite till supper time," replied the old man. "I canna gae past Whinmore lights for na man—nor t'horse neither. Get up wi' ye! Joe, lend t'gentleman a hand."

Joe did as he was desired, and then said—

"Will ye be home the night, fayther?"

"May be yees, may be na, lad; take care of t'place."

In a moment the horse started, and we were rattling over the moor at the rate of eight miles an hour. Surprise, indignation, and hunger possessed me. Was it possible I had been whirled off dinnerless into this wilderness against my own desire?

"I say, my good man," I began.

"My name is Ralph Thirlston."

"Well! Mr. Thirlston, I want something to eat. Is there any inn between this desert and Mr. Erle's house?"

"Nobbut Whinmore Hall," said the old man, with a grin.

"I suppose I can get something to eat there, without being obliged to anybody. It is my own property."

Mr. Thirlston glanced at me sharply.

"Be ye t'maister, lad?"

"I am, Mr. Thirlston," said I. "My name is Whinmore."

"Maister Tom!"

"The same. Do you know anything about me and my old house?"

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"'Deed do I. You're the heir of t'ould leddy. Mr. Erle is your guardian, and farms your lands."

"I know so much, myself," I replied. "I want you to tell me who lives in Whinmore Hall now, and whether I can get a dinner there, for I'm *clem*, as you say here."

"Weel, weel. It is a sore trial to a young stomach! You must e'en bear it till we get to Mr. Erle's."

"But surely there is somebody, some old woman or other, who lives in the old house and airs the rooms!"

"'Deed is there. But it's nobbut ghosts and deevil's spawn of that sort."

"I am surprised, Mr. Thirlston, to hear a man like you talk such nonsense."

"What like man do ye happen know that I am, Maister Whinmore? Tho' if I talk nonsense (and I'm no gainsaying what a learned colleger like you can tell about nonsense), yet it's just the things I have heard and seen mysell I am speaking of."

"What have you heard and seen at Whinmore Hall?"

"What a' body hears and sees to Whinmore, 'twixt sunset and moonlight;—and what I used to see times and oft, when I lived there farming-man to t'ould Leddy Jane,—what I'm not curious to see again, now. So get on, Timothy," he added to the horse, "or we may chance to come in for a fright."

I did not trouble myself about the delay, as he did, but watched him.

This man is no fool, I thought. I wonder what strange delusion has got possession of the people about this old house of mine. I remembered that Mr. Erle had told me in one of the very few letters I ever received from him, that it was difficult to find a tenant for Whinmore Hall. Curiosity took precedence of hunger, and I began to think how I could best soothe my irritated companion, and get him to tell me what he believed.

We were back on the road again, and going across the shoulder of a great fell;—the sun had just disappeared behind a distant range of similar fells; it left no rosy clouds, no orange streaks in the sky—black rain-clouds spread all over the great concave, and in a very few minutes they burst upon us. There was a cold, piercing wind in our teeth. I felt my spirits rise. The vast monotonous moor, the threatening sky, and the fierce rushing blast had something for me sublime and invigorating. I looked round at the new range of moorland which we were gradually commanding, as we rounded the hill.

"I like this wild place, Mr. Thirlston," I said.

"Wild enough!" he grumbled in reply. "'Tis college learning is a deal better than such house and land. Beggars won't live in th' house, and th' land is the poorest in all England."

"Is that the house, yonder, on the right?"

"There's na ither house, good or bad, to be seen from this," he replied: but I observed that he did not turn his head in the direction I had indicated. He kept a look-out straight between the horse's ears; I, on the contrary, never took my eyes off the grey building which we were approaching. Nearer and nearer we came, and I saw that there was a sort of large garden or pleasure-ground enclosed round the house, and that the road ran past a part of this enclosure, and also past a large open-worked iron gate, which was the chief entrance. Very desolate, cold, and inhospitable looked this old house of mine; wild and tangled looked the garden. The tall, smokeless chimneys were numerous, and stood up white against the blackness of the sky; the windows, more numerous still, looked black, in contrast with the whitish-grey stone of the walls. Just as we entered the shadow cast by the trees of the shrubbery, our horse snorted, and sprang several yards from the enclosure.

"Now for it! It is your own fault for running away, and bringing us late," muttered Ralph Thirlston, grasping the reins and standing up to get a better hold of the horse. Timothy now stood still; and to my surprise he was trembling in every limb, and shaking with terror.

"Something has frightened the beast," said I. "I shall just go and see what it was," and was about to jump down, when I felt Ralph Thirlston's great hand on my arm: it was a powerful grip.

"For the love of God, lad, stay where ye are!" he said, in a frightened whisper. "It's just here that my brother met his death, for doing what you want to do now."

"What! For walking up to that fence and seeing what trifle frightened a skittish horse?" And I looked at the fence intently. There was nothing to be seen but a straggling bough of an elder bush which had forced its way through a chink in the rotten wood and was waving in the wind.

Finding that the man was really frightened as well as the horse, I humoured him. He still held my arm.

"There is no need for any one to go closer to see the cause of poor Timothy's fear," I said, laughing. "If you will look, Mr. Thirlston, you will see what it was."

"Na! lad, na! I'm not going to turn my face towards the deevil and his works. 'Lord have mercy upon us! Christ have mercy upon us! Our Father which art in heaven—'" and he repeated the whole prayer with emphasis, slowness, and with his eyes closed. I sat still, an amazed witness of his state of mind. When he had said "Amen," he opened his eyes, and looking down at the horse, who seemed to have recovered, as I judged by his putting his head down to graze, he gave a low whistle, and tightening the reins once more, Timothy allowed himself to be driven forward. Thirlston kept his face away from the enclosure on his right hand, and looked steadily at Timothy. I gave another glance towards the innocent elder bough,—but what was my astonishment to see where it had been, or seemed to be, the figure of a man with a drawn sword in his hand.

"Stop, Thirlston! stop!" I cried. "There is somebody there. I see a man with a sword. Look! Turn back, and I'll soon see what he is doing there."

"Na! na! Never turn back to meet the deevil, when ye have once got past him!" And Thirlston drove on rapidly.

"But he may overtake you," I cried, laughing. But as I looked back I saw that a pursuit was not intended, for the figure I had seen was gone.

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"I'll pay a visit to that devil to-morrow," I added. "I shall not harbour such game in my preserves."

"Lord's sake, don't talk like that, Maister Whinmore!" whispered Thirlston. "We're just coming to the gaet! May be they may strike Timothy dead!"

"They?—who? Not the ghosts, surely?" I looked through the great gate as we passed, and saw the whole front of the house. "Why, Mr. Thirlston, you said no one lived in the old Hall! Look! There are lights in the windows."

"Ay! ay! I thought you would see them," he said, in a terrified whisper, without turning his head.

"Why, look at them yourself," cried I, pointing to the house.

"God forbid!" he exclaimed; and he gave Timothy a stroke with the whip, that sent him flying past the rest of the garden of the Hall. Our ground rose again, and in a few minutes a good view of the place was obtained. I looked back at it with vivid interest. No lights were to be seen now; no moving thing; the black windows contrasted with the grey walls, and the grey chimneys with the black clouds, as when the place first appeared to me. The moon now rose above a dark hill on our left. Thirlston allowed Timothy to slacken his speed, and, turning round his head, he also looked back at Whinmore Hall.

"We are safe enough now," he said. "The only dangerous time is betwixt sunset and moonrise, when people are passing close to the accursed ould place."

About a mile further, the barking of a house-dog indicated that we were approaching Mr. Erle's. The driver stopped at a small wicket-gate leading into a shrubbery, got down, and invited me to do the same. He then fastened Timothy to the gate-post. The garden and the house have nothing to do with my present tale, and are far too dear to me to be flung in as an episodical adornment. They form the scenery of the romantic part of my own life; for Miss Erle became my wife a few years after this first visit to Whinmore. I saw her that evening, and forgot Ralph Thirlston, the old Hall, its ghosts and mysterious lights. However, the next morning I was forced back to this work-a-day world in her father's study. There I heard Mr. Erle's account of my property. All the land was farmed by himself, except the few acres round the Hall, which no one would take because it was not worth tillage, and because of the evil name of the house itself.

"I suppose you know why no tenant can be found for the Hall, since Ralph Thirlston drove you over?"

"Yes," I said, smiling. "But I could get no rational account from him. What is this nonsense about ghosts and lights? Who lives in the Hall?"

"No one, my good fellow. Why, you would not get the stoutest man in the parish, and that's Thirlston, to go into the house after sunset, much less live in it."

"But I have seen lights in some of the windows myself."

"So have I," he replied.

"Do you mean to say that no human beings make use of the house, in virtue of the superstition about it? Tricks of this kind are not uncommon."

"At the risk of seeming foolish in your eyes, I must reply, that I believe no human beings now living have any hand in the operations which go on in Whinmore Hall." Mr. Erle looked perfectly grave as he said this.

"I saw a man with a sword in his hand start from a part of the fence. I think he frightened our horse."

"I, too, have seen the figure you speak of. But I do not think it is a living man."

"What do you suppose it to be?" I asked, in amazement; for Mr. Erle was no ignorant or weak-minded person. He had already impressed me with real respect for his character and intellect.

He smiled at my impetuous tone.

"I live apart from what is called the world," said he. "Grace and I are not polite enough to think everything which we cannot account for either impossible or ridiculous. Ten years ago, I myself was a new resident in this county, and wishing to improve your property, I determined to occupy the old Hall myself. I had it prepared for my family. No mechanic would work about the place after sunset. However, I brought all my servants from a distance; and took care that they should have no intercourse with any neighbour for the first three days. On the third evening they all came to me and said that they must leave the next morning—all but Grace's nurse, who had been her mother's attendant, and was attached to the family. She told me that she did not think it safe for the child to remain another night, and that I must give her permission to take her away."

"What did you do?" said I.

"I asked for some account of the things that had frightened them. Of course, I heard some wild and exaggerated tales; but the main phenomena related were what I myself had seen and heard, and which I was as fully determined as they were not to see and hear again, or to let my child have a chance of encountering. I told them so, candidly; and at the same time declared that it was my belief God's Providence or punishment was at work in that old house, as everywhere else in creation, and not the devil's mischievous hand. Once more I made a rigorous search for secret devices and means for producing the sights and sounds which so many had heard and seen; but without any discovery: and before sunset that afternoon the Hall was cleared of all human occupants. And so it has remained until this day."

"Will you tell me the things you saw and heard?"

"Nay, you had better see and hear them for yourself. We have plenty of time before sunset. I can show you over the whole house, and if your courage holds good, I will leave you there to pass an hour or so between sunset and moonrise. You can come back here when you like; and if you are in a condition to hear, and care to hear, the story which peoples your old Hall with horrors, I will tell it you."

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"Thank you," said I. "Will you lend me a gun and pistols to assist me in my investigations?"

"Surely." And taking down the weapons I had pointed out, he began to examine them.

"You want them loaded?"

"Certainly, and with bullets. I am not going to play."

Mr. Erle loaded both gun and pistols. I put the latter into my pocket, and we left the room by the window. Grace Erle met us on the moor, riding a shaggy pony.

"Where are you going, so near dinner time?" she asked.

"Mr. Whinmore is going to look at the old Hall."

"And his gun?" she asked, smiling.

"I want to shoot vermin there."

She looked as if she were about to say something eagerly, but checked herself, and rode slowly away. I looked after her, and wondered what she was going to say. Perhaps she wished to prevent me from going.

Presently we stood before the great iron gate of Whinmore. Mr. Erle took two keys from his pocket. With one he unlocked the gate, with the other the chief door. There were no other fastenings. These were very rusty, and were moved with difficulty.

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"People don't get in this way," said I. "That is clear."

The garden was a sad wilderness, and grass grew on the broad steps which led up to the door.

As soon as we had crossed the threshold, I felt the influence of that desolate dwelling creep over my spirits. There was a cold stagnation in the air—a deathly stillness—a murky light in the old rooms that was indescribably depressing. All the lower windows had their pierced shutters fastened, and cobwebs and dust adorned them plentifully.

Yet I could have sworn I saw lights in two, at least, of these lower windows. I said so to my companion. He replied—

"Yes. It was in this very room you saw a light, I dare say. This is one in which I have seen lights myself. But I do not wish to spoil my dinner by seeing anything supernatural now. We will leave it, and I will hasten to the lady's bed-chamber and dressing-room, where the apparitions and noises are most numerous."

I followed him, but cast a glance round the room before I shut the door carefully. It was partly furnished like a library, but on one side was a bed, and beside it an easy-chair. "What

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name is given to this room? It looks ominous of some evil deed," I said.

"It is called 't'ould Squire's Murder Room,' by the people who know the story connected with it."

"Ah!" I said; "then I may look for a ghost there?"

"You will perhaps see one, or more, if you stay long enough," said Mr. Erle, with the utmost composure. "This way."

I followed him along a gallery on the first floor to the door of a room. He opened it, and we entered what had been apparently one of the principal bedrooms. It was a regular lady's chamber, of the seventeenth century, with dark plumes waving on the top of the bed-pillars of black oak. The massy toilette, with its oval looking-glass, set in silver and shrouded in old lace—the carved chairs and lofty mantelpiece—gave an air of quaint elegance to the dignity of the apartment. I had but little time to examine the objects here, for Mr. Erle had passed on to an inner room, which was reached by ascending a short flight of steps.

"Come up here," cried a voice which did not sound like Mr. Erle's. I ran up the stairs and found him alone in a small room which contained little else than an escritoire, a cabinet, and two great chairs. On one side, a large Parisian looking-glass, *à la Régence*, was fixed on the wall. The branches for lights still held some yellow bits of wax-candle covered with dust. I joined Mr. Erle, who was looking through the window over a vast expanse of mountainous moorland. "What a grand prospect!" I exclaimed. "I like these two rooms very much. I shall certainly come and live here."

"You shall tell me your opinion about that to-morrow," said Mr. Erle. "I must go now."

Concealing as much as possible the contempt I felt for his absurd superstition, I accompanied him down-stairs again. "Are these the only rooms worth looking at?" I asked.

"No; most of the rooms are good enough for a gentleman's household. The rooms I have shown you, and the passages and staircase which lead from one to the other, are the only portions of the house in which you are subjected to annoyance. I have slept in both the rooms, and advise no one else to do so."

"You had bad dreams?" I asked, with an involuntary smile, as I took my gun from the hall-table, where I had left it.

"As you please," said Mr. Erle, smiling also.

I stretched out my hand to him when we stood at the gate together.

"Good night!" said I. "I think I shall sleep in one of those rooms, and return to you in the morning."

Mr. Erle shook his head. "You will be back at my house within three hours, Tom Whinmore; so, *au revoir!*"

He strode away over the moor. His fine figure appeared almost gigantic as it moved between me and the setting sun.

"That does not look like a man who should be a prey to weak superstition, any more than good Ralph Thirlston, who drove home alone willingly enough past this same gate and fence at nine o'clock last night! The witching hour, it seems, is just after sunset. Well, it wants a quarter of an hour of that now," I continued, thinking silently. "There will be time enough for me to explore the garden a little, before I return to the house and wait for my evening's entertainment."

As I walked through the shrubbery, I recollected the figure I had seen outside the fence on the previous evening. I must find out how *that* trick is managed, thought I, and if I get a chance I will certainly wing that ghost, *pour encourager les autres.*

Ascertaining, as well as I was able, the part of the shrubbery near which I saw the man, I began to search for footsteps or marks of human ingenuity. I soon discovered the elder bush that had sent some of its branches through a hole in the fence. I crept round it, and examined the fence. No plank was loose, though some boughs had grown through the hole. I could see no footstep except my own on the moist, dank leafy mould. I got over the fence and saw no marks outside. Baffled, and yet suspicious, I went back and continued my walk, in the course of which I came upon sundry broken and decayed summer-houses and seats. In the tangled flower-garden, on the south-west side, were a few rich blossoms, growing amicably with the vilest weeds. I tore up a great root of hemlock to get at a branch of Provence rose, and then seeing that the sun had disappeared below the opposite fell, I pursued my course and arrived again at the broad gravel path leading from the gate to the hall-door.

Both stood open, as I had left them. I lingered on the grass-grown steps to look at the last rays of the sun, reddening the heather on the distant fell. As I leaned on my gun enjoying the profound stillness of this place, far from all sounds of village, or wood, or sea—a stillness that seemed to deepen and deepen into unearthly intensity—the charm was broken by a human voice speaking near me—the tone was hollow and full of agony—"*Bring me a light! Bring me a light!*" it cried. It was like a sick or dying man. The voice came, I thought, from the room next to me on the right hand of the Hall. I rushed into the house and to the door of that room; it was the first which Mr. Erle had shown me. I remembered shutting the door—it now stood wide open; and there was a sound of hurrying footsteps within.

"Who is there?" I shouted. No answer came. But there passed by me, as it were, in the very doorway, the figure of a young and, as I could see at a glance, very beautiful woman.

When she moved onwards I could not choose but follow, trembling with an indefinable fear, yet borne on by a mystic attraction. At the foot of the stairs she turned on me again, and smiled, and beckoned me with an upraised arm, whereon great jewels flashed in the gloom. I followed her quickly, but could not overtake her. My limbs—I am not ashamed to say it—shook with strange fear; yet I could not turn back from following that fair form. Onward she led me—up the stairs and through the gallery to the door of the lady's chamber. There she paused a moment, and again turned her bewitching face, radiant with smiles, upon me before she disappeared within the dark doorway. I followed into the room, and saw her

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stand before the antique toilette and arrange in her bosom a spray of roses—the very spray that I had so lately pulled in the garden, it seemed—then she kissed her hand to me and glided to the narrow stairs that led to the little room above. Then came a loud haughty voice—the voice of a woman accustomed to command. It sounded from the little room above, and it could not be the voice of that fair girl, I felt sure. It said:

"*Bring me a light! Bring me a light!*"

I shuddered at the sound; I knew not why, but I stood there still. I then saw the figure of an old female servant, rise from a chair by one of the windows. She approached the toilette, and there I saw her light two tapers, with her breath, it seemed.

"*Bring me a light!*" was repeated in an angry tone from the upper room.

The old woman passed rapidly to the stairs. Thither I followed in obedience to a sign from her; and, mounting to the top, saw into the room.

That beautiful girl stood in the centre, with her costly lace gown sweeping the floor, and her bright curls drooping to the waist. Her back was towards me, but I could see her innocent, sweet face in the great glass. What a lovely, happy face it was!

Behind her stood another lady, taller, and more majestic. She pretended to caress her, but her proud eyes, unseen by the young lady, brightened with triumphant malice. They danced gladly in the light of the taper which she took from the maid. "God of heaven! can a woman look so wicked?" I thought.

"*Watch her!*" whispered a voice in my ear—a voice that stirred my hair.

I did watch her. Would to God I could forget that vision! She—the woman, the fiend—bent carefully to the floor, as though to set right something amiss in the border of the fair bride's robe. I saw her lower the flame of the candle, and set fire to the dress of the smiling, trusting girl. Ere I could move she was enveloped in flames, and I heard her wild shrieks mingling with the low demoniac laughter of her murderess.

I remember suddenly raising the gun in my hand and firing at the horrid apparition. But still she laughed and pointed with mocking gestures to the flames and the writhing figure they enveloped. I ran forward to extinguish them;—my arms struck against the wall, and I fell down insensible.

* * * * *

When I recovered my senses I found myself lying on the floor of that little room, with the bright cold moon looking in on me. I waited without moving, listening for some more of those demon sounds. All was still. I rose—went to the window—the moon was high in heaven, and all the great moor seemed light as day. The air of that room was stifling. I turned and fled. Hastily I ran down those few steps—quicker yet through the great chamber and out into the gallery. As I began to go down the stairs, I saw a figure coming up.

I was now a very coward. Grasping the banister with one hand, and feeling for the unused pistol with the other, I called out—

"Who are you?" and with stupid terror I fired at the thing, without pausing.

There was a slight cry; a very human one. Then a little laugh.

"Don't fire any more pistols at me, Mr. Whinmore. I'm not a ghost."

Something in the voice sent the blood once more coursing through my veins.

"Is it ——?" I could not utter another word.

"It is I, Grace Erle."

"What brought you here?" I said, at length, after I had descended the stairs, and had seized her hand that I might feel sure it was of flesh and blood.

"My pony. We began to get uneasy about you. It is nearly midnight. So papa and I set off to see what you were doing."

"What the devil are you firing at, Whinmore?" asked Mr. Erle, coming hurriedly from a search in the lower rooms.

"Only at *me*, papa!" answered his daughter, archly, glancing up at my face. "But he is a bad shot, for he didn't hit me."

"Thank God!" I ejaculated—"Miss Erle, I was mad."

"No, only very frightened. Look at him, papa!"

Mr. Erle looked at me. He took my arm.

"Why! Whinmore, you don't look the better for seeing the spirits of your ancestors. However, I see it is no longer a joking matter with you. You do not wish to take up your abode here immediately."

I rallied under their kindly *badinage*.

"Let me get out of this horrible place," said I.

Mr. Erle led me beyond the gate. I leaned against it, in a state of exhaustion.

"Here. Try your hand at my other pocket-pistol!" said Mr. Erle, as he put a precious flask of that kind to my lips. After a second application of the remedy I was decidedly better.

Miss Erle mounted her pony, and we set off across the moor. I was very silent, and my companions talked a little with each other. My mind was too confused to recollect just then all that I had experienced during my stay in the house, and I wished to arrange my thoughts and compose my nerves before I conversed with Mr. Erle on the strange visions of that night.

I excused myself to my host and his daughter, in the best way I could, and after taking a slice of bread and a glass of water, I went to bed.

The next day I rose late; but in my right mind. I was much shocked to think of the cowardly fear which had led me to fire a pistol at Miss Erle. I began my interview with my host, by uttering some expressions of this feeling. But it was an awkward thing to declare myself a fool and a coward.

"The less we say about that the better," said her father, gravely. "Fear is the strongest human passion, my boy; and will lead us to commit the vilest acts, if we let it get the mastery."

"I acknowledge that I was beside myself with terror at the sights and sounds of that accursed house. I was not sane, at the moment, I saw your daughter! I shall never—"

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"Whinmore, she hopes you will never mention it again! *We* certainly shall not. Now, if you are disposed to hear the story of your ancestor's evil deeds, I am ready to fulfil the promise I made you last night. I see you know too much, now, to think me a fool for believing my own senses, and keeping clear of disagreeable creatures that will not trouble themselves about me. I don't raise the question of *what* they are, or *how* they exist—nor even whether they exist at all. It is sufficient that they appear; and that by their appearance they put a stop to normal human life. You may be a philosopher; and may find some means of banishing these supernatural horrors. I shall like you none the less, if you can do what I cannot."

"I will try. Will you tell the story?"

"Yes, if you will take a cigar with me first."

After we had composed ourselves comfortably before the fire in his study, Mr. Erle began.

"How long ago, I can't exactly find out, but some time between the Reformation and the Great Rebellion, the Whinmores settled in this part of the county, and owned a large tract of land. They were of gentle blood, and most ungentle manners; for they quarrelled with every one, and carried themselves in an insolent fashion, to the simple below them, and to the noble above. The Whinmores were iron-handed and iron-hearted, staunch Catholics and staunch Jacobites, during the religious and political dissensions of the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. After the establishment of Protestantism in the reigns of William III. and Anne, the position of the proud house of Whin-

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more was materially altered. The cadets went early into foreign service as soldiers and priests, and the first-born remained at home to keep up a blighted dignity. After the establishment of the Hanoverian dynasty, the Whinmores of Whinmore Hall ceased to take any part in public affairs. They were too proud to farm their own land; and putting trust in a nefarious steward, the Whinmore who reigned at the Hall when King George the Second reigned over England was compelled to keep up appearances by selling half the family estate.

"The Whinmore in question, '*t'ould squire*,' as the people call him, was a melancholy man, not much blest in the matrimonial lottery. His wife, Lady Henrietta Whinmore, was the daughter of a poor Catholic Earl. Tradition says she was equally beautiful and proud; and I believe it.

"To return. This couple had only one child, a son. When Lady Henrietta found that her husband was a gentleman of a moping and unenterprising turn of mind, that she could not persuade him to compromise his principles, and so find favour with the new government, she devoted herself to the education of her son, Graham. As he was a clever boy, with strong health and good looks, she determined that he should retrieve the fortunes of the family. She kept him under her own superintendence till he was ten years of age. She then sent him to Eton, with his cousin the little Earl of ——. He was brought up a Protestant, and thus the civil disabilities of the family would be removed. He was early accustomed to the society of all ranks, to be found in a first-class English public school; and his personal gifts as well as his mental excellence helped to win him the good opinion of others. Graham

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came home from Oxford in his twenty-third year, a first-class man."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "I hope I am descended from him, and that his good luck will be a part of my inheritance. Is there any portrait of this fine young English gentleman of the olden time?"

"A very good one. It is in my daughter's sitting-room. We are both struck by your likeness to your grandfather, Graham Whinmore."

"I shall never take a first-class," I sighed; "but go on."

"When Graham returned home after his success at college, he found his father a hopeless valetudinarian, who had had his bed brought down to his library, because he thought himself too feeble to go up and down stairs. He showed little emotion at sight of his son, and seemed to be fast sinking to idiotcy. His mother, on the contrary, was radiant with joy; and had made the old ruined house look its best to welcome the heir. For, at that time, the place was much dilapidated, and only a small portion was habitable, that is the part you saw yesterday, the south front.

"And Graham stayed at home for a month or two in repose, after the fatigues of study. One afternoon as he rode home from a distant town, he paused on the top of Whinmore Hill, which commands a good view of the Hall. The simple bareness of the great hills around, the antique beauty and retirement of the Hall—above all, the sweet impressive stillness of the place, had often charmed Graham, as a boy. Now he gazed with far stronger feeling at it all.

"'It shall *not* be lost to me and my children,' he vowed, inwardly. 'I will redeem the mortgage on the house, I will win back every acre of the old Whinmore land. Yes, I will work for wealth; but I must lose no time, or my opportunity will be gone.'

"He looked at the ruined part of the house, and began to calculate the cost of rebuilding as he hastened forward. As soon as he entered the house he went to see his father, whom he had not seen that day. He found him in his bed, with the nurse asleep in the easy chair beside it. His father did not recognise him, and to Graham's mind, looked very much changed since the previous day. He left the room in search of his mother; thinking, in spite of his love for her, that she neglected her duty as a wife. 'She should be beside him now,' he thought. Still, he framed the best excuse he could for her then, for he loved and reverenced her. She was so strong-minded, so beautiful. Above all, she loved him with such passionate devotion. He dreaded to tell her the resolution he had formed. She was an aristocrat and a woman. She did not understand the mutation of things in that day; she would not believe that the best way to wealth and power was not through the Court influence, but by commercial enterprise. He went to her bedroom, the Lady's Chamber, in which you were last night. She was not there, and he was about to retreat, when he heard her voice in anger speaking to some one, in the dressing-room or oratory above. Graham went towards the stairs, and was met by an old female servant who was in his mother's confidence, and acted as her maid and head-nurse to his father. She came down in tears, murmuring, 'I cannot bear it. It was you gave me the draught for him. I will send for a doctor.'

"'A doctor, indeed! He wants no doctor,' cried the angry mistress. 'And don't talk any more nonsense, my good woman, if you value your place.'

"In her agitation the woman did not see her young master, and hastily left the room.

"Astonished at the woman's words, he slowly ascended the steps to the dressing-room. He found his mother standing before the long looking-glass arrayed in a rich dress of old point lace, over a brocaded petticoat, with necklace, bracelets, and tiara of diamonds. She looked very handsome as her great eyes still flashed and her cheek was yet crimson with anger. She turned hastily as her son's foot was heard on the topmost stair. When she saw who it was her face softened with a smile.

"'You here, Graham! I have been wanting you. Read that.'

"He could scarcely take his admiring eyes from the brilliant figure before him as he received the letter.

"It was addressed to his mother, and came from his cousin, the Earl, informing her that he had obtained a certain post under government for Graham.

"She kissed him as he sat down after reading the letter.

"'There is your first step on fortune's ladder, my son. You are sure to rise.'

"'I hope so, mother. But where are you going decked out in the family diamonds and lace?'

"'Have you forgotten?—To the ball at the Lord-Lieutenant's. You must dress quickly, or we shall be late. Your cousin will be there, and we must thank him for that letter.'

"'Yes, mother,' he replied, 'but we must refuse the place—I have other views.'

"Lady Henrietta's brow darkened.

"'Mother! I have vowed to recover the estate of my ancestors. It will require a large fortune to do this. I cannot get a large fortune by dangling about the Court—I am going to turn merchant.'

"Lady Henrietta stared at him in amazement.

"'You?—My son become a merchant?'

"'Why not, mother? Sons of nobler houses have done so; and I have advantages that few have ever had. Listen, dear mother. I saved the life of a college friend, who was drowning. His father is one of the wealthiest merchants in London—in all England. He wrote to tell me that if it suited my views and those of my family, he was ready to receive me, at once, as a junior partner in his firm. He had learned from his son that I wished to become rich that I might buy back my ancestral estate. His offer puts it in my power to become rich in a comparatively short space of time.—I intend to accept his munificent offer.'

"Lady Henrietta's proud bosom swelled; but there was something in her son's tone which made her feel that anger and persuasion were alike vain. After some minutes' silence, she said bitterly:

"'The world is changed indeed, Graham, if men

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of gentle blood can become traders and not lose their gentility.'

"'They can, mother. And I do not think the world can be much changed in that particular. A man of gentle blood, who is, in very truth, a gentleman, cannot lose that distinction in any occupation. Come, good mother, give me a smile! I am about to go forth to win an inheritance. I shall fight with modern weapons—the pen and the ledger—instead of sword and shield.'

"At that moment hasty steps were heard in the chamber below, and a voice called:

"'My lady! my lady! come quick! The Squire is dying!'

"Mother and son went fast to Mr. Whinmore's room. They arrived in time to see the old man die. He pointed to her, and cried with his last breath,

"*She did it! She did it!*'

"Lady Henrietta sat beside his bed and listened to these incoherent words without any outward emotion. She watched the breath leave the body, and then closed the eyes herself. But though she kept up so bravely then, she was dangerously ill for several months after her husband's death, and was lovingly tended by her son and the old servant.

* * * *

"I must now pass over ten years. Before the end of that time Graham Whinmore had become rich enough to buy back every acre of the land and to build a bran new house, twenty times finer than the old one, if he were so minded. But he was by no means so minded. He restored the old house—made it what it now is. He would not have accepted Chatsworth or Stowe in exchange.

"The Lady Henrietta lived there still; and superintended all the improvements. She had become reconciled to her son's occupation for the sake of the result in wealth. She entered eagerly into all his plans for the improvement of his property, and she had some of her own to propose.

"It was the autumn of the tenth year since her husband's death, and she was expecting Graham shortly for his yearly visit to the Hall. She sat looking over papers of importance in her dressing-room; the old servant (who seems to have grown no older) sat sewing in the bedroom below, when a housemaid brought in a letter which the old servant took immediately to her mistress.

"Lady Henrietta opened the letter quickly, for she saw that the handwriting was her son's. 'Perhaps he is coming this week,' she thought with a thrill of delight. 'Yes, he will come to take me to the Lord-Lieutenant's ball. He is proud of his mother yet, and I must look my best.' But she had not read a dozen words before the expression of her face changed. Surprise darkened into contempt and anger—anger deepened into rage and hatred. She uttered a sharp cry of pain. The old servant ran to her in alarm; but her mistress had composed herself, though her cheek was livid.

"'Did your ladyship call me?'

"'Yes. Bring me a light!'

"In this letter Graham announced his return home the following week—with a wife;—a beautiful girl—penniless and without connections of gentility. No words can describe the bitter rage and disappointment of this proud woman. He had a second time thwarted her plans for his welfare, and each time he had outraged her strongest feelings. He had turned merchant, and by his plebeian peddling had bought the land which his ancestors had won at the point of the sword. She had borne that, and had submitted to help him in his schemes. But receive a beggarly, low-born wench for her daughter-in-law?—No! She would never do that. She paced the room with soft, firm steps, like a panther. After a time thought became clearer, and she saw that there was no question of her willingness to receive her daughter-in-law, but of that daughter-in-law's willingness to allow her to remain in the house. Ah! but it was an awful thing to see the proud woman when she looked that fact fully in the face. She hated her unseen daughter with a keen cold hate—a remorseless hate born of that terrible sin, Pride. But she was not a woman to hate passively. She paced to and fro, turning and returning with savage, stealthy quickness. The day waned, and night began. Her servant came to see if she were wanted, and was sent away with a haughty negative. 'She is busy with some wicked thought,' murmured the old woman.

* * * *

"Graham Whinmore's bride was, as he had said, 'so good and so lovely, that no one ever thought of asking who were her parents.' She was also accomplished and elegant in manner. She was in all respects but birth superior to the Duke's daughter whom Lady Henrietta had selected for her son's wife. The beautiful Lilian's father was a music master, and she had given lessons in singing herself. Lady Henrietta learned this and everything else concerning her young daughter-in-law that could be considered disgraceful in her present station. But she put restraint on her contempt, and received her with an outward show of courtesy and stately kindness. Graham believed that for his sake his mother was determined to forget his wife's low origin, and he became easy about the result of their connection after he had seen his mother caress his wife once or twice. He felt sure that no one could know Lilian and not love her. He was proud and happy to think that two such beautiful women belonged to him.

"The Lord-Lieutenant's ball was expected to be unusually brilliant that year, and Graham was anxious that his wife should be the queen of the assembly.

"'I should like her to wear the old lace and the jewels, mother,' said Graham.

"The Lady Henrietta's eyebrows were contracted for a moment, and she shot forth a furtive glance at Lilian, who sat near, playing with a greyhound.

"If Graham had seen that glance! But her words he believed.

"'Certainly, my son. It is quite proper that your wife should wear such magnificent heirlooms. There is no woman of quality in this county that can match them. I am proud to abdicate my right in her favour.'

"'There, Lilian! Do you hear, you are to eclipse the Duchess herself!'

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"I will do so, if you wish it,' said Lilian. 'But I do not think that will amuse me so much as dancing.'

* * * *

"Balls, in those times, began at a reasonable hour. Ladies who went to a ball early in November, began to dress by daylight.

"Lilian had been dressed by her maid. Owing to a certain sentimental secret between her and her husband, she wore her wedding-dress of white Indian muslin, instead of a rich brocaded silk petticoat, underneath the grand lace robe. The diamonds glittered gaily round her head and her softly-rounded throat and arms. She went to the old library, where Graham sat awaiting the ladies. She wanted his opinion concerning her appearance. The legend does not tell how he behaved on this occasion, but leaves it to young husbands to imagine.

"'You must go to my mother, and let her see how lovely you look. Walk first, that I may see how you look behind.' So she took from his hand a spray of roses he had gathered, and preceded him from the room, and up the staircase to his mother's chamber. She was in the dressing-room above.

"'Go up by yourself,' said Graham; 'I will remain on the stairs, and watch you both. I should like to hear what she says, when she does not think I hear; for she never praises you much to me, for fear of increasing my blind adoration, I suppose.'

"Lilian smiled at him, and disappeared up the stairs. It was now becoming dark, and as he approached the stairs, a few minutes afterwards, to hear what was said, his mother's voice, in a strange, eager tone, called from above,

"'*Bring me a light! Bring me a light!*'

"Then Graham saw his mother's old servant run quickly from her seat by the window, and light a tall taper on the toilette. She carried this up to her mistress, and found Graham on the stair on her return. She grasped his arm, and whispered fearfully,

"'Watch her! Watch her!'

"He did watch, and saw—"

"For God's sake, Mr. Erle," I interrupted, "don't tell me what he saw—for I saw the same dreadful sight!"

"I have no doubt you did, since you say so; and because I have seen it myself."

We were silent for some moments, and then I asked if he knew anything more of these people.

"Yes—the rest is well known to every one who lives within twenty miles. Graham Whinmore vowed not to remain under the same roof with his mother, after he had seen his wife's blackened corpse. His grief and resentment were quiet and enduring. He would not leave the corpse in the house; but before midnight had it carried to a summer-house in the shrubbery, where he watched beside it, and allowed no one to approach, except the old servant who figures in this story. She brought him food, and carried his commands to the household. From the day of Lilian's death till the day of her burial in the family vault at Whinmore Church, Graham guarded the summer-house where his wife lay, with his drawn sword as he walked by night round about. It was known that he would not allow the family jewels to be taken from the body, and that they were to be buried with it. Some say that he finally took them from the body himself, and buried them in the shrubbery, lest the undertakers, tempted by the sight of the jewels on the corpse, might desecrate her tomb afterwards for the sake of stealing them. This opinion is supported by the fact that a portion of the shrubbery is haunted by the apparition of Graham Whinmore, in mourning garments, and with a drawn sword in his hand.

"Would you advise me to institute a search for those old jewels?" I asked smiling.

"I would," said he. "But take no one into your confidence, Tom Whinmore. You may raise a laugh against you, if you are unsuccessful. And if you find them, and take them away—"

"Which I certainly should do," I interrupted.

"You will raise a popular outcry against you. The superstitious people will believe that you have outraged the ghost of your great-grandfather, who will become mischievous, in consequence."

I saw the prudence of this remark; and it was agreed between us, that we should do all the digging ourselves, unknown to any one. I then asked how it was that I was descended from this unfortunate gentleman.

Mr. Erle's story continued thus:—

"After his wife's funeral, Graham Whinmore did not return to the Hall, but went away to the south, and never came here again, not even to visit his mother on her death-bed, a year after. In a few years he married again, and had sons and daughters. To an unmarried daughter, Jane Whinmore,—always called 'Leddy Jane' by our neighbours,—he left the house and lands. He did not care to keep it in the family, and she might leave it to a stranger, or sell it, if she pleased. It was but a small portion of Graham Whinmore's property, as you must know. She, however—this 'Leddy Jane'—took a great fancy to the old place. She is said to have lived on terms of familiarity with the ghost of her grandmother, and still more affectionately with her father's first wife. She heard nothing of the buried jewels, and saw nothing of her own father's ghost during his lifetime. That part of the story did not come to light until after the death of Graham Whinmore; when the 'Leddy Jane' herself was startled one evening in the shrubbery, by meeting the apparition of her father. It is said that she left her property to her youngest nephew's youngest son, in obedience to his injunctions during that interview."

"So that though unborn at the time, I may consider myself lord of Whinmore Hall, by the will of my great-grandfather!" I said.

"Precisely so. I think it an indication that the ghostly power is to die out in your time. The last year of the wicked Lady Henrietta's life was very wretched, as you may suppose. Her besetting

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and cherished sins brought their own reward—and her crowning crime was avenged without the terror of the law. For it is said that every evening at sunset the apparition of her murdered daughter-in-law came before her, wearing the rich dress which was so dear to the proud woman; and that she was compelled to repeat the cruel act, and to hear her screams and the farewell curses of her adored son. The servants all left the Hall in affright; and no one lived with the wicked Lady except the faithful old servant, Margaret Thirlston, who stayed with her to the last, followed her to the grave, and died soon after.

"Her son and his wife were sought for by Jane Whinmore on her arrival here. She gave them a home and everything they wanted as housekeeper and farm-manager at the Hall. And at the death of Giles Thirlston, his son Ralph became farm-manager in his place. He continued there till 't' Leddy's' death, when he settled at the little wayside inn which you have seen, and which he calls 'Leddy Jane's Gift.'"

* * * *

I have but little more to say. Mr. Erle and I sought long for the hidden treasure. We found it, after reading a letter secreted in the escritoire, addressed to 'My youngest nephew's youngest son.' In that letter directions were given for recovering the hidden jewels of the family. They were buried outside the garden fence, on the open moor, on the very spot where I can swear I saw the figure of a man with a sword—my great-grandfather, Graham Whinmore.

After I married, we came to live in the south; and I took every means to let my little estate of Whinmore. To my regret the Hall has never found a tenant, and it is still without a tenant after these twenty-five years.

Will any reader of ONCE A WEEK make me an offer? They shall have it cheap.

J. M. H.

LOVE'S PHOTOGRAPH.

[*Laura is duly "engaged," and offers Charles her photographic likeness.*]

I've a portrait already of thee, ladie mine,
  Love used the photographer's art.
You look'd for awhile with your bonny bright smile,
  And 'twas fix'd on my sensitive heart.

You do not believe it? Then see in my eyes
  This image that dwells in my breast,
Thy minature, beauty mine, loving and gay,
Jumps up to convince you, and when you're away,
  Sinks back to the place of its rest.

A. F.

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LAST WEEK.

WHAT was the most marked feature in the week ending on the 10th of January, 1861? Clearly—The Frost! There is some mysterious and over-ruling power which provides for the ever-recurring necessities of our editors, and of the public for whom they in their turn spread the daily banquet. Even with the battles, murders, crimes, intrigues, revolutions of the world to draw upon—with all the new books, and new plays, and new operas, and new pictures open to their criticism, it must be a hard matter for the conductors of our public journals to find matter for 313 "issues" in the course of every year. When Parliament, and the Law Courts—especially the Courts of Chancery—are sitting, there is much balm for the editorial soul, a sober certainty of waking consciousness that for twenty-four columns at least—barring the labour of "cutting down"—they are safe. No daring reader—with the exception, perhaps, of the Chancery client more immediately interested, or the eloquent member who has made the telling speech—will risk himself into that arctic region of frozen print. No one will run the risk of being closed up for an indefinite time amidst those ice-bergs of the intellect. So far it is well; but when the British Parliament passes away like a dream of the night, or a tale which is told, and Chancery judges, and Chancery lawyers relapse into the normal conditions of humanity, the fate of our editors is less endurable. Were it not that some gentle influence from above sends from time to time a Horsman to Stroud, or permits that large gooseberries—in the Scottish vernacular, "blobs"—should flourish during the autumnal months in the distant county of Caithness, what would become of him? For six months of the year a daily newspaper is a bolter, and will scarce yield obedience to the restraining hand of the editorial Chifney—for six other months it is a slug, and requires the soft incentives of whip and spur to keep it in its place. That task of weaving of the daily leaders out of one's own bowels—as one may say—is a hard one indeed. It is difficult to conceive a more appalling destiny for a journalist of untidy moral character, than that he should be condemned to produce a leading article every day throughout eternity, even when intelligence is slack, and fashionable arrivals rare in the regions where it has been appointed that he should take up his final dwelling-place. The autumnal months—and the weeks of early winter which immediately precede the meeting of parliament—usually give our editors a foretaste of this form of bliss. But for this year the Frost has come to their assistance, and carried them triumphantly through what sailors would term the "doldrums" of their harassing occupation.

In truth it has been a rare frost, and even whilst these lines are committed to paper the Thames is frozen over at Battersea, and by the time they are given to the public, unless a thaw should intervene, of the fairway, even at London Bridge, there will be an end. As you look from the bridges down upon what is usually the great water thoroughfare of London, you see it choked with masses of ice of such size, that the navigation is already well-nigh stopped. At Rochester amateurs are getting their skates ready, and as one of the events of LAST WEEK it may be reported that the Medway was frozen over at Rochester Bridge. Very many years have elapsed since such a sight has been seen. In the southern counties of England the reporters tell us of 38 degrees of frost; and in the eastern counties, of 40 degrees. The ice on the Trent is of great thickness, and the great Yorkshire rivers are quite frozen over.

A very curious phenomenon—which illustrates the severity of this season in a very striking manner—has been recorded by naturalists as having been witnessed in the neighbourhood of Pontefract and Doncaster. It is said that the intensity of the frost has affected the plumage of the birds in that district, and that several which have been shot have proved quite pie-bald. Every one who has dabbled in arctic travels—pleasant reading by a bright fireside in latitude 52!—will remember that the plumage of the birds of the arctic regions is naturally colourless and white. It requires the genial warmth of sunnier climes to provide the humming-bird with its irridescent court-dress, and to clothe the parrot—that harlequin of the woods—in its brilliant motley. Just now it is Northward-Ho with our poor little English birds, and it is to be feared that as far as they are concerned the frost will finish the task of destruction which the floods of last year in the breeding time had too effectually begun. If so, we shall miss them next season, and discover to our loss that they have another use in the economy of nature than merely to make our hedge-rows and coverts delightful with song.

But what a strange scene was witnessed in our London Parks LAST WEEK. Why this was to be at Moscow, or St. Petersburgh, or to enjoy ourselves after the fashion of men about town at Nishni-Novgorod. Night after night there were very many hundreds—nay, thousands—of persons skating by torch-light. During these icy Saturnalia you might have seen crowds—many women amongst them—weaving fantastic dances; each one with skate on foot, and torch in hand, as merrily as though the floor had been chalked for their use in some pleasant ball-room "during the season." The quicksilver in the thermometer stood at very many degrees below freezing point, but the intensity of the cold seemed only to give additional fervour to the amusement. The objects of human ambition had become changed. Happy was the mortal whose proficiency on the "outside edge" was unquestioned—happier still the adept who could cut you the figure 8 backwards in a careless and easy manner, as though such were the natural fashion of locomotion in this slippery world. Then there were games of nine-pins played out upon the ice, with a vigour which would have put the champions of our American bowling alleys to the blush. It was delightful to witness the effect of one's own puny prowess as the ball darted over the ice as though impelled by the arm of a stalwart champion in this kind. Nor were bands of music wanting, nor displays of fireworks, to give glory to this strange scene; while amidst this strange medley of sights and sounds—the 'Express Skating Train' would flash past, giving one the

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idea of how locomotives might enjoy themselves when out for the holidays.

Alas! however, for the Poor during these hard times! There is another, and far less delightful side to this strange fantastic picture. This pitiful subject has been more than once touched upon in these brief notices of the chief events of each week, as it takes rank as the LAST WEEK to the readers of this publication. There is something here at stake of far more importance than a mere literary interest. Would that any word of ours could carry such weight with our readers as should induce them to give a little more thought than usual to the sufferings of their poor fellow-countrymen and country-women, who are just now enduring very terrible privations. The pity should not be so much for those who are driven to take refuge in the unions and workhouses. For them, at least, there is food—such as it is—and warmth, and shelter. The helping hand should be for such as are just struggling to keep clear of the House, and who are parting, day after day, with one little article of furniture and clothing after another, in the hope that the frost may break up, and the work, as they say, may "come back." Day after day they struggle on, and nothing but the instant apprehension of death—not always that!—will induce them to retire from their bare walls, and dissolve the fellowship of suffering which stands to them in place of the happiness of a family. The one consideration which appears to keep them out of the workhouse, more than bolt or bar, is the stern rule which enjoins separation during their sojourn within the walls of the Union between husband and wife, parent and child. It is probable that, as their means of procuring daily food of the roughest kind decrease, and the vital powers are lowered, the suffering has so become a habit that they look upon the realities of their situation with duller apprehension. They are content to starve to-day as they starved yesterday. To-day they are alive—why should they not be alive to-morrow? The problem is solved one way or another, and, on the First of May, most of them will be alive; but at what expense of human suffering—at what expenditure of vital power and energy which might have been profitably employed in taming the sea, and drawing nourishment from the earth, it would be hard to say. We are apt to think "they are alive—all is well." There are worse things than death. To live on with abated energy, and forces sadly unequal to the daily task;—to bring into the world an offspring of stunted power and growth;—in the day to wish it were night, and at night to say, "would God it were morning!"—all this is worse than the long rest, and the realisation of the eternal hope which is in man's nature. Is it not strange that there should be too many Englishmen and English-women in this world? Is it not stranger still that we should have so much pity and sympathy for starving and distressed persons in other lands, whilst our own people—those of our own flesh and blood—are undergoing equal privations of food and of the necessaries of life, in addition to the miseries caused not merely by a rigorous climate, but by a climate whose rigour comes by fits and starts, and is therefore all the more distressing? Our pity always travels South. No one subscribes for the Esquimaux, and yet as long as the skies are bright, and the sun is warm above, human suffering is shorn of half its bitterness.

The intelligence received LAST WEEK from the United States has been of the most astonishing kind. It would seem that in South Carolina there has been a convention, or State gathering, and that by the persons present it has been decided that this State shall no longer form part of the North American Union. Other slave-holding states have been invited to join this glorious conspiracy against the freedom of a large section of the human race in the name of freedom. Botanists tell us that the rose is a very foul feeder —no flower consumes so much dung as the garden's queen. This seems to be the case with freedom in the Southern States of the North American Union. Freedom in South Carolina, and in the other planting states must be well manured with slavery, that its petals may be bright and its leaves vigorous, and that the plant may flourish in a satisfactory way. It is difficult to believe even now that the true statesmen of the United States will not find a way out of the difficulty, for as the matter strikes upon one's intelligence at the first blush, the disruption of the Union is a heavy blow to the prosperity of that great confederation—which, with all its faults, was so useful an ally to the Liberals of Europe. We want a counterbalance to the vast military despotisms of Europe—for France, Spain, Russia, and Germany are still despotically governed by military power. Like "a good deed in a naughty world," the lamp of freedom shines with faint glimmer here and there upon the European continent—in Holland, in Belgium, in Switzerland, in Piedmont—but as yet it sends forth but an uncertain beam. Were the British islands once subjected to military power, there would soon be an end of freedom in the Old World. The Liberals of Europe live by virtue of British freedom, and we in our turn rely for sympathy and support upon the various gatherings of the Anglo-Saxon race which have established themselves at this or that point of the habitable globe. The Australian continent, with its adjacent islands, and still more, at the present period of the world's history, the continent of North America, constitute our two great supports. There does not exist any nation, save our own, which has cast its roots so deeply and so firmly into the earth at distant points of its surface, as our own. The power of Russia, of France, of Germany, respectively, is concentrated into a comparatively narrow space; but on the other side of the Atlantic there is another England; in the far Southern Ocean, an England again. These great offshoots have drawn their vigour from the parent trunk, but they have well repaid the debt. The progress which has been made in turning Liberal ideas into facts, during the last thirty years, even here at home, is greatly the result of the existence elsewhere of British communities, which had broken off all connection with feudal forms of thought. How, then, can we do otherwise than wish well to the United

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States of North America, and pray that they may not diverge from the paths which would lead them to permanent greatness and prosperity?

It seems incredible that we of this generation should live to see so important an event as a disruption of the great Confederation. By the last advices from the States we are informed that there is a general idea throughout the Union that at the last moment the North will give way, and consent to receive conditions from the South. Such a result, although perhaps it would afford a momentary solution of the difficulty, would, in the long run, prove the direst calamity both to the States and to the world. It would mean nothing less than the extension, at a period more or less remote, of the system of slavery over the larger portion of the North American continent—over Mexico and Central America—and probably over Cuba, and certain others of the Antilles. The Southerners mean nothing more nor less than that this large and fertile section of the globe should be cultivated by enforced negro labour for the benefit of white masters. Is this the best arrangement which can be made? We are bound to admit that in the present condition of human labour, the cultivation of cotton, sugar, and tobacco, and perhaps, coffee, is mainly performed by the negro. They tell us that the constitution of the white man is incapable of continued toil under the burning sun of the tropics, and in the unwholesome swamps where the cotton plant is grown. They add that experience has shown that the negro will not cultivate the earth in obedience to the same impulses which drive the white man to his daily toil. He is an inferior animal—a half-way something between the white man and the horse; he must be put in harness and driven along the road, or he will not perform that daily amount of work which the white man's Providence, and the white man's system of Political Economy tell us is required of all human beings, as the condition of their existence.

Now, we are certainly not of those who would advocate the doctrine that the extinction of Slavery is to be purchased at such a price as would be involved in the confiscation of the property of the Southern planters—which, for the matter of that, would carry with it confiscation to our own Manchester magnates as well. But the doctrine, if carried into effect, would do something more than this—it would inflict sudden and enormous misery upon the slaves themselves. The very commonest suggestions of Justice, of Prudence, of Humanity, forbid such a conclusion. The question rather is, whether at this critical period of the world's history, and looking forward, as we are bound to do, to the advantage of those who are to come after us, we are doing the wisest thing in entrusting the cultivation of the great staples named to the hands of the negro? We may now adopt one of two courses. We may work down to the conclusion that in a generation or two the culture of cotton, sugar, &c., is to be carried out by white labour aided by machinery, and availing itself of the improvements in mechanical and agricultural science. If this be not well, then we must look forward to negro labour as our sole resource, and to an indefinite increase in its amount, for certainly the demand for the great tropical staples is annually on the increase. In half a century, if the same rate of progress is maintained, it will be something very enormous.

If the Northern view were to prevail in this dispute which is now dividing the Disunited, rather than the United States—at least the rational Northern view, not the view of the extreme zealots and fanatics, slavery would be confined within its actual limits, and within them it would be suffered to die out in a few generations. On the Southern suggestion, slavery is to be indefinitely extended, and to become the very basis upon which the New Southern Confederation—to be formed by the secession of the planting States and territories—is to repose. Let this be carried out, and in a few generations what will be the numerical amount of the slave population?—what its proportion to the whites? As matters stand at present in the United States, it must not be forgotten that the Northern States have always offered a most important guarantee to the Southern in case of a servile war, or any disturbance of that kind. Whatever the views of the Northerns might have been upon the subject of slavery, there is no doubt that they would have marched as a man to the defence of their Southern brethren in case of a rising amongst the negroes. But let the Southern idea be carried out, and before long the whites will stand amongst the negroes scarcely as thousands amongst millions. The negro population will be enormous—the white population, as fortunes become more and more concentrated into a few hands, will proportionably decrease. To be sure we hold British India upon such terms; but, commercially speaking, that is not the most profitable speculation we have taken in hand. It may be added that, were we to attempt to govern India in such a spirit, one of two results would surely follow,—our expulsion within the next twenty years, or the bankruptcy of the mother-country.

Every person who has made himself practically familiar with the planting system as it actually exists in the southern states has told us that one of the great blots upon it is, that white and black labour cannot be brought to bear upon the soil within the same district. Agricultural industry, the black man's merit, is therefore the white man's reproach. To take a turn at the sugar-canes or the cotton-plants is to be degraded to the negro's level. This is a great danger, for it shuts out all hope of a modification of the system by the introduction of white labour upon any considerable scale. It should also be considered that the negro is not an apt workman where machinery is used. You can supplement the powers of the white man—the thews and sinews of the black man are all that can be called into action. If, as the advocates of slavery say, the negro is an inferior animal, why should we be at such pains to perpetuate an inferior race? Why not machinery of iron instead of negro muscle? If, on the other hand, the negro is not an inferior animal—although one of a branch of the human race which is not gifted with faculties very susceptible of development—what right have we to keep him in slavery?

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON the day following that of Adair's interview with Henderson, at which he had extracted the scrap of paper from the reluctant hand of the lady's maid, Ernest, who had taken up his quarters at the little inn at Versailles, received an unexpected visitor. This was M. Silvain, who presented himself with considerable sternness of manner. The symptom was not lost on the observant Adair, but he had his own reasons for being very little affected by any change of bearing in the usually polite and deferential perfumer.

"Ah, the dear Alphonse!" said Adair, in French, the language in which their subsequent conversation was conducted, and which Ernest Adair spoke with perfect facility.

M. Silvain bowed slightly, upon which Adair rose, mockingly returned an elaborate salute, and then, resuming his seat, proceeded to make a cigarette.

"I wish to be favoured with your attention, Monsieur," said Silvain, coldly.

"You have it, my good Alphonse. Have you discovered a new hair-dye, or does some confiding victim to your last invention in that line threaten you with the tribunals?"

"I am not here to *badiner*, Monsieur."

"Is that a grateful answer, when a friend anticipates your griefs, and prepares to solace them?"

"Before we separate you will need another preparation, M. Adair."

"For my hair?"

"I forbid you to jest at my profession, Monsieur, or on any other subject at the present moment."

"*Diavolo!*" said Adair, opening his eyes. "Let us hear more, and shall I order you some absinthe? It is very bad, but you are accustomed to deleterious liquids."

"I repeat to you, M. Adair, that I forbid jesting."

"Well, if you will neither be consoled nor treated, the tribune is to you. Speak."

"I had thought you, M. Adair, with certain drawbacks, for which I know how to make allowances, a man of honour."

"I swear to you that I have kept your secrets. Nobody has learned from me how you colour the violet pomade. I only refuse to use it."

"You seek to enrage me, M. Adair, but you have already done so more effectually than by your coarse taunts."

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"Enraged you, Alphonse!—you, the pattern of all that is soft and amiable. Nay, then I am a wretch indeed, and miserable to the lowest extent. *De profundis* I implore you to tell me my crime; only break it to me gently, knowing the feminine tenderness of my heart."

"The word is well chosen, M. Adair, by a man who commits a brutal outrage upon a woman."

"And who has done such a truly shocking thing?"

"You yourself, Monsieur, and in this very apartment."

"I begin to think, my fabulous Alphonse, that my hospitable offer of refreshment was something more than superfluous, and that you were wise to decline it. I would not presume to dictate, but I think that the interests of our trade may suffer if we indulge too freely in the sensuous pleasures, at least during business hours."

This was said very indolently, and the punctuation supplied by light puffs of smoke.

"Your insolence, Monsieur, will not deter me from the purpose I have come for," returned Silvain, who, though pale with anger, preserved much composure of deportment.

"I should be very sorry to deter you from anything, my dear Alphonse," replied Adair. "I cannot charge myself with habitually keeping you out of mischief. But tipsiness is such an exceedingly objectionable frailty, that a friend's ardour may be pardoned."

"A friend, M. Adair. That name is never again to be used between us."

"Exactly as you please, Alphonse. Perhaps you are right. Real friends need no parade of their affectionate sentiments."

"In this apartment, M. Adair, you dared to permit yourself, yesterday, to outrage a woman whom you were bound to treat with respect."

"You are rather a tiresome *raconteur*, Alphonse. You told me this just now, with a slight deduction. A narrative should advance—and one would think a perfumer understood fiction."

"It is no fiction, Monsieur. Do you dare to deny having wrenched from a young girl's hand a certain paper?"

"Suppose I denied it?"

"That would be a fresh insult, because you would charge her with a falsehood of which she is incapable. Do you know that?"

"Indeed, M. Silvain, with all apologies to you, I know of no falsehood of which any female is incapable."

"The sentiment is worthy of you, M. Adair. But spare yourself the unnecessary trouble. Mademoiselle Matilde has informed me, somewhat reluctantly, of your conduct, and I am here."

"Well," said Ernest, emitting a large puff of smoke.

"Had you been the man of honour I had supposed you, this conversation would have been needless."

"It is."

"That is false, Monsieur. It would have been needless, for you would at once have made your reparation, and charged me with apology. I do not observe that you are in the slightest hurry to do either."

"Did you ever observe me in the slightest hurry about anything?"

"Again, I repeat, Monsieur, that I will not be provoked into anger, and I invite you to take the course which is due to the young person you have injured."

"I have injured nobody, and you are a fool, Alphonse."

"We shall see, presently, M. Adair."

"As you please; but I warn you that I was reading something much more pleasant than your conversation, and I may easily be fatigued by a repetition of your absurdities. Have some absinthe, and go away and become tolerable."

"I may have the misfortune to fatigue you without much conversation, M. Adair. But I prefer to act in the first place with consideration. You deprived Mademoiselle Matilde of a paper."

"What, again?"

"You will, at once, deposit that paper in my hands, first placing it in this envelope." And he produced one from his pocket.

"This envelope," said Adair, affecting to smell it, and then tossing it at Silvain, "is so infernally scented with bad millefleurs that I must protest against touching it again."

M. Silvain's eyes sparkled with rage.

"I produce the envelope, Monsieur, because, although I shall return the paper in question to Mademoiselle, I refuse to be thought to have seen the writing upon it, or to have become acquainted with her least secret."

"Chivalrous Alphonse, worthy to have been christened after Spanish royalty! But your scruples are in excess. There was but one word on the piece of paper, but I half suspect that Mademoiselle's curious French has made you think there was some allusion to yourself or your calling. Tranquillise your mind. The word was not *couper*, but *coupon*."

"Monsieur, you are a dastard."

"You should not say that, when I have been bold enough to permit you to shave me. I have had wounds from your awkwardness that testify to my bravery."

"You may have others, ere long, Monsieur."

"That is, I think, the third time that you have darkly hinted at some scheme of personal vengeance, my dear Alphonse. You force me also into the bad and dull habit of repetition, and constrain me again to say that you are a fool."

"Enough, and more than enough, M. Adair."

"The interview is at an end, then. The fates are merciful."

"Perhaps not," said the Frenchman, suddenly rising, and leaving the room, and as hastily returning with a long wooden box, which he placed on the table.

"Ah, now you interest me," said Adair. "The dialogue was really flagging. Now we have novelty. And what is that box? You have some new invention, after all, only you meditated an amiable surprise for your friend. Come, no more mystification. Is it a monster bottle of home-made Eau de Cologne?"

The Frenchman quietly unlocked the box, took out two small swords, and threw off his coat.

"Eh!" said Ernest Adair, affecting pleasure.

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"That is charming. Two real swords. Did you buy them a bargain, to be cut up into scissors? Well, any improvement in your French cutlery is to be hailed with ecstacy."

But while he spoke his eye was vigilant, and his foot firm on the floor, and ready for a spring, should Silvain offer sudden violence.

The Frenchman had no such base intent. He placed the box on a chair, pushed away the table, so as to leave the centre of the room free, and calmly offered Adair his choice of weapons.

For a moment it crossed Ernest's mind to snatch both, but the next instant he smiled and took one of the swords.

"This looks the prettier handle," he said, without rising, "but both are very nicely cleaned, and do credit to our crystal scouring powder, *breveté*. What next?"

"Next, defend yourself, Monsieur," said Silvain, retiring, and taking up his position in a very determined manner. "The door is behind *me*," he added, for the first time letting a taunt escape him.

"I am obliged by the counsel and the information," said Adair, still keeping his seat. "But are you sufficiently insane, M. Silvain—and as you repudiate intoxication, observe the ready charity that offers you another excuse—are you sufficiently insane to suppose that I am going to fight a hair-dresser about a lady's-maid?"

"We will not talk, M. Adair. You have long since waived all the considerations of rank, even if I allowed them. You have insulted a young person whom I esteem, Monsieur, therefore, defend yourself."

He looked so determined, as he spoke, that Ernest thought it prudent to rise, in order to repel any sudden attack, but he did not advance upon his antagonist.

"This is a gentleman's reward when he condescends to fraternise with *canaille*," he said, with calm impertinence.

"Fight, and do not talk," replied the Frenchman, advancing upon him, with the most evident intention of doing his very worst.

Ernest instinctively fell upon guard—the blades crossed—and M. Silvain's sword, like that of the Corsair, made fast atonement for its first delay. He attacked Adair with downright fury, and any one thrust which he delivered would, unparried, have worked important change in the subsequent destinies of several persons with whom the reader is acquainted. But Adair, retaining his cigarette between his teeth, coolly parried every lunge, without making a return.

"How long," he said, as M. Silvain, baffled in a vigorous onslaught, retreated for a moment, and glared vengefully at his antagonist, "how long is this delightful assault of arms to proceed?"

"Until one falls, Monsieur," cried M. Silvain, anew advancing to the combat. Ernest smiled.

But the most cold-blooded man is roused sooner or later by the persistent efforts of another to do him mortal harm, and, moreover, there is something in the rapid clash of steel that fires the soul of the swordsman. Another desperate effort of Silvain's to get home, and Ernest had no longer the paper in his teeth, but had set them, and with a very evil eye was keeping deadly watch on that of his enemy. Adair was rapidly forgetting how inexcusably foolish he would be to derange all his schemes for the sake of punishing a petty shopkeeper, and was on the very point of leaving the defensive and lunging his best when the voice of Mary Henderson was heard hastily asking whether Mr. Adair was within.

The sound operated differently on the two men. Adair instantly recalled his better judgment to his aid, and, still watching his enraged antagonist, did not return his thrust. But the voice of his mistress roused the lover to heroism, and he felt that he would have given his own life to let her see her enemy stretched on the floor between them. Thirsting to finish the duel, he rushed at Adair, delivered three or four rapid and desperate lunges, and laid himself open to a thrust that, had Adair pleased, would have speedily ended M. Silvain's life, love, and woes. But Ernest (as will have been perceived), a practised and skilful fencer, did not so please; but at the instant Mary's hand was on the door, he suddenly performed one of the feats known in the art; and as the girl entered, she had the satisfaction of seeing her lover, with a wrenched wrist, glaring with anger and discomfiture at Ernest, the sword of Silvain having flown to a distance on the floor.

"And I had forbidden you," said Mary, reproachfully, to Silvain.

"Forbidden him to give me a fencing lesson, Mademoiselle?" said Adair, as calmly as usual. "That was indeed cruel, for he is so good a master of the sword that I profit greatly by his teaching."

The girl looked searchingly at her lover, conceiving from the expression of his face and from his being defenceless, that he might have received a hurt, the rather that Silvain was too mortified to speak on the instant.

"He has not stabbed you?" asked Mary, vehemently.

"What a word, Mademoiselle!" said Ernest. "We do not stab, except under very exceptional circumstances. M. Silvain is perfectly unhurt, and I hope will pardon my awkwardness in knocking his sword out of his hand."

He picked up Silvain's weapon, and replaced it, with his own, in the box, which he quietly locked.

Meantime Mary was administering, in an under tone, that mixture of reproach, consolation, and affection which woman has ever ready for him whom she loves, and Silvain, with his hand in hers, was almost comforted for his defeat by the unwonted kindness with which his usually rather undemonstrative mistress caressed him.

"But I ordered you not," she added.

"I thought of you, and could not obey you," said M. Silvain, tenderly and epigrammatically.

"And now, my dear Alphonse," said Adair, cheerfully, "let me renew my offer of absinthe. After a fencing-lesson one requires refreshment. What say you, Mademoiselle? You must teach him to take care of himself."

"And I will," said Mary, firmly, and leading her lover from the room, whence he certainly did not depart very triumphantly.

"I could have spiked the idiot a dozen times," said Ernest, "but what would have been the

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good? And he has spilled the ink over my papers. If I had seen that before, he should have had something in his arm that would have prevented his snapping his scissors for a month to come. He has been in luck, the insolent hair-cutter! I have not seen anything so laughable for many a long day. Peace to your *manes*, M. Roland, for rendering me so capable of defending my innocent life against frantic barbers!"

CHAPTER XXV.

It will easily be supposed by those who have ever had their hearts determinately set upon the attainment of an object, that although it did not enter into the calculation of Mrs. Urquhart that Arthur Lygon would be on his way to Paris without waiting for the morning, he was hastening thither in a few moments from leaving her house. He was, in fact, walking towards the capital at his best speed. The journey is not much to a man in health and with average powers, but to Lygon, under the circumstances, it seemed the merest trifle compared with the delay of a few hours. He walked well, and, though by his exertion of strong will he excluded to the utmost of his ability the thoughts which incessantly pressed upon him, as Abraham drove away the birds that sought to come down to the sacrifice, his sensations, alternating between an agitating hopefulness and a bitter and reproachful distrust, made him regardless both of distance and of the minor incidents of the night.

He reached Paris, just as the beautiful city was lying in the earliest light of the summer morning, but he had no eye for the charming spectacle that rewards the stranger who will at such an hour be astir in the French capital. He made direct for the quarter in which stood the residence of the lady whose card had been given him. The address had been fixed in his mind by a glance, but on taking out the card to be certain as to the number of the house, he perceived that other cards must have lain at angles across it for many a day, as its enamel was partially soiled with dust. But he did not at the moment attach any significance to this little sign, and pushed on for the street designated. It was in the Luxembourg quarter, which he speedily reached. He found the street, he found the house, he found the number, but the last was upon a wall already devoted to the architect, whose destroying workmen (not yet come to that day's duty) had almost removed the house to which Lygon had been sent.

He had been deceived again.

Almost against hope he made such inquiries as were possible. At first, at that hour, there was no one whom he could consult; but, as the morning wore on, and houses opened, Lygon had the opportunity of ascertaining from respectable evidence that Madame * * * * * had certainly resided at the mansion in question, and was well known, but that, at least six months back, she had sold the place to a celebrated banker, who, as Monsieur could see, was going to rebuild it on a scale of—O, such magnificence! As for Madame, she had gone to Italy.

He said nothing, now, that could have told a stranger that Lygon was wounded, grieved, or angered. The time for such words had passed. He made no sign that could attract the notice of a passer-by. Casually addressed by a workman who asked him for a light, he took out a fusée-box and helped the man to kindle his pipe. A child, toddling after its hurrying mother, fell and bewailed itself, and Arthur Lygon raised it from the ground, and brought it to the woman's hand. He actually stood still and permitted his eye to range over the architecture of one of the churches, though utterly unaware of what he was doing.

At length, exhausted both in body and mind, he entered the first decent place of refreshment and partook of food. He felt that he hated it, and all else that reminded him of home and comfort; but he forced himself to eat.

Then he went out and walked in the now busy city, sparkling in the sunshine, and as he saw men of his own rank on their way to their duties, he looked curiously in their faces, and wondered whether any one of them had left a wife who had embraced him tenderly, and would, in a few hours, have abandoned his house.

Lygon passed some time — he knew not how long—in the state in which intervals of a stupefied unbelief, of utter rejection of the grim circumstances around us, are broken by fever-fits of intense consciousness and bitter agony. And when these hours of agitation were over, and the brain cleared, and the heart throbbed less violently at the recurrence of the image of Laura, Arthur passed to a worse state—that in which a man resolves to believe the very worst.

And what words shall tell of that agony? Laugh at the attempt, you who have known such an hour. Laugh, and do not desire to be saddened by the picture, feeble as it would be, you who have never loved, or have loved and never known yourselves to have been deceived.

A tremendous hand on his shoulder, and the heartiest of voices in his ear, as he crossed for the fiftieth time, it might have been, the bridge near the Place de la Concorde.

"Arthur Lygon in Paris! That's as things should be."

He turned to be cordially greeted by Robert Urquhart.

The great, tall, broad Scotsman was delighted, and gave out of his big chest one of those laughs which are rarely heard, and so are the more worth hearing. And Parisians looked up at the sound, which indeed was rather over the heads of most of them, and wondered what was pleasing the genial giant with those insufferably ill-made clothes and vast round hat, and why his blue eyes and white teeth should shine out like that at the sight of the much better dressed and more elegant person whose hand he was clearly trying to wring off. And then they went on their way.

If there was one man on earth whom Arthur would have avoided at that moment, it was the man who was welcoming him so cordially. Without time to consider what course to adopt, without a shadow of preparation for inevitable questions, the answers to which might determine the events of a life, here he was in the irresistible grasp of his friend, the husband of the woman whose history

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Lygon had so lately learned, of the woman who had enabled Laura to escape from a husband vulgarly deceived by her shameless sister.

But, unless the bridge could have suddenly given way, speaking became a necessity, and Lygon struggled to answer Urquhart, and make inquiries as to the railway accident about which the latter was supposed to be away from Paris.

"O, ay, you fools? It served them just right, and I wish that a mile had gone down instead of a hundred yards. I was as pleased as Punch, and I just told them so to their faces, before I set the fellows at work. But now then, Arthur, where are you, and how long have you been in this decent city, and is Laura with you—but of course I needn't ask that of the model husband?"

"No, Laura is not with me," said Arthur, hastening to deal with this merciless catechism, and almost wishing that the kind good fellow before him would go mad and spring into the river, or be somehow got out of the way before another word could be said.

"No? That's shabby, and I don't envy you the scolding you'll get from Bertha. But perhaps you have seen her, and had your chastising."

"Yes, I have been to your house—indeed, I left it only last night. I am on my way to England directly."

"Not exactly, my man, seeing that the way to England is out there," laughed Robert Urquhart, stretching forth his great arm, and pointing in the given direction. "But that's purely a low and topographical view of the case. In the moral and social aspect of the question, I am likewise d—d if you are going to England, because we are going to have a long walk and a long crack, and a trifle of creature comfort, and then we're going to order a jolly dinner at the Traw Frare, of which we will partake in the evening, with befitting thanks to Providence before and after meat. Do you see that, my man?"

"Utterly impossible, my dear Robert. I must get away."

"You'll just do nothing of the kind, so it's no use being an obstinate brute. I hate obstinacy."

"It is matter of business of extreme importance."

"Matter of bosh. Hearken unto me. You can't get to England until night, when it's too late to be doing any business which decorous Christian men like you, and another who shall be nameless, are likely to undertake, and therefore you may as well leave by the night train, and be at your business early in the morning. Now that is so clear that I'll not hear another word on it; and now we'll go and get some lunch, for I will not insult the good breakfast I had three hours ago by pretending I want another. Come along."

At another time no one would have extricated himself more pleasantly and yet more satisfactorily from an engagement he wished to get rid of than Arthur Lygon. But at this moment he seemed powerless. The commonplace excuses of life did not seem to come to his tongue, and his imagination was far too much exhausted to supply him with any better plea. His condition may be judged when it is added that he actually had an impulse to make a sudden start, and flee away from his unconscious tormentor, who would assuredly have been after him with the speed of an Achilles.

"I am not very well," said Arthur, "and I had rather not walk."

"Then we'll ride, which is more dignified and also more retired," said Urquhart. "But I don't like to hear you talk of being ill. I thought that, like myself, you left such follies to the women, who are the final cause of those abominable doctors. What's the matter, my man?"

"Oh, I don't know. I have been working too hard."

"That's a wicked thing to do, and clean contrary to the will of Providence. I am ashamed of you, and likewise of Laura for permitting it. Indeed I believe it must just be her fault, for a more obedient husband, excepting myself, I do not know, and it is her prerogative and privilege to take care of you. Give her a lecture for me."

"Yes, over-work won't do."

"I should think not. But let us go over to yon caffy, and see what the beggars can give us."

The repast occupied some time, during which Arthur Lygon contrived to parry many home questions, and, by his manner, to impress Urquhart, with an idea that Lygon was really much more ill than he owned himself to be. The good-natured talk of the engineer incessantly wounded Arthur to the heart's core; but Robert Urquhart not only could not perceive this, but with the affectionate instinct of a kindly Scot, who always finds happiness in speaking of those dear to him, thought that he was rendering Lygon the very best service in attempting to cheer him up by incessant questions about Laura, and her looks, and habits, and remembrances of some of her old bits of playfulness, or naïveté, and other trifles, the like of which, when addressed to the happy, make them happier. But what were they to the unfortunate husband? Then Robert would speak of the children in succession, and know how old each was, and what he or she could do, and whether they resembled Arthur or Laura, and what were their views for the future; and by the time the lunch was over, Lygon was worked to a state which even Adair might have pitied.

Urquhart watched Arthur swallow at a draught a large quantity of a not very weak wine, and the Scotchman shook his head, and said no more until they were seated in an open carriage, whose driver was ordered to take them a long round, and not to fatigue his horse.

"Parley voo Anglay?" was Mr. Urquhart's demand of the driver. The latter proudly disclaimed the slightest knowledge of the insular tongue.

"So much the better," said Mr. Urquhart, lighting a cigar about the size of a small umbrella, and tendering a similar club of tobacco to Lygon, who took it rather eagerly. It was a good excuse for much silence, that mighty weed. Again the keen Scotchman watched him, as they drove away towards the Arch of Triumph.

After some minutes, Robert Urquhart, who was as straightforward in his dealings as man should be, said, laying a great hand on Lygon's,

"Now, my man, there should be no secrets between us."

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No secrets between us, thought Lygon.

And what a secret he, if he chose, could tell the man who was thus addressing him!

"No secrets, I tell you, Arthur. We are a couple of honest men, who have married a couple of honest women, and as they are sisters, we should be brothers. Is that true, Mr. Arthur?"

"I hope so," said Arthur.

"Very well, that's confessed. Now, what is your trouble? Because that you *are* in trouble a man that has both his eyes sharpened by liking, which I take to be the best eye-ointment in the world, can see with half of one of them."

"I told you I was ill, my dear Robert."

"You told me, begging your pardon, that which was only true in a sense, as the devil said when the monkey called him cousin, and I know better. You are a plucky fellow, as well as a clever one, and if anything was the matter you would go to one of those d—d doctors, and be cured, and meantime you would hold up your head and look like a man. Now you are all down in the mouth, you don't eat, you do drink, and instead of smoking that prime weed like a Christian man, you are sucking it to death as if for a wager. There's something on your mind."

"You are determined to have it so," said Arthur, with a faint smile.

"I'm determined to know all about it, my man. And as I know that some men don't like to break the ice, and I do, I shall just take the liberty of breaking it myself. And if I make a good guess, you'll answer truthfully."

"Yes," said Arthur, with his lips. His heart's answer need not be set down.

"Done. And you'll not be offended?"

"What, with *you?*"

"That's the first decent word you've spoken to-day. But I'll have some more out of you before you've done. Now then, how much will see you out of the mess, and ready to snap your fingers at the world, the flesh, and the devil?"

"How much?" repeated Arthur.

"Come, come, walk uprightly, and according to your lights, or you'll be in for something bad. You know what I mean, my man. We've been having a bit of a race with the constable, and being young and active, we've licked the old fellow, as was natural."

"What—you think that I am in debt. My dear Robert!"

"I know you are, and there's an end of that. I suppose you have come over here to be out of the way, while things are being put right, and that Laura is managing that for you. Very sensible, too, and all I ask is to be allowed to put on some more coal, and get the journey done at a wee bit better pace."

"You have the kindest heart in the world, Robert," said Lygon, touched.

"I've just got nothing of the sort, I am proud to say," said his brother-in-law. "I would be very sorry to be the biggest fool of my acquaintance. But that's not the question. Do you mean to let me have the pleasure of helping you?"

"If I wanted such help, I would come to you before any man I know in the world," said Arthur.

"And you do. For your wife's sake, Arthur, I think that you are bound to avail yourself of any lawful means of putting matters right. It is not well for a young wife to be left without her husband, and it's bad for the bairns to be accustomed to see their father away, let alone the cackle of the fools outside, who are sure to have something to say if you give them a chance. You must take a bit of paper, and write an I.O.U. for the amount you need, and before we get to our dinner—which, please God! we'll make a bit cheerfuller than our lunch — I'll have got the money for you in English notes. Then we'll talk about paying back, or else your proud English prelatical stomach will have no digestion. Do you see all that, my man?"

To Lygon, this kindly speech, in which his home, his comfort, his honour, his pride were all cared for by the Scot, suggested a refuge from the immediate pressure upon him—a mode in which he could escape from the slow torture to which he was being exposed. It could do no harm to let Urquhart think that he was right, and to return the money, with an explanatory letter, would be an easier course than the talking down the impression which Robert had formed. At all events, in Lygon's state of mind it seemed a most desirable loophole.

"I feel all your kindness, Robert."

"And accept my proposals. Of course you do. That is the only course for a man and a Christian."

"I don't feel like either just now."

"No, but you will by and by. Now I tell you what. Turn over in your own mind, while we drive about in this beast of a carriage, which bumps like the very devil, how much will answer our purpose, and mind you leave a margin for something handsome, which you are bound to buy for Laura for not bringing her to Paris. Turn it over, I say, and while you are doing it, I'll get through a bit of calculation of my own, which I can do in my head if I am not talked to, and which is for the benefit of my friends those beggars that let my railway down, and be hanged to them. So here goes for a think, my man."

And with this last touch of consideration the warm-hearted Robert Urquhart ceased to speak, nor did the brothers-in-law exchange another word until they alighted, hours after, at the Palais Royal.

But when Urquhart, at the table of the Trois Frères, pushed a piece of paper across to Lygon, and said "Write," Arthur felt it impossible to perform that piece of deception. Anything of the kind had always been foreign to his frank nature, and though in the state of wretchedness in which he found himself he might have permitted his friend to insist on deceiving himself, Lygon could not put his hand even to what might have almost been called a pious fraud.

"Robert," he said, "you are the best fellow in the world——"

"That's not writing," said Urquhart, impatiently.

"Listen to me. I have been thinking very deeply over a great number of things, and have finally made up my mind what to do. The advancing this money would not remove the weight

that is on my mind. But I think it possible that your advice might do so."

"Try, my man; that can't harm you."

"I will. But I assure you, Robert, that I am physically incapable of laying my case before you to-night. I must have some rest. Let everything stand over until to-morrow."

"I hate that way of going on, because it's not going on."

"So do I, but it must be so."

"Your hand on one thing. You don't go back to England without giving me your confidence?"

"I promise that."

"Done. Then we'll dine *ad interim*. Garsong. Eecy."

(To be continued.)

THE AGED.

THEIR HEALTH.

WHAT is Old Age? It must strike thoughtful people, now and then, how very little we consider what the thing really is that we talk about so often, and with so much feeling. The poets, the moralists, persons of strong domestic affections, and dramatic delineators have plenty to say on certain characteristics of the last stage of human existence; so that, as far as description of the condition, and every possible pathetic presentment of it can go, it would be scarcely possible to add to our wealth of literary portraiture. But none of these methods of treatment show us what old age is; and, till we know this, our way of regarding and treating the condition must be mere guess-work.

One who has a Philosopher's right to speak* upon the subject, says, "The general theory of death is certainly in a very backward state, since the ablest physiological researches on this subject have usually related to violent or accidental death." He adds that even so far the investigation has been anything but thorough; whereas we do but half our business if we study the growth and development of the frame, and neglect the process of its decline. One glimpse has been obtained, the physiologists tell us; and only one, as far as the organic life of the frame is concerned: and that is that the turning point between maturity and decline is the moment when the balance changes between the functions of composition and decomposition; or, in other words, when the frame begins to give out more than it receives.

During the first years of life, the fluids abound over the solids, and the elements which go to expand the frame are received and appropriated very plentifully, while a much smaller amount is exhaled. The stage of maturity is that in which the balance is equal; and this period is supposed to include, at the outside, twenty years of human life. Then begins the process of dying, as the philosophers say; or, as less learned persons express it, we turn our faces towards old age; or, according to the common figure of speech, we begin to go down the hill. The age of forty-five is assigned for this change. The change itself consists simply in the exhalation of particles beginning to exceed the reception of them—the waste becoming greater than the nutrition—nutrition meaning not only the operation of the food swallowed, but that of the gases breathed, and the appliances of every sort which are administered through the incessant action of the frame, and of the materials which surround it. The necessary consequence is a gradual drying up,—extremely gradual, in the case of vigorous frames,—but incessant, till the consolidation becomes too great to admit of vital action. To go through this process without disturbance from disease is to die of old age. This is, we are told, about all that is known about the decline and death of organised bodies. It is enough to guide us in observing the facts and appearances of old age.

* Auguste Comte.

It is clear that there has been no noticeable change in the method of human life between the Psalmist's time and our own. No doubt there has been of late years a considerable diminution of mortality in proportion to numbers, which is the same thing as its proportion to time, as all die at last; but this is owing to the increased power we have over disease, and not to anything we can do in arresting the process of decline. Thousands of men and women who would have died young of small-pox, a century ago, may now live as long as the universal law of the human frame allows; but we have no power over the operation of that law.

Men have dreamed of such a power in all ages,—have longed for it, have striven for it, and have not seldom fancied that they had obtained it. Among the oldest and commonest stories in every nation, and every literature, are those which tell of some medicine for the renewal of youth discovered by a philosopher, and handed down from one person tired of living to another,—always as a secret, and always a burdensome one. The great chemists who used to imagine they had discovered this elixir of life, were not such fools as they are commonly considered. They, as well as the astrologers, and the gold-seekers, had an idea, and a not absurd idea, at the core of their enterprise. Modern science shows us where they were wrong; but we are just like them in the interest we all feel in the subject, differing from them chiefly in being aware that there is no known way of resisting the law of natural decline.

How long is that stage of decline, speaking accurately? It is so long that giddy readers may laugh at the mention of it. To be tending towards death from five-and-forty seems to them ridiculous. So it would be as a matter of sentiment, among people who think about death in such an exaggerated way as we, of this age, do. But I am here speaking of the natural facts which bear upon the condition of old age; and that is my concern with forty-five. In a rough way, the physiological distribution of our life is set down as including five-and-twenty years of growth, five-and-twenty of decline, and twenty of maturity between them. This makes up the three-score years and ten which the Psalmist speaks of as the natural duration of human life. He adds that if by reason of strength, we reach four-score years, yet is that strength but labour and sorrow, and soon cut off.

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"Labour and sorrow." Are these the characteristics of old age? I should say the words give a singularly precise description of that stage of human experience. I do not mean that it is complete; for there are antidotes, comforts and pleasures appropriate to the case: but the liabilities of the condition are precisely "labour and sorrow."

It is rarely understood by persons who have the full use of their animal powers that the worst evil of the absence of any of them is not the pain of privation (bad as that is), but the laboriousness thus occasioned in the act of living. I do not know that I have ever met with any person who had thought of this truth without being told; and certainly no person has ever first mentioned the fact to me. Yet there can be no doubt about it. A "well-favoured" person, as the ancient expression is—a person endowed with health and comeliness, and with the keen senses which belong to thorough health, has a very easy life of it, whatever tricks fortune may play him in regard to his surroundings. Impressions flow in upon him incessantly, setting mind and body to work in a natural way, exercising and entertaining his faculties, and rendering easy and plain what he has to do. One with purblind eyes or dull ears has much harder work to do in the mere act of living on from day to day; and the blind, or the deaf, have a lot so laborious as it would astonish their neighbours to become aware of. Instead of influences of sight and sound flowing in upon them, and working within them, they have either to do without that inestimable benefit and aid, or to seek it with pains and toil. They have to make express and laborious effort, from hour to hour of every day, where others simply receive as a free gift the means of thought, feeling, and action. I could say much about this, but my business here is with so much of the truth as is involved in the experience of old age. The "labour" is of this description. The "sorrow" arises from the trials of the affective nature, chiefly, with considerable additions from other sources.

I remember the way in which, when I was young, an elderly friend of mine reasoned with, and laughed at, himself, about this matter of the laboriousness of advancing age. A man of active mind and habits, he felt the stiffening of his joints, the twinges of rheumatism, and the conflict between mind and body about moving hither and thither, which were growing upon him. He told me he had found himself making long faces at having to mount his horse slowly, and leave off running, and give up waiting on sisters and daughter, like the young fellows. Lying awake with rheumatism, or mere sleeplessness, was worse: but he had remembered that he had been glad to live thus long rather than die earlier, and that it was absurd to quarrel with the conditions. He accepted the "labour," or, as we commonly call it, the burden of years, as a lot which he would have chosen if a choice had been offered him how long he would live. His merry face and philosophical temper impressed me strongly, though the incident may look very small and commonplace to others.

The failure of the senses is a far graver matter than that of the limbs, involving more labour as well as more privation. To young persons suffering under the loss of a sense there is something frightful, as well as painful, in the process. The sense of exclusion from the sights or sounds (whichever it may be) of nature and society is terribly painful; but yet worse is the converse sense of imprisonment—of being secluded from the life of other people, and more and more helplessly. We all shudder at the story of the octagon prison chamber, one side of which disappeared in the course of each night, till it must become a mere closet—a triangular case to stand in—and then, a crushing machine. The same horror of the imagination seizes on a person who, becoming blind or deaf, is daily aware of losing something of the common influences of life, and is aware that he must go on alone into deeper seclusion, finding the mere act of living more difficult every day. The aged do not suffer so acutely as those on whom the calamity falls untimely; but they can tell what the labour is, while caring less for the privation. It does not matter so much to them, they say, how the remnant of their life is passed: they have not active duties, nor heavy responsibilities resting upon them; their accounts with society are made up, and it is their own affair what they are thenceforth fit for; so, if they are sensible and amiable, they keep themselves quiet, and amuse themselves as well as they can. But still there is the laboriousness! Nothing can relieve that. When they were young, the contact between external objects and their special organ (whichever it be) was so natural as to be unobserved; so was the function of the nervous fibre, and so was the cerebral reception of the impression; and its effect on mind or body followed of course. Now, when the consolidation of the frame has gone too far, there is obstruction somewhere in the process, or everywhere; the impression is faint, or it is spoiled, or it is wholly absent, and a natural stimulant and guide to action or thought is withdrawn. Its loss must be supplied somehow, if thought and action are to go on; and to supply it is a heavy and unremitting task.

How this is to be made the best of, depends mainly on the moral strength and temper of the aged person. A superannuated man or woman who sinks under the trouble, or frets under the pain, must be merely humoured and borne with. No other aid is possible, because the sufferer cannot get away from the evil which no one can remedy. A stronger and wiser person has much less to suffer, and for a shorter time. As age advances, the activity subsides, the actual fact of daily existence becomes more acceptable; and monotony itself becomes easiest, while proving anything but dull. One of the characteristics of old age is its susceptibility to old impressions revived, which forms a remarkable contrast to the apathy about new experiences. It is common for aged people to say that the pleasure of the opening of spring is more vivid to them than ever. Granting that they may have forgotten somewhat of the intensity of the pleasure in youth, it is evidently true that they do keenly relish the enjoyments they have known longest. Göthe, whose mental resources might be supposed sufficient for

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all situations, if any man's ever were, was in a state of manifest exhilaration every year, when the shortest day was past; and he was like a very wise child, when the first wood anemone, or violet, or brood of chicks, or young lamb came across him, up to the last year of his life. It is the same thing with old music for those who can hear; and old flowers and sunsets for those who can see. The delight is transient in the extreme, after a certain point of superannuation is reached; but, if this is a sign of second childhood, so is the vividness of the enjoyment. If both these chief senses are dulled past exciting, the next question is about the provision of inner material.

If the mind cannot act without the stimulus of external influences, a state of general apathy will ensue on the decay of sight and hearing. If the mental constitution be of a higher order, self-sustaining and self-moving, the aged person himself is surprised to find what complete satisfaction he is still capable of. If his interests have been of an intellectual order, he *lives* almost as much now as ever. Literature is as charming to him as if he kept the substance of what he reads for use; whereas the impression is now very superficial. Philosophy exalts and chastens his mood, and sustains his habit of composure and patience, though he can no longer lay it down as the foundation of some work of wisdom or beauty. Such a kind of superannuation is too rare and select, however, to be dwelt upon as a sample of this experience of human life. We must look lower among average people, for a lesson for the many.

Average people, if their minds are alive when their senses are shut up, may, if they have but good tempers, take up for themselves that exquisite song* intended for a different kind of enforced seclusion:—

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage:
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,—
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

If their hearts are warm, and their habits of mind simple, unselfish, and self-respecting, they often show themselves surprised that their "quiet way of life" is so full of amusement, so devoid of dulness, though few sights or sounds reach them, and they have no pleasure in eating and drinking, and seldom have a good night's sleep. When they are ill, they sometimes say, "Never mind, my dear! What can it signify whether I go now or some months hence?" but perhaps it happens oftener that they say, "I should like to live a little longer, if it had pleased God: but no doubt it is all right."

This is the saying which shows that the "sorrow"—the peculiar sorrow of old age—is no great burden. There are hours when the sorrows of survivorship are certainly very dreary, as any of us can tell who have witnessed the consternation or the tears of aged persons who say that there is now "not one left" of the companions of their earlier life. But the impression is brief. On the one hand, there is the consolation "I shall not be long after them;" and on the other, there are the interests of the hour—the newer generations round about them, and the wonderful new spectacles of an advancing century. Instead of grumbling old people, who insist that "the former days were better than these," we now more commonly meet with ancients who are proud, as Humboldt was, of surviving so many of the world's elders, and of having lived to see the human race getting on so fast with its improvements. This is a pleasanter spectacle than that of the grumblers: but there is a better still. I have seen an aged person who would have bowed her head before the youngest of Humboldt's order, who yet rose above everybody, philosopher or other, who had any vanity about living so long. She never compared herself with anybody, because she had no self-regards. She was always ready, to a minute, to depart; while she daily triumphed in the spread of education, and of the moral and material arts of life.

Before going on to the remaining case—the one other aspect—of superannuation, we may consider for a moment what is the proper treatment of this decline of human vitality.

The physical symptoms are familiar enough. Old people are chilly, apt to eat what for others would be too little or too much (generally too little); unapt to sleep at night, and therefore frequently drowsy in the day; apt to forget the time and be unpunctual; or, on the other hand, over precise and jealous of interference. The commonest vanity of old age is very like that of childhood,—the conceit of being able to take care of itself.

Amidst the noblest and sweetest moral graces of old age, some one of these liabilities is pretty sure to appear. The hoary head is indeed a crown of glory to one who is exempt from them all.

In treating them, the best method generally is, indulgence. It is a sad mistake to medicate and discipline old age as one would a morbid condition of earlier life. I once heard a dutiful daughter of a very old mother say, after her mother's death, that the illness had taught her one lesson,—never to tease an aged invalid to eat, or to do anything undesired by the patient. Even where the food taken is little or none, so that life cannot be prolonged, it is better, we agreed, to let things take their course. "It is of less consequence," said she, "that one in that condition should live a month more or less than that she should be spared all contradiction and opposition." Some difficulty there must be with one who has a jealousy of independence, without prudence to justify it, like a certain aged marchioness who wore high caps, and would sit alone, writing and sealing letters, and nodding over the candles. She was burnt, with the great mansion which her high head-dress set on fire. This is the most embarrassing particular, perhaps, in the case of aged people. I have known one who, in the last year, before she became too ill to be left, set herself on fire three times, by choosing to read the newspaper late at night, and falling asleep over it. Another was fond of stirring the fire when unable to

* Sir William Lovelace.

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see how to do it; and she was perpetually turning the coals back over the top-bar. One night a burning mass fell in that way on the skirts of her dress, and was discovered only by the smell of burning woollen. If it had fallen on cotton or silk, she must have been burnt. I see nothing to be done in such cases but to have locked fireguards, and to explain simply that the family could not be easy to leave their charge without that precaution.

Very like this is the persistence of some aged people in going out alone into the streets—crowded streets where crossing is difficult, and where good sight and some agility are necessary to guard against embarrassments and dangers. I have known more than one infirm septuagenarian who would slip out at a back door, or lie in wait for the hall being empty, to get out unobserved; and in a few minutes, a horse was rearing over the head of one, and a porter was knocking another up against the wall; and the wonder was, when either was safe at home again. They came home in a state of vexation from having been plainly told by their rescuers, "You ought not to be out in the streets alone:" "You should be better taken care of;" and the more obviously true this was, the greater was the irritation.

It is not easy,—indeed I know few things that require more resolution than it does,—to mortify this little vanity in persons to whom we have always looked up with deference, and whose will we have been accustomed to obey. To trench on their personal rights, and invade their liberty, seems something monstrous, no doubt, to all parties: yet, in these instances, it must be done. If possible, the pain with which it is done should be covered over with cheerfulness; and, instead of any solemn remonstrance or announcement, the guardianship should be imposed as a matter of course, and treated like the household customs of regular meals and going to bed. I have witnessed every sort of dutiful and beautiful care of the aged; and none with more respect and admiration than that in which the children—themselves elderly—have been the managers, as well as the nurses, of their parents; yet I have never got over the painful kind of surprise of the spectacle,—the violation of all one's associations of deference with age, and one's feelings of the sacredness of the liberty and the will of one's elders.

The more necessary such offences are, the more scrupulous should be the indulgence in every instance which does not involve personal danger. The aged should be allowed to follow their own prejudices, and live according to their own notions, even to their own disadvantage, since opposition would cause them more pain than their own mistakes. If, when short of breath, they like going about the house on their own errands, let them do so, rather than wait upon them against their will. If they oppose themselves to modern sanitary practices, let them go to their graves as their fathers did. About exercise, food, and hours let them suit themselves. About dress, few would wish to interfere. It is painful to see old ladies in gay or youthful dress; and a little tact may soften the absurdity, in many a case; but the opposite tendency is more common, and quite unobjectionable. I remember more than one old gentleman, in my childhood, who wore pigtail and powder, and knee-breeches for every-day wear; and old ladies in ruffles and long gloves, and outside muslin handkerchiefs, and muslin aprons; and their antique appearance inspired unmingled respect, as the Quaker dress always does. If it did not, we should still wish to avoid interference, and to help our old folks to gratify their taste and judgment in dress to the end. So it should be also in regard to their little hoards of relics,—their worm-eaten furniture, their bits of china, their antiquated sermon-books, and their curiosities in the way of old shoes, and gloves, and trinkets. Let all be tenderly used, and allowed to take up room, however inconveniently. It is not for long; and the one great duty to the aged is to save them from fret, and, above all, from the fret of mortification.

I have seen a very self-complacent and sentimental woman do a thing which put me more in mind of King Lear than I could have wished. An aged and infirm relative had lent, as a privilege, some beautiful verses of a close personal interest, to be read, enjoining care of this her only copy. For many days she modestly asked for them back again, till, the self-complacent lady being induced to search, the precious document was found torn by the children; and the only apology offered was a snub about "making such a fuss about a sheet of paper." If, instead of being a thing of real value like this, it had been a page out of a copybook, it ought to have been respected as prized by one whose smallest wish should be honoured.

A sympathy which is sufficient for these things should naturally be more ready than it usually appears to be, to enter into the immediate prospect of the aged. It is natural for persons on the verge of life to speak sometimes of leaving it: but nobody responds. Few have a word to say on what so closely concerns their charge; they make haste to talk of something else, or go away; or even, as in an instance which I remember, say, "Oh, nonsense; don't talk so. You are no nearer death than ever you were." They would not have done so about a voyage to Australia, twenty years before; and the departing one would like some sympathy now, even better than then. The fault lies mainly, no doubt, in the common exaggerated view of the importance of death. The exaggeration still influences the younger nurses, and is detected by the elders as they approach their departure; but the departure *is* their prospect, and it is a failure of sympathy to shrink from speaking of what the waiting one thinks of with freedom and cheerfulness. One meditative old man whom I knew was self-sufficing in this respect. He had on his table—the table at which he read and wrote daily—a pretty cast of a sleeping child. His friends wondered at his constancy to this cheap bit of art; but one of them soon divined its meaning. When weary, as such very old people are, and longing for rest, it soothed him to see the image of rest. I suspect he might have waited long for any one to minister to his need by speech. Who ever does say to the aged, except as comfort under bereavement, that they have not

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to wait long, and that their end is perceptibly approaching?

One consideration remains—the case of failing faculties in the aged. Of course, this is by far the most painful aspect of the case; but there is something to be done; and where there is something to be done there should be something said.

Most elderly persons among us must have read Dugald Stewart's writings when they were young, and none who read them can have forgotten the following description:—"One old man, I have, myself, had the good fortune to know, who, after a long, an active, and an honourable life, having begun to feel some of the usual effects of advanced years, has been able to find resources in his own sagacity against most of the inconveniences with which they are commonly attended, and who, by watching his gradual decline with the cool eye of an indifferent observer, and employing his ingenuity to retard its progress, has converted even the infirmities of age into a source of philosophical amusement." *

This old man was Dr. Reid; and his noble use of an opportunity of studying phenomena through his own bodily failure reminds us of Sydenham, the physician, whose last moments were employed in noting his own pulse, for a scientific object—a death which I have heard Dr. Channing declare to be the most enviable he knew of. How indeed can there be a nobler close to life than providing light for others out of one's own eclipse?

There are few, perhaps, who could do this; and certainly not many could be expected to think of doing it. But there is a preparation for that peculiar trial and difficulty which it is in the power of most aged persons to make, who are happily placed in regard to home and friends. Most who have advanced far in the "labour and sorrow" of old age must be conscious of more or less failure; and all are aware of the liability they shall be under if they live so long. Is it not possible—is it not even easy—to predetermine our own welfare in that condition? Can we not make a resolve, too determinate to be ever forgotten by the feeblest memory, to put ourselves entirely into the hands of some guardian whom we can trust in such circumstances better than ourselves? Do we not *know* that we cannot be judges in our own case as to whether our judgment is as sound as ever, and our temper as calm and strong, and our understanding as clear? From the moment when any failure is probable, or is recognised by anybody, it should be our plan, long formed and dwelt upon, to resign ourselves to decisions more trustworthy than our own, and to yield obedience to a better guidance. There can be no doubt of the benefit of this course to health, peace of mind, and serenity of the daily life. It is not always easy, of course, for it requires a resolute repression of self-love and self-will; but, when the work of repression is mainly done beforehand, there is no pain remaining that can for a moment compare with that of conflict, internal or external, with that of making mistakes, discrediting ourselves and disconcerting others—of sinking, in short, under infirmity, instead of conquering its worst liabilities. What can be more painful and humbling to witness, than the struggle which a failing mind keeps up; arguing in favour of its own abilities with saddened friends whom common humanity keeps from replying; quarrelling with the comrades of old times, or resenting their refusal to quarrel with him; fidgeting about everybody's opinion of him, and straining his mind to show how sharp he still is; refusing all suggestion as to what he shall do, and how he shall live; subject to exploitation by those who will flatter him about his independence and his dignity; and at last humoured in his tempers and caprices because "it is his way," and "he cannot help it now!" What can be more consoling than the spectacle, on the other hand, of the old man or woman who, however weakened, is still noble—however dulled, is still venerable—from the good sense and unselfish considerateness still pervading the course of daily life! He has engaged some trusty friend or friends to tell him plainly when it is time for him to retire from work and the competitions of life; and the moment he is told, he settles his accounts with the world, and gives himself to the interests and amusements of retreat—not seclusion, but leisure. He is wholly tractable in the hands he has chosen to guide him, and is thankful for guardianship, instead of resenting it. By thus depositing his cares, he reduces care all round to the minimum. His own life and its remaining powers are well husbanded; for there is no needless irritation to chafe his temper by day, or spoil his sleep at night. He has no more to bear than what Dr. Johnson called "the natural force of the evil" of his superannuation. And when he is gone, survivors will not have to put away the impression of his latter days, in order to think of his life as, on the whole, it deserves.

No doubt it may be objected, that this is requiring from the aged exactly what they are disabled from doing. This would be true if it was proposed that the failing should choose their course at the moment of failure, and hold it from choice when the power of choice is gone: but the actual suggestion is the widely different one, that the resolve should be made in anticipation of the need, and the habit of amenableness formed in good time. I cannot help thinking that such a purpose and such a habit may spread their influence far into the season of infirmity, and generally carry the meek philosopher through in safety and honour.

There will be little difficulty about passing the latter hours pleasantly if there is wisdom enough to follow a natural course. Let the aged person read or be read to, however soon he may forget. This is not a time for getting knowledge for use, but why not for pleasure? The chief delight will always be in old poetry—old divinity—old music—old history: but if there are new discoveries—new views—which can be understood for the moment, let them be enjoyed, even if lost again in an hour. The object is the calm entertainment of each passing day: no use beyond this need be considered; and here, as usual, the most thorough humility is the completest wisdom.

I need not speak of the opposite condition. The fret and passion of imbecility, unchastened by

* Stewart's Philosophy of the Human Mind, Chap. VI. Sec. I.

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self-control, are speedily fatal to the worn-out frame. Apathy may last long; serenity is highly conservative in its influence; and folly and self-love together create a constitutional irritation, under which the low vital powers soon give way. It is a dreary and terrible mode of dying. The contrast of the two courses taken by old age is the contrast between the child under possession at the foot of the Mount, and the sleeping child which the old sage set before him, for his daily admonition and solace. No one can say that he has no power of choice between the two.

Beginning with the earliest stages of life, and ending with the latest, I have pointed out some of the causes of the needless mortality and the prevalent imperfection of health, for which society is answerable. Slight and superficial as my treatment of the subject must be in a series of essays like these, I believe I have exhibited facts enough to show that we have all something to do in checking untimely death, both in our own persons and in those of our neighbours.

If half the thought and sentiment that are spent on the subject of Death were bestowed on the practical duty of strengthening, lengthening, and ennobling Life, we should be more fit to live worthily and die contentedly. Let us prepare the way for the next generation to try whether it is not so. HARRIET MARTINEAU.

WOMENS' WORK.

DESIGNING PATTERNS.

If, as Mr. Ruskin so often assures us, people work better who are happy in their work—and it is most agreeable, as well as rational, to believe that it is so—one can scarcely imagine anything more beneficial to women who are disposed to work, than that they should direct their attention to the invention of beautiful patterns. Who can have so much to do as women, not only with the choice of fabrics in which beautiful patterns are displayed, but in the study and enjoyment of them when they adorn our dwellings, or when they impart grace and elegance to the human figure? The avocations of men lead them so often away from these matters of social and domestic arrangement, that women are left very much to themselves in this department of taste, and must have opportunities innumerable, in which men take no part, for studying the various combinations and effects, or the harmonies and discords, both of form and colour, as displayed in the objects immediately around them. Even upon their own dresses what an amount of invention must be bestowed to produce those exqusitely delicate and elaborate patterns by which muslin, calico, and silk fabrics are now adorned. Yet how much of this devolves entirely upon men; and how much also upon the exquisite taste, and the skilful hands, of our neighbours across the Channel?

The great want, of which in the present day we behold so many instances, is of something for women to do that will not expose them to hardship—something which they may render remunerative without losing caste—something, in short, that will not vulgarise them. We have at present no recognised step between the governess and the shopwoman. For simple independence of position there can be no question but the latter bears the palm; but as a matter of feeling to a well brought up, and a well educated woman, the difference is immense the other way. It is of no use reasoning on such points. Reasoners are apt to say—"I should prefer the shop." When their turn comes to make the actual experiment, we see which they choose.

In consequence of this universal and natural leaning to the more genteel occupation, the market for governesses is frightfully overstocked, and their services grievously reduced in value; while a worse evil still becomes incorporated into our educational systems by hundreds and thousands of women undertaking to teach—who hate the occupation most cordially—hate it from beginning to end, and who murmur against the necessity which drives them to it as the greatest calamity upon earth.

Now, if the daughter, without leaving the protection of her father's house, could sit down in the midst of a happy and united family to draw patterns; if the lone woman in her own neat little parlour could employ herself upon graphic designs; or if the widow with her children around her, taking up her pencil, or her colours, could construct new forms of beauty, perhaps as interesting to them as to herself, and so bring in a trifle for their food and clothing, still keeping over her head the shelter of a roof to call her own, and at her feet the warmth of a hearth, her title to which no stranger could dispute—what happiness of a domestic, as well as individual nature, such women might enjoy, compared with that which falls to the share of those who "go out," as it is called.

Of course, like all other exact and beautiful arts, that of designing patterns is not acquired in a moment. If left until the season of necessity, there is every reason to fear it will never be acquired at all. The very faculty of invention itself, if allowed to lie dormant for twenty years, will prove very inefficient when suddenly set to work for the first time under the stress of adverse circumstances. Hence the vast importance to that class of women whose position in life renders them liable to the exigences of business, or of any precarious profession, of bestowing their time and attention in moments of leisure upon something better than merely counting threads and stitches, or following with minute precision lines already traced out for them by machinery.

One day spent in observing the patterns contained in a single room, and in considering how to improve them, would do more for the *minds* of such workers than years occupied in fine stitching, without an idea attached to it; and when once the faculty of invention has fairly got to work, if only in improving what others have invented, it produces sensations of an animating and pleasurable kind, such as can never be the accompaniment of servile and slavish work.

In proof of how much the art of drawing patterns requires cultivation, we have only to look over the *rejected* patterns of any of our great Manchester cotton printers. I have myself seen the volumes of these rejected patterns, many of which,

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to my unpractised eye, looked more attractive than some that were accepted. I remember especially one that represented a little vase of flowers, most exquisite in itself. Beguiled by the beauty of this design, the manufacturers had gone so far as to have it engraved and printed, and still it would not do. There was a slight want of balance in the group of flowers, which, when they were regularly repeated, and seen from a little distance as a whole, gave them the appearance of slanting not quite diagonally; and this, the exhibitor said, had in a dress the effect of making the figure look crooked. In the same manner we have all, no doubt, detected in the papering of a room some one-sided cast of this kind in flowers, leaves, or any other figures, making the paper look as if not placed straight upon the wall, or making even the wall itself appear slanting, so that the eye becomes continually puzzled, and painfully occupied in tracing out lines which have no agreement either with the horizontal or the perpendicular.

Anxious to come at some rule or principle of art which might guide the beginner, I inquired what was the first thing to be observed in drawing patterns for fabrics to be worn as dresses. I was answered, "To avoid the last year's fashions;" and it struck me that this simple advice embodied a principle well worth remembering, its application being by no means confined to the subject under consideration.

The prices paid for accepted patterns varied so much, and my inquiries were made so many years ago, that it might mislead more than assist others, were I to repeat all that was told me on this occasion. I know, however, that more than one lucky little pattern was shown me, in size not covering more space than a crown piece, for which seven shillings would be given. But then those bulky volumes of rejected patterns still stared me in the face, many of them rejected for no earthly reason that I could understand. I was told, too, on the same occasion—only the "long, long ago," must be taken into account—that the principal designer of patterns for the Manchester houses was at that time receiving a salary for his work of not less than £300 per annum, and that scarcely any female skill—I think that of only one lady in England—was then engaged in this most agreeable and interesting occupation.

It is impossible, if we look around us with observant eyes, not to discover for ourselves certain facts or truths of essential service to the designer of patterns; such, for example, as that a large strong bold pattern has the effect upon the eye of coming near, and a small dim pattern of retreating. We see this in the papering of rooms, for how painful is the sensation of being in a small room, the walls of which are covered with a pattern that seems to make them come near, and almost close upon us, like the iron tomb which grew less and less every night, though by almost imperceptible degrees.

Again, architectural patterns should never be made to *float*. Nothing can look more absurd than figures representing the solid structure of massive walls, when the texture on which they are displayed is one which necessarily wraps itself into folds, or is generally in motion, as in the case of a lady's dress.

Depth, too, is another important consideration, as well as aërial effect. There are very few patterns in which we require what painters call depth, and all attempts to reach this point, so desirable in a picture, had better be let alone, where the fact of a surface being level constitutes its merit. Such depth as gives the appearance of work slightly raised, as in the diaper patterns of the Alhambra in the Crystal Palace, may be always appropriate, but beyond this the effect must generally be doubtful, and often worse than that.

In the same way aërial effect producing an appearance of distance must be highly objectionable, where the fabric is of such a nature that it would be a demerit if we could see through it. Hence in all carpets this effect should be scrupulously avoided. We want to stand upon our carpets, not to slip through them. And yet some of those exquisite fabrics produced by the looms of the Messrs. Crosby have exactly this design successfully carried out—an appearance of soft atmospheric distance, alternating with the richest groups of scrolls and flowers. On a wall this effect would be more appropriate, but in the flooring of a room these alternations of depth and air convey a certain feeling that we shall stumble into holes in the dark places, and slip through in the light; thus destroying the sensation of repose and serenity, which are chiefly wanted in a foundation, in order that it may be comfortably relied upon.

It is possible that in the furnishing of our rooms generally we make too much the mistake of producing excitement rather than repose; but as this consideration of the subject would lead us up to painted ceilings, and so far away from women's work, considered in a remunerative point of view, we must descend again to those more simple questions of relation and fitness, by observing which, such work can alone be successfully pursued.

S. S.

THORR'S HUNT FOR HIS HAMMER.

THE Norse gods (As, pl. Æsir, gen. pl. Asa) dwelt in *As-garth*, a high burg in the midst of the earth; round them lived the race of men in *Manheim*, or Manhome. All round Manheim rolled the great sea, and beyond that sea, and below the earth, was *Iötunheim, Etinhome*, Ogreland, the abode of the huge Giants of Frost and Snow, who were at perpetual feud with gods and men, and ever watchful to do them mischief. One of the chiefest and hugest of these giants was Thrym, who, while Thorr was asleep, contrived to steal his hammer; this was a dreadful loss to gods and men, for Thorr's hammer was the main defence of As-garth and Manheim, and without it he was unable to crack the skulls of the Ogres who were ever ready to make an onslaught on the Æsir. The Song of the Edda, which is here laid before the reader in a translation very nearly literal, is one of the oldest in that venerable collection. It belongs to the grey dawn of Norse Mythology, and the latest date that can be assigned to it is the eighth century of our era. It may well be, and probably is, much earlier. The alliterative rhythm of the original has been adhered to. This kind of verse was slowly and solemnly sung or chanted to some rude instrument, and in reading it, care should be taken that the

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accents, or beats, should fall as much as possible on the words which in each line begin with the alliterative letters. After so much preface, here follows

THE HUNT FOR THE HAMMER.

I.

WRATH was Wing-Thorr
When he woke from his rest,
Felt for his hammer
And found it was gone;
Beard he 'gan bristle,
Locks he 'gan lug,
Earth's boy* took to beating
About with his fists.

II.

And this was the speech
He first of all spoke:
"Listen now, Loki,†
Come list to my tale,—
Nor here on earth below,
Nor in high heaven above,
Knoweth man aught of this,—
The God's maul is missing."

III.

Off they went fair
Freyja's* town toward,
And this was the speech
He first of all spoke:
"Wilt thou now, Freyja,
Thy feather-suit lend me?
So I my hammer
May hope to regain."

IV.

Freyja quoth:
"Give it I would thee,
Though golden it were;
Lend it? ay, surely,
Though silvern it were."

V.

Away then flew Loki,
Feather-wings whirring,

Till he came outside
Asa-garth holy,
Till he came inside
Ogreland ugly.

VI.

Thrym sat on hillock,
Lord of the Thursa-kin,‡
For his greyhounds
Gold bands twisting,
And his grey mares'
Manes a-smoothing.

VII.

Thrym quoth:
"How is't with Asa-kin?
How is't with elves?
Why art thou come alone
Down into Ogreland?"

Loki quoth:
Ill is't with Asa-kin,
Ill is't with elves;
Hast thou the Hardhitter's†
Hammer here hid?"

VIII.

Thrym quoth:
"I have the Hardhitter's
Hammer here hidden,
Miles measured eight
Deep down in mould.

* Thorr, who was son of Odin and Earth.

† Loki, the Norse Mercury, who was always getting the Æsir into scrapes, out of which his shrewdness set them free.

‡ Thursa-kin, Giant-kin, Ogre-kin. The word survives in some British proper names, as *Tuskar*, *Thurs-skar*, "the Giant's skerry."

* The Goddess of Love and Beauty.

† Hardhitter, a name of Thorr.

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It now no man
E'er may bring back,
Save when he fetches me
Freyja to wife."

IX.

Away then flew Loki,
Feather-fledge flutter'd,
Till he came outside
Ogreland ugly,
Till he came inside
Asa-garth holy;
Met him there Thorr,
Moody in mid-yard,
And this was the speech
He first of all spoke:

X.

"Hast thou thy errand's toil
Taken in vain?
Utter aloft now
All thy long story;
Often a sitting man's
Mind misses something,
And lying men's stories
Are lengthened with lies."

XI.

Loki quoth:
"Sped has my errand,
Not mis-spent my toil;
Thrym hath thy hammer,
Lord of the Thursa-kin;
It now no man
E'er may bring back,
Save when he fetches him
Freyja to wife."

XII.

Off they go fair
Freyja to find,
And this was the speech
He first of all spoke:
"Bind thyself, Freyja,
In bridal array,
We two must drive off
To Ogreland down."

XIII.

Wrath then waxed Freyja,
Fiercely she foam'd,
All that high Asa-hall
Under her quivered,
Up on her bosom leapt
Brising's broad jewel:*
"Wanton and wedding-sick
Call thou this woman,
If I drive with thee
To Ogreland down."

XIV.

Then the great Gods all
Gather'd in meeting,
Goddesses proud too
In parley there met,
And they devised then,
Those deities mighty,
How they the Hardhitter's
Hammer might get.

* Brising's broad jewel was a famous necklace which Freyja owned, and always wore.

XV.

Then thus spoke Heimdall,
Fairest-hued As,
Wise-minded master,
More cunning than most:
"Bind we now Thorr here
In bridal array;
Brising's broad collar
We'll clasp round his throat;
Down at his girdle
The house-keys shall dangle;
Full round his knees, too,
Women's weeds fall;
Broad stones and bright
He shall bear on his breast;
Tidily, too, let us
Top up his head."

XVI.

Out stuttered Thorr,
Sturdiest of Asa-stock:
"Me will ye Asa-kin
Craven heart call,
If o'er my body
These bride-weeds ye bind."

XVII.

Then thus spoke Loki,
Laufey's son shifty:
"Hush, Thorr! nor utter
These idle words;
Straightway will Ogres
As-garth abide in,
Save thou thy hammer
May'st hope to get back."

XVIII.

Then they bound Thorr
In bridal array;
Clasp'd round his throat
Brising's broad collar;
Down at his girdle
The housewife's keys dangled;
Full round his knees, too,
Women's weeds fell;
Broad stones and bright
He bore on his breast;
Ay, and so tidily
Topp'd up his head.

XIX.

Then thus spoke Loki,
Laufey's son shifty:
"I too with thee now
Will go as thy maid;
We two will drive off
To Ogreland down."

XX.

Then were Thorr's he-goats*
Soon driven home;
Tied to the traces
They trotted off fast:
Rocks rent asunder,
Earth roar'd with flame:
So drove great Odin's son
Down into Ogreland.

XXI.

Then thus quoth Thrym,
Lord of the Thursa-kin:

* Thorr's thundering car was drawn by two he-goats.

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"Stand up, ye Ogres all,
Strew us our seats;
Fetch me now hither
Freyja to wife,
Njord's fair daughter
From Noatown."

XXII.

"Here in the garth graze
Gold-hornèd kine,
Oxen all-swarthy,
The Ogre's delight;
Rich store of rings have I,
Hoards of red gold;
Freyja alone methinks
Fails to my lot."

XXIII.

Then down to supper
They speedily sate,
And for the Ogres all
Ale was brought out;
One ox all alone,
Salmons eight, also,
Together with dainties
Dished up for the women—
These—and three butts of mead
Sif's husband* bolted.

XXIV.

Thus then quoth Thrym,
Lord of the Thursa-kin:
"Where saw'st thou bonny burd
Bite more keenly?
Ne'er saw I bride before
Broader in mouth;
No! nor more mead ever
Maiden drain down!"

XXV.

There sat in wait
That waiting-maid witty,
Finding an answer
For all Ogre-talk:
"Nights eight fair Freyja
Ne'er once her fast broke,
So eager was she
For dear Ogreland."

XXVI.

Under her veil he look'd,
Longing to kiss her,
But back he leapt soon
The length of the hall:
"Why so fierce, pri'thee!
Are fair Freyja's eyeballs?
Methinks from her eyne flames
Burning flash forth!"

XXVII.

There sat in wait
That waiting-maid witty,
Finding an answer
For all Ogre-talk:
"Nights eight fair Freyja
Ne'er once a wink slept,
So eager was she
For dear Ogreland."

XXVIII.

In came the ugly
Ogre-lord's sister,
She that a bride-fee
Dared to beseech:

* Sif's husband, Thorr.

"Reach from thy fingers
Gold rings so ruddy,
If my own heart's love
Thou listest to have,
True love so heart-whole,
That all homage pays."

XXIX.

Thus then quoth Thrym,
Lord of the Thursa-kin:
"Bring here the hammer*
To hallow the bride,
Lay now the Mauler
On fair maiden's knee;
Wed us together
With Var's† holy hand."

XXX.

Laugh'd then the Hardhitter's
Heart in his breast,
As hard-hafted hammer
He handled again;
Thrym he slew first of all,
Lord of the Thursa-kin,
Then all that Ogre-band
Batter'd to bits.

XXXI.

Her too he slew there—
That old Ogre's sister,
She who for bride-fee
Had dared to beseech;
Hard blows she had then
Instead of hard coin,
Maul's ringing strokes
Instead of red rings—
So came at last
Odin's son to his hammer.

G. W. D.

HEIDELBERG, AT FAIR TIME.

On our homeward route from a tour in the Tyrol, we found ourselves on the 18th of October at Heidelberg. The amphitheatre of hanging wood, which rises immediately behind the grand old castle, was glorious with the many-coloured tints of Autumn. In and about the ruins, the sombre foliage of the dark firs contrasted with trees which appeared transmuted into gold. The walks were illuminated, not shadowed, by overhanging branches assuming all the varied changes of deep brown, ruby, red, and dazzling yellow. The effect of colouring was fascinating beyond measure. The whole combination of castle, river, hills, and wood, decked in their gorgeous hues, might have been a dream of Turner's. Many woodland scenes had we enjoyed under the bright influence of Autumn skies, but never, we agreed, had we beheld such brilliancy of tints, as at this place and time.

Those who know Heidelberg (and who does not?) will mentally recall the scene when we describe ourselves as standing on the Altan, or Castle Terrace, which immediately overlooks the town. The haste of the tributary Neckar to join the imperial Rhine causes some brawling and chafing, as it

* Thorr's hammer, "the holy maul," was necessary to hallow the wedding rite. Thrym, therefore, had to produce it.

† *Var*, the goddess who presided over weddings.

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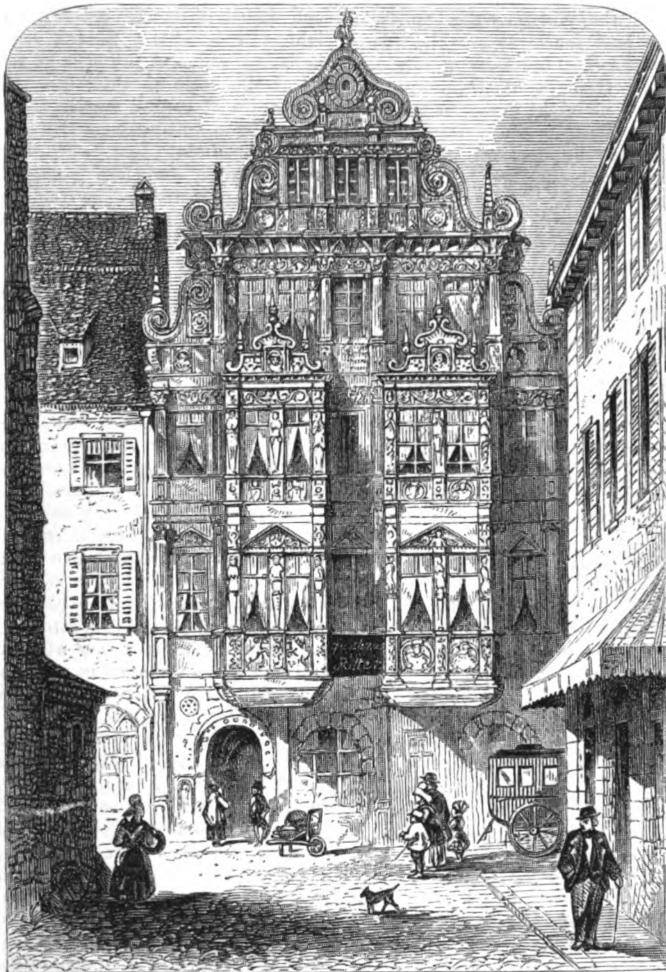
hurries past the half-sunken rocks, which partially intercept the stream. It is curious to observe the skill with which the rafts are navigated in their rapid transit down the river. In the few minutes from the time when we were first attracted by the red flags of this floating island, the serpent-like form had passed through the arch of the bridge, and was fast disappearing in its winding course to Manheim.

The murmuring noise of the river rises pleasantly to the ear, not unlike that of the flowing tide on the shingly beach; and with something of the Germanic facility for evolving improbabilities out of mere self-consciousness, even a practical Englishman might picture to himself the dark blue ocean at a league or so from Heidelberg. In some states of the atmosphere, the Rhine plain looks marvellously like the sea, and the Haardt and Taunus mountains appear as distant headlands. But illusion, on this occasion, was snapt asunder by the loud and booming report of cannon: "Are the French come?" was our first ejaculation. On the contrary, this salute is to celebrate the anniversary of their defeat and departure. On this day forty-seven years ago, took place the battle of Leipzig, or, as the Germans characteristically name it, the "Völkerschlacht," "Battle of the Nations." May collective Germany again join together in unity, and rise in her strength, should foreign foe assail. Old feelings have been stirred, old recollections roused, which have made this year's anniversary conspicuous above those of foretime. Last night there were bonfires on the Heiligenberg, and on the Königstuhl, which, with friendly blaze, called forth many answering fires along the topmost ridges of the Odenwald and the Schwartzwald.



House in Heidelberg.

Leipzig, on the 18th of October, 1813, is a significant memory just now; and the echoes from the hill-sides are sharp, ready, and far reaching as the spirit that would rise at the faintest sound of aggression. Never again may those vine-clad hills be desecrated by the foot of the enemy.

It is the time of vintage, and between the long intervals of the booming of cannon—there comes the reiterated sound of musketry—but these sharp-shooters have no deadly purpose. It is an act of rejoicing, for it is the custom here to fire off guns and to shout, when the task of gathering in each little vineyard is ended. Boats filled with baskets of grapes are floating down the river. This year the fruit is plentiful, but sour. There will be a considerable amount of sugar needed to make the wine marketable. This plan of adding sugar and water has been rather recently introduced. There is a prejudice against the practice, but, overtly or otherwise, it is very generally adopted. Every working man here drinks his bottle or so of wine a-day, which costs him six or eight kreutzers a bottle, viz. two or there pence English. This beverage bears a great likeness to our cider. There are considerable quantities of "apple cider" and "pear cider" made in this locality. The better sorts of cheap wine, drank by the higher classes, are the Ortenburger and Markgräfler: these cost about sixpence or eightpence a bottle; but the more expensive, Affenthaler and Deidesheimer, are mostly patronised by foreigners. We were rather astonished to observe in the "Wein Karte," presented to us

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at table d'hôte yesterday, the name of two wines, certainly not a little remarkable—the one "Himmelreich," "The kingdom of heaven wine," which grows near Gumpelzheim, on the Neckar; the other "Höllenwein," "The kingdom of ———," what in Miltonic language one might designate pandemonium. We were curious as to their respective flavours, and tested both qualities. With shame we confess that that which nominally belonged to the region, called by the Germans "The land where the pepper grows," certainly possessed the most piquant flavour.

Joyous sounds of the vintage come up from hidden glens which lead far away into the Odenwald. The mention of those hills recalls the legend of the "Wild Huntsman," whose spectral host, arrayed for their midnight flights, is the sure presage of war and calamity. But turning to the extreme left, where the broken and picturesque line of the Vosges attracts the eye, we are reminded of sounds once more welcome than the portentous voice of the "wild Jäger." There is but one tower remaining of the Castle of Trifels, beneath whose walls, tradition says, the faithful minstrel sung that song, whose response discovered to him the prison of Cœur de Lion. Not so far back seem those chivalrous days of the crusades,—if we recall the still older time when this very Rhine plain was the scene of much of the mythic heroism detailed in the Nibelungenlied, the Homeric Epic of Germany. The Minnesänger called this fertile district "Wonnegan," the land of joy. Here loved, suffered, and fought, many of the personages who figure in that grand old poem. Truly there are few spots in Germany where the field of vision includes so many historical memories as those recalled by the prospect from the Altan.

On this particular autumn day, the shifting sunlight lit up at intervals the silvery thread of the Rhine: at first Spires, Manheim, and then Worms, came out of shadow-land. What stirring thoughts are awakened while looking at the towers of the old Domkirche, beneath whose roof Luther boldly confronted the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and the Diet.

In Heidelberg itself—just beneath the Schlossberg—we look down on the roof of St. Peter's Church, to the door of which Jerome of Prague nailed his celebrated Theses—an event in itself more fraught with consequences than all the bombardments, sieges, sackings, and assaults, which the town has suffered. Pleasant old Heidelberg! except for the "Gesprengte Thurm" and a few other gaping rents in the ruined Schloss, one might deem that Time only had laid his hand on castle and town. The former has been adorned rather than ravaged by time, and the quaint old town itself has grown into harmonious irregularity. There are here no impertinent improvements, reminding one of rates and taxes; the streets are as narrow, ill-smelling, and as badly paved as in the "good old days." The song says:

It is a pleasant place when it has left off raining.

To-day there is nothing but sunshine and gladness. Leaning on the balustrade of the terrace, we can trace the streets by the gay flags which hang from upper windows, all in honour of the Battle of Leipzig; and, looking down on the Carl Platz and Dult Platz, we see that they are filled with booths and whirligigs, and other indications of merry-making. It seemed worth while to join the busy throng, and retracing our steps through the quadrangle, for the sake of one more look at the *cinque cento* façade, with its decorations of sculptured heroes, we made our way by the carriage-road to the town.

In the Hauptstrasse, or High Street, we find "confusion worse confounded," besides the ordinary jostle of foot-passengers on a narrow trottoir, each indiscriminately persisting in having both right and left hand to the wall; besides this, there are scores of huge dogs resolutely following at the heels of their masters, the students. This order of canine march is occasionally disturbed by a fight amongst the quadrupeds, which fills the whole place with uproar, upsetting small children and frightening old ladies. Big dogs are an institution at Heidelberg—the young men have a passion for big dogs, as the father of Frederick the Great had for tall soldiers. The students of the University wear coloured caps according to their corps, and the dogs are muzzled; both contend for the pavement against men and dogs, not of the University. Giving up the trottoir in despair, you take yourself to the street, but here you encounter all manner of impediments. At this season, opposite almost every house, there are huge piles of wood which are being measured, sawn, and chopped up for winter fuel. While in the act of springing over some of the outlying logs, you suddenly find yourself poked in the ribs by the pole of a lumbering bullock-waggon, drawn by two meek-eyed, cream-coloured cows. You had almost need mount one of these beasts to escape being crushed by a rattling post-omnibus with three horses in rope-harness, which comes thundering up the pitched street, the driver cracking his long whip in a way which makes you conscious of every vertebræ in your possession.

Darwin might have been inspired to write his chapter on "Struggle for Life" in the Haupstrasse. We were forced to retreat, by way of "natural selection," into the midst of a bevy of German girls with beautifully dressed hair, who smiled provokingly at our discomfiture. We were, however, content to remain where we were with perfect humility while much clang and uproar announced the approach of another post-omnibus, surmounted, as was the case in the former vehicle, by a Pomeranian dog, who barked at the whole world as if incited by the furies. At the same moment up drives a droskey filled with English tourists, Murray in hand, *en route* for the Wolf's Brunnen, which barely escapes collision with another droskey freighted with students out for a lark.

Persistence will carry you to the end of everything; add then to persistence, patience and pushing, and you will have proceeded along the Haupstrasse as far as the Ritter, a very curious old inn of the 16th century. Opposite is the church of the Holy Ghost, now amicably shared between Catholics and Protestants. Hereabout are the first signs of the fair. The lower walls of the Ritter and some of the adjacent houses are covered with prints and pictures of the most

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heterogeneous description. We recognised a rude transcript of Millais's "Release," and "The Huguenot." "A View of London," with St. Paul's looking very big and the Thames very blue, and "An Evening in Schotland," with a violent tropical sunset. Passing to the more national elements of high art, we noticed a few harmless caricatures expressive of the German sense of humour. There was a perfect absence of all coarseness or indelicacy, though the patrons were clearly of the humblest classes. The approbation of the spectators was, however, mostly attracted by the pictures of saints, miracles, and holy families. The horrors of the day of judgment, of purgatory, and even of the deeper abyss of Hades, were depicted with an unsparing amount of brimstone and diabolism. In contrast to all this, there were representations of all the saints in the calendar, beaming with supercilious beneficence on mundane affairs. Many of these holy families and saints were familiar to us: we had seen them hung as votive offerings in the pilgrimage and wayside chapels in the neighbourhood of Salzburg and Innsbruck. But in strange juxtaposition with all this ultra-Romanism appeared portraits of Luther, Melancthon, and Jerome of Prague. The *mélange* was queer enough. Pio Nono formed a *pendant* to Garibaldi. The men of the Reformation seemed attracted by the Empress of the French, while they turned their backs upon Moses

and the Prophets. Ignatius Loyola and Calvin were clearly destined to hang as a pair. In short, for three or four kreutzers you might take your choice of an episode in the Reformation or a Popish miracle. Passing by the pictures, which really amused us infinitely, we stopped before a stall which displayed plaster of Paris casts of some of the finest works of modern sculpture. The titular deities of Germany, Goëthe and Schiller, were repeated in every size, and seemed to find purchasers amongst the working men.

Arrived at the Dult Platz we found it filled with booths, where were presented wares of inconceivable variety. The poet's axiom that "man wants but little here below," would not be verified at Heidelberg fair. There was hosiery for the million—vast woollen comforters, in which a man might lose his nose (no great misfortune in Germany), nether garments and overcoats that a Russian bear might envy, cutlery as harmless as the toys from Nuremberg, and spectacles to suit all sights. There was wicker-work, and baskets pretty enough, by the side of rude, coarse pottery worthy of the year One. We looked admiringly upon the dazzling whiteness of the tubs, bowls, and wooden implements made in the romantic depths of the Black Forest. Division of labour and railways will soon extinguish fairs altogether—even now they talk of their past glories. Progress is an excellent thing, but we are not sorry to have lived on the borders of the old time.

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The stalls kept by the Tyrolese were by far the most interesting. They had gloves of dainty hue and goodly shape that found numerous purchasers. We were attracted to an adjoining stall by the display of some remarkably pretty ornaments of amethystine quartz and garnets. The latter are principally found in the Thuringian mountains, and are manufactured into trinkets at Prague. We have heard that the King of Saxony has a garnet of such size and beauty that it is valued at 8000 gulden. Very pretty but not quite so costly were the ornaments set forth for sale by the Tyrolean stall-keeper. We found that he was a native of Innsbruck, and having just returned from thence in a state of enthusiasm, we hailed him as a kind of friend, and bought several articles of carved wood and ivory. The delicacy of the work, the justness of proportion, and the general beauty of design, observable in many of these things, might really challenge artistic criticism.

The fair is a serious matter of business to the haus-frau, who has "a frugal mind." She comes here twice a year to replace those inevitable breakages which will happen in the best regulated families. She has to purchase linen, calico, and flannel for the family, boots and shoes for the children, and Swiss embroidery for herself. It is an old custom to lay in stocks of things at the fair—"a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance" thinks the young fraulein, who talks just now a good deal about Paris fashion.

Before leaving the fair, it is necessary that you eat waffeln. Formerly, the secret of making these cakes was possessed only by the Dutch women, who regularly attended in their picturesque national costume. But the Germans have discovered the art, and one old woman of Manheim has realised so large a fortune, that she has bought several houses in her native town. The waffeln are a sort of pancake—square, very light, and of a cellular formation. One of them is made at an open fire in about ten seconds. The cooking apparatus is quite *sui generis*. They are concocted while you stand at the stall, and must be eaten the moment they are off the fire; in short, heat seemed to us the principal element in their composition, and, beyond burning our mouth, we have no remembrance of the taste of waffeln, nor could we positively distinguish the sensation produced from that of inadvertently possessing oneself of a very hot potatoe.

Escaping from where the throng was the thickest—where our ubiquitous friend, Punch, was performing his antics, and where joyous children shrieked with delight on the backs of hobby-horses, who galloped in mad circles to the loudest and merriest music—escaping from all this, we encountered several persons who had evidently just purchased the wreaths they carried tenderly in their hands.

These wreaths were composed of the greenest moss, or of ivy, interspersed with bright artificial flowers. It will soon be All Saints' and All Souls' day, and then—and such is the custom—these *immortelles* will be taken to the cemetery and hung on the numerous crosses which mark the graves of the remembered dead. The whole current of thought was changed by this *memento mori*; we stood half unconscious of the real world, when a light touch on the arm from our companion, drew us aside, and, without question, we entered an exhibition, at once singular and characteristic. The so called "Cabinet of Art" was part and parcel of the fair. The owner set forth that it contained "moving wax figures, after originals of Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, and Dominichino." The exhibition was, in fact, something after the manner of the Mystery Play, recently performed at Ammergau, in the Tyrol. The figures were life-size, representing, though rudely, certain well known pictures of great masters. The object was to portray some of the most prominent events in the life of Christ. First, there was the infant Saviour in the stable at Bethlehem, at the moment of the adoration of the kings. Then Jesus in the Temple, among the scribes and elders; the Marriage at Cana in Galilee; the Last Supper; and the scene on the Mount of Olives. The figures moved, and the scene shifted, with an attempt to give something like vitality to the picture. To us it appeared a rude and grotesque piece of mechanism, which at the first hearing we should have condemned as shockingly irreverent; but the people who were looking at the exhibition at the same time, were evidently impressed with a deep feeling of solemnity. These spectators were men in their working dresses; to them it had a religious significance. If there are those who can

——— build the soul a lordly pleasure-house.

there are also those, the untutored, who know nothing of the Palace of Art, but are not unmoved by even such rude attempts to rouse their sympathies. There was a quaint mediæval simplicity about the whole, which at least might teach us something of charity for the prejudices and superstitions of others.

THE BLACK SPOT.

A STORY FROM CHINA.

THERE was much mirth in Hong Kong. That little rock of an island—a perfect terrestial paradox, so rich is it, and, at the same time, so unproductive, had lately received a substantial addition to its stock of European inhabitants. A battalion of her Majesty's infantry, two batteries of artillery, a detachment of sappers, and a body of marines, had been landed, while eleven new sail, what with transports and what with steam frigates, were at anchor in the Roads. There was a new attorney-general, too, and several new clerks, secretaries, and aides-de-camp to the governor, for the climate is a trying one, a vapour bath in one wind, a kiln in another, and there is a great consumption of young gentlemen holding official situations at Hong Kong. The governor gave four dinners and a ball, for British hospitality does not grow mildewed in the far east, and the Rifles gave a ball, and so did the 117th Foot, and so did the admiral, and the chief justice followed suit. Then the civilians had their turn. By civilians, in this case, I do not mean civilians in the Anglo-Indian sense of the word, but merely the merchant-princes of Hong Kong,—men who have appointed

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themselves to irresponsible offices, in a murderous climate, at salaries absolutely fabulous. Trade is more profitable there, in that small golden key-hole that unlocks the boundless Chinese Empire, than perhaps in any other cranny of earth, but the Nemesis that waits on profit is not absent. No one's liver is in its normal condition, and the old "residenters" might be gorged with their own gold, so yellow is the prevalent complexion. But they are hospitable folks, those mighty merchants, and the ball at the club-rooms in Victoria Town promised to eclipse those which the governor and the chief justice, and the 117th, in their white-washed mess-room, and the admiral on board his gaily lighted flag-ship, had given during the past fortnight.

The ball was a splendid affair. The bands of three regiments had been culled for the choicest musicians; Cantonese gardeners had furnished, despite hostilities between our Queen and the Brother of the Sun and Moon, a perfect bower of roses and tulips for the occasion. Every green thing on the island must have been cut down to furnish the verdant covering of the portico, and about a ship-load of the Wenham Lake Company's ice had been bespoken for the refreshment and refrigeration of the guests. As for the supper, Europe, India, and China had united their efforts and done their best. Gold and silver plate, wondrous porcelain, glass of England and Bohemia, crystal lamps, delicate viands, costly wines, obsequious waiters,—all that dollars and trouble could produce — and dollars and trouble can effect a good deal—were forthcoming, and all that was wanted to promote the happiness of the company was one breath of the cool healthy breeze from *home*.

But this the Hong Kong merchants could not give them, nor Fortnum and Mason supply. The ball went off very well. There were crowded rooms—crowded for colonial rooms, at least—and *that* is a great source of enjoyment, for people cannot take their pleasure thoroughly unless they are devoid of elbow room. There were not many ladies, to judge of matters by European standards. This Hong Kong ball was a very different affair from those county assemblies, where the daughters of clergymen and half-pay officers sit round the walls—a sea of neglected book-muslin—and where young Finch, the ensign, or Dick Wapshot, the Squire's son, looks round him with the air of a sultan, and tantalises the expectant misses before he makes one of them proud and happy by an invitation to dance. No, in India or in China ladies are at a premium, and learn their own real value. Where there is but one pair of fair shoulders and one pair of bright eyes to every dozen of red coats or blue ones, the disparity of the sexes tells entirely in the ladies' favour. Such was the case at Hong Kong, but there were handsome women present, and, however few, they attracted none the less admiration.

Among them, beyond comparison,—the *belle* of the ball-room,—was the beautiful Mrs. G——, a fair young wife, almost a bride, who had just come out from England with her husband, Captain G——, the junior captain of the Rifles. Captain G——, "Geordie," as we used to call him, had just got his promotion before sailing, and had been married less than a year. He was a fine manly fellow,—the best cricketer and oarsman in the Rifles, and a favourite with old and young, high and low. He deserved the Victoria Cross in the Crimea, everybody said. I don't know how he missed getting it; and the men swore by him, and would have followed him through fire and water. It was a great proof of poor Geordie's popularity that I don't think anybody grudged him his good luck in getting such a peerless wife as Mrs. G——, the beautiful new-comer, was considered. All the ensigns and middies, and half the lieutenants, naval and military, to say nothing of the parboiled young gentlemen in mercantile houses, were fairly raving about the angelic stranger. The foolish boys devoured her with their eyes, and wrote sonnets to her eyebrows, for aught I know, and she never moved along the little parade at band-time without an overwhelming escort, but no one ever said that Geordie was not worthy of the good luck he had found, and the great prize he had drawn in the lottery matrimonial — he, the "best fellow" in the service. I do not remember a more attached couple, and yet so free were they from the regular Edwin and Angelina pathos, the *coram populo* demonstrations, that a superficial observer would have set Mrs. G—— down for a flirt, and Geordie for a careless fellow. Yet everybody knew how they loved each other—everybody, down to that stupid garrison Adonis, young Crammington, of the Horse Artillery, who has since owned to me that he penned nine copies of heart-breaking verses on pink paper, nine "perfumed billets," as the young booby called them, and never dared, somehow, to deliver to their destined recipient any one of these inestimable productions. However, on this night, at least, Mrs. G—— was in the highest spirits, and waltzed, and flirted, well to all appearance, and was the very centre of attraction, — the target of all eyes. Geordie, who knew her too well to be easily made jealous, was in very good spirits, too; so were most people. It was a very gay night, all the gayer because active hostilities were expected between John Chinaman, and his namesake and best customer, Mr. John Bull. Nothing gives so high a zest to life as a spice of danger, especially in that enervating tropical climate, and many who were destined to perish ingloriously by sun and malaria, were laughing and chatting gaily, with hearts beating high, over the expected campaign. At the buffet—where refreshments were in great demand — Captain G—— was the centre of a merry group who were drinking in libations of champagne to the future education of the flowery land—an education only to be prefaced and grounded by the exertions of those manly figures in red and blue, with the V. R. on their buttons, whom her Majesty had sent as schoolmasters to teach the celestial gentry respect for the law of nations. Mrs. G—— went through dance after dance, as the band played on with admirable taste and spirit, and still partners buzzed about her, and her little ivory memorandum-book was as filled with writing as a bank ledger. It was wonderful how actively the dancing went on, and on such a night! Even for Hong Kong

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it was pronounced hot. The day had been broiling, and the night was sultry to a degree hardly to be realised by mere imagination.

It was not the heat alone, though that was bad enough, for every rock was radiating the terrific amount of caloric it had sucked in through the long baking hours of the sunlight. Not the heat alone, but the peculiar heavy atmosphere, the suffocating steam, the moist vapour so peculiar to China, in which the strong perfume of the great tropical flowers is so sickly and rich as to load the dull air. Not a breath of wind swept over the island, or if it did, Victoria Mountain kept off every puff of the faint sea breeze from Victoria Town. The city sweltered in the heat. In the ball-room, the weight and warmth of the atmosphere—an atmosphere almost as suffocatingly oppressive as a steaming-blanket wrapped around each miserable individual—began to tell. The company gasped, and ate ice, and drank frothing champagne, and fragrant lemonades, and sherbets, and cup, and sangaree, and Bass, all iced to the

(See page 136.)

limits of refrigeration, and then gasped and danced again. Mrs. G——, gayest and prettiest of all the women present, was still the life of the room. There were plenty of waiters, of course, in the tea-room, the supper-room, and the corridors, bustling about with trays of ices, cooling drinks, wine, and all the crinkum-crankums of a rout. Some of these were European servants; some were Chinese. The latter were under the especial surveillance of Ching-Lung the old *comprador*, or steward of the club, as honest a manager as China could produce, and as shrewd also. He was a native of Chusan, and had followed our people's fortunes when we abandoned that large island after making peace with the Dragon Emperor. No man knew so much of Chinese and British peculiarities as Ching-Lung. He could manage both nations to his and their entire satisfaction. The club highly valued their excellent *comprador*, the natives obeyed and liked him, and his savings were reputed considerable. None but a clever man could have done these things, and

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pleased such opposite interests, and Ching-Lung *was* a clever man. In matters celestial he was a dictionary. If you wanted real "pigeon" information, the old *comprador* could tell you more about China than you could learn from all the Blue Books ever printed at the national expense. In person, Ching-Lung was stout and jovial, a burly old Chinaman in flowered slippers, a silk robe, and a tremendous pigtail of carefully tied hair, with the polished claw-like finger-nails that denote a native gentleman. There he was, presiding over the ices, and scolding the Chinese waiters. When Mrs. G—— entered the tea-room on one occasion, early in the evening, the old *comprador* started as he looked keenly at the beautiful "Fankwi" lady. She passed by him, repressing, good-naturedly, a smile at his outlandish dress and figure. He stared after her with seeming rudeness, or curiosity, and then gave a grunt, and wheeled off to his avocations. Several officers noticed this, but Ching was a character, and no one asked what he meant, or if he meant anything. It was an hour or more before Mrs. G—— left the ball-room again. This time she entered the supper-room, leaning on her partner's arm. While the latter procured her some refreshment, the old Chinaman hovered near, looked sharply at the fair "barbarian" and then drew back with a muttered remark in his native tongue. Mrs. G—— never noticed him. Two minutes after, Ching-Lung was seen in close confabulation with the doctor of the Rifles, a sensible experienced surgeon, who had been three years in Hong Kong, who had served on the medical staff in the old war, and who was regarded as the chief professional authority on the island—aye, though there were staff-surgeons in plenty, and a titled physician to the forces. Dr. Rogers was a man who knew China well. He seemed much disturbed as Ching took him by the lappet of his coat, and whispered some communication. The two men's eyes ranged across the ball-room, in the doorway of which they stood a little apart, and fixed on Mrs. G——. The eyes of several loungers followed theirs by a common impulse. What did they see? Surely, no terrible sight, but a young, happy, high-bred Englishwoman, radiant with beauty, health, and gaiety, crowned with flowers, and sweeping through the ball-room like its queen. What was there in all this to make old Ching purse up his expressive Chinese mouth, and Dr. Rogers lift his eyebrows, and bite his lips, with a brow that knit with a spasm of involuntary anxiety. Smoothing his ruffled brow, the doctor stepped from his place, passed Mrs. G——, and looked full and steadily on her face. She looked surprised, and a little annoyed, but presently turned away smiling. She thought the doctor, no doubt, an odd, rude old gentleman. Very much compressed were the doctor's lips, and very often did the frown of care return to the doctor's brow, as he threaded his way through the crowd, most of whom had some slight or merry remark to bestow on so popular a character, until he reached the place where Captain G—— was talking to the Colonel's wife and two other ladies seated on an ottoman. The doctor drew Geordie aside; they were old friends; and begged as a particular favour that he would take his wife home, away from the ball, but without alarming her.

"Alarming her!" said Geordie, quite in the dark as to the other's meaning, "Why, what a Blue Beard you would make me turn out, doctor. She's engaged twelve deep, I'll be bound, and it wants an hour of supper-time, and *I* can't get her away. Besides, she's not tired. Why *should* she go, you know?"

To this Dr. Rogers merely answered that he begged, as a favour, that Captain G—— would take Mrs. G—— home. It must be done, and would be for the best. And being hard pressed for his reason, the doctor said Mrs G—— was about to be ill. It was his duty to ask her husband to take her away from the crowded room.

Captain G—— laughed incredulously at first, but it was a hollow and forced laugh. It was plain that he did not believe in his own disbelief, and he knew the good old *Medico* too well to suspect him of jesting on such a point. His voice quivered a little as he asked for an explanation.

"Well, if you *will* have it," said Dr. Rogers, laying his hand on Geordie's arm, "there is something wrong with your wife. Old Ching noticed it first, and told me of it, and I have seen it myself, and I have seen such a thing but twice before, and both times in China. Pray heaven that this may not end as it did in those two instances!"

"Speak out, man, you torture me!" said Captain G——, gasping for breath and very pale.

"It is a trifling matter, in appearance at least," replied Dr. Rogers gravely and kindly; "it is a small black spot on your wife's face—on her left cheek—that is all, and——"

"And what is it? For the sake of all that's sacred, *what* is it?" asked G——, quite fiercely.

The doctor, noticing how quickly the group was increasing, drew his friend a few paces back, and whispered something in his ear.

The effect on Geordie was terrible. The brave strong man trembled visibly, and shook from head to foot, while his bronzed face became of an ashen paleness. Then, followed by the doctor, who vainly tried to keep pace with him, he hurried up to the place where his wife was wheeling in the mazes of the waltz. He strode recklessly in among the dancers; his wild haggard looks and brusque gestures caused some confusion and surprise. His wife saw him, and started, and with a word to her partner stood still. How beautiful she looked! flushed and excited with the dance, crowned with flowers, richly yet tastefully dressed; how, too, her fair fresh English bloom contrasted with the pallor of most of the other pretty women present; how her softly bright blue eyes rested with wonder on G—— with apprehension for *him*, lest he should be ill. Certainly, if one of those two were in mortal danger, any observer would have selected the husband as the one who bore the marks of it. But G—— was careless of that. All his soul was in his gaze, as he beheld, in the centre of his wife's blooming cheek, *a small black spot*, not much larger than the head of a large black pin, and quite circular. It did not disfigure her; only a keen eye could distinguish it; and, when seen, it resembles one of those "beauty patches" which the belles of the last century used

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o give an additional piquancy to their charms. Yes, there it was, the black spot the doctor had lescribed. By a great effort G—— smoothed his eatures, and tried to smile, as he begged pardon of he company. He had interrupted them very udely, he said—they had all left off dancing by his time—and he begged they would go on, and not mind him. The musicians had ceased playing; ne waved his hand impatiently: they went on. His wife approached him, her partner beside her, a Naval Commander, who did not feel at all disposed to forego the rest of his dance with the queen of the ball. "Was he ill?" she asked in an anxious whisper. "No, no," he was not ill: but he wished she would come away—come home with him directly. He would give no reason. His manner was irritable, harsh, unusual. The young wife looked at him with surprise; tears gathered in her blue eyes; but she was not without spirit, and she dashed them proudly away. She could not leave yet, she said; she was engaged or several dances. If there was no reason to be given for leaving so abruptly, she could not be so uncivil to her partners. And in a moment more he Commander whirled her off. G—— stood and bit his lips. She danced once, twice, thrice more. G—— stood moodily watching her, the doctor at his elbow. It was sad, agonising, to poor G—— o watch that glorious creature, and to know that he bore on her face the mark of—what? Even he doctor shrunk from telling G—— all he feared. Her momentary burst of hurt womanly pride was over; the sight of her husband's anxious face disturbed her; her gaiety fled; the compliments of her partners were unheard; she begged to be excused; left the gentleman on whose arm she eant, and came up to G—— with a sunny smile. "I will be good now, and come home."

The doctor whispered to G—— to introduce him. G—— hurriedly complied. His wife recognised the old gentleman who had stared so pertinaciously at her; his eyes observed her still. He whispered a word to the Captain. Geordie ried to be calm as he asked his wife if she—if she was aware that there was a small black spot, a mere speck, on her left cheek. She blushed and aughed. Yes, she saw it in the glass when dressing. She could not rub it away. She thought it would go of itself. It had annoyed her a little, because it looked so like one of those absurd patches, but she hoped nobody noticed it.

"Excuse me, madam," said Dr. Rogers; "it may be of more consequence than you are aware of. I am an old doctor, and may be allowed to ask questions. Does it give you any pain?"

"None—none at all."

The doctor looked graver still.

"There is a glass nearly opposite. Please to ook, and see if it has not increased in size."

The lady, half frightened, complied. "Yes, it has indeed—it is four times as large as it was, almost as large as a pea—how tiresome!"

"One more question," said the doctor. "Have you any idea what brought it?"

"None," answered Mrs. G——. "George, ove, I think I would rather go."

"Think again," pressed the doctor. "Has any eptile—any insect?"

"Yes, Dr. Rogers," answered the now fast paling beauty; "yes, but no! that could not be it, and I was silly to think twice of so trifling a thing as the bite of a fly."

"A fly? What sort of fly?" exclaimed the doctor.

"One of those black flies that were in the verandah, a tiresome buzzing thing: it stung me very sharply just there, on the left cheek where the spot is. I thought nothing of it when the pain went off. It was a long sort of fly, with a shining body and glistening greenish wings."

"The Bal-Tse! the Black Jupiter Fly! I know it. Ching know it," said a hoarse grumbling voice close behind.

It was the old *comprador*, half horror-struck, half vain of his sagacity! Hastily they drew her from the room, wrapped her shawl around her, and hurried her home. The music struck cheerily up, the dance went on, supper succeeded (a very sumptuous affair), and then followed more dances, but by degrees the mirth languished, and a sort of uncomfortable feeling of apprehension and gloom pervaded the guests. Strange whispers, muttered hints, went round; the very Chinese servants had an ominous look. By degrees almost everybody became aware that some mischance had befallen the fair young Englishwoman whom they had just welcomed among them. None knew the exact truth, but all had some inkling of it. Then, too, there was a fellow-feeling, perhaps half selfish, among those exiles in a sickly clime; the insidious pest that strikes one to-day may strike another to-morrow. Accordingly the high spirits of all ebbed away, and the ball so gaily begun came to an untimely close. Two or three officers went to seek the doctor in his quarters, late as it was, to learn the truth. The doctor was absent. He was at Captain G——'s bungalow, his servant said. He had sent for his portable medicine chest. Also the physician to the forces, and the marine surgeon, had been called up. The next morning, when most of the officers were at breakfast in the barrack messroom, a subaltern entered hastily.

"Have you heard about poor Mrs. G——?"

"What? Dead!"

It was even so. She had been cut down in the very pride of her beauty, like some queenly flower. It was awfully sudden. It threw a gloom, for awhile, even over merry, sickly, festival-loving Hong Kong. It broke her husband's life and hope at a blow. He never was seen to smile after her loss; he shrunk away from his old friends; he left the Rifles, exchanging into a regiment that was serving in Upper India, and died of fever in the Terai. Poor Geordie! I have taken some liberties with the names of those concerned, but there are not a few living who will be able to recognise, under this mask, a too true tale.

Now, to clear up the seeming mystery of the *Black Spot*. There is a fly which, for the mischief it does, is known and feared throughout the East, and which is usually called the Baal-Fly, or Jupiter Fly. Its bite is generally most fatal to cattle. It is identified with the Baal-Zebub of Scripture, the type under which the Arch Enemy was depicted. The fatal Tsetse-Fly of Central Africa, which Dr. Livingstone has so well de-

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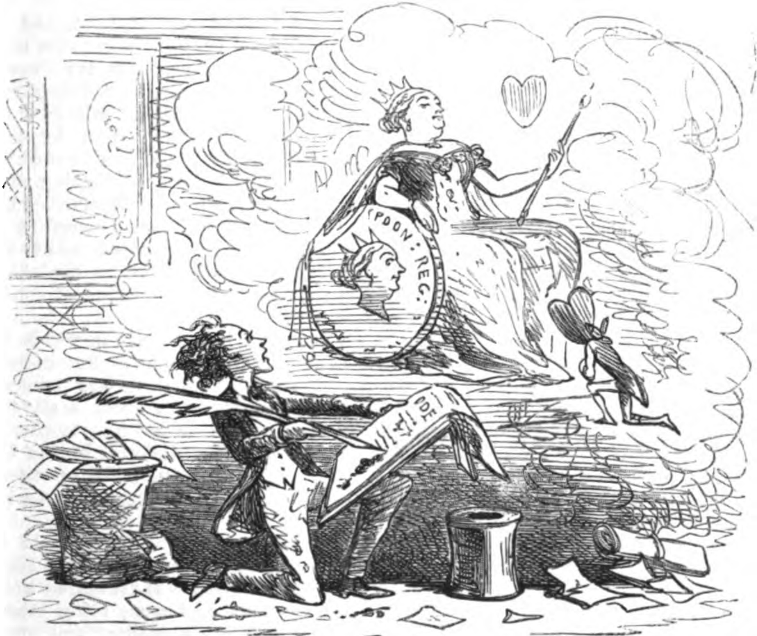
scribed, the Baal-Fly of Syria, and the Bal-Tse of China, are akin, in appearance and effects, while the names, even, are singularly identical. This fly is seldom very hurtful to the human race, except when it has lately been feeding on carrion, and thus communicates the morbid virus of decomposed animal matter to the veins of a living being. This occasionally happens even in Europe, and in the case of the common house-fly and the "buzz," or greenish carrion-fly. But this is rare, indeed, and only three or four cases of death ensuing from such bites are recorded within the last six or seven years on the continent of Europe. In the East, with a sun peculiarly adapted to the hastening of disease, the deaths from this insidiously administered poison are more frequent, and the poison itself is more virulent and rapid. It was in this manner that poor Mrs. G—— met her death. The *black spot*, unnoted at first by all eyes save her own, and neglected by herself, was the mark of incipient mortification, the centre of the gangrene that spread and spread, painlessly but inevitably, until what had been a scarce seen speck proved sufficient to cut short that fair young life. The doctor took blame to himself for not having insisted in defiance of ordinary rules, on the young lady's quitting the ball-room at once, but the hope that he might be mistaken, and a wish to spare G—— as much as possible, made him hesitate in speaking out. But it was the opinion of all the medical men on the island, that when the *comprador* first called the doctor's attention to the mark of death on the face of the doomed beauty, the mischief was beyond remedy. At length, all that skill and care could do, was done; but this was one of the saddest of the many cases when Science stands by, impotent to save, beside the deathbed.

JOHN HARWOOD.

SHE NEVER TOLD HER LOVE.



WAS it that Moonington could find
  No lucky chance to urge his suit?
Or did Capricia's wayward mind
  Flutter irresolute?

Could it be virgin bashfulness
  That still concealed the tender thought?
Or fear she might perchance confess
  A love that was not sought?

Was it mere womanly caprice?
  Or pride? or maidenly reserve?
Was it respect for mental peace?
  Or merely want of nerve?

Could it be possible that he
  (Conjecture tenth and last) not quite
So irresistible might be,
  As *every* heart to smite?

She could not choose but understand,
  He thought, his little game of sighs,
Slow parting pressures of the hand,
  Soft words, and "making eyes:"

And then that ode to his "Heart's Queen,"
  To whom he'd "ever bow the true knee!"
For Moonington was slightly green,
  And more than slightly spooney.

"The reason why" (this was above
  Ten years ago), he now knows well;
She simply "never told her love,"
  Because—*she'd none to tell!*

J. B. S.

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LAST WEEK.

LAST WEEK commenced under happy auspices, inasmuch as on Wednesday last—the 16th of January—there was reported in our public journals the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench in the matter of John Anderson, the fugitive slave, now lying in Toronto gaol. An affidavit was presented to this Court on the part of L. A. Chamerovzow, the secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, in which it was stated in substance that John Anderson, of the city of Toronto, in her Majesty's province of Canada, a British subject, domiciled there, was illegally detained in the gaol of that city against his will; that he was not legally accused, tried, or sentenced for the commission of any crime or offence against the laws of Canada, or recognised by the laws of that province, or in any other part of the Queen's dominions; and that unless a peremptory writ of *habeas corpus* should issue, the life of the said John Anderson was in the most imminent and immediate danger.

The application was based primarily on the ground that John Anderson was a British subject domiciled at Toronto. The law presumes *primâ facie* that the place of a man's actual residence is the place of his domicile. This presumption may, of course, be rebutted by positive proof that he has either come to live in a foreign land for a limited time, or for a special purpose; or, in legal phrase, that he has not in point of fact an *animus manendi*, or an intention of making that country his place of permanent abode. Clearly in the case of John Anderson the proof confirms the presumption. There can be little doubt, indeed, that any suggestion to the effect that Anderson contemplated either presently, or at any period, however remote, a return to the province of Missouri, in the United States, would be disposed of readily enough.

We must crave the indulgence of our readers if we venture to introduce for once the jargon of lawyers into the columns of ONCE A WEEK. The interests of humanity, and the fair name, and honourable reputation of this country, are involved in the decision to be pronounced in the case of this poor coloured man. The contest must be decided by lawyers, and in courts of law; it may not therefore be amiss to examine in popular language the chief points which have fallen, or which may fall under their consideration. These are the tools with which we must work in this matter—it is as well to understand their use.

The Canadian Court having decided, as we think (and as we stated a fortnight back, immediately upon receipt in England of the intelligence), erroneously, that the fugitive slave Anderson should be handed back to the agents of the United States, the next point was, as far as the Canadian judges were concerned, that they should discuss his right of appeal. If this were granted, the ultimate decision of the case would lie with the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. There would be little to fear from any conclusion at which this learned body might arrive; but, meanwhile, the Canadian judges may go wrong in the affair of the appeal, as they have gone wrong according to all probability in their original decision.

Under these circumstances the application was made LAST WEEK to the Court of Queen's Bench here in London that a *habeas corpus* might issue, directed to the Governor of the Province of Canada—to the sheriff of Toronto—and to the keeper of the gaol there—commanding them to bring up the body of John Anderson, together with a statement as to the cause of his detention.

It seems to be correct law—at least we now have it upon the authority of the Chief Justice Cockburn, and the Judges of the Queen's Bench—that such a writ may issue in the Queen's name to Canada. Lord Mansfield had previously laid down the law upon the subject in the following words: "There is no doubt of the power of this Court where the place is under the subjection of the Crown of England. The only question is as to the propriety. To foreign dominions which belong to a Prince who succeeds to the Throne of England, this Court has no power to send a writ of any kind. We cannot send a *habeas corpus* to Scotland, or to the Electorate; but to Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Plantations, and (as since the loss of the Duchy of Normandy, they have been considered as annexed to the Crown in some respects) to Guernsey, and Jersey we may: and formerly it lay to Calais, which was a conquest, and yielded to the Crown by the Treaty of Bretigny." The Chief Justice and his fellows considered LAST WEEK that nothing short of a legislative enactment could deprive our Courts here of concurrent jurisdiction in such a matter, even where local legislatures and local Courts of Justice had been established. In the absence of such enactment it is a question of concurrent jurisdiction.

Such, then, is the way in which Anderson will be brought to England. But in considering his case we must disabuse our minds of the old honourable clap-trap about a slave's recovery of liberty, as soon as his foot touches English soil. Anderson is not claimed by the United States under the Extradition Treaty, because he is a Fugitive Slave, but because he is a Fugitive Murderer.

The facts are, that being held in slavery in Missouri, he was endeavouring to effect his escape, but that one Digges endeavoured to interrupt his flight;—that Anderson, being otherwise unable to escape from his assailant and would-be captor, resisted with all his might, and in the course of the struggle struck Digges with some weapon, or instrument. The wound proved mortal, and Digges died. It does not appear that Digges held any special warrant for the arrest of Anderson, or that he was employed in carrying out the process of any Court when he attempted to capture Anderson. There is, however, a law in the State of Missouri which empowers, and, we believe, *requires* all citizens of the State to arrest any slave who may be found at a certain distance from his master's house and plantations. Digges was acting under the authority of this municipal regulation when he endeavoured to capture Anderson, and in so doing met with his own death.

Let it not be forgotten that such is the law of

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Missouri, and of other slave states; but it is not the law of New York, of Massachusetts, of Connecticut, of Rhode Island. It is not the universal law of the United States of North America. It is a municipal regulation which holds good in certain states, but not in others.

But were it ten times the law of the United States, the terms of the Extradition Treaty, by virtue of which the delivery of the slave—or call him if you will the alleged murderer—Anderson, is required would not be satisfied. By the language of the treaty it is expressly provided that certain criminals, or rather persons charged upon fair presumptions with certain crimes enumerated, are to be reciprocally given up by the contracting countries. But the question of crime, or no crime, is to be considered, not according to the law of the place where the deed was committed, but according to the law of the place where the alleged culprit is found, where he is arrested, and where his conduct is challenged according to form of law.

In the present case Anderson was arrested, and brought before the courts in Canada.

He was charged with this: that he, being held in bondage, and being a slave, did fly from his master's service and authority, and that during such flight he struck down a man who endeavoured to arrest him, and take him back into captivity, whereby the pursuer died.

Is this murder according to British or Canadian law? Anderson was a free man according to British law, which ignores the very existence of slavery. Had Digges, being a Canadian subject of the British Crown, done in Canada what he did in Missouri, Anderson would have had a right to free himself *quocunque modo* from his grasp. Should it even be proved that he had used undue violence, and more than the occasion warranted, it would have been manslaughter at the most—but manslaughter is not among the offences enumerated in the Treaty. Here, then, is the pith and marrow of the question: had Anderson killed Digges in Canada as he killed him in Missouri, would he have been held to be a murderer? We will boldly say, that no judge in England would have summed up for a conviction, and no jury in England would have brought in a verdict of "Guilty of murder" in such a case.

If this is so, there is an end of the debate. The United States, for the purposes of this Treaty, cannot make that out to be murder which we, the subjects of the British crown, declare not to be murder. Still less, if even the Federal Government are unable to do this, can a single province of the Union elevate a municipal regulation of its own not only to the force of a national law, but to the dignity of a universal canon, binding upon the conscience of the human race.

First, and as of right, we have dealt with the very words of the treaty, for of course mere *parol* evidence could not be let in to vary, or even explain, the meaning of so solemn an instrument. But having shown that the language of the instrument suffices for the purpose of our argument, we may, in the way of illustration, show that the construction which is patent upon the face of the Treaty was in the minds of our legislators at the time they gave their consent to it. Had they not been well-assured that the construction we have mentioned is the correct one, they would not, in point of fact, ever have given their consent to the Treaty at all. Mr. George Denman has forwarded the following *cento* of extracts to the Editor of "The Times," as the result of his examination of the debate which took place in our House of Commons on the 11th of August, 1843, when Sir Frederick Pollock—then Attorney-General—had explained the objects of the Bill. When Sir Frederick had concluded, the late Lord (then Mr.) Macaulay asked,—

"Take the case of a slave who had committed murder in his own defence. Suppose a man scourged him, pursued him. The slave had surely a right to resist, and, in his defence, to kill his assailant. By the law of England that would be justifiable homicide. By the law of Georgia it would be murder," &c.

The Attorney-General said,—

"That in all the cases put by the right hon. gentleman no doubt could arise. The Bill expressly said the fugitives must be tried by the laws of the country where they were found."

Mr. Macaulay asked,—

"Whether he was to understand, then, that an action not criminal in a free man, would be held not to be criminal in a slave?"

The Attorney-General said,—

"He was of opinion that an English magistrate would not be at liberty to enter into the question as to whether the fugitive brought before him was a slave or not. He could only enter into such questions of common law (which, of course, means English law) as might arise out of the case; and if the accused person was not shown to be a criminal, no extradition could take place."

Viscount Palmerston—

"Did not go as far as some of his friends as to the effects of this Bill, and the explanation of the hon. and learned gentleman had gone far to remove the apprehensions which he might have entertained. He understood that in no case where a slave was charged with the offence of murder or robbery, would any English magistrate be justified in delivering him up for trial, unless the offence he was charged with was one which was looked upon as murder or robbery by the law of England; and he apprehended that any act that a slave might commit in resisting the coercion of his master could not amount to murder, and would not justify a magistrate in giving up the fugitive."

The conclusion was that the Attorney-General said,—

"No fugitive, under the treaty, could be surrendered as a murderer, unless his offence were such as our laws would qualify with this epithet."

This is surely decisive enough, and, save upon the supposition that the Canadian judges have been guilty of some act of enormous folly before the announcement of the decision in the Court of Queen's Bench reaches them, there is little cause for serious apprehension in Anderson's case. The intelligence, however, from the United States is of the most startling kind. We are informed that

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Mr. Buchanan and his advisers—at least those who have remained staunch to him after the secession of the Southern members of his Cabinet—have resolved to drive matters to a decisive issue. They are prepared to abide by the result of a conflict between the North and the South, and to enter upon it at once. Until the first shot is fired, we still cling to the belief that the wiser and cooler heads upon both sides will find some means for averting a collision which in any case must be attended with the most disastrous consequences to both parties concerned. It is difficult to suppose in the present temper of the world that a great Empire or Republic can subsist upon the basis of slavery. In the Brazils, which constitute the great example of the slave system thoroughly in work, the most certain apprehensions of a servile war are constantly entertained. The slaves are rather a hindrance to progress than a cause of it. In the first place, from their numbers, they are dangerous, if they should ever combine for concerted action; and, secondly, the white men cannot be brought to consider labour otherwise than as a degradation, where the negroes constitute the bulk of the labouring population.

We are told that the Southerners indulge in dreams of Mexican conquests, and of an extension of their dominion over the Southern portion of the North American Continent. On the most favourable supposition this would be a work of time, and before the idea could be carried out in practice it seems probable that the white men with their machinery would drive them from the markets of the world. The position of a bankrupt slave empire would not be a very enviable one. On the other hand, it is beyond doubt that the Northern States of the great American Confederation derive much of their prosperity from the South. As merchants, as brokers, as bankers, as holders of railway shares, as ship-owners, their wealth is inseparably bound up with the tranquillity and well-being of the Southern neighbours. If Charleston were bankrupt to-morrow, New York would feel the blow. Is it possible to conceive under such circumstances that men with English blood in their veins, and English brains in their heads, will push to extremity a contest which must end in grievous damage, if not absolute ruin, to the conquerors as well as to the conquered? Here in England we cannot be indifferent spectators of the strife, for it is perfectly appalling to think of what the result would be in our own manufacturing districts if the peace of the North American Confederation should be seriously compromised.

It is not, however, only on the other side of the Atlantic that clouds are hanging heavily on the horizon. No one can cast a glance at the present condition of Europe without considerable apprehension as to what may be the history of the year 1861. The policy of the French Emperor is the great enigma which we must solve at our peril. During the last two months, by prolonging the siege of Gaëta, he has done almost as much harm to the Italian cause, as he formerly did good by driving the Austrians out of Lombardy. It is also certain that he has largely reinforced the army of occupation in the Patrimony of St. Peter; he has caused Civita Vecchia to be fortified in a manner which would inspire a casual observer with the belief that he contemplated the withdrawal of his troops from the Italian soil. For some time past he has abandoned the policy of non-interference—if indeed it can be said with truth that he ever acted upon it. Whatever his intentions may have been, this is the result. The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies remains in a most disturbed condition, and the forces of Northern Italy are consumed in the effort to restore tranquillity. Should the Austrians—emboldened by their very despair—make any serious effort in the ensuing spring to reimpose their yoke upon Italy, Louis Napoleon has so contrived matters that he may make submission to his will in Southern Italy the condition of any assistance he may be disposed to afford in the North. Venetia may be the set-off for the realisation of the *Idées Napoleonnes* in the Pontifical States, and in the Kingdom of Naples, and in Sicily.

The pivot of the situation seems to lie in Hungary, and in the discontented provinces now nominally subject to the rule of the Austrian Emperor. If the discontent is as great as it is stated to be, Francis Joseph will have difficulties enough upon his hands, without courting fresh dangers by an armed invasion of Italy. Again, if the Austrians are unable to try the results of another campaign, the combinations of the French Emperor, if we read them aright, will probably prove false. As he will not be called upon to make any more sacrifices, he will scarcely be able to claim any more compensation. Public opinion in France is very much opposed to the course he has pursued at Gaëta, and the opposition will increase if the French armies are not again involved in the chances of war. When the British Parliament meets, there will, no doubt, be very strong expressions of the view taken in this country upon Italian affairs, and just now it seems that the policy of Louis Napoleon is to live upon good terms with us. After all, much depends upon the course taken by the Italians themselves. If they have good sense, and public spirit enough to avoid discord and provincial jealousies, they may even yet defy the intrigues and policy of France. In Central Italy, during the course of last year, they so conducted themselves as to extort the admiration of Europe. Their independence has been the result. We note with sorrow and vexation that in Naples and Sicily at the present moment, it is not so. The rashness of political zealots at that extremity of the Peninsula, just now threatens the sacred cause of Italian freedom with the most serious dangers.

The idea at Paris is, that the French Emperor still clings to the Programme in which he announced his policy before the Italian campaign. Northern Italy is to be under the dominion of the Sardinian King—Central Italy to be given up to the Grand Duke of Tuscany—the Pope to be reduced to the patrimony of St. Peter, and to be guarded there by French troops—Southern Italy to be restored to the Ex-King of the Two Sicilies, with constitutional guarantees. In short, there is to be an Italian Confederation under the protection of France. The French Emperor does not like the prospect of a rival in the Mediterranean.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AFTER her visit to her father at Canonbury, Mrs. Hawkesley returned to Maida Hill, anxious to communicate to her husband the scanty information which Mr. Vernon had added to the contents of his letter. Charles Hawkesley had not arrived, and long indeed seemed the delay. Beatrice was all but on the point of hastening over to Brompton, in the idea that some painful disclosure had detained her husband, when he entered with the two boys. In their coming that day, instead of the next, as proposed, she naturally detected fresh cause for alarm; but a word from her husband sufficed to reassure her sufficiently to give Walter and Fred her usual kindly welcome.

"Neither of our parents has chosen to come back yet," said Hawkesley, "so we have deserted the house, and come over to live with our cruel uncle and aunt, and when we are wanted, we are to be sent for."

But when the boys had been cared for by Aunt Beatrice, and had been sent into the garden with letter of licence to deal at will with the fruit, a concession not lightly made at other times, and Hawkesley and his wife were alone, his first words were—

"Something wrong, dearest."

"I knew it," said Beatrice, hastily. "I had a presentiment that it was so, and though you laugh at such things, I felt that when we met again we should have bad news. Tell me quickly—you know I want no preparation."

"Nay, there is *no* news. That is, in fact, the worst I have to tell, except some small matters, which may in themselves be nothing."

And the husband and wife told each other the results of their respective errands.

"And what do *you* make of it, dearest?" said Beatrice, after a long pause.

"I would rather hear your idea—you are her sister."

"Charles," said his wife, "that means that you suspect something very painful, and would not wound me by being the first to impute such a thing."

"Dearest girl, what *is* one to think, when a wife suddenly leaves her home with an unknown gentleman, and the husband, without a word to any friend, takes away his daughter, and is heard of no more?"

"You know how fond he is of Clara. I do not see anything in his taking her rather than either of the boys."

"Well, pass that for the moment. What is your key to the mystery?"

"I cannot arrange my thoughts in the least. I am simply at a loss to comprehend the affair. But, Charles, it is not an inexplicable story that shall make me think ill of darling Laura."

"Nor me, and you do not want to be told my affection for Laura. We were joking over it only the other morning."

"So we were, and little thinking——Charles, I am perfectly terrified at a thought that flashes upon me. The idea is almost too dreadful. Help me to crush it at once, before it begins to haunt me."

"My dearest wife!"

"Is it—is it possible—but it is not," she said, drawing closely to her husband, and speaking with agitation—"is it conceivable that the strange man, whom nobody knew, and who instantly removed Laura from her house, could have been a—a doctor? Say no."

"I understand you," said Hawkesley, turning pale. "But no, no, a thousand times no, my own one."

"The idea came like lightning as you spoke this moment, and impressions which come like that are often true—"

"Banish it—dispel it—there is not the shadow of reason in it. My dear Beatrice, you have known Laura from babyhood, and can say for yourself whether there was ever the faintest defect in her beautifully ordered mind."

"But is it not the most delicate minds that are most easily injured?"

"Assuredly not. That is one of the mistakes of ignorance—don't be angry with the word, dearest; I use the strongest purposely. It is the machine in which there are flaws and damages that flies, the perfect one is true and safe to the last. Pray drive away the thought—reject it as absolutely as I do."

"You do, entirely?"

"Utterly."

"Then I will. And yet how the story would agree with such a misery. Laura is taken away in her husband's absence: he could not bear to see her removed: a single stranger, in black—"

"Never heed the black. Unless you can suppose that she had been previously seen by two medical men, who must have been together in judgment in her case, the thing is impossible. It *is* impossible. In Heaven's name, my dearest wife, do not let us pursue that terrible course of thought."

"Then," persisted Beatrice, "he cannot bear to be in the deserted house, and flies away with Clara, who reminds him of her mother—"

"Would a man who loved his wife take her image with him?"

"Yes, Charles, I think he would if she had been removed from him by death or misfortune—not if she had been wrong, perhaps. But who dares accuse Laura of that?"

"I would not hear it, but—"

"No, Charles, no. If there is truth and goodness and purity in woman, it is in my sister Laura. The other thought is dreadful, but not so dreadful as the idea that —; but that you will never believe," she said, clasping both her husband's hands.

"It would be almost the saddest hour I could live, if an hour should come to make me think ill of her, Beatrice. But do not let this abominable haze of anonymous letters and shopmen's slanders blind us to other ways of accounting for the affair."

"O, do you see any other ways? Anything to drive away the fearful thought of her possible insanity."

"I beg you, darling, to reject that, whether we see at once any other solution or do not. There is one idea comes to me already; it seems a wild one, but the incidents of real life are so much wilder than anything one dares invent—"

"Yes, yes."

"This man in black—by the way, who told us he was in black—are we beginning with a mistake?"

"You said it was Freddy."

"Yes, but does a boy notice dress?"

"He said it before Walter."

"Who had not seen him, I think," said Hawkesley. "I must ascertain as casually as I can."

He went out to speak to the boys, and returned in a few minutes.

"Freddy speaks positively to the black dress, and he had a good look at the stranger, who it seems interposed between the children and a visit to the Zoological Gardens. We may take the black for granted. Beatrice, dear, had Laura ever any Catholic leanings?"

"No," said Mrs. Hawkesley, promptly, "certainly not, that I ever heard of. Poor Bertha used to be rather inclined to go to Catholic chapels, not from any particular convictions, for she had not many of them, but the music, and the incense, and novels about mysterious Jesuits, worked upon her at one time. But not Laura. What is your idea?"

"I hardly know, but stay a moment. Do you mean that Bertha at any time became a Catholic, or had any connection with the Catholics beyond attending their services?"

"I don't think so. To tell you the truth, she did not get much mercy from me when she spoke of such things, for I knew that religion had nothing to do with her likings, and that they were the merest sentimentality."

"Laura would be more tolerant?"

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"Why, Laura was the youngest, and would scarcely dare to speak to Bertha as I did, and they were more confidential with one another than with me, though now that Laura is a woman, I know that she has learned to love me the best."

"Laura was her confidant."

"At one time very much so. Partly it was my fault—perhaps I made too few allowances for Bertha's nature, and partly, dear, it was your own, for I was thinking a great deal more about your letters, and your making your way upwards in life, to care for the girls' chatter about the heroes of novels, and the divinely handsome men they had seen riding through the village."

"Come, I am leading you into cheerfulness, dear, and now be prepared to laugh at what I am going to ask."

"*Will* I laugh if it is anything that shows me daylight?"

"It seems to me possible that Bertha, in some of those sentimental moods, as you very properly call them, may have got entangled in some of the meshes which are constantly spread for the young, by Catholic missionaries, some of whom, I dare say, believe that they are doing good work, and that she may have drawn in Laura with her. What particular form of entanglement it may have been I don't just now try to guess, but such things are."

"Those Jesuits, perhaps, who are so clever."

"Well, they tell us that they are. I have met a good many, and thought them much too clever to do harm, seeing that 'Beware of Mantraps' was as plainly to be read in the down look, in the impertinent curiosity, and in the unfrank conversation, as ever one read it in the preserves of the squirearchy. But they manage to lay hold on the minds of the young, I fancy, and especially of girls of a mopish turn, and it is only when the young lady gets married that she recognises the absolute fitness of the Jesuit's being kicked down stairs. Before that time he may have wound his way into some of her secrets, and may afterwards use them in his own fashion. Were there any Jesuits at Lipthwaite?—if so, they have not done *you* much harm."

"Well, there was a dear old Catholic priest who was never out of the houses of the poor, and who died at last of typhus caught by a sick bed."

"Ah! but he was a gentleman as well as a priest. I remember his white hands and courtly manner, though I saw him but once. But you had no real Jesuit at Lipthwaite."

"No. There was a writing-master at Mrs. Spagley's, a man whom I detested, though he was a clever man, too, and some of us elder girls had a notion that he was a Jesuit, but I suppose, now, that it was all nonsense, and that we thought him one only because he dressed in black, and made silky kinds of answers to questions, never telling you what you wanted to know."

"That is a little in their line, too. Did Bertha know him?"

"Yes, I tell you, he was our writing-master."

"What was his name?"

"Hardwick—Mr. Ernest Hardwick—I remember it well by a girl's joke that he was never in earnest."

"He dressed in black," repeated Charles Hawkesley, "but, pooh, that is nothing—a good many thousands of honest men do that—but I feel it is nonsense, and yet, while one is holding an imaginary thread, tell me—was he intimate with you beyond the relations of teacher and pupil?"

"He used to call sometimes at the Hut, but papa's talk was too much in earnest for him, and he had a scoffing kind of manner with men, which papa did not like, so there was not much intimacy. But, my dearest Charles, how on earth can you connect a country writing-master with Laura's disappearance?"

"Perhaps not at all, and yet I have an odd persistence in following up a trace of a story. Beatrice, what was Laura's reason, when she sat for that portrait, for being painted with a rosary?"

"Is she? To be sure she is, I have seen it a thousand times. It never occurred to me to think why. I supposed that it was a fancy of the painter."

"Very likely it was. I dare say that it was. But suppose that it was not, and that something was symbolised."

"Do you mean to say that you think Laura is a concealed Catholic, and that some one has come to claim her and take her away to a convent. Good Heavens, Charles, can such things be done?"

"My dearest, you hasten to fill up a very imperfect outline of mine, and not exactly in the way I intended. We have not the least real basis upon which to build our conjectures, but having nothing to do but conjecture—except one thing, which I will tell you presently—a sort of idea, hardly worth calling one, presents itself. My dear Beatrice, Laura is too good to be suspected of wrong, Laura is too wise to be suspected of aberration, but is it on the cards that Bertha—"

"Bertha!"

"Stop. That Bertha, who does not love her husband," said Hawkesley, speaking slowly and distinctly, as if he wished her to scan every idea as he presented it,—"that Bertha, who, at all events, appears not to love her husband, which, the husband considered, is a very singular fact—should have united herself, in other days, to the Catholic church, and should have induced Laura to do the same?"

"Impossible."

"I may think so too, but hear me out. Bertha has long been residing in a Catholic country, and old feelings may have revived, to say nothing of the system of proselytism, which is always on the look out for its prey, and which would not be long in discovering an impressionable woman who had once believed."

"When you put such an idea into words it seems reasonable," said Beatrice, "but I feel it is the vaguest guessing."

"So it is, and let us guess on. Bertha has been re-converted, and I need not tell you that the first result of such a process would be to alienate her from her heretic husband, and to withdraw her confidences from him. Hence, we may get at that estrangement which we were deploring the other morning, and acquit Bertha of the horrible stupidity of not appreciating such a man as Robert Urquhart."

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"But you charge her with folly, and with deceit, which is worse than anything in the world."

"Let us suppose that her butterfly mind, such as it is, has risen above dress and the opera, and settled on a sort of perfumed religion, which tells her, through the mouth of her confessor, that the deceit is pardonable, or even laudable, if truth-speaking would render her less useful to the church."

"Butterfly, indeed. That would be far too mild a name for her."

"Nay, nay, she is not wise. You know that. But, then, for Laura."

"She is no butterfly, dear."

"No, indeed. But Laura has been a very young girl, who was left very much to herself, without a mother's guidance, and who made this silly Bertha her friend and confidant."

"If I saw things as you suggest them, how I ought to reproach myself, Charles, for not having been more of a mother to her, poor child."

"And who had been a mother to you, dearest, and where should you have learned the value of such counsel? Besides, you must share the guilt, if there is any, with me, who deprived your sister of your companionship."

"You always try to make me believe I am right, Charles."

"When I find you wrong, I will tell you so—rely on me," said Hawkesley, pressing her hand. "But just let me finish my chapter of possibilities. Bertha, now entirely in the hands of her priest, has been worked upon to send him, or one of his brethren, over here, and has prevailed on Laura, by what arguments we have yet to learn, to visit her sister in a haste which has, of course, to be accounted for, but which is quite reconcileable with the exacting demands of the Church—when you are in its power."

"You make out a story before my eyes," said Beatrice, "and I hardly know whether to wish to believe it or not."

"Do neither, until we know more."

"What was the other thing you said we had to do?"

"To ascertain for ourselves whether Laura has gone to her sister."

"Do you mean by writing?"

"I am afraid to write."

"Ah! then you do not believe a word of your own story."

"Why do you say so?"

"Because, Charles, if she should *not* be there, and your letter should miscarry—that is what you are thinking of. You are suspecting something far worse than even the folly you think may have been committed."

"You shall have all my thoughts. I should be inclined, Beatrice, to accept this wild theory of mine, while we waited for news, but for one consideration."

"Laura's strong sense?"

"Laura's strong love."

"Yes, there would be the chain to bind her to her home."

"Why, Beatrice, do you think that if a score of sisters were to summon *you*, through the mouths of a whole college of Jesuits, to leave my house in my absence, they would have power to move you from this hearthstone?"

"Not all the sisters and priests in the world."

"Not if, when a girl, you had taken all the vows of the Church?"

"I know one vow only, Charles."

"I know it, wife. And I thought that Laura had no other."

"Say, for my sake, that you think so still. Let us believe anything, no matter how improbable—that the story of the lady who was dying, and which that servant dared to tell Walter not to believe—if I were Price, I would have turned her into the street in five minutes—"

"Price had no authority."

"Don't tell me—I would have given her to the police. I daresay that she will turn out to have been a thief."

"Your anger against her is just, but do not blame Price, who had really no more right to put Eliza into the street than I have."

"No, dear, no. But it puts one in a rage to think that she should dare tell a child not to believe his own father, when he is speaking about the child's own mother. I wonder Walter did not strike her."

"He can strike at the proper time, as I ought to tell you." And Hawkesley told of Walter's vengeance on the caluminator.

"A darling, noble boy!" exclaimed his aunt. "That was the Vernon blood."

"Possibly," said Hawkesley, smiling. "And there is some of that article on his hand, and perhaps you may as well see to it."

"Is he hurt? Why didn't you tell me?"

"Were we not speaking on a graver subject till this moment?"

"Yes, yes," said Beatrice, "but you made the tears come into my eyes by telling me of his courage in the cause of his mother. Let us, who know her even better than the poor child does, Charles dear, let us be as courageous, and utterly refuse to listen to the least thing against her. Believe me, we shall be right."

"I am only too rejoiced to see you take that view," said Hawkesley.

"Did you expect me to condemn her because I do not know where she is, and because some wretches spread scandals against her? Do you think that Laura would judge me so, Charles?"

"I love you for standing by her. And as we are thoroughly agreed about this, you can bear to hear, and to recollect, that appearances are most fatally against her."

"Indeed they are. But all will be explained, and we shall have the happiness of telling her, on this very hearthstone you spoke of, that we knew from the first all would be well."

"Is that one of your presentiments?"

He asked it quietly enough, and Beatrice's lips were parting, in the act of reply, when she turned pale, and looked round at him with eyes that suddenly brimmed with tears.

"I dare not say yes," she whispered, and broke into a convulsive fit of crying.

"Come, come," said her husband, "you must be calm, dear, and remember how many things

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good and bad have happened to us without any presentiments. Perhaps they do not come when they are asked for."

"I was just going to say yes," sobbed his wife, "for I was taking the wish for the thing, when I felt that I was going to utter a falsehood. I only pray that all may be well."

"God grant it. But on one thing I am resolved. I will test that story which has framed itself to me out of a parcel of trifles which one is ashamed to call facts."

"I felt that you were saying it all to draw me away from darker views, and I took it as kindness, though I could not believe in it," said Beatrice, on her husband's bosom.

"But as I spoke it grew upon me," said he; "and I will send through Aventayle, who has agents in Paris. Meantime, dear, try and make those children as happy as you can. It is a comfort that they love you as if you were their mother."

"I understand you, Charles," said Beatrice, "but darling, *do* not talk so—at least now."

CHAPTER XXVII.

"OF course," said Mr. Aventayle, "always show him up. Stay, clear a seat of some kind for him, can't you?"

The inquiry did not seem altogether beside the mark. For though the manager's room at the theatre was a tolerably large one, it was so completely choked up with his Varieties, as he called them, that any disarrangement of that chaos threatened a general confluence of matter. It would be almost easier to say what was not in the room than what was, or at all events the latter feat could only be accomplished by the pen of an untiring inventory-maker, who should not be deterred from his work by any surprises, or for a moment drawn into the feeble belief that classification was a possibility. Upon the dusty crimson cushion of a white and elegantly gilded chair, in which some theatrical nobleman of the Regency date had sat, and uttered exceedingly improper sentiments during the progress of a melodrama, reposed a handsome Skye terrier, and it naturally seemed *his* place to move in favour of a visitor. But Mop was of an opposite opinion, and signified it by so resolute a growl when the manager's servant touched the chair, that he abandoned the idea, and looked hopelessly round for some other quarter in which Mr. Hawkesley might be planted. But chaos was obdurate. To remove from an old couch near the fire-place a vast heap of manuscripts and newspapers, was more than Beeton's place was worth, Mr. Aventayle always declaring that he had placed everything there in exact order, and knew where to lay his hand upon it. Any of the big wooden boxes, some piled on others, would have made a good seat, but then on one was a great chandelier, and another held a pyramid of books that Aventayle had bought, as curiosities, at a sale, and would never have time to look into while he had eyes to read them. A model of his stage, with the scenery, in miniature, of a celebrated "effect," was mounted on another box, and Vister, the wonderful painter, had, in reply to the objurgations of his manager, taken a solemn oath, every evening for some months, to remove it the next morning, but meantime it was there. A window seat seemed more promising, but to utilise that for social purposes involved the moving a lamp which stood in a little pool of oil, about eight hats of various shapes and ages, and a plaster caricature statue of M. Alexandre Dumas, the regenerator of Italy. So, with a helpless look that comprised his employer's whole room, the portraits of the ladies and gentlemen of the company in characters in which they had been painted, the suspended list of pieces, with the number of nights each had run, the manager's table, loaded with letters that overflowed the small island he sought to keep for his writing-place, the water-bottle and tumbler flanking the splendid French clock that was never right, but now and then, by frantically striking nineteen, claimed the privilege of genius to do as it pleased, and the grand array of bandboxes, music-books, swords, boots, and images, with which it pleased Mr. Aventayle to surround himself, Beeton withdrew to bring up Mr. Hawkesley.

He did not leave the manager solitary, for by his side stood a fiend. That is to say, one of the most accomplished members of the company, dressed for some Mephistophilean part, but with rather more diabolic adjuncts than are usually given to the friend of Faust, was in counsel with his manager, and in the dim light of the shaded lamp, looked, as he stood by the huge black chair of his chief, as if he were tempting the latter to sign some unhallowed compact. The thought, however, would not have occurred to any person likely to enter that room; a few years of practical stage life wear out any fancies arising from theatrical accidents, and it is perhaps difficult to bore an actor more completely than by what you deem facetiousness, based on topics from his own profession.

"You know Hawkesley, Grayling, don't you?"

"Yes, to be sure. A capital fellow, and a decidedly clever one. Has he got anything for us?"

"I hope so."

Mr. Aventayle, still a handsome man, though considerably past middle life, and retaining the play of features—fine ones—which had in earlier days materially aided him to eminence, placed his double-glass to his eyes, as he heard Hawkesley's step, and when the latter entered affected to survey him with intense curiosity. Then, without speaking, he dropped the glasses, as if hopelessly.

"No! I do not see three acts in *that* face. Do you, Grayling?" he asked of the fiend.

"Well, I am not much of a physiognomist, but I think I see two, and perhaps a prologue," said the actor, shaking hands with Hawkesley.

"Ah, you were always of a cheerful nature. Mop, you old fool, will you come down?" said the manager, spilling out the reluctant animal to the ground, and inducting Hawkesley into the nobleman's seat. "I'm very glad to see you, on any terms," he continued, "as it shows that you have a hankering after the place. What will you have to drink?"

"What have you got that is good on a warm night?'

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"Everything in the world; everything without exception. But if you will take my advice you will try our highly superior cold brandy-and-water at nothing per glass, waiters included."

"I understand. As thou sayest, so let it be."

And the manager, the devil, and the author were soon provided with their beverage.

"Now of course you won't talk before me," said the fiend, "so I shall finish this, and go."

"Unless Hawkesley has any secrets, I have none," said Aventayle, "and you should always try, Grayling, to remain in the society of the good and virtuous, because you may improve yourself by their conversation and example: and you should also, Grayling, pass the brandy when you have helped yourself."

"I have been dining at the club," said Hawkesley, "and thought I would walk round and tell you that I have read that piece you gave me."

"Ah! well?"

"In its present form, it is out of the question."

"Rough and crude. I told you so."

"The story won't do. They wouldn't stand it."

"They'll stand a good deal, too."

"Yes, but this is too cynically offensive to be endured. They will sit and cry over a Traviata who whines because her lungs are going, but they would hiss her if she were in health, and prosperous and defiant, like one of the women in this thing. It won't do, Aventayle."

"If you say so on consideration, there is an end of the matter; but the play seemed to me to have some very strong stuff in it."

"Strong as hartshorn," said Hawkesley. "But it will not do for you. I wish it would."

"Which means that you don't want to work."

"No, it does not, my dear fellow. I have a good notion for you. But I would rather not have taken it up until after Christmas; and if you could bring out this thing, I should have been glad of the interval. But I shall be ready for you soon."

"That's well. Anything for this boy?" said the manager, indicating the fiend.

"Plenty."

"That's well again, and we'll ask you no more questions."

"I want to ask you one or two. You said you knew nothing of the man who sends you this piece, except that his name is Adair."

"Nothing," said Aventayle, "but he writes me a long letter, after the manner and fashion of young dramatists, explaining his play at great length, as if it was not strong enough to explain itself."

"Would you mind showing me his letter?"

"Not a bit," said Aventayle. "But I should very much mind looking for it." And he pointed, with a piteous look, at the mass of correspondence before him.

"But I should particularly like to see it."

"H'm. In that case you shall, but it is a cruel thing to ask me to go through all that heap."

"Why don't you keep your papers in order?"

"Manage a theatre for a fortnight, and you'll see, my boy," said Mr. Aventayle, beginning a search among his letters.

"I will come and sort them and docket them for you."

"You'll go and mind your own business, which is the finishing my piece. Have you got a good title?"

"Yes, excellent."

"Then the piece will be good. I have noticed that if a man fumbles over a title, he has generally written without purpose. Confound the letter!" the manager growled, or may have said worse.

"I couldn't sit in such a room as this," said Mr. Grayling.

"Who said you could? You are not sitting. Nobody asked you to sit," grumbled Aventayle, with pretended petulance, as he turned over his heaps, and was reminded at every turn of something he had neglected to attend to, or somebody who ought to have been obliged or abused. At the recurrence of each of these suggestions the manager fired off a fresh growl.

"I'm afraid I am bringing your sins to your mind," said Hawkesley. "Your good health."

"People have no right to write letters, I'll be hanged if they have," said Aventayle. "Here it is—no it isn't—that's from a woman I never saw, giving me five sides of note-paper to prove why I ought to give her a box, and she's as rich as creases, as old Poulter used to say; her husband's a banker."

"Send her the box, if she will bring him," said Grayling. "I'm told bankers' morals are queer, and the piece may do him good."

"Let him pay for improvements," said the manager. "I know I have to do so. I can't see the letter."

"Shall I look?" said Grayling, "or are you afraid of my seeing letters poisoning your mind against me."

"I had rather you did, it might make you more careful and painstaking," said Aventayle. "Do look, there's a dear boy, while I refresh myself. A large sheet, a very neat hand, and the signature something Adair."

And he turned away with a sigh, and nodded across his tumbler at Hawkesley.

"What do you want to see the letter for?" he said. "Childish curiosity?"

"No, but for a reason."

"We must keep him in good humour just now," said Aventayle, in a stage whisper, behind his hand, to Grayling, "Find it for him."

"I am proceeding systematically," said the actor. "Mind your brandy-and-water."

The manager and the author chatted on for some minutes, and the actor went on with his search. Hawkesley, in answer to a renewed demand by his friend, assured him that the new play was really in hand, and that he liked it as it came on, whereat Aventayle professed himself consoled for his life and other misfortunes, and begged that the ladies' characters might be made as strong as possible. This again Hawkesley promised, and was enlarging upon the extreme importance of keeping the women constantly upon the stage, when the fiend uttered a melodramatic

"Ha!"

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"Got it?" asked Aventayle.

Without a word, the fiend strode to Hawkesley, and laid the letter in his hand. It was long, and as the author began, with some eagerness, to read it, Aventayle said,

"Bother reading and spoiling talk. Put it into your pocket."

Many a day afterwards, Hawkesley recalled the circumstances to his mind, and remembered that the letter had been put into his hand by the devil.

(To be continued.)

BATHS OF AIX AND ANNEXATION OF SAVOY.

Fishermen of Aix. (See page 150.)

SAVOY is always interesting; the country, its wildness, its glaciers. Chamounix, Mont Cenis, Mont Blanc, &c., are in Savoy. But it has become of intense interest of late, on account of the annexation question; and having been in the most beautiful part of the country, namely Aix, this last summer, I hope it may be found interesting to give some short account of Aix les Bains and the beautiful lake of Bourget.

I dare say many have been at Aix; in fact, before the railway from Paris was completed, there was a steamer which went up the Rhone from Lyons, along a canal which joins the Lake Bourget, and from Aix the traveller went on by post or diligence to Chambery, and so over the Mont Cenis to Turin: this steamer still plies.

"Between France and Italy, equidistant from Naples and Paris, suspended from the sides of Switzerland like one of the roses of its Alps to its rock, is a charming country, which opens its hospitable valleys to Europe as soon as summer comes. This is Savoy."

Such is the flourishing description with which the writer of "A Season at Aix" opens his work, and this grandiose style is continued throughout the finely illustrated volume. Its origin is curious: the government contractor for the gaming table at Aix, wishing to attract company, had this volume prepared at considerable cost. Luckily for the morals of the virtuous, though not for the pocket of the contractor, rouge et noir was put down by law; and there is no longer the disgrace of state-patronised gaming, as is yet permitted at some German watering-places.

The whole country is about 100 miles from north to south, and about 95 from east to west, and the population about 400,000.

As regards the house of Savoy, originally German, though the state is small and poor, its history is important as being at once remarkable for its antiquity and its many illustrious princes, its good and bad fortune, the warlike and chivalrous bearing of its princes (Prince Eugene amongst the rest), down to the noble and unfortunate Charles Albert, at once the Hero and the Martyr of Italian Liberty! The tale shows a series of fights, either at one time seeking to repel encroachments, or at another supporting some ally, or seeking to recover some contested inheritance. Savoy has changed masters more than once. Louis XIV. conquered it, but it was restored at the Peace of Ryswick. Again Savoy and Nice were added to France in 1791, and restored to Piedmont in 1814. The great struggle of Charles Albert against Austria ended with his defeat, 23rd March, 1849, at Novara, when he abdicated, dying the 29th of July in the same year at Oporto. Victor Emmanuel succeeded him, and it is to be hoped he will retain the liberty of his own state, and obtain it for the whole of the Italian peninsula.

It was interesting to be at Aix and at Chambery just after the annexation. To an Englishman this appears a dreadful wrench; passing by the stroke of a pen from liberty to despotism, from one set of hands to another. The common people perhaps did not feel this, and as regards material prosperity, the being annexed to France must be all in their favour. Little cared for by Piedmont hitherto, harassed by the French and Swiss Custom-houses on their frontiers, finding but a scant market in Piedmont and Switzerland for their productions; all this will now be changed, capital will flow in, the current of improvement in agriculture and trade will run on up to the very foot of the Alps, and instead of being dependent on the dear market of Geneva, their luxuries and wants will be supplied by Paris and all France, and free trade, now being developed, will reach Savoy.

This may not, and indeed does not, compensate the patriot for the loss he has sustained. No real reliance is to be placed on the vote *oui* or *non;* the parties were drilled into acquiescence; and even well-to-do persons, seeing how hopeless it was to oppose it, and become a marked *frondeur*, voted *oui*, when their hearts said *non*.

As regards the French Codes Criminel et Civile, I believe they much resemble the Piedmontese, and here, perhaps, there is no evil in the change. The stricter game laws and tax cause great dissatisfaction. I was told that the conscription was a change for the better, the seven years' service being far less onerous than that of Piedmont. Only those who are now born will call themselves true Savoyards, as existing before the annexation; as old Lord Marischal, Frederick the Great's friend, told the

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Duke of Hamilton, "You are North Britons; I am the only Scotchman amongst you born before the accursed union."

As regards the Savoyards whom we saw at Aix and the neighbourhood, nothing could exceed their quiet, mild, and amiable manners—civility without servility. With above six thousand visitors to a small town, converted for the season into one vast lodging-house or hotel, nothing of the corruption of manners of such places seems to have taken place. You are asked in a mild, gentle voice if you want a carriage, or a boat, or a nice donkey. No pressure, no crowding, nor abuse. The peasants have the same mild manners. A family out of Aix were gathering their grapes, much cut up by the mildew and the bad season; nothing could exceed the gentleman-like manner in which the father, assisted by wife and daughters, selected the few ripest of the red grapes to give us, saying of the white ones, "I should offer you some of those, but they are not ripe." The very dogs are quiet and well-behaved; and there was one lame boy on crutches, just out of Chambery, with a beautiful face and a pair of gold ear-rings, who submitted himself as an object of charity by reason of his lameness, with a delicacy of manner that made Sterne's beggar not a caricature. This had nothing in it of the Italian *lady* begging with fan and mantilla, or the Spanish beggar who collected from the charitable on horseback.

In writing of Aix, I may be mistaken, and possibly many more may have visited the country than I suppose. For myself, for many years during the autumn an old continental traveller, although I had more than once crossed the Mont Cenis, and passed through Chambery, it so happened I had never seen the Lac du Bourget nor Aix les Bains. There was a celebrated judge of former times much addicted to foreign travel, about the time the Continent was opened in 1814, but who, being stronger in law than geography, came back after a long vacation ramble and announced the discovery of Treves and Prague as new places in Europe, with an earnestness such as Cook or Bruce might have displayed with regard to one of their discoveries. I do not pretend, however, to have discovered Aix, but I think I may infer that it is not much frequented by the English, as, out of from six to seven thousand visitors last season, not above seven per cent. consisted of our countrymen.

Now, however, besides calling attention to a beautiful country, and a town filled with every accommodation at a reasonable price, it is probable that many who now seek overcrowded English watering-places, or who put up with the discomforts of such places abroad as Vichy, may be induced to go to Aix, seeing it is now but a short day by railroad from London to Paris, and from thence to Aix one long day; or the journey might be divided into two short days, stopping at Dijon or Maçon. Two hours after leaving the latter town, the train arrives at Amberieu. Here the traveller is transferred to the Victor Emmanuel railway (a pleasant name for the lovers of liberty), which traverses in all its windings the beautiful valley or gorge terminating at Culoz; now stopping at picturesque out-of-the-world little towns or villages, where the flying train is still an object of wonder, and now again rushing on for another two hours through the wildest scenery of uninhabited rock and mountain.

At Culoz, the Rhone is crossed, and the railway, coasting the eastern shore of the lake of Bourget in its entire length, deposits the traveller in less than an hour at the Aix station, continuing its course for another half-hour to Chambery.

Nothing can be well more beautiful and sheltered than the situation of Aix, a few miles below the head of the lake, in the midst of its cultivated slopes covered with vineyards and gardens, or small woods, or clumps of trees, and enlivened with bright country houses of all sizes, and dotted about at all heights, the Swiss style of architecture, with external galleries and overhanging eaves, prevailing. The shutters both within and without all the houses, as well as the cultivation of the Indian corn, are sufficient evidence of the summer warmth of this sunny valley.

Behind all this smiling prospect is a fine backing of mountains, often from their form leading one to suppose that gigantic ruined castles crowned their heights, and which in the middle of October began to exhibit new beauties in the partially fallen snow; while, at the same time, the grander chain of mountains beyond Chambery and the head of the lake appeared like real snow mountains.

On the western shore of the lake, and opposite Aix, the scenery is of a totally different and far grander character. The cultivated plateaus, farms, and small villages, are few and at a considerable height; sometimes even the road on that side seems to disappear, and the rocky mountain sides of the Dent du Chat, nearly five thousand feet high, to come sheer down into the lake.

Although it is possible to scale the sides of the Cat, and to reach the highest pinnacle, the Tooth, it is more pleasing to dwell on the more sunny side of Aix—on the sloping protected sides of the hill and village of St. Innocent, the Provence of Savoy, where is the beautiful villa of the Baron Despine, Director of the Baths, and where the best wine, which has somewhat the character of Burgundy, is grown, as well as many trees suited to the climate of the south of France; or on the wooded hill of Treserve, which, though between 600 and 700 feet, seems, partly from the clearness of the atmosphere, but a mere sloping bank, over which the "Cat's Tooth," on the other side of the lake, looks towering down.

The hospitable custom is common here of leaving the gates of gardens, and even larger domains, open, and it is an understood thing that strangers may walk round the same,—indeed, sometimes they are politely invited to do so. Some of the country houses, built on the top of Treserve, have their gardens and vineyards sloping down to the lake, and some of the most beautiful views of lake and mountain are obtained from the openings in the long arboured or trellised walks.

There is nothing very peculiar in the costume of the peasants, if I except the women's large mob-shaped cap of calico or finer material, the head-piece of which is stiffened and flattened out

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so as to hide the border, and look like an extra-sized muffin attached to the back of the head; and the striped petticoats, of every shade of pink or red, or of alternate yellow and brown stripes, which look very pretty and harmonious in the green landscape, or when half-a-dozen of their wearers are kneeling at their washing beside one of the many brooks about Aix, or at the smoking, boiling fountains in the town, cleaning their pots and pans.

I say little as regards the character and efficacy of the waters. There are hot and cold baths of every kind, douches, vapour, water, &c. The principal spring, I believe, resembles that at Harrogate, but the vast body of hot water is unequalled. A patient may, if so ordered, be shot at by at least six douches, each douche being equal to the stream from the hose of a fire-engine; and as regards the doucheurs and doucheuses, these are most skilful in rubbing the patients. Many, for a long succession of years, have been educated to the work from father to son, and from mother to daughter. The establishment of the baths, and their management and arrangement is admitted to be the most complete in Europe; and I think there is one rule which is advantageous, though some complain. No person is allowed to bathe without the certificate of one of ten doctors attached to the baths, and this has the advantage of preventing the improper use of the remedy, though it compels each person to fee one of the ten doctors; but as all but the Baron Despine charge only five francs as a fee, I think it is well spent. It is, however, supposed that this regulation is to be abolished. If I were to suggest an improvement, it would be to do away with the leaden pipes through which the water is conducted, which, as regards the patients who take the waters internally, may add to disease; and as regards the room for inhaling the steam of the hot waters, it would be another improvement if some provision for a cooling-room were made, so that the patient should not be sent forth into the long, cold, windy passages of the building. Although it is not important to discuss the particular merits and effects of the waters, I observe that by the tables 390 in 1,000 are rheu-

The Burial-place of the Kings of Savoy.

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matism and gout, and 169 diseases of the skin, these two heads including more than half of the ills which these baths endeavour to cure. In addition to the public baths which are paid for, there is an hospital for the poor, which was mainly endowed by an English gentleman residing at Lausanne, well known for his munificent charities. The hospital went by his name, till the recent visit of the Emperor, when the Mayor of the town, with over-much zeal, changed the name to that of the Emperor's mother, who was formerly a frequent visitor, and who had contributed a few pounds to the charity. If this was known to the Emperor, no doubt but that he would order the right name to be restored.

The town is in the season, as before stated, one large lodging-house or inn, the prices in most cases are fixed, and a very comfortable bed-room, breakfast, and dinner at a table d'hôte may be had for about 4*s.* a day, or even less; whereas three very good rooms on the first-floor, and the use of a saloon for dinner and breakfast, were only charged 12*s.* This includes the use of a garden, which is attached to most of the houses. In addition, for the "upper ten thousand" there is a magnificent hotel just opened; its extent almost rivals its giant brother the Louvre at Paris: it was said to be dear. There is a tariff for boats, carriages with one or two horses, and donkeys either by the day, half-day, or hour. Hitherto, as before stated, the place has not been much frequented by the English, though of course the railway, the two posts a day from England, and electric telegraph, coupled with the sanitary baths, the reasonable living, and the beautiful scenery and climate, not forgetting that there is now no custom-house, will soon greatly attract our countrymen; and it is to be hoped this will give the French a better opportunity of knowing us. It is wonderful what rubbish is taken for *fine writing*, and what notions even now the French have of the English people. In the fine volume before referred to, which I am told is nearly out of print, called "The Season at Aix," after a page of the wildest rhodomontade, describing "how, often at midnight, at this charming hour when the plaintive waters gently caress the solitary Grotto of Raphael, when the moon," &c., &c., we are further informed, "this is the hour when the young English girls abandon to the caresses of night their flowing tresses and drink tea, in which a tear of milk is dropped—this is the propitious hour for sweet reveries, and slices of bread-and-butter. They eat roast beef, and think on the mysterious Childe Harold, which every child of Albion knows by heart." Then comes the like about Romeo and Juliet, and supping at the Casino. I dare say that we do not understand the French, especially as regards their private society; but I don't think even the most rubbishing of our writers pen such stuff as this. The English who visit the baths are described as a collection of eccentric originals, members of the House of Lords, with seven or eight millions of rent-roll (thirty or forty thousand sterling) which they do not know how to get rid of,—country gentlemen (squires), retired nabobs, city bankers, *sportmen*, and tourists.

Beyond the scenery and climate there is plenty of amusement: there is a fine building used as a casino, with garden and large balcony, from which there is a near view of the range of mountains bordering the western side of the lake. There are endless balls and concerts, to which respectable persons find no difficulty in obtaining admission, and in the Avenue Marie there is a building, formerly a riding-school, which is occasionally devoted to dramatic performances. It is not intended, of course, to write a guide to Aix; one is found in every shop; but the beautiful excursions are endless. There is especially one picturesque waterfall made interesting by the melancholy fate of a lady of honour of Queen Hortense, who, in passing a plank, fell into the boiling whirlpool and was lost. A plain monument put up by the late Queen marks the spot.

The virtues of the waters were known to the Romans, and there are ancient baths and Roman buildings in the town, with the usual accompaniments of small bronzes, lamps, &c., enough to amuse the antiquary for two or three days.

In addition to the shorter excursions, there is the Grande Chartreuse within a day's journey: Annecy, Chamounix, and Geneva, and all the beautiful intermediate country, as well as the wilder valleys of Savoy, are well worth the trouble of visiting.

But the beauties of the lake, and the facility and cheapness of boating excursions, make this one of the popular amusements of Aix. One expedition is to the small town of Bourget at the head of the lake, which may be approached either by a beautiful carriage-road bordering the shore, or by a boat; here the bon-vivant eats matelotes of the lake fish, the reputation of which—the matelotes, not the fish—however, surpasses the reality, as in other matters of life is not seldom the case: but without reference to the matelotes, the scenery of the drive or the sail will well repay the excursionist, who cannot but be interested by the groups of simple fishermen in their rush cloaks.

The principal lake excursion, however, is to Haute Couche, founded in 1128 by one of the Counts of Savoy, and here is the principal burial-place of the House of Savoy. The chapel has been restored lately by the present family. I say nothing of the taste of the Gothic style employed, though it is much praised, nor of the very middling monuments lately erected or restored. As regards this Gothic building, what with twisted pillars, grotesque capitals, and overloaded coarse mouldings, it is as fine within as stone and gaudy coloured modern glass and "richly painted" ceilings in the worst style can make it; but from its situation and history it is interesting. What was done at the annexation? Did the King give up the graves of his ancestors to be the perpetual monuments of his having sold his birthright? or is there an *enclave*, and does the chapel still remain Savoy? There is something melancholy in the thought of its being otherwise. The love of the graves of one's ancestors is a deep-rooted feeling pervading the most savage and the most refined people alike.

The lake by all accounts is safe, but there is a

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narrative of some royal lady who was nearly lost in a storm, and more than once we saw from the shore the waves "curling their monstrous heads."

These beautiful waters, whose blue is unsurpassed, have inspired the muse of France. Lamartine has a poem, "Le Lac," which is said to be a description of its beauties, but if his novel of "Raphael," said to have been suggested by a cave on the lake, is not more interesting in prose than the "Lac" is in poetry, I suspect that the English reader will be disappointed.

To go from poetry to more material matters relating to the lake, those who love good eating will rejoice at finding at least thirty kinds of fish, several of which are excellent, and peculiar to Bourget. There are two or three kinds of trout, excellent large and small perch, different from the English kind: a small fresh-water sardine, nearly rivalling our whitebait: the omble (or "ombre") chevalier, of which it is said Sir H. Davy used to be so fond, that his life was endangered more than once from an excess arising from an overmeal of this fish: there is also the lavaret, said to be peculiar to this lake, very excellent, and, as Mr. Disraeli christened a whiting "the chicken of the sea," this may with equal justice be called the chicken of the lake. Henry the Third of France was so delighted with the lavaret, that he used to have them sent to him express to Paris. I myself know more than one gourmand who would think himself well repaid for the trouble of a journey to Aix, to be able to go through a course of the omble chevalier, the lavaret, the lake perch, and the fresh-water sardines.

While on the subject of eating, it may be well to mention that the Savoyards are good cooks, and in addition to the usual French dishes, their proximity to Italy has induced them to adopt some of the more popular dishes of northern Italy.

I have devoted some space to the important subject of fish, but I ought also to add, that the country abounds in all the usual kinds of game, as well as almost every variety of waterfowl, which are to be found in the lake and adjacent water-meadows. On referring to the different excursions which may be made, I find I have omitted one, the most important and most easily made, namely, that to Chambery, the capital of Savoy; the railway takes you there, along a charming road, in twenty-five minutes, for a few pence. You shop and see the fine old town and new streets, the castle, and chapel, where, by-the-bye, is some very beautiful 15th century stained glass, and are back at Aix with your purchases by half-past three, unless you are tempted to make further excursions in the country to either of the beautiful cascades, called severally that of the Bout du Monde and La Doria; or a pilgrimage to Les Charmettes, where lived Madame de Warrens, the mistress and lover of Rousseau. Who ever reads his account of this woman without horror and disgust, both as regards himself and her? Not denying his genius and the splendour of his language, who now has the courage and the patience to wade through his novels, or even to read his "Confessions," except in pity, as the picture of an eloquent madman? Surely our taste as well as our morals must have improved of late. Who now could receive much pleasure from Miss Burney's "Evelina?" and yet Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Windham, &c., were enchanted by it, and seemed unable to think of any other book for the season. I should mention that Rousseau is said to have described some of the scenery of the lake in his novel, and that his opinion of the Savoyards corresponds with my own. He more than once mentions their "*esprit riant*" and kind disposition, adding, that having wandered through different states, he had found no people better than the Savoyards, and that he wished above all things that he could pass the remainder of his days amongst them.

Besides the Savoyard organ-grinders, whom the London police are continually bidding to "move on," many of their brethren emigrate to Paris and other large towns and become chimney-sweepers, commissionaires, &c., sending home much of their hard earnings to their poorer families. In respectability as well as in other matters, they much resemble the travelling barometer-sellers from the Lake of Como and other parts of the North of Italy, and, like them, they return to their own country when they have gained a small competency.

Those who visit the Grande Chartreuse should extend their journey to the Val d'Isère and Grenoble; with Wickham and Cramer's book for a guide the track of Hannibal may be traced, and Grenoble will more than repay the journey. Perhaps not even Inspruck is so gloriously situated; and, as Dr. Clarke said, that at the latter town "the wolves wandering in the overhanging mountains looked down into the streets," so I felt, as I walked home from the opera at Grenoble one fine starry night, that more than one bear or wolf might be licking his lips at me from his lair.

As regards country and the excursions, I feel that I have said enough to tempt many to take the one long day's railway from Paris, and spend a month at Aix, giving up Battle Abbeys, Fairlight Glens, Lovers' Seats, and Devils' Dykes for what must be newer and more beautiful.

H. L. C.

CAMBRIDGE WRANGLERS.

THERE are newspaper devotees, who include the Mathematical Tripos in their January course, but no list of names has so little interest for the ruck of readers. Unless they "have a friend in," what is it to them that Cambridge is about to send another eleven dozen of *alumni* into the world with honours and white fur hoods? They may glance at the name of the happy senior wrangler, but they have borne no part in the common-room and wine-party discussions for months before, as to whether St. John's would again hold its own against Trinity, or a small-college man beat them both; and they have forgotten it, along with "The Wooden Spoons," before they are two paragraphs a head. What are cosines, differential co-efficients, and the frustum of a cone to them? Making their accounts square is the simple equation of their bosoms now. XXX has superseded that little familiar x of their school-boy days (of which

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a dutiful fox-hunting algebraist wrote home, that, after working it pretty well in the open, he ran it to ground under a root, and could never dig it out); and there remains but one practical "book-work" recollection, that a fluid differs essentially from a solid, in "the property it possesses of transmitting equally and in all directions the pressure applied to its surface."

Still to thousands of hearts,—not only amid

> The shady groves of Trinity,
> And the sunny slopes of King's,

but in old county houses, which have sent up an aspiring fellow-commoner bent on doing honour to the gold tassel of his order; and quiet clay farms, where the sizar has sat by the family ingle, and astonished his homespun relatives in the long vacation with stories of "Jemmy Wood of John's," and predictions that he himself may be in the first ten, and go out in the Classical Tripos as well;—that list is a treasured bede-roll. And well it may be, as none are more big with youthful destiny, or reflect so many crushed hopes and groundless misgivings. It is nothing to us that —— may have just missed being a wrangler; but he knows right bitterly, as he reads the irrevocable verdict of the four M.A.'s, that a little more steady work, and a little less flirtation or boating, when he was with his reading party in the last "long," would just have made the difference. The fellowship has proved a mere mirage; no pupils care to be "coached" by him now; and there is nothing for it but to go home as soon as he can get a cheque from his father, and look out for a little curacy, with all its untidy landlady and clothing-club joys. The mathematical tutor also groans, in his more sedate way, over a favourite pupil among the Senior Optimes, who has latterly deserted the paths of pure science for classics, and bids fair to turn out a mediocrity in both; and the classical one is as galled that his pet has not cut his way through a thicket of Junior Optimes, and earned a right to go in for the Chancellor's medals.

Such troubles are hard and common enough, but even the senior wrangler himself is often not one tithe as uplifted as his college dons or his gyp. It is a pleasant thought, that both the county papers will merge politics next week, and unite in speaking of "the distinguished honours which have been recently conferred by his *Alma Mater* on the son of our much respected townsman," &c.; and that the papers of the adjacent counties will quote the paragraph at length; but he knows, to his sorrow, that there is another week of labour before him. Four or five grim professors, one of them with his eternal "fly-wheels, driven by a piston acting on a crank," desire the pleasure of his company to be examined for the Smith prizes; and he may have not only a secret fear that the second wrangler, who is burning for a mathematical revenge, will beat him; but there is always some friendly recorder at his elbow to hint that the third, and even the fourth, are dangerous, and to quote unpleasant precedents from Atwood's day to prove it.

It is ninety years since that renowned tutor of Trinity astonished both Christ's and St. John's, after that fashion, for the "First Smith," in every sense of the phrase. The Senior Wranglership had become an institution in 1739, and "John Empson, *Cath.*," must, to use the language which once sorely puzzled an unacademic dame, have "stuck fast by Catherine Hall," or he would not have been the earliest chosen. Public Orators, Esquire Bedells, and Registrars combined, can give no clue to the missing lists of *Baccalaurei* up to 1747; and, in fact, the triposes between that year and 1753 were rather perplexing affairs, with Wranglers and Senior Optimes in one solid mass. As in the case of the timid Church dignitary, who was wont to take private riding exercise in a flowing blue cloak about his grounds, you never exactly saw where the dean left off and the donkey began. The men, however, soon began to tell their own tale, when they quitted the banks of the Cam, and fought their own way through the fluxions and curves of life. The earliest fifth wrangler we know of, Carr of Jesus, became Lord Archbishop of Dublin, while the first author on the list made his solitary bid for fame with "Pompey the Little." Classics gained their formal recognition in 1752 (some seventy years before Bishop Kaye persuaded the Senate to grant him a grace for a separate tripos); and the A. and B. to their names, mark how Bishop Porteus had then to bow to Maseres, Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. The love of mathematics knew no decay in the heart of that ancient Templar. At eighty-eight he still sat in his quaint wicker chair, meditating a complete new edition of the works of Euler; and, throwing back his long white locks, would unconsciously repeat, twice or thrice to each new visitor, the same wordy formula about his idol Newton, and "the luminous example of Huygens." Dr. Darwin, full of gentle botanic yearnings, and little dreaming how the satirist would descend on to him with "The Loves of the Triangles," joins the throng in a very modest position, but still with a future Lord Bishop of Peterborough behind him. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, and Paley, whom the Government of his day thought too strong-minded even for a deanery, start bravely on their course as second and senior wranglers; and then that honour-column twice claims a Lord Chief Justice, and a puisne judge as well.

One of them was young Law, the winner of a legal peerage, and the would-be dictator of verdicts in the ermine to many a sturdy City of London jury; and three years after him, Milner, the weaver's boy, leaves the Senate House, trembling and almost tearful, after his last paper, and yet with every rival hundreds of marks behind. "*Isaac, my lad, you're off,*" was the homely sentence, in which his elder brother told him that his sad apprenticeship at the loom, where he sat with his *Tacitus* by his side, was ended, and that he would have scope at last to grapple with whole libraries. Cambridge has never reared a healthier intellect. We see it whether he is putting the puzzled Board of Longitude to rights, or fathoming the show-room mysteries of "The Invisible Girl;" whether he is chatting with Mendoza, the learned professor of boxing on the Hull packet, or making physical science as pleasant as a fairy tale

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to a schoolboy; whether he is remonstrating in his study with young Master Macaulay, for passing such severe strictures on Luther; or causing the Cumbrians to crowd every nook and cranny of their cathedral, Sunday after Sunday, to listen to the muscular and yet persuasive Christianity which fell from their Dean's lips. But, anon, Malthus and Richard Porson become man-marks in the tripos; and, after "Joe Littledale's" seniority in 1787, quite a spring-tide of wrangler success sets in for the lawyers, with Lyndhurst, Tindal, and Wensleydale. Two bishops become seniors in turn; and then four judges, Pollock, Langdale, Alderson, and Maule, in five successive years win the same honour. Herschel, Peacock, and Fallows make up a brilliant first three; and the Duke of Devonshire, Airey, Whewell, Goulburn, and Adams earn their Commencement cheer as senior or second. Among the Optimes, we find Thirlwall, Praed, the three brothers Kennedy (all heads of the classical tripos), and Lord Lyttelton and Vaughan, the most famous bracket that Cambridge ever knew. Tennyson was quite content with his two Chancellor's Verse medals, and his poll degree; for Hallam's and Sir Alexander Cockburn's honours we have to look to the Civil Law Classes; and for Lord Macaulay's best achievement to the Craven Scholars' roll.

There is a strange tale that an Arabic Professor was invariably missing whenever a real live Arab was to visit the University, and conversation was expected; but far stranger things than that may be found among the legends of the tripos. Lovers of such lore can recount how one senior wrangler nearly cleared his papers; and how another, to make up for his lack of pace, began the stiffest papers at the stiffest end, and very nearly got beaten for his daring. How, again, the sixteenth wrangler in a bad year beat the senior and every one else in a paper of problems; and how a man, who might have easily been second, got so disgusted without reason at the whole thing, that he fled and hid himself for the last two days of the six, and was ninth wrangler after all. Great, too, are the achievements of 'cram,' administered by a judicious tutor, even at the eleventh hour. One smart fellow went in with barely a Senior Optime's knowledge, but he warmed as he went on, and his Mentor guessed nine pieces of book-work, which might be set, over night, with such weird-like sagacity, that he almost pushed his way into the wranglers. Another, whose chances of getting through at all were doubtful, got up, as a last desperate resource, Sturm's Theorem, and wrote it out so accurately from sheer memory, without the most earthly notion of what it meant, that he made, on the astonished examiner's own confession, at least ten places.

The list of the poll, in days when Denman considered the captaincy of it quite as great an honour as the head of the Classic Tripos, was merely handed over to a newspaper to print; and fearful was the fight of the future curates, squires, and lawyers to force their way up the passage to the little window, from which the editor at intervals doled out little scraps of information as to their fate. Still the rush of rushes in the academic year is when at nine o'clock on the last Friday in January, the Proctors' men fix up the Honour list, and throw back the Senate House portals. Town and Gown mingle quite harmoniously in that last fearful quarter of an hour, and so far forget their Fifth of November feuds, as to lay peaceful bets. Moderators and Examiners flit about, conscious of the great secret which they alone carry in their breasts, and fence smilingly with all leading questions. Men who are certain to get high honours do not think it delicate to linger in sight, but trust to some swift-footed friend to bring them the news, and wait for it in their rooms, or some handier trysting-place. Year after year, as they have counted the minutes from nine, and at last espied their messenger coming across the Quadrangle at only a sullen foot's-pace, they have had to make up their minds to prepare for adversity.

Anxious wives, too, are standing near with their husbands; for ancient men who have been in the army, or the Indies, often long for the church, and instead of going to St. Bees, cast in their lot here with younger and fresher rivals. There are gyps by the score on the edge of the crowd of gownsmen, who struggle like a surging sea towards the door, and at last, as St. Mary's clock is on the first stroke of nine, burst in with a crash and a cheer. In another second, the name of the senior wrangler is shouted by a hundred voices above the din, and there is soon a highly successful elimination among the gyps and gownsmen outside. Men are seen running on that day, who cannot raise a trot the entire year round, and woe betide the enthusiast with corns, who may have got near the pillar, and expects to get out again. B.A.'s and undergraduates all round him, jump up and down, reckless of the consequences, in their struggles to read the list, which excited undergraduates, almost breathless with the squeeze, endeavour hopelessly to gasp out. After the first half-hour, the systematic paper and pencil enthusiasts have matters pretty well to themselves. Wranglers steal quietly in to have the luxury of gazing on their own names; and, along with them, Senior and Junior Optimes, who did not expect to read much good of themselves, and wisely took a long country-walk to be out of the way.

Well may they ironically remark: "We'll hear all we want to know, quite soon enough."

One January there was a name among them, for which all the University seemed to look with a painful thrill. It was that of a man who had been found in the snow near Chesterton, two days after the examination had closed. There were rumours abroad that he had been murdered by gipsies, and years after, a crazy old crone muttered strange things about the dark mystery of that night, in Cambridge jail. The examiners felt that it was a solemn thing to be settling the intellectual standard of a man who was lying in his coffin, as they counted up his marks, and appointed him his place with the living. One senior wrangler also, of late years scarcely outlived the first flush of his honours; he, too, was found in a ditch, but dead from disease of the heart, and with the wild flowers he had been gathering, clasped in his hand.

H. X.

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THE MAZED FIDDLER.

I. THE VIOLIN.

"Stunning weeds," said the Tourist, who was a Londoner, and flippant in his speech.

"The cigars," rejoined the Village Schoolmaster, "are indeed of an excellent savour and fragrance; and methinks that if King James—a ripe scholar, Mr. Smith——"

Mr. Smith nodded; his notions of scholarship were hazy.

"—a ripe scholar, as became one who was the pupil of George Buchanan, and the friend of Isaac Casaubon,—could have sat with us here, in this little parlour,—could have looked out over yonder garden, and watched, as he did so, the long luxurious curls of smoke, he would, perchance, have somewhat mitigated the fury of his famous 'Counterblast.'"

Mr. Smith thought it likely, and then, with every demonstration of placid bliss, returned to the consumption of his cigar. He had come down for a stroll in North Devon, and the kindly, if somewhat formal old schoolmaster of Coombetown, happy enough to see a strange face, had quickly fraternised with him. Thus it befel that they sat together one July evening in the schoolmaster's parlour, and there, cigar in mouth, talked lazily as men who have much leisure on their hands. The day was very hot; but through the open window came the breath of many flowers; the little air that stole in was thick and sweet with summer, and from the street without came the voice of a young girl, crooning over some plaintive old west-country ballad. The conversation flagged, for the cigars were undeniably good. At last:

"What's that?" cried Smith, starting up.

"Wait and listen," answered his friend.

It was only the sound of a violin in the next house; and Smith, who was a practised musician, trembled lest he should hear some eccentric jig, such as country fiddlers alone can perpetrate or even imagine. He was wrong. In five minutes a look of wonder was in his face; in ten, he cried, "the fellow has genius!" There was an immense pathos in the music; the divine instrument (the instruments own the organ for their king, but they claim the violin for their poet) seemed telling some strange tale, of love ineffable and of infinite sorrow; now, it would seem to sink into a wail of utter desolate weariness, and anon there was a wild exultation,—rapid, passionate, vibrant, in every tone. Of mere technical skill, the player had evidently abundance; but then, besides this, there was a soul in his playing—there was passion, poetry. Silently the two men sat, listening with reverence to the wonder-worker; at last the music grew confused, even harsh, as if the player had sought to go beyond the limits of possible expression, and had found some strange harmony in what, to ears less finely attuned or to hearts less hotly excited, seemed utter discord. Then he ceased, and our friends looked gravely at each other.

"You are astonished to hear such music in a little fishing-hamlet?"

Said the Londoner: "If that man comes to town he will make a fortune in a year. I have heard Paganini; he played, they said, like a man who had sold himself to the devil. Why, this man plays as a devil might to whom Paganini had sold himself! Who taught him?"

"Two masters," said the schoolmaster, with a half-frown at the Londoner's rather irreverent words, "two masters—Love and Vanity—and the latter, I fear me, was the stronger of the two. The man is mad—'mazed' as we call it here. His is a painful story. Will you hear it?"

The Londoner, really interested, gave a rapid *yes*, and his friend began.

II. THE SCHOOLMASTER'S STORY.

"I came to this place a man of thirty, and I am sixty now. It suits me well enough. I was never fitted to struggle in the great cities; and here I know every one. My work is simple; its reward is sufficient for my few wants, and I know that the children love me. There is much comfort in that, sir, for one who has never been a father. Well, when I came here, the prettiest girl for many a mile round was Mary Lee. You have seen our North Devon girls—dark eyes, dark hair, and ready speech? Mary had all this, and she had more; she had the bearing of a born lady, so that, though our folks are plain and rough, no one ever dreamt of uttering a coarse jest before Mary Lee. Her father, a small farmer, had left her tolerably well to do; and the old maiden aunt, with whom she lived, had been to her a very mother. You will suppose that she had many lovers. In a manner, she had; every lad in Coombetown felt a kind of pride in her; but she was 'grand-like,'—there was something about her which rather awed than invited them, and only John Hamlyn had any reason to hope for her hand. He lives next door still—a plain old sailor now, but in years gone by, as fine and daring a fellow as breathed along the coast. Like Mary, he was sufficiently rich; that is, his father had owned two or three small coasters (people *did* talk of his smuggling, but that is no affair of mine) and, dying, left them to his only son. Mary and he had grown up side by side, and always there was a quiet kind of affection between them. There was more than that, one wild winter morning when John was brought speechless and bleeding into the village, and Mary heard how, in the tempest of the night before, he had manned a boat, pushed off to a large brig that had struck upon the Tangle Rock in the offing, and saved the lives of some of her crew at the imminent peril of his own. A spar had struck him during his work, and there was a great ghastly wound in his head. Dr. Woodbury—the old gentleman whom you saw to-day upon his little chestnut mare—met the men, as they silently brought John Hamlyn up the steep path from the pier, and saw him carried to his house; and Mary, going home, knelt down beside her bed, burst into wild tears, then into prayers as wild, and felt, for the first time, as if she really loved the great strong sailor. He recovered slowly;—some traces of the wound indeed remained, but he could have had, I think, no scars more glorious, and ere long he hoped to bring Mary home as his wife."

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"And this brave fellow is the one who was playing?"

"Pray let me go on. No, he is not. Genius he never had; only the courage of a lion and the affectionate gentleness of a child. Poor Mary! It had been well had these sufficed her, and so for a time they did; but, unfortunately for her, unfortunately for John, there was a lad in the village *who had* genius, and, alas! who knew it. Willy Basset was but a poor young fisherman—not a strong one, not even a brave one; but one of singular parts. If I was too partial to him, and if my praises helped to turn his head and fill him with the demon of vanity, may God forgive me. I did all for the best. Suffice it, sir that whatever time he could steal from the drudgery of his daily life, was given partly to the books I lent him, and partly to practising upon an old violin which had belonged to his father, the village fiddler.

"John Hamlyn passed the cottage where he lived one day, and heard him playing. 'Willy Basset, lad,' cried the big curly-haired John, 'it seems to me you might spend your time better than in fiddling, with your poor old mother bed-ridden at home. There's the herring-hawks off the bay, man, and the shoal will be round the head before you finish Bobbing Joan. Out to the boats, Willy.'

Willy looked up, and was about to answer angrily; but John looked alarmingly big. Said Willy: 'It is very generous of you, John Hamlyn, to talk of my mother's poverty. You are richer than we, I know; but you need not remind us of it!' These were mean, false, cowardly words of his; but John—placable John—felt as if he had spoken too roughly, and held out his hand. Willy refused it, and turned away. From that hour, as I fear, he often thought how he could best injure the strong prosperous fellow who had reminded him of his duty.

"You have noticed that we are a musical race down here. Mary Lee had this passion almost to excess, and sang with singular sweetness. One evening, at my house, she had been singing some of her quaint old songs, when Willy Basset came up to return some of my books. He sat down, and I asked him to play a tune or two, as he often would when he came to see me. As yet he was but a poor player, though already he gave some faint promise of that wondrous skill to which he afterwards attained. This night, whatever was his inspiration—and Mary Lee's dark eyes had surely much to do with it—he played as he never had before, with quite new passion and energy. This was indeed the first time on which I ever heard him improvise. Hitherto he had simply played the

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ordinary country tunes; to-night, he struck boldly away from them, trusted to his own heart, and succeeded. Have I said that he was not handsome? At ordinary times he was not; but *now*, as his eyes lighted up with the excitement of his music, there was a wild beauty about them which, to a romantic girl, would have far more charm than ordinary comeliness. When he ended, I asked Mary to sing—and behold, Mary was crying.

"It is the old story. What was John Hamlyn, plain and bluff, to this Willy Basset, so gifted and so passionate? Mary asked herself this question too often for her first love to last. It died out. John saw the change, but would not believe it. A year passed by. Willy Basset's bed-ridden mother died—proud of her son, and loving him wildly to the last. The poor soul cried out, as she lay dying, in her wretched cottage, on a rough December day, 'He will be the pride of the county yet, my Willy—a wonderful boy, sirs! a wonderful boy!' But the neighbours said that little good would ever come of one who had been fiddling to please himself when he should have been fishing to help his mother; and I could not but feel that what they said was true.

"And now, sir, came a time which, to Mary, I think, was one of the purest happiness; but which brought pleasure less pure to Willy Basset, and absolute torture to the brave John. Willy—let me not be unjust to him—was thoroughly sincere in all his professions of love; but there mingled with them always, I fear, a base sense of triumph over his richer, stronger, handsomer, manlier rival. And as for John, though the poor fellow blundered about in his big, uncouth, righteous way, still sang at his work, and never left a duty undone, yet was he as assuredly smitten with a deep and terrible grief as if he had testified thereto by jumping over the cliffs—which often he was very much inclined to do—for, struggle against the conviction as he might, he could not but see that Mary Lee, though she had ever a kindly word and a bright smile for him, no more intended to *marry* him than she intended, say, to marry *me!* Thus went down all the poor fellow's card-castles, shattered by a fiddle-stick. He was not imaginative, this big John; but, smoking his honest pipe of evenings in the sanded kitchen of his old homestead, he had had his little visions of happiness and ease, the central figure in every such vision being that of Mary Lee. Well, *that* was over now. I don't pity him the less because he could not write a sonnet about his 'blighted hopes.'

"In the April after his mother's death, Willy Basset, with his violin and with ten pounds in his pocket—my savings were very small, and I could give him no more—sailed away in a ship that was bound to Naples. He went as a common sailor; but I knew that what he chiefly wanted was to reach some land where he might obtain really good musical teaching; and, for my own part, I encouraged him in this scheme, wild as it might appear. An old friend of my own lived at Naples, and I recommended Willy to him as a youth of rare and brilliant promise. For, whether it was through his love for Mary Lee, or whether it was through a mere ambitious desire to show his kinsfolk and his townsfolk that, if he *was* a humble fisherman, he was yet something superior to *that*, certain it is that his genius had taken a rapid and sudden start, and that he would oftentimes play with really wonderful expression and power. Ere he went, Mary Lee, with little urging, had promised that if in a few years he came back in a position to maintain a wife she would be his.

"I remember well the morning on which his vessel sailed—a drizzly uncertain April day, with now and then some faint and fitful gleams of sunshine over the sea. His friends, Mary amongst them, stood upon the pier-head as the ship went slowly away to the west. Soon they could no longer see the waving of his red fisherman's cap; the vessel went on, growing fainter and fainter to the sight; a cold cheerless rain began to fall; at last the ship could be seen no more, and Mary Lee, as the Good Endeavour went fairly out of sight, sank back fainting in John Hamlyn's arms. He was not far from fainting himself, I think, the big brave man, as he led her home; and if I found some tears in my own eyes that day, I do not think I was the worse for them.

"Letters came from Willy in due time—hopeful, eloquent letters. My friend at Naples was very kind to him; procured him a master; and, at last, plain Willy Basset, ex-fisher-boy, had a seat in the orchestra of an Italian opera. Mary was proud enough of this, be sure; but when three years passed by, and he still said nothing of returning, she became uneasy. His letters grew less frequent. 'He has found new friends,' thought she, 'and forgets old Coombetown folk.' Indeed, indeed, sir, if *she* was sorely tried, yet was he as sorely tempted! I learnt afterwards that he had progressed in his art with startling rapidity; at last he became a celebrity; and you know, doubtless far better than I, to what seductions an artist is exposed in the south.

"Six years after his departure there came a letter from him which made Mary's face flush and glow again. He was coming home—successful, famous, rich. Home to his little Mary, 'whom he loved better than any signora of them all.' Home to his 'dear old friend,' naming me with words far more flattering than I liked. Home to old Coombetown, 'where, perhaps, he would be rather more valued than formerly.' And so on: a vain, egotistical letter, as I see now, but which made Mary's heart as light as a bird's. She had waited long, waited faithfully, but she had not waited in vain, it seemed. Was she not right in her choice?

"John Hamlyn? John Hamlyn was doing very well in the coasting-trade between Coombetown and Bristol.

"Willy Basset? He was a famous artist—and she would be an artist's wife.

"The artist reached home. He landed at Bristol, where he lodged almost all his money with a well-known banker, and thence posted on to the little Devonshire village with what speed he might. You will pardon me if I do not attempt to describe his meeting with Mary Lee. I could tell you of its gladness, of its vehement passion, but even as I speak the sad memory is with me of all those trials, all those afflictions, which so

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speedily followed this hour of intense delight. I found him changed—not altogether for the better. His face, though he came from the south, was very pale; his eyes, brilliant as ever, had now a light in them which was not that of cheerfulness and health; and in his whole bearing there was somewhat of ostentation, somewhat of affectation, which it pained me bitterly to see. Despite all this, he could be very fascinating when he chose, and the faults which I, a grave bookman, saw, were doubtless invisible to the girl who loved. John Hamlyn indeed conceived an utter loathing for him; but John had very strong provocation; for Willy now took it into his head to be *jealous* of John—jealous of the man whose life-happiness he had ruined! and gradually John's relations with Mary Lee grew to be formal and constrained. It was hard for John to keep quiet under this: but Love, if it had worked wonderfully upon the artist, if it had fired and kindled him into genius, had tried John Hamlyn also in its magic crucible, and found him utterly pure; so that, rather than cause one tear, one shadow of anxiety to Mary Lee, he would even—keep away from her! He was very seldom at her house now, and Willy made his visits exceedingly trying to him. The time fixed for the marriage was now close at hand.

"John Hamlyn, returning from a coasting-voyage to Bristol, went home, smoked a huge pipe in the kitchen, and then, contrary to his wont, walked up to visit Mary Lee. He saw Willy, from a distance, leave the house, so he knew that Mary would be alone. The same evening Willy called to see me. He seemed overflowing with happiness; all the better part of him—and, believe me, sir, he had much that was very loveable!—shone out. And, oh, how he played! You have heard him to-night, and you know his genius; but *then*, his heart was so full of joy, the future stretched before him so bright and so gay in its every aspect, that his music was as the warbling of an angel rejoicing over the beauty of the earth. He left me at last; but, excited by the conversation and the music, he could not go home to sleep. He walked on towards Mary's house, to wander round it, to dream about it, as lovers will. As he approached, he saw a light in her window, though it was strangely late—and there was the shadow of a man upon the curtain! It stung him, this shadow, like a snake. With a cold biting jealousy at his heart, he crept into the darkness of the hedge and waited.

"Presently he heard the door open, and then a voice which he knew to be John Hamlyn's, said: 'but she had been crying, he could tell that.' John's big form came out into the light. He walked slowly, silently, up the hill. Silently, slowly, the artist followed him. God forgive the poor man if he meant to use a knife—I know he carried one; but, on the brow of the hill, John, turning, saw that he was followed, and marched back upon his follower. Even in the faint starlight, he recognised Willy by his wide foreign cloak, and said, with a strange grave earnestness in his voice:—

"'I have bad news for you, Basset: I would rather you learnt them from some one who is less hateful to you than I am—*why*, I cannot tell—I never wronged you in any way.'

"'Never tampered, I suppose, with my intended wife? Never tried to lure her away from me? Never came to her like a thief in the night? Never "pitied the poor fiddler," as one would pity a maimed cur?'

"'You are very hot about it, Basset—but you shall know all to-morrow morning.'

"'I insist, sir, upon knowing all to-night—to-morrow you may be busy, discharging your bales at the pier-head!'

"John felt the insult: but still, very stubbornly, very nobly, held down the passion that was rising in him. Willy—for rage had blinded him—mistook this silence for timidity, and went on, rapidly, tauntingly, till at length John answered:—

"'I went up to Mary Lee to-night, if you *will* have it, to tell her that Johnson, the Bristol banker, has absconded, and that you are a beggar!'

"With a hoarse shriek, Basset leapt upon him, and struck him in the face. And then, the suppressed rage of years concentrated into one single blow, John lifted his huge arm and beat him down. It was a terrible blow: the passionate artist lay stretched like a dead log upon the ground—senseless. Suddenly the moon shone out large and full. The light fell through the thick hedgerow trees, right upon Basset's face. John knelt down, and saw that it was bloody—bloody. He groaned with shame, the big John, that he should have struck one so frail; but, at last, Basset's eyes slowly opened, and John still knelt by his side, weeping like a babe.

"What made him leap up, and then stagger back, as if a knife had struck him to the heart? This: as he knelt by the artist, and watched him return to consciousness, he expected to hear a curse from his lips: he heard, instead, a low, feeble, chuckling *laugh*. It was the laugh of an idiot. Willy Basset was insane.

"Three months afterwards, I followed Mary Lee to her grave; and when the clamour and the noise of the affair had died away, John Hamlyn took the mad artist to his home, and has supported him ever since.

"Willy Basset has lost all recollection of that terrible night. He wanders about, harmlessly, quietly: the villagers, who call him 'the Mazed Fiddler,' never molest him; and at times he will take his violin and play so sweetly and so well, that the few strangers who visit Coombetown will hardly believe me when I tell them he is mad."

III. WHAT FOLLOWED.

HOWEVER feebly the old schoolmaster had told his tale, there had been something in it which had riveted the attention of his listener. The two men sat for a while silently, smoking and thinking. At last, as the evening closed in, the schoolmaster was rising to light his lamp, when he heard a tap at his door. In another minute John Hamlyn entered.

The Londoner gazed at him with interest. There was nothing romantic or picturesque in his appearance. He was simply a big sea-captain, with prematurely grey hair, and mild eyes: for

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the rest, he wore a rough pilot's jacket, and smelt strongly of Cavendish tobacco. He said quietly:

"I have been down to the pier, sir; the Sarah Jane has just come in: and now I find that poor Basset has left the house. I am going to look for him. Would you like to come with me, sir? There's a wildish look about the sky to-night, and I should be loth to have him caught in the storm that is rolling up."

"I suppose we shall find him in the churchyard?" said the schoolmaster.

"Most like, most like, sir. I always notice that on nights like this, he steals away there. Poor fellow! it can't be helped *now*. But I would rather lose my right hand than use it as I did one night!"

The schoolmaster sighed; and, after a few words with the Londoner, all three set out together for the churchyard.

John Hamlyn had been right enough when he said that a storm was coming. The day, as I have hinted, had been one of intense heat, and now there was not a breath of air stirring. As they walked on, they felt oppressed by the close,

(See page 157.)

sultry deadness of the night. Their road lay up-hill, through a thick deep lane, such as every Devonshire tourist knows; and ere long the utter silence of the place grew almost terrible. Not a leaf moved above them; and when, after half an hour's walk, they reached an open space from which the sea was visible, they were still more struck with the gloomy look it wore. A dull, heavy, leaden look—now and then there was a little white flash below them, when a larger wave than usual rolled slowly in and broke upon the rocks—but there was no *life* in the sea, so to speak.

As they paused at the little churchyard gate, they heard the sound of the violin. Willy Basset, standing by the grave of Mary Lee, was playing such a requiem as never yet musician has expressed in notes—a requiem of such depth of lamentation, such bitterness of regret, such vehemence of self-accusation, yet such overwhelming love and tenderness withal, that the three men almost wept as they listened, and not another sound was heard save the magical tones with which the Mazed Fiddler mourned over his dead love. They did not dare to interrupt him; but at length the music ceased; he walked towards them, stagger-

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ing like a drunken man; and then, as he reached the gate, sank heavily, fainting, on the ground! At that instant there was a peal of thunder in the east, which rolled on, crashing and reverberating as it rolled, till it seemed to break right above their heads; then for a minute utter silence; and then a blinding sheet of rain fell suddenly upon them. They lifted the Mazed Fiddler from the earth; John Hamlyn, flinging off his rough jacket, wrapped Willy in it as a shelter from the rain; and they turned homewards. The rain still fell, but far away towards the horizon vivid flashes of lightning leapt over the sea like swords.

"Make haste, for the love of God!" cried John, striding along with his burden as one who carried nought: "make haste! he is wet to the skin already—it will be the death of him!"

They brought him home, and laid him gently in his bed. The Londoner ran off for Dr. Woodbury, but the good doctor was ten miles off, tending a sick woman; and when Smith returned, the artist was raving in his delirium. He said not a word now of Mary, not a word of John Hamlyn, his thoughts were away in the south.

"A poor fisher-boy, Signora!—Money, money, always money! can I coin it?—On the Red, then —I back the Red! For the eighth, ninth, tenth time, *Red!* Red it is!" he screamed, half starting out of his bed. "Do you believe in my fortune, now?—In notes, in notes! I have no lackey to carry my gold for me—an artist, nothing more!"

Through the whole weary night, while the rain fell in torrents without, the three men watched beside him; but as it drew on towards morning, and the storm slowly and sullenly abated, he became much calmer. He slept for an hour or two, and at daybreak turned to the old schoolmaster, with a peculiar smile upon his face:

"You will give me my violin?" There were several in the room, his friend handed him the nearest. "Not *that*, not *that!* I played that at the San Carlo, when la Catarina sang so grandly: give me the old one—the one I had when a boy." He took it from the schoolmaster's hand, and looked at it lovingly. Just then the morning light came full into the room, flooding it with its lustre. "I played it often enough, sir, down among the rocks, when there were none to hear me but the merry sea-gulls. Ah! the beautiful light! The birds will be singing after the storm, and the lambs will be running in the meadows over the fresh wet grass. I loved to see them once, but I fear me, I fear me, that I'll never move from this bed till they carry me away to the grey old churchyard yonder, close by the dear old sea. And, well, I have had troubles enough, God knows! and I'm weary, weary, and I shall rest by her side at last!"

Was he mad now? He spoke softly, but there was a *raised* look in his eyes, and at times a cold, nervous trembling went right over him.

"Let him have his way, sir," whispered John Hamlyn: "it is nearly over."

The artist played a few feeble notes upon his old violin, and smiled sadly as he preluded with a bar or two of a simple country air. *Crack!*

It was but the snapping of a fiddle-string; but as it snapped his heart broke too. Another hour had passed away. The artist, with his lean, long hand still upon the instrument, had fallen back upon his pillow: and big John Hamlyn, kneeling by the bed, and shaking terribly with the great strong sobs that seemed to be choking him, suddenly cried out, "Lead us not into temptation, lead us not into temptation! but, oh Lord, deliver us from evil!"

W. J. PROWSE.

THE WATER STOPPAGE.

HUMAN beings in the aggregate have, in some things, a strong resemblance to sheep. If a flock of sheep be driven along a narrow passage, and a stick be placed across it to impede the way, the leading sheep will leap over it, and all the following sheep will continue to leap at the same spot, even though the stick be taken away, and the necessity for leaping ceases. It is the sheep's mode of showing respect for the principle of "red tape," which seems to be a kind of universal fungus overlaying all nature, when not carefully rooted out like "quoitch grass."

In all countries where winter's frost exists, and where water is supplied to houses artificially by pipes—save perhaps in Iceland, where the Geysers supply water with the chill off—it has been from time immemorial the rule to have pipes burst and flood houses in winter. The proximate cause of this is still water—that is, water, not flowing—left in the pipes. In New York, the Croton River is made to flow over the city at the summit-level, and so gravitate downwards through pipes from top to bottom of the houses,—by dint of constant observation, it is probable that the Croton water company arrived at the fact that running water generally does not freeze, so as soon as winter sets in they send forth a recommendation to their customers to keep their taps constantly running. Those who follow their recommendations are freed from all difficulty, save that of the bubbling crystal, which, though suggestive of pleasant associations in summer, becomes mere noise suggestive of shivering in winter, and so the thoughtless-minded, with a *morale* on the level of that of Red Indians, preferring present pleasure to future comfort, stop their taps and burst their pipes.

But in London and other English cities "water is water," and it would be a very difficult thing to get the water companies to issue a circular to their customers recommending them to run the water off in waste, simply to save cost and annoyance to those customers at the company's expense. So for the natural means of stopping freezing by keeping up a current, we must apply some simple artificial means. But let us begin at the beginning. Why do the pipes burst?

Simply in conformity with a law of nature whereby water frozen occupies a larger bulk than water in the state of liquid, and if confined in the liquid state and then frozen, it will burst the vessel which contains it. It is this process that bursts rocks, and breaks down mountains, and pulverises the clay soil of the farmer, and bursts metallic pipes. Take an Enfield rifle barrel, stop up the

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vent or touch-hole, place it vertically, and fill it with water on a frosty night. As the water freezes it will flow over at the top and cover the outside with ice, and the barrel will remain uninjured. But if, after filling with water, a metallic plug be screwed fast into the muzzle, the result will be that the barrel will burst, and most probably along the curve of the grooves or thinnest section. If an old "Brown Bess" be treated in the same mode, it also will burst, and probably along the course of the weld or junction, commonly the weakest part.

The cause of bursting is, that the water is confined and has no room for expansion. If the lead pipes commonly used for water be made of pure soft lead they may possibly stretch and yield to the expansion without bursting, but if there be an ordinary solder joint made of brittle metal, there probably the burst will take place.

Time was, when water was more plentiful, or the consumers fewer in number, that it was allowed to run to waste. But a self-acting arrangement was invented to save the water when the cistern was full, gradually closing the supply pipe, thus ensuring its being left full of water for the frost to act on and burst it. Probably "ball-cocks" have done more to burst pipes than any other arrangement connected with artificial water supply. Shrewd people tie up their "ball-cocks" during the frost, and let the water overflow by the waste pipe till it is turned off; and, supposing the "ball-cock" to be the lowest point of the supply pipe, this arrangement is effective, but it sometimes happens that the pipe bellies down lower than the "ball-cock" and remains full of water, in which case bursting may take place notwithstanding.

The freezing of the water in the pipe can, of course, only take place when it is exposed to cold air or is laid too near the surface. Haybanding and other contrivances are resorted to with more or less effect; but an effective, permanent, and self-acting plan is needed. Several modes might be adopted, but in all cases the objectionable plan of building the pipes into walls, so as to be inaccessible, should be avoided. One method would be to enclose the supply or service pipe in a wooden box, or trough, six or eight inches in diameter, and pack it round with ashes, or a cast-iron pipe in halves might be used. And there might be left a mere open space round the pipe with access to warm air from the kitchen range. But this supposes relaying *ab initio*. In the mass of cases the question is, how to apply a remedy to existing practice? In houses where gas is burned this may be accomplished by attaching a small copper cistern at the lowest point of the supply pipe, and keeping a gas-jet burning in contact with it during the duration of the frost, the pipe being duplicated for a yard or two in length in a rising loop, to keep up a circulation, in which case freezing cannot take place. Where gas is not laid on, an iron tube may be connected with the supply pipe, with a closed end placed in the kitchen boiler, which may be shut off when frost does not exist.

When all is done that can be done to prevent the bursting of the pipes, there will still be an element left to deal with of an uncertain kind—thoughtless people who will forget to light the gas-jet, or to open the communication with the boiler, till put in mind of it by the stoppage of the water supply, when the evil is done. The pipes burst during the freezing action, but only become apparent in flooding the house when the thaw comes.

Upon the whole, it would be for the interest of the companies to provide that the supply pipes from the main to the cistern should be kept at the proper temperature, and thus preclude the results of carelessness. A hollow watertight space round the supply pipe, communicating with the warm air of the kitchen, would need no care on the part of the tenant. The cost of repairing and drying one drenched house would more than pay for such an appliance. And we only heal the apparent evil, not the remote one. I knew an instance of a house being flooded with water in the process of conveying engine-hose through it to put out a neighbouring fire, and the result was, that four months afterwards the whole family were attacked by ague as effectually as though they had lived in an American swamp.

W. Bridges Adams.

OUR MODERN MERCURY.

It is often the case that the history of a single firm, is the history of a great social revolution in a country of rapid development, such as Great Britain. What ages seem to separate us from the time, little more than a quarter of a century ago, when it took two days to convey any important item of intelligence between London and Liverpool. Then the "Times" in the north was fresh two days after date! In those days, say thirty-five years ago, all newspapers sent into the country passed through the Post-Office. The clerks at country post-offices received subscriptions for them, and transmitted their orders to the heads of the divisions at St. Martin-le-Grand, with whom they corresponded; these again employed a Mr. Newcombe to procure the papers for them. This process interposed an unnatural delay, inasmuch as the papers never left but by the night mail, and matters of the utmost importance to the mercantile community often were delayed a full day later than were passengers themselves. Just before the establishment of railways, it will be remembered, the speed of coaches was greatly augmented. The journey to Birmingham of 110 miles was regularly accomplished in ten hours, and the coach that left the Saracen's Head at eight A. M., stood before the doors of the Hen and Chickens, in the great toy-shop, with reeking horses, at six in the afternoon. It struck Mr. Smith, the father of the present head of the extensive firm near St. Clement's Danes Church, that instead of waiting for the night mail, the morning papers might be despatched by the quick morning coaches, thus enabling the community at Birmingham to read the London morning news, and the great cities of Liverpool, Manchester, and other neighbouring towns to get the papers on the first instead of the second morning after publication. This was a simple idea, and destined to be of immense importance

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to the community, and one would have thought that its advantages would speedily have been taken advantage of. The experiment, however, was only another example of the length of time it takes to make the public leave their old ruts, but of the ultimate triumph of all good ideas if sufficiently persevered in. Mr. Smith laboured long and earnestly in this new direction before it began to tell. As the morning papers in those days made no editions expressly for early trains, it often happened that the coaches started before they were out—this was Mr. Smith's first difficulty, which he overcame by establishing express carts to overtake them. On great occasions these express carts went the whole journey at a very heavy expense; but the prize was commensurate—the conveyance of important news before any other medium of communication. Thus Smith's express carried the news to Dublin of the death of George IV., before the government messenger arrived. Again, during the excitement of the Reform Bill, the craving for early intelligence made Smith's expresses famous throughout the north. Even at the latest period of the coaching time, however, one man, who is still in the establishment, was able to carry all the papers to the coaches under his arm, and now six tons of the "Times" newspaper, alone, are despatched every day by the early trains; and the preparation of packing and folding carried on in the great room in the Strand is one of the most remarkable sights in London. The best day to witness this operation is on Saturday morning, between 4 and 6 A.M. The packing room of the establishment is a large square hall open to the roof, and surrounded by two galleries, rising one above the other. A single cluster of gas-lights in the centre of the domed skylight is sufficient to make this immense apartment during the dark evenings of winter as light as day.

As soon as the steam presses of the morning papers have thrown off the first copies, the red express carts of the establishment are at their doors ready to convey them to the office, and the clock has scarcely struck half-past four before the porters are seen staggering under huge piles of quires of broadsheets still wet from the press. These early copies do not go to the Post Office at all, but are sent direct to agents in the great provincial cities. It is a race with time to get them off—a race, however, which is always won. One of the farthest stations from Messrs. Smiths' office is the Great Western, which cannot be less than three and a quarter miles away. Nevertheless, the light express carts tear along the vacant streets at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, and rarely take more than fifteen minutes in performing the journey. The early copies despatched, the process of folding and directing the single copies to be transmitted through the post commences. The galleries, and the tables in the centre of the hall, are alive with young lads folding and putting on the address covers for their very lives. The urgency is too great to permit of running up and down stairs, and therefore the strong arm comes into play. "Look alive there and get these 'Times' done," and a quire of papers pitches just like a shell in the midst of a group of boys. In a minute they are folded, wrapped, pasted, and have descended through a trap into a sack ready for transference to the cart. The superintendent, like nature, hates a vacuum, and no sooner is another group of lads idle, than a fresh shower of "Telegraphs" fly at their heads, with injunctions to get them off in three minutes. Sometimes there is a regular bombardment of the galleries with solid quires, which is returned by a descending musketry of folded papers.

The human hand folds well enough for ordinary papers where extreme nicety is not required; but the "Illustrated News," which must be folded with the regularity of book-work, and with the speed of lightning, has a special machine constructed to accomplish this purpose. Those who remember De La Rue's envelope-folding apparatus in the Great Exhibition will have a tolerably good idea of the neatness, speed, and exactness with which iron fingers fold this favourite paper for the British breakfast-table. The penny morning papers are beginning to monopolise the public market; and the thousands which daily leave Messrs. Smiths' for the country is a proof that hundreds of thousands in the provinces now see a daily paper who never enjoyed that luxury before. As the "Telegraph," "Star," and "Standard" have thus spread themselves over the country, all the high-priced daily papers, with the exception of the "Times" only, have lost a considerable part of their circulation, and must eventually come down to the standard penny, if they would avoid destruction. Whilst we note this revolution among the daily papers, it is equally clear that the old slovenly scissors and paste weekly journal is going to the wall. People, as soon as they grow accustomed to see a cheap morning paper, will not tolerate a mere stale jumble of the week's news patched together without method or originality. Hence many of the old sixpenny weeklies are rapidly passing into a moribund condition, and a higher class of journals, such as the "Saturday Review," and the "London Review," which aim at giving a selection of original essays, and at passing in review the events of the week, rather than of giving old news, is coming into favour. The old high-priced provincial papers are also rapidly becoming extinct, and in the great cities of the north are being displaced by penny morning papers, written with a vigour certainly not inferior to that which distinguishes the metropolitan cheap press. And we cannot but pause here to pay our tribute of admiration to the spirit and ability with which the cheap press throughout the country is conducted. The sneer heretofore urged against the "cheap and nasty press" now falls harmless, and there can be no reasonable doubt that they will assume and exercise a very considerable influence, as an educational power, among the middle and lower orders of the population.

It is impossible to calculate the fruits which spring indirectly from any new discovery. Who would have imagined that the introduction of railways would be a powerful and direct means of increasing a thousand-fold the influence of the Belles Lettres, and of scattering throughout the country the literary treasures that find their birth as a natural consequence in great capitals? The institution of

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ailway libraries by Messrs. Smith is, we think, ne of the most remarkable features of the present ay. On the first establishment of railways, the orters were allowed to keep bookstalls for their own molument. Low class intellects of course could nly appreciate low class literature, consequently hese stalls at last became mere disseminators f literary trash and rubbish, and were quite a uisance. It was evident that the note of public aste had been struck a whole octave too low. At this juncture the stalls of nearly all the railway stations fell into the hands of Mr. W. H. Smith; and a book for the journey speedily became s great a necessity as a railway rug or cap. Our eaders must have observed that a certain class f literature was called into existence to fill that ew want. The shilling serials of Routledge were he true offspring of the railway libraries. Even heir highly embellished covers were of the rapid chool of design, calculated to ensnare the eye of he passing traveller. It cannot be denied that his new style of literature had its evil as well as ts good side, and had a tendency to deteriorate ur current literature with a certain slang and ast element which boded anything but good or the future. It was speedily discovered that igher priced books, such as are published by Messrs. Murray and Longman, seldom found a ale at these stalls, and the circulating population vould feed on no literary food but that which vas of an exciting stimulating character. In this ountry, however, things have a tendency to work traight, and it occurred to Mr. W. H. Smith that very bookstall could be turned into a circulating ibrary, fed by the central depôt in London. Listen to this, young ladies in remote villages, aten out by ennui, and pining to read the last ew novel! Imagine one of the largest booksellers n the metropolis proposing to pour without stint ll the resources of his establishment into your emote Stoke Pogis, and you will find this unheard-f proposition is now an actual and accomplished act. At the present moment, almost every railway n Great Britain and Ireland, with the exception of he Great Western, is in literary possession of Mr. V. H. Smith. At two hundred stations, metroolitan, suburban, and provincial, a great ciruating library is opened, which can comnand the whole resources of an unlimited suply of the first-class books; and to appreciate his fact we must remember the state of things it isplaces. In the country village the circulating ibrary is generally an appendage to the general hop. A couple of hundred thumbed volumes, nostly of the Edgeworth, Hannah More, or Sir Charles Grandison class, form the chief stock-inrade. If by any chance a new novel loses its way own into one of these villages, in a couple of months' ime a resident may have a chance of reading it. But all this is now changed. In Mr. W. H. Smith's irculating library the reader may have any book e may choose to order down by the next morning rain, regardless of its value. Imagine Southey iving in this age, and whilst he enjoyed his lovely Cumberland Lake, having a stream of new books own from London fresh and fresh, at an annual ost a little more than one volume would have ost him in his day! The subscriber to the railway library has simply to present his ticket to the bookstall keeper, wherever he may be, to get the book he wants, if it be in stock; if not, a requisition is forwarded to the house in the Strand, and he gets it by the next day. He can get the book he wants with a great deal more certainty, and almost as quickly even in the North of England, than he could by sending to the next country town. If he is travelling, he may exchange his books at any station where he may happen to be.

The works purchased at the bookstall itself is not a bad barometer of the popular taste, as regards the sale of current books of the day. As we have said, there is but little demand for the more expensive works of the leading publishers, Messrs. Murray, Longman, &c., but a very large call for Parlour and Railway Libraries, shilling novels, and works under half a guinea. The demand for mere book-maker's productions has, however, quite passed away. Cheap editions of standard authors are in constant requisition. Dickens, Thackeray, Kingsley, and Tennyson, are very popular, and Anthony Trollope is coming up fast behind them. The publications of the authoress of "Adam Bede" and "Charlotte Bronte," have had an enormous run upon the railway. One of the most popular cheap books of the day—but only of the day—has been the "Detective Police-Officer," reprinted from "Chambers' Journal." Of this work, at least 10,000 copies have been sold in a few months at the railway-bookstalls alone.

Perhaps the most cheering features in the demand for cheap editions of books, is the call for works of the character of "Self Help" and "Stephenson's Life." The success of these works has called forth a host of imitations, called "Men who have risen," "Men in Earnest," "Men who have made themselves," "Farmers' Boys," and others, all testifying to the love of energetic action among the population so different to that which obtains in centralised continental countries. For second-class poetry there is no demand whatever. Byron and Cowper remain popular, but Tennyson, Longfellow, and Hood, have the run. Cheap handbooks on farming and the farm-yard are bought largely. "Our Farm of Four Acres," for instance, was a grand success. We have tried to ascertain if any particular class of works is in demand in particular localities, but the only instance of this nature has reference to the county of Leicester, and other sporting counties, in which books about the horse, and about hunting and fishing, are constantly inquired after; and, singularly enough, the general demand increases on the publication of any particular book of merit upon these subjects. The didactic class of books stands no chance, and works of a theological character are seldom sold on the railway-bookstalls; but of late, a very large demand has sprung up for a cheap Bible. The Bible Society sometime since determined to offer for sale, at a loss, at their stalls, a well got-up neatly bound Bible for one shilling. The success of this step was immediate. The sale has been going on at the rate of 4000 copies a-year, and is still increasing. It is no uncommon thing, we are informed, for employers of labour to take a large pocketful down into the

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country for the purpose of giving away to their work-people.

As we have shown, the railway-bookstalls find but few purchasers for first-class, high-priced books; but, singularly enough, it is now found that there is an almost exclusive demand for them in the circulating library department of these stalls; the public are anxious enough to read them, but it cannot afford to pay such high prices for them; but those who may be anxious to buy at a reduced price have the opportunity of doing so after the books have been "well read," standing on the stalls as "second-hand" library books. Thus the institution of the circulating library has tapped—if we may make use of the expression—a class in the community which before made but little sign.

Amid the hum of the mighty Babylon, we easily overlook the noiseless and unostentatious growth of such an establishment as that of Messrs. W. H. Smith & Co. Within thirty-five years, by the exercise of intelligence, perseverance, and industry, this house has grown from a mere stationer's shop and newspaper agency, employing half-a-dozen persons, to a mighty establishment, employing two hundred clerks and five hundred men and boys; and whilst Mr. Smith has thus toiled to place himself in the position of a great employer of labour, his efforts tend most powerfully to civilise and elevate the intelligence of the nation.

Along every line of rail which traverses the country, in every direction, these libraries are posted, and become wells of English undefiled. They have established a propaganda of culture in the remotest as well as in the most cultivated spots on the island; and their proprietor, in building up his own fortune, is doing no small service towards the educational movement in this country. A. W.

WHAT IS ELECTRICITY?

The perplexities of an inquiring mind seeking to enter upon the vast fields of scientific research, included under the name of Electricity, are not a little increased by finding that the first question it naturally asks,—What is Electricity? What definitely am I to think of when I say that word?—will be the last to get satisfactorily answered. Yet this mighty something pervades and penetrates the whole depth and breadth of the solid earth, the water and the viewless air, with modes of action complex and various, that blend subtly with the other forces of nature, sometimes over-mastering, sometimes subservient to them.

Not much more than a hundred years ago physical science began the enterprise of unravelling these intricacies, almost without a clue. The first hint which called men's observation to the existence of electricity was, that certain substances, when rubbed, attract light bodies, bits of paper, feathers, &c. But this fact, known to the ancients, lay isolated and barren for centuries; and it was not till after the accidental discovery, in 1746, of the Leyden jar—of an apparatus that is, which, when put in communication with a frictional machine, could accumulate in great quantity and intensity the electricity produced,—that this unknown power began to be identified as one of Nature's mightiest agents—one that, in it[s] terrible moods, could deal death and devastation.

Has the reader a clear idea of what is meant b[y] producing, or, more properly, liberating electricity[?] All bodies, whether solid, fluid, or gaseous, con[-]tain electricity in a natural or neutral state, i[n] which, that is, the two opposing principles o[r] forces known as negative and positive electricity exactly balance each other, and consequently giv[e] no evidence of their existence. But frictio[n,] pressure, percussion, heat, chemical action—wha[t-]ever, in fact, disturbs the relative position of th[e] particles or molecules of a body,—disturbs th[e] balance, destroys this union; and the two opposin[g] principles, no longer neutralising each other, a[re] free to act on other particles, and disturb the[ir] electric equilibrium. When thus liberated th[e] negative manifests itself upon one surface, and th[e] positive on a neighbouring surface. This decom[-]posed condition is called static electricity, or elec[-]tric *tension*. The reunion of the two kinds, whic[h] takes place in virtue of their mutual attractio[n,] may be either instantaneous, as in the discharge[,] or continuous; or "a series, in fact, of decompos[i-]tions and recompositions," as in the current. Th[is] is dynamic electricity. Bodies in which a curren[t] can thus transmit itself freely are called conductors[;] those that oppose a resistance insulators. It wa[s] once thought that this constituted an absolute di[s-]tinction, but it is now known to be merely a di[ffe-]rence of degree. All bodies conduct electricity t[o] some extent—all oppose some degree of resistance.

It is a familiar fact that electricity in motio[n,] when of sufficient intensity, gives rise during i[ts] transmission to light and heat. One conditio[n] is necessary—that it should meet with some con[-]siderable degree of resistance to its progress; and where the resistance is greatest, there the ligh[t] and heat are most intense. Very soon after th[e] invention of the Leyden-jar, Franklin succeede[d] in melting thin leaves of metal by means of dis[-]charges; Beccaria and Priestley also in makin[g] wires incandescent, in melting, and even in burn[-]ing them, if the experiment took place in the ai[r] and the metal was an oxidisable one. The dis[-]covery of voltaic electricity (electricity liberate[d] by chemical action, that is) furnished a means o[f] establishing constant currents, and showed tha[t] similar effects resulted from these as from dis[-]charges, only that the latter, when very powerfu[l,] produce an explosion that disperses the wires t[o] powder, which is not the case with a current[.] Sir Humphry Davy placed thin leaves of metal i[n] the circuit of a voltaic pile, and found they gav[e] flames of different colours in burning. Zinc give[s] a beautiful blue flame; tin a purple; lead, yello[w] with violet border; copper, green accompanie[d] with very vivid sparks. Silver gives a flame whit[e] in the centre, green at the edges; gold a brillian[t] yellow. A crackling sound and a kind of hissin[g] accompany the burning.

The most remarkable manifestation of electri[c] light, both for intensity and continuity, is th[e] voltaic arc discovered by Davy. It is produce[d] between the conductors that terminate the tw[o] poles of a voltaic battery (the electrodes, as the[y] are called). Dipped in this arc of brilliant light "all the most refractory substances, platinum

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apphire, magnesia, melt like wax in a candle; agments of diamond, carbon, plumbago, seem to vaporate without undergoing previous fusion." he voltaic arc "may be formed in vacuum as ell as in air, a proof that the combination with hich it is attended in air is not the cause of the eat and light there developed." Only in this ase a current of great intensity is required—ufficient, in fact, to tear off minute particles from he surface of the electrodes; and these incanescent, scintillating particles form the arc. When the arc is produced in air, or any gaseous medium, the particles of this medium become ncandescent, just as a wire becomes so when raversed by a discharge or powerful current; and all the phenomena of electric light," says e la Rive, "confirm us in the opinion that it rises from the incandescence of the particles of he medium which is traversed by the discharge r current, and from that of the particles which re detached from the electrodes." M. Silliman, aving protected his eyes with green glass, *saw* he particles pass from the positive to the negative ole, and collect there like dust driven before the ind. On one electrode is found a little cone of the ccumulated particles, in the other a slight hollow. ometimes, however, the transport takes place in oth directions.

Electric light approaches more nearly to solar ght than that produced from any other source. t presents no trace of polarisation; its spectrum ontains the same colours as the solar spectrum, ith the addition of several very clear rays of reat brilliancy, which differ in number and osition according to the nature of the electrodes mployed. As to intensity, the light of the arc roduced by a powerful battery, is to solar light s 1 to 2·5; while the light produced by the ombustion of gaseous mixtures is to the electric ght as 1 to 56. A daguerreotype impression ay be obtained of an object illuminated by it.

Chemical action was spoken of above, as the ource of voltaic electricity. This, however, was ong a disputed point; MM. Becquerel, Karsten, nd others, regarding the mere contact of the two eterogeneous metals forming part of two conecutive pairs of a pile as the exciting cause. A ew exceptional facts appeared stubbornly to suport this view. But M. De la Rive, who has made he theory of the voltaic pile a special subject of nvestigation, holds they may be otherwise interreted, and on the whole considers it well stablished that chemical action, not contact, is he *source*.

Viewed as an *effect*, chemical action produced y electricity has yielded results which, both in cientific and in practical importance, transcend all thers. It has unlocked recesses of which the very xistence was previously hidden. Substances that ad baffled all other means of chemical analysis, nd were regarded as elementary, electricity has esolved. When its decomposing power was first iscovered, it was thought new elements, and in articular a new kind of acid, were produced by t. But a lynx-eyed investigation of the question nabled Davy fully to establish, that it only *berates* the pre-existing elements of bodies xposed to its action, and thus facilitates their combination with other elements that may be present. In this manner entirely new *compounds* have been formed. It not only liberates the elements—it transports them: a characteristic that belongs to decomposition by electricity alone. Bodies that submit to its action (for all do not) are called electrolytes.

To conclude, Electro-Chemistry seems likely to prove also the quarter whence most light will come on the great question alluded to at the outset,—What is Electricity? It has, at all events, effectually exploded the old notion of a fluid, or two fluids; and has led to its being universally regarded as a force. But, What kind of force? is still the question. Its power over the atoms of matter, to alter their relative position, and constrain or accelerate their movements in a solid body, may be proved, but cannot be seen, except in those more violent manifestations that shatter and destroy. In electrolysis, on the contrary, we partly *see* into the very mode of working. We see the firmest unions dissolved, the elements in definite proportions carried this way and that, and forced into new combinations. More than one electro-chemical theory (involving of course the nature of electricity itself) has arisen. The subject, though obscure, is so interesting, that perhaps the reader may be tempted to follow a very brief statement of M. De la Rive's view of it, which is based on that of Berzelius. He sets out from the principle, that every atom has two electric poles, contrary, but of the same force. Whether caused by a movement of rotation in the atom or not, he regards as a question that cannot at present be decisively answered. One atom differs from another in its polarity, only inasmuch as one may have a more powerful polarity than another, but in the same atom the two electric poles are always of the same force. When two insulated atoms are brought near to each other, if they have an equal force of polarity, it is by their bulk they attract one another, and unite: which is molecular attraction, or *cohesion*. But if one have a stronger polarity than another, they attract each other by their opposite poles, and a new or compound atom is formed, also having two equal and contrary electric poles: and this is *chemical affinity*.

It is to be borne in mind these are not the fanciful speculations of men eager for the goal yet impatient of labour, who suffer a lively imagination to outrun knowledge. Neither do they pretend to claim acceptance as established truth, but simply as an hypothesis which, in the judgment of some of those standing foremost in the ranks of discovery, seems best to harmonise and bind together a great body of anomalous facts: an hypothesis that will stand or fall according as increased knowledge shall strengthen or undermine its foundations; but by no means to be rejected on the ground that it contradicts the evidence of the senses, or handles a subject beyond our reach. Unless a man is prepared to say, "The earth stands still, the sun moves, because *I see them do so*," he has no right to regard the evidence of his senses as impregnable ground. It was a singular lesson Astronomy taught us on this head, though we are now so familiar with it as to

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have ceased to perceive its meaning. Think what a slumbrous stillness rests upon the face of Nature; how endlessly broad and deep seem to spread out the foundations of the earth. Then think again what is the truth: a little rounded star in rapid, ceaseless, threefold motion; not slumbering on its broad foundations, but hung baseless mid infinity, it "taketh no rest." Perhaps we have been equally deceived at the opposite end of the scale: perhaps the fundamental idea we have of solid matter—that its particles are relatively at rest, may be overthrown, and ceaseless motion proved the condition of existence for atoms as for worlds. What then? We cannot afford to despise our senses, since through them alone comes our report of the world without. Science deals with them as an able lawyer deals with a pack of stupid or roguish witnesses: cross-questions them, sets one against the other, sifts and balances the conflicting evidence, marshals it, puts sense into it,—and in the end triumphantly draws truth out of it. It is but shallow philosophy to sneer at the senses, for without them man's reason would be a king without a kingdom. Dwell rather on the ingenuity with which—when once he has got a hint of new fields to be explored—man provides himself with supplementary senses, as it were: with the telescope, makes his eyes as the eyes of a giant; with the microscope, sees into the mysteries of the smallest flower, like King Oberon himself; with electroscope, galvanometer, and other dainty devices, achieves a delicacy of perception which can detect the feeblest trace or lightest movement of Nature's stealthiest agent.

A LIFE STORY.

I.

IN haste I call'd him the light word
 That darken'd life for ever;
My pallid face nor moved nor stirr'd—
 His lips but one short quiver.
He gave me that long yearning look,
 And spake: "If such I be"—
And all his frame a shudder shook—
 "I am not fit for thee."

II.

We never met again—until
 Long years had swept away:
His face was cold, and calm, and still—
 My hair was tinged with gray.
Upon his arm a lady hung—
 His voice was kind and free:
He did not know the blood-drops wrung
 From my heart's agony.

III.

We met but once again—the day
 On which my darling died.
His wife and child had pass'd away:
 I bade farewell to pride.
We met—my face to his he drew—
 He call'd me by my name:
And in his dying hour we knew
 Our love had been the same.

MARA.

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LAST WEEK.

Clouds are gathering thickly around us on every ide. The very air is as it were charged with lectricity—and it will be strange indeed if the ear 1861 passes away without change and turnoil. The most significant symptoms of trouble re, on the one side, the gradual disruption of the ustrian empire, and the enormous military prearations of France; on the other, the disunion of he North American Union. The one means a uropean war, in which, if this country is not alled upon to take a share, we may reckon ourelves fortunate indeed; the second, a temporary cessation in the supply of cotton, upon the egularity of which about a fourth of our own opulation depends for subsistence. The coming pring will decide what turn events are to take for he next few years.

There can be little doubt that the action of 'rance in Italian affairs is not the result of any acillation or uncertainty upon the part of the 'rench Emperor, as has been sometimes suggested. ouis Napoleon sees clearly enough that the creaion of a great maritime Mediterranean power eriously imperils the future policy of France in hat quarter of Europe. Even upon the suppoision that an independent Italy remained for a ime a satrapy of France—partly on account of its ilitary necessities, and partly through gratitude or benefits received—still, as its strength grew vith years, that subordination of policy andseniment would disappear. The Italians are more ailors by natural inclination than the French. n Italian commercial navy would arise at once, s soon as the country was fairly rid of the tyranical governments which have paralysed and retrained the spirit of enterprise throughout the 'eninsula. A navy for war purposes follows, as f course, from the existence of a large commeral navy. It is then a plant of natural growth, nd vigorous as all natural productions are;—not n exotic, the mere creature of artifice and arangement, destined to fade and wither away if he gardener should forget one night to light the ubterranean fire upon which its existence epends. The English navy is powerful because ne commerce of England is so enormous. The avies of Holland and of the Baltic Powers are rong proportionately to the number of their ommercial marine. The United States of North merica have never thought it worth their while o keep up any considerable navy for war purposes, but they are always looked upon as forudable antagonists at sea, because the sea is lready covered with their ships, and because the ailors who man these ships could be converted nto man-of-war's men at a moment's notice. With ussia it is otherwise. The Russian fleet is umerically strong, but weak in seamanship, and the seaman's spirit. The navy of France again, great have been the care and forethought estowed upon it, has been brought up to so high point of efficiency, that many competent judges ave doubted what would be the first results of a onflict between it and the maritime armaments f England. These results, however, could be oubtful only for a moment. What has happened any time during the last five centuries would happen again when the spirit of the country was fairly roused, and the official personages charged with the administration of the Navy had been brought to their senses. Even if mechanical skill and the possession of iron and coal are to be the conditions of success, instead of superior seamanship, England is not worse placed in the race than heretofore. It is, if we mistake not, an apprehension of what may be the consequences of a development of the capacities of the Italians for maritime dominion, which gives pause to the counsels of the French Emperor. Hand him over the Island of Sardinia, or a section of the Italian coast which would include Genoa, and he might be inclined to take a favourable view of the question.

It is a curious fact that Napoleon Bonaparte, an Italian himself—if ever there was one—has left it upon record that it was always a cardinal point in his policy to restrain the growth of Italian power. Whether his opinion was right or wrong, it was to the effect that the Italians, if free and independent, might one day become a great danger to Europe.

The intelligence from Italy during the Last Week is of a very chequered complexion. On the one hand we hear that the French ships of war have at last taken their departure from before Gaëta. Cialdini and Persano are now left to deal with that fortress. Until Gaëta is reduced, it will be impossible to restore order in the Two Sicilies; and, even when this event shall happen, the French Emperor has bequeathed a fearful legacy to Victor Emmanuel and his advisers. The partisans of the Bourbon have had time to combine for resistance, and to over-run the country. They must be met, and dispersed, and when dispersed they will be even more troublesome than when united; still the thing must be done. It is difficult to see how tranquillity can be ultimately restored, save by the proclamation of military law, and it is to be feared by military executions, which, however necessary, are not exactly the measures by which a new Sovereign would wish to commence his administration. The Bourbons, especially those who have borne rule in the Two Sicilies, have a knack of leaving their successors to deal with a plague of brigands. The First Bonaparte, not a very patient man, after making trial of a few palliatives, gave orders that the mayors and municipal authorities of the various towns and villages, as well as the townsmen and villagers, should be made responsible for the brigandage committed within their respective limits. If the French could catch the brigand, that was well enough. They hung him. If not, they hung the mayor. It was a rough way of dealing with the difficulty, but it answered.

The truth is, that this is a work which the Neapolitans and Sicilians, if a long course of tyranny and subjection had not emasculated their spirit, ought to do for themselves. They have no right to call in the Sardinians as their executioners. If Garibaldi and his companions first, and Victor Emmanuel and his regular troops afterwards, have driven away the King from his capital, taken his strong places, dispersed his army, seized his fleet,

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and driven his abominable police-agents from the country, or into dark hiding-places from which they dare no longer to come forth, the least they could do would be to maintain order for themselves. Europe, at the same time, should not be too exacting in its opinion of the Southern Italians. These men are what their tyrants have made them. If it turns out that they are the fathers of freemen, we shall be content.

Cavour, as it is said, has a working majority in the Italian Parliament, and for every reason it is to be hoped that this may turn out to be true. The safety of Italy lies in undivided counsels. Garibaldi, with his great heart—the man who, after having conquered a kingdom, retired to his farm with the hope that all letters to him might be post-paid, because he could not afford the expense of paying the postage—is not a very likely man to embarrass the hands of the Italian Government at the critical moment when the fate of Italy is trembling in the balance. If we hear of him this spring it will probably be in Hungary, or in the Adriatic Provinces of Austria, for he is a person who will not find much favour in the eyes of the official personages at the Horseguards at Turin. A report was current LAST WEEK that Louis Napoleon had caused Count Cavour to be informed that if the Austrians sent a soldier across their own limits, or fired a gun in hostility, he would instantly cover Lombardy once more with his troops. The French are now in a far better, and the Austrians in a far worse position than after Solferino. At that time the best troops on the French side had perished in the various bloody engagements which had preceded the misunderstanding at Villa-Franca—public opinion in France, despite of the victories and triumphs of the French arms, was fairly alarmed at the gigantic proportions which the operations in Lombardy had assumed. Not forgetful of Sebastopol, the French were scarcely prepared to incur the carnage and hazard of protracted operations in the Quadrilateral. The slightest check in the career of Louis Napoleon's success might, in the then temper of the nation, have seriously endangered his political and dynastic position. To advance was difficult; to recede, an impossibility. The great gainer at Villa-Franca was Louis Napoleon himself.

Who can say that the French have not a right to affix any conditions they please to the assistance they may be willing to afford to the Italians? Clearly Louis Napoleon was in the wrong, not only in the eyes of Europe, but even of France, when he detained his fleet before Gaëta, and prolonged the agony of a nation for his own selfish ends. Clearly he is in the wrong, when he remains in armed occupation of Rome, and fortifies Civita Vecchia in a way which does not inspire one with the belief that he has any real intention of relaxing his grasp upon that portion of Italy. But if he withdrew every French soldier from the Peninsula to-morrow, and refused to assist the Italians in a military way, on the grounds that a nation which could not help itself was not worthy of independence; and because it was not reasonable that the French nation should spend their blood and treasure upon a cause which was not their own; who could blame him? If he accompanied such declarations as these with expressions of hearty good-will to the Italian cause, he would be doing exactly what we are doing in England. If we blamed him we should blame ourselves. The only difference in our position is that the bones of many thousands of Frenchmen lie buried in Lombardy, and that, were all the fruits of this great sacrifice to be thrown away, the French nation might call their ruler somewhat sternly to account.

It is impossible not to dwell upon this subject. Who has taken up a newspaper LAST WEEK with any serious thought but that of looking for intelligence—first from the United States, and then from Italy? Risca colliery explosions—the frost, and then the thaw—scandalous trials in the Divorce Court—railway accidents—even the Metropolitan distress, are not subjects which interest the public just now in any very peculiar way, because every man of ordinary understanding in these islands is well aware that the points which most immediately concern him are the turn which affairs may take in Italy and the United States. Threatening as the aspect of affairs may be on the other side of the Atlantic, and vitally interested as our own people are in the solution of the difficulty in some satisfactory way, there is far more danger to us in a breeze from the sweet South than in an Atlantic gale. For all the bluster and disturbance which prevail at the present moment throughout the United States, it is difficult to acquiesce in the belief that in a moment of fierce exasperation against each other, they will consent to sign their own ruin. The Americans—let the expression pass to signify the citizens of the United States—are more demonstrative in their affections and animosities than we are in this older and more settled land. They have less reverence for the past—for their past is yesterday. They have more confidence in the future, for why should men despair of the future who find a whole continent open to their ambition upon the easiest terms? A man struggling for subsistence is ready to make allowances, to acquiesce in compromises, to admit that he cannot have all things in this world his own way. The Americans are not disturbed by any such hesitations. Earth and sea are their own—why should not every self-sufficient citizen of every state in the Confederation take his own course, and leave his fellows to their own devices? There is but one reason of which we know—and that is that amid the very storm and whirlwind of passion, a still small voice whispers the potent word "Dollar—Dollar—Dollar!" to every freeman's heart, and this suggests the pecuniary advantages of political forethought, and patriotism.

How often have we Englishmen—that is, as many of us as have reached middle life—been astonished with the fierce declamations of the American Press, and of their indignation meetings, when directed against ourselves. Now, it was the Boundary Treaty—now Oregon—now a Fishery—now an Island. We have invariably given way with a somewhat contemptuous consciousness of our own superiority; but it has as invariably appeared that if we had not done so our antagonists, on their part, were upon the eve of retiring

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from the contest. It seems most probable that this is pretty much the history of the Slave and Free Soil parties or factions in the States at the present moment. Each is determined to play its last card in the game of "brag." Each will adhere to the very extremest of its own demands as long as there is a chance that the other side will give in. But secession to all appearance means ruin to the great American Confederation of States—both to North and South. There is not any consequence of a war with this country which could be so dreadful to the United States as the apparently certain results of disunion. It cannot be but that when the most violent spirits have had time to exhale their angry passions, men of calmer head will step in and preserve the unity of the Confederation. The North would be simply paralysed if this secession should take place: the Southern States would lose the market for which they are contending, even whilst the dispute was in course of settlement. There would be a governing caste of white proprietors, a vast population of slaves with no work ready to their hand, inasmuch as Africa, Australia, and British India, would have been summoned to repair their deficiencies in supply. Save as caterers of cotton for the world, the Southerners could not afford to maintain the slave population—what, if the privilege of supplying cotton should slip from their grasp whilst they are asserting, with all the spirit of freemen, their inalienable right to keep the negro in slavery? Of course the matter is still doubtful, and at first sight he would appear to be a bold man who foretold a peaceful solution of this great "difficulty"; but the Americans have a way peculiar to themselves of producing storm and sunshine—and that in an instant of time. Despite of these Charlestown demonstrations, and of Mr. Buchanan's correspondence with the deputies from the South, it will be surprising indeed if the Americans do not find some peaceful and satisfactory solution of the question. If this cannot be done by the regularly constituted authorities, at least it would seem probable that the cooler and more calculating heads in each State will devise some method of promoting their own views, without having recourse to so ruinous a step as the dissolution of the Union.

Surely this American difficulty and the position of Italian affairs are in themselves sufficient to give zest to the intelligence of Last Week. But now that the British Parliament is to be called again together in a few days, we may look a little forward, as well as a little back. Was there ever a period in the history of the British nation when, upon domestic grounds, the opening of Parliament was anticipated with such apparent indifference? It is scarcely doubtful that the grand football of Reform, which has amused rather than occupied so many Parliaments of late years, will be again produced; but the public have ceased to feel much interest in the game, for they have ceased to believe that the players are in earnest. We do not believe in Lord Palmerston's Reform Bill more than we believed in the Reform Bill brought in under the auspices of Lord Derby. On the whole, it would appear as though, in the present threatening aspect of foreign affairs, any considerable domestic contention may stand adjourned over the ensuing Session. The British nation is not resolved to force the hands of our British statesmen—and our statesmen seem resolved not to move in the matter until their hands are actually forced. Are we to throw good money after bad, as we did last year? It would be no inconsiderable gain if, during the next six months, the Attorney-General should pass through the two Houses a good measure of Bankruptcy Reform—giving up the two clauses which were the blots upon his propositions of last year—and if the various Bills for the consolidation of our Criminal Law were to be converted into statutes. These are not measures which involve any strong political or party feeling, but, if they could be passed through Parliament, they would be of enormous advantage to the community.

Again, there is the question of British India—that splendid but ever-running sore—which must be dealt with in the course of the next few months, or at least be placed in the way of solution. The vital point of the amalgamation of the British and Indian army is still unsettled. British India is still in a bankrupt condition, and is likely to continue so for a time. It is too much to expect that all these difficulties should be settled by a legislative thunder-clap; but at least, after these many years of delay, we have a right to expect that such impulses may be communicated to our Indian policy as may enable us to look forward to a day when India may be self-supporting, and cease to be a source of ever-recurring anxiety to the population of these islands. The reform of the financial system of India, and changes for the better in the arrangements of the civil service, would seem to be the turning-points of the difficulty.

India is killed by her military expenditure. The British Islands also can scarcely support the burden of maintaining the naval and military forces which are necessary for their security. Here, in Europe, we are compelled to take precautions against the ambitious designs—real or supposed—of our great neighbour; but in India, economy and good government are interchangeable terms.

Never did a British Minister enter upon a session of Parliament apparently with greater strength than the present Premier. Those, however, who have watched Lord Palmerston's political career always feel that the hour of difficulty is his time of triumph—in over-security lies his danger. He is too apt to forget that followers must be conciliated, and public opinion respected, even when large majorities are at his back. So long as the Continental difficulties continue, he has little to fear from the rivalry of Lord John Russell—for the Foreign Secretary is content with the direction of foreign affairs. It may well happen that Mr. Gladstone may prove a more serious embarrassment, for the expenditure of the country is enormous, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, despite of his brilliant talents, does not possess the confidence of the Exchange. Lord Palmerston's chief danger, however, lies in the difficulty of preserving moderation in the midst of seeming security.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Do not spur a willing horse," is a rule of masculine invention, and one which only the higher minds among the gentler sex are very apt to adopt and obey. It was scarcely to be expected that Mary Henderson, with her soul on fire for the attainment of a revenge of her own, should have sufficient self-command to follow the wise counsel of the saw. Chiefly in order to ensure the unhesitating obedience of her lover, but a little, it may be, with a view of atoning to herself for having somewhat compromised her hitherto unbending dignity by her display of interest and affection at the moment of alarm, Henderson, when alone with M. Silvain, hesitated not to let him perceive her comprehension of his signal defeat at the hand of Adair. Assured of Silvain's safety, she relapsed into her ordinary cold manner, and infused some slight touch of the most irritating compassion for the man who had sought to avenge a woman's wrongs without being able to do so effectively. She alluded to Adair as one who was so evidently Silvain's superior, both in intellect and physical prowess, that the latter must avoid annoying him for the future, and must leave Mary (or Matilde, as she would still be to Silvain) to protect herself in the best way a helpless girl might.

All this was utterly needless, and the horse wanted no spur. The stream of insults he had received from Ernest, and the complete overthrow which the Frenchman had sustained, in the presence of his mistress, were quite enough to saturate his very being with the deadliest hatred of the scornful conqueror. There was something approaching to dignity in the silence with which he listened to Henderson's galling talk, and in the almost mournful smile with which he repaid her. His compressed lip and dangerous eye might have given her full assurance that his vindictiveness was not to be increased by anything she could urge, and when Mary had uttered as many demi-sarcasms as occurred to her uncomfortable spirit, Silvain quietly took her hand, pressed it with affection, and intimated that she had said enough,

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unless she had any distinct course to propose, in which case it was his duty to postpone any plan he might have formed.

"You will do nothing whatever without asking my leave," said Mary. "It is not for you to presume to take other people's affairs into your hands."

M. Silvain must be the guardian of his own honour, but was ready to obey to the letter any order of Mademoiselle.

"I have no order to give at present, but we never speak again if you see that man any more without my permission."

M. Silvain signified his assent by a grave bow, and another touch of Mademoiselle's hand.

"Don't bow at me," said she, impatiently. "Swear it."

"My word is as binding as an oath, Mademoiselle. Is it an English custom to require oaths from those we trust?"

"I do not know that I trust you," said Henderson. "Well, yes, I do," she added, observing his reproachful look, "but it is a satisfaction to have a solemn promise."

"In homage to an English feeling, then, Mademoiselle, I swear to what you demand, but my heart, already your slave, needs no new sacrament."

"Don't talk in that profane manner," said Mary, totally ignorant of her lover's meaning. "But you have sworn, and that is enough. Now, I suppose you'll go back to your shop?"

"For the moment, yes, unless Mademoiselle has commands."

"Stay there until I come, or send to you."

"I am at your orders, Mademoiselle."

She gave him her hand, kindly enough, as they parted, and his look of intense gratitude and admiration touched her heart.

"After all," she said, on her way to the avenue, "he is a brave and a true fellow; and as for his not fighting so well as that wretch, who, I dare say, has often got his living by teaching the trade, that is nothing. If Silvain had time and money to be always practising, he would be a splendid fencer, and even without his sword, and with his eyes sparkling, he looked much more noble than the white-faced creature opposite to him. Silvain's figure is perfection, and if he only dressed——"

But we need not delay over the affectionate meditations of the *femme de chambre.*

At the farther end of the ground-floor of the house of Mr. Urquhart, and opening into the large room of miscellaneous scientific matter which has been described, was a small apartment, nearly empty, and with a ground-glass French window looking upon the garden. This room could be approached by a small narrow staircase, from the first floor, but this approach was never used, and the door above was constantly locked. It had been Henderson's suggestion that a little furniture should be taken into the room, and that while Mrs. Lygon should be in the house, it should be her place of refuge, one not likely to be thought of, and one which afforded a ready escape to the garden. Scarcely waiting for the assent of either of the ladies, Henderson, with stealthy rapidity, had discovered, oiled, and used the key of the stair, and without the knowledge of the other domestics had conveyed into the apartment enough to render it tenantable.

"The other girls are very ignorant, Madame," said Henderson to Mrs. Urquhart, as the latter descended into the room, "and they believe in ghosts. I shall tell them, by accident, a ghost-story before bed-time, that will make them afraid even to look at the door of the big room as they go out and in."

The sisters were alone in the secluded chamber, when a letter was thrown down the stair by the vigilant Henderson.

It was for Mrs. Urquhart, and was in the bold free hand of her husband.

Bertha trembled too much to open and read it, but Laura did both, and found that it contained a few lines from Robert Urquhart, in which he congratulated himself on having met with Lygon, and scolded Bertha for not having kept him. "As a punishment for such a violation of all the sacred duties of hospitality," the writer went on, "we two gay young dogs intend to disport ourselves in the pleasures of Paris for a while, but if our hearts should relent, or rich Countesses should make very desperate efforts to carry us off, we shall just drop down to Versailles at any hour that may seem good unto us, and it may promote peace and forgiveness should there be an adequate supply of creature-comforts at the shortest notice." Bertha was also ordered to revolve in her mind what would be fittest for a united present for Laura, which her husband should take over in the hope of appeasing her wrath at being abandoned, of which he seemed to be in wonderful terror.

"They have met," gasped Bertha.

"It is always so," said Laura, wiping tears from her eyes, as she again read the playful letter, just one which might have been looked for from either Lygon or Urquhart, had circumstances been as the latter supposed them.

"Arthur has said nothing to him."

"And what could you dream that Arthur would say?" asked Laura, indignantly, a wife's pride flushing her fair brow at the shadow of a suspicion that Lygon would willingly say aught to compromise herself or her sister.

"He left me in a fever of rage," said Bertha. "He spoke quietly enough, but I know that he was in a rage."

"And had he not a right to be? A right! There is nothing that he could do that could not be justified, but Arthur will never do anything to need justification," said Laura, proudly. "O, if I could say the same," she added. "But I will trust that he will trust me yet."

"They may come at any time," said Bertha, feebly.

"Arthur will not return here," replied Mrs. Lygon. "They have met by accident. He could not escape from your husband, but will shake him off at the first moment. Perhaps he is now on his way to London—to his home," she said, burying her face in her hands.

"I hope so," said Bertha, whose nature saw something less of danger in the absence of one of those whom she dreaded.

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"Do you?" replied Laura, slowly and reproachfully. "There! I must not think of it, and I must not expect you to be stronger than you are. Robert will come here without Arthur," she added in a calm voice, "and you have nothing to fear from what may pass between them. It is I only who am in danger—comfort yourself with that thought."

"Do not speak so unkindly."

"I did not mean unkindness, dear. I only mean to reassure you. Now, we have no time to lose."

"If one of the servants should say that you have been here," said Bertha, tremulously, "and Robert should know."

"Angelique only has seen and knows me. We must trust to Henderson to silence her. That is a small risk among great ones."

"But if Arthur should have told Robert?"

"My life and soul on Arthur's silence where I am concerned," replied Laura, almost fiercely. "Do not hint at such a thing again, Bertha, or I will leave you to yourself, and go off to England. It is only my intense confidence in Arthur, my deep conviction of his overmastering love for me, that sustains me in this trial. You do not understand me, but understand that you will ruin yourself if you shake the belief that holds me up. Not one more word about that."

"What next are we to do?" said Bertha, humbly.

"We have done little or nothing, and yet I seem to see a way opening. Pardon me, Bertha dear, but it is useless to talk to you. I must see Henderson. It is shocking to be driven to such counsels, but things have gone too far for hesitation, and I must avail myself of every means in my power to help you and save you. Please to send Henderson to me."

"I wish I was dead," said Bertha, slowly departing.

"Would dying save your honour in the eyes of your husband?" asked Laura, laying a firm hand on her sister's arm.

"I should be out of the way of all fear," sobbed Bertha.

"Send Henderson to me," replied Mrs. Lygon, calmly. And she gazed wistfully at the retreating form of her sister.

"If the saving her were all," she murmured, "would I have incurred this peril? But I will go through with it now, to the very end. O, Arthur! my darling Arthur! My own, my noble, loving one."

Henderson stood before her, ere the wife's eyes could discern her through the mist that dimmed them.

Mrs. Lygon recovered herself with a strong effort.

"If I might speak, Madame, before you had anything to say to me?"

"Yes, Mary."

"I did not think I should have any news so soon, Madame, but you may wish to hear of something which has happened."

"Quick, tell me."

"It does not concern anybody you know, Madame, except through me. But I told you that I believed I knew a person that I could trust to shed his life for me, if wanted."

"Strong words, Mary."

"They are that, Madame, but not too strong, if I may say so."

And she briefly told the story of the duel at the inn, and did not fail to lay the utmost stress upon M. Silvain's having become the deadliest and the most resolved enemy that Adair could have.

Mrs. Lygon listened with intense interest. If, when the story was done, she felt a pang of regret that the speaker had not to tell of a different ending to the fray, it need hardly be said that she gave utterance to no such vengeful thought.

"You should be a good girl, Mary, to have inspired such a love in a brave and honourable man."

And Henderson's lips quivered proudly at the double praise.

"I did not think that anybody's words could make me so happy, Madame," said the girl, keeping down tears of pleasure. "You make me bold to ask one favour."

"You will ask nothing improper, Mary, I am sure."

"I would cut off my hand first, Madame. But if you would have the goodness only to see him."

"Him?" said Mrs. Lygon, startled. "You mean——"

"M. Sylvain, Madame. Only for one moment. If you would only let him see you. I would not think of your speaking to him, or condescending to talk to him about anything. That is my business. But to see him for a minute, and let him say one word."

"The fewer persons I see the better."

"Not another soul in the world, Madame. I shall take care of all that, and proud to be trusted. But if you would see poor Sylvain for just one minute."

"If you desire it, then, I will."

"Thank you, Madame, for him and for me. There is no one in the house just now, except Madame and yourself—Angelique and Suzanne are gone to mass—and if you would come into the next room, only for a moment as I say. O, not even Sylvain knows of *this* place, no soul but me."

Mrs. Lygon ascended the stairs, and, conducted by Henderson, whose vigilance was tiger-like, came down into the chamber of science. Mary, with an apology, departed for a moment, and returned, bringing her lover.

M. Sylvain's approach was most respectful, and his bow, without being servile, expressed the deep honour he felt. He either had not intended to speak, or hesitated for words, when Mrs. Lygon, addressing him in his own language, said,

"M. Sylvain, this young person has told me that you have been displaying your affection for her by an act of unusual bravery. I know her friends in England, and it will give me happiness to tell them that she has secured the regard of a man of honour."

That speech, delivered in a gracious voice, and moreover in French, by a beautiful woman, vanquished M. Sylvain at once; and literally brought him to the ground. For, remembering what his mistress had said upon the subject of oaths, it

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flashed upon him that such a homage would be but a worthy reply to so much kindness. Dropping on one knee, and holding his arm aloft, M. Silvain called upon his Maker to listen to and attest the lover's vow to perform, with the utmost fidelity of his soul, whatever wish Madame might honour him by signifying through Mademoiselle.

Greatly scandalized, Mary made all speed to remove her demonstrative admirer from the chamber.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The kind-hearted Scotsman had no idea of losing sight of Lygon, and they took up their quarters for the night at the same hotel. Arthur retired early, though not to sleep; and Urquhart, who had disposed of a few hours in the smoking pavilion in the rear of the house, by getting through about a couple of feet of tobacco, in company with a pleasant circle of English and Americans, who loved to congregate in that apartment and exchange experiences of travel, proceeded to bed about the time that his friend, outwearied with mental and physical fatigue, fell into a disturbed and feverish slumber. At an early hour in the morning they met again, Lygon pale and nervous, Urquhart cheery and vigorous, but with a dire grievance, at which he grumbled mightily, in being deprived of a huge shower bath, wherewith when at home he recruited his mighty limbs for the work of the day.

"These French will never be civilised Christians," he said, "until they get the high service all over Paris, and they'll not have that for many a day, for there is a whole army of rascally water-carriers who would get up a revolution if their monopoly were threatened. But perhaps our friend Looey" (it was so that he affectionately described the Elected of the Millions) "will have the pluck to cart them all off to Cayenne one of these days, and let his subjects wash themselves. It is as much a state necessity as was the massacre of the Janizaries out in Constantinople."

Arthur Lygon did not seem much interested in the sanitary condition of the French metropolis, and Urquhart went on:

"You look as if you would be none the worse for a header into Loch Katrine, the which lake we have turned into every dressing-room in Glasgow, my man. You've nothing like that in London, which proves where the superior nation is to be found."

Lygon smiled faintly, but was in no mood to give the good-natured battle with which in other days he had often met the Scot's assertions in favour of his country.

"Well," said Urquhart, "we'll not be proud and vaunt over you too much, because that's not the right thing, and if you'll take off that cup of coffee, we'll e'en go and sit on one of the benches in yon garden, and have our crack out."

They went into the pleasant garden of the Tuileries, and Urquhart, with an engineer's eye, selected a seat which he judged capable of sustaining his weight, and motioned to Arthur to take a place by his side.

"And now, my man, for confession and absolution, as yon dirty-looking priest that's thumbing the little mass-book, and mumbling away there, would say. What's on your mind?"

"More than I can tell you, Robert; but I will tell you a good deal, nevertheless."

"But make a clean breast of it, Arthur. Even those doctors have the sense to tell you that you should hide nothing from your physician."

"I will hide nothing that I ought to tell."

"Well, well, we'll take what we can get quietly, and then wrangle for the rest—that's a bonny rule of life, my man."

"I have come to France, Robert, upon an errand of the most singular kind," said Arthur, who had been reduced by the prolonged struggle with himself to feel the necessity of making a confidence, and of receiving the support and counsel of a friend; but had resolved that, deeply tempted as he was to cast the whole burden of his sorrow before Urquhart, no word should convey to the latter a shadow of the gloomy doubts that were darkening his own existence, and menacing him with a future of loneliness and wretchedness.

"Political, perhaps, or official?" asked Urquhart. "That's the way business is managed now, instead of leaving it to those diplomatic fellows who take an acre of foolscap to tell their Government that they have called on a man, and he was out of town."

"Neither—I wish it were either. It is solely, painfully private," replied Lygon.

Robert Urquhart addressed himself to listen intently.

"You took it for granted, yesterday, that Laura must be with me," said Arthur, bringing out the name with an effort. "She is not with me, but I have followed her here."

"Well," returned Urquhart, cheerfully. "And what brought her?"

"I do not know—that is, I know in part."

The Scotsman knitted his large brow, and his countenance assumed a sudden sternness, utterly foreign to its usual character, and far from pleasant to behold.

"I must hear more," he said, "but I do not like the beginning."

In a few words Arthur related to him the story of the sudden departure of Mrs. Lygon, suppressing mention of the note that had been left on the table of the bed-room, but proceeding to speak of his own journey to consult Mr. Berry.

"And why did Berry send you to France?" was the expected and inevitable question.

For this demand Arthur Lygon had prepared himself, and seizing Bertha's hint of a political trouble in which Mr. Vernon had been involved, he transferred that suggestion to the counsel of the solicitor at Lipthwaite. Poor Bertha—could she but have known the care which the man whom she had deceived was taking to frame a reply that should exclude her name from question.

"I never heard of this plot, or whatever it was," said Robert Urquhart.

"Nor I," said Lygon, "but you are as well aware as I am that Mr. Vernon led a strange life before he settled at Lipthwaite, and there is nothing unlikely in the story."

"Which, Arthur, you believe as much as I do. That is, you believe neither jot nor tittle of it."

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"I wish to believe it."

"Wish to believe a lie. That is foolish talk, Arthur Lygon."

"Believing it, I am here," said Lygon.

"Cut this sort of thing short," said Robert Urquhart, almost sternly. "We are not to play with words, when there is honour or shame in the matter before us. You are either meaning to tell me nothing, in which case the sooner we two part company the better; or, which is more likely, you are preparing the way to tell me what you ought. You will take your choice, of course, but you call me your friend."

"You are impatient, Urquhart," said Lygon, with a forced composure. "You have not heard me to the end."

"I know that well," said Urquhart, quickly.

"I have told you why I came over to France. Naturally, the first place I hastened to was your house."

He expected an assent from his companion, but the latter preserved a dead silence.

"I saw Bertha," he continued, "and learned that my wife *had* been with her, but had returned to Paris, and was on her way to England."

"Which you believe to be as great a lie as the first story, or I could never have kept you in Paris last night. You believe my wife to have told you a deliberate falsehood."

"I have said nothing of the kind, and I have given you no right to say anything of the kind," said Arthur, firmly.

"We shall see," said Urquhart. "I am waiting for the end that you have promised me."

"Bertha told me what she supposed to be true."

"And why do you suppose the contrary?"

"For reasons of my own, which in no way concern any one but myself and Laura."

"The first thing that we will do," said Urquhart, rising, "is to take the first train to Versailles, and hear from my wife's own lips all that she has to say upon this business."

"I have no intention of returning to Versailles. Robert, you profess yourself my friend, and, as I believe, most truly mean to serve me. If so, you will do it in *my* way, or you will cause irreparable injury."

"You have mixed up my wife's name and fame in the affair," said Urquhart, "and therefore it becomes mine as much as yours. But you are quite right, Arthur, in believing that I would not move one hair's breadth in a line that could injure you, and if I spoke hastily, you must remember that I am a man of action, and out of the habit of picking my words. And now, Arthur, tell me the rest."

"The rest is that I do not believe Laura to be returning to England, and that I do believe her to be in—France," he said, hesitating for a moment at the word.

"I said I never picked a word," said Robert Urquhart, "but I do not know what word to use now. Yet if we are to understand one another, I must run all chances of hurting you to the soul. You will not say why you think Bertha has been deceived. If you will not, I must ask you a frightful question."

"I foresee it," said Lygon, with a terrible calmness. "You would ask me whether I have reason to think——my God!" he said, grinding his teeth, "that the thought should have to be put into language!—well,—whether I have reason to think that Laura is not worth a husband's pursuing."

"Answer that."

"Reason? I thank God—I thank God from my very heart, No. But—"

"Nay, hold your tongue there," said the Scot, more kindly and gravely than he had spoken since their first meeting. "Be silent there. We may do wicked wrong, the wickedest, if we go a step further in that direction, when you are able to say the words you have just uttered. They mean that you know nothing against your wife, and that if she stood before you now, and I would to Heaven she did, you would not dare to make any charge against her. She is innocent, but there is a mystery to be cleared up. For God's sake let us do no injustice in our rash impatience that *we* cannot clear it."

Gravely he laid his hand upon the shoulder of his friend, whose agitation visibly increased, and who did not reply.

"Do not think, Arthur," continued Urquhart, "that I am saying this to delude you into false hopes, or to beguile you with a temporary comfort. I would not do so, if the speaking my own convictions were to be followed by your falling down dead upon this ground. If I believed that your wife had forgotten her duty, I would be the first to urge you to drive her from your home, and tear her from your heart,—the first to scorn you if you forgot your duty to yourself. But out of your heart came the words that assured me of her innocence, and I now say to you, in all the sincerity which man can shew to his fellow-man, hold your heart up, and keep the devil's thoughts out of it until you look into her dear eyes and hear her tell you why you have been thus tried. In the name of the God who will judge us all, Arthur Lygon, I call on you to do justice to the woman you chose from the world."

This appeal was made in a tone that was more than grave, it was solemn, and as is not uncommon with the educated Scotchman, when really and worthily excited, the language of Urquhart took somewhat of the manner of the preacher—a fact easily referable to the earlier life of the natives of a country where religious ordinances are so highly cherished as in Scotland. The effect upon Arthur Lygon was strong, but the habit of self-control, dear to the Englishman, prevented his giving way to any vehement demonstration of what he felt. He wrung Urquhart's hand hard, and turned away to gain a more perfect victory over his emotions. Urquhart perceived this, and permitted Lygon to remain silent for some minutes. Then passing his arm through that of his friend, Robert Urquhart said, in the old pleasant voice,—

"We'll just take a turn. It quickens the brain to quicken the circulation."

And Arthur, yielding to the kindly impulse, walked by the side of Urquhart, and listened to his further counsel.

"*That* is settled," said Robert, and there was

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no need to explain the world of meaning in the simple word. "Now I am one of those who do nothing by halves. When I give my confidence, I give it wholly, and when I am deceived, I punish with my full power. If you will take my advice, Arthur, you will return to your home. In all likelihood you will find your wife there before you. But whether or not, it is upon your own hearthstone that you should be waiting her."

"It may be so," replied Lygon, sadly.

"It is so," replied Urquhart. "You have not told me the reasons why you think poor Bertha was deceived, nor do I care a rush to hear them, now that you have declared the rest. But if Laura is doing what is right, it matters little where she is. If your presence were necessary to her she would not have left you without a clue. Trust the wife of your bosom, the mother of your children, and go home, and wait for her where she has so often waited for you."

"I think," said Arthur, after a pause, "that your judgment is a safer guide to me than my own, in my present state of mind."

"That means that you will go."

"Yes."

"That is well. It is the first time I ever tried to send you away," said Urquhart, his hospitable instinct refusing, even under such circumstances, to be entirely silenced. "But you'll not misjudge me for that, my man."

"My dear Robert."

"Another word, though. I shall go home as soon as I have seen you off."

"Yes," said Arthur, anxiously.

"I see what you are thinking about. But don't I tell you that I never do things by halves? I regard all that you have said to me as mere idle talk, and certainly I should not think it worthy to be repeated to anybody, least of all to my own wife."

"But," said Arthur, "you will of course mention that I told you of Laura's visit to her sister?"

"If Laura has given Bertha her confidence, as I make no doubt she has," said Urquhart, "Bertha will tell me whatever it is meet and right I should know. But I shall ask her no questions, and I shall wait patiently for your letter to inform me of your being satisfied on every point, and I know you'll not let me wait for that any longer than is needful."

"Not an hour."

"There is one thing, Robert," said Arthur, who, gladly clinging to the resolute assurances of the Scot in regard to the innocence of Laura, had thoughts for the weak and terrified woman at Versailles, whom he had so recently beheld in her agony of fear. What if Urquhart should, by some mistaken or half understood words, drive her into a sudden revelation.

"What is that, my man?"

"Why," said Arthur, resolved on preventing danger even to one who *had* given him but little cause to care for her welfare, "the fact is—and I ought to tell you—I was rather rude—at least I was abrupt in my manner to Bertha."

"We will make all allowance—nay, Arthur, you don't think so ill of her or of me as to think that when a man is half distracted about his wife, his looks and words are to be counted up against him by either of us as if he were a stage-player. For shame!"

"I own that expecting, hoping, to find Laura, and learning that she was gone, I allowed my feelings to manifest themselves—"

"If you say another word about it, I shall think that Bertha was less kind and considerate than it was her duty to be."

"No, you must not think that, but I fear she was perhaps hurt at my impatience."

"I will make her an ample apology for you, then."

"Do so, then."

"Or if you like to make it for yourself, though I am heartily angry with you for thinking it necessary, we'll just step back to the hotel, and you may write her a bit of a note."

"And I will," said Arthur, catching at the proposal which he himself had been on the point of hazarding.

They returned to the house, and Arthur wrote as follows:

"My dear Bertha,

"I am leaving for England, but feel that I ought to say half a dozen words to you in apology for my hasty manner on leaving you. I have explained, however, to Robert, that having traced Laura to your house, and receiving from you the rough shock given by your information that she had gone off to England, I expressed myself somewhat unkindly, but though he assures me that you will overlook it, I cannot help making my personal request to you to do so. He does not think that I can be of any use in aiding anybody in the matter with which Mr. Vernon was said to have been connected, and therefore my remaining in Paris would be idle. I trust to find that Laura has not been over-fatigued by her hurried journey. So with renewed apology, and *adieux*,

"Yours affectionately,

"*Paris.*" "Arthur Lygon.

"This is what I have written," said Lygon.

"You have written all that is right I dare swear," said Urquhart. "I have too many letters of my own, and don't want to hear anybody else's. Seal it up, my man, and I will be your faithful postman."

This will surely be hint enough to her, poor wretch, thought Lygon, as he enveloped the letter. If not, she must take her chance. I am in no mood for further precaution. "Here it is, Robert."

"It shall go, even if I do not return at once," said Urquhart. "And see, there is a train in an hour, and I would have you depart by that. We have not met for many a day, my dear Arthur; and I little thought, when the time did come, that we would have had such a conversation; but who knows what will happen to any of us? But I hope that you will look back, many a happy day to come, upon our present trouble, and be thankful that we were brought out of it so completely. Go home, my man, and once more take the comfort with you that you have a good and loving wife, and that all this will pass away like a dream; and one day, when it's nearly forgotten, and the story

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comes up again to your mind, you'll just give Laura a kiss for her brother-in-law, and say that he upheld her in the hour when her good-for-nought husband permitted the devil, which is Satan, to get the upper hand of him. But you'll drive away the devil's thoughts now, Arthur, I've your promise for that?"

"You have."

"Your hand on it. And I'll see you to the train, my man. We'll have no discontented bodies like you upon this free and happy soil of France."

(*To be continued.*)

THE MONTHS.

FEBRUARY.

MY household and I have no wish to be perverse; but we cannot join in the common abuse of the month of February. It is not surprising that the people of London and other large towns should dislike the most *sloppy* of the months, precluded as they are from witnessing the awakening of the year as we see it in the country; but I rather wonder that rural residents should join in the fault-finding. No month has a more distinctive character; and no characteristic can be more interesting than that of an awakening from the season of sleep, and a visible preparation for the noble shows of the coming year. The days are lengthening; the sunshine in our south rooms is warmer; and we trace with pleasure the change in its course. The sun is no longer so low as to light up the bookcases on the opposite wall, or touch the pictures on one side; the carpet only is now shone upon; and the space will shorten till, at Midsummer, the glare will not pass the threshold of the glass door. There is a portrait in a room of ours which has a western aspect; and for a few days, twice a year, the sunlight touches the eyes of this portrait, immediately before sunset, giving an extraordinary and unearthly expression to a familiar face, which it is scarcely possible to look at steadily. A thoughtless stranger might easily make a ghost story out of it. For that purpose, he must come towards the end of February, or in the middle of October, and take his chance for some one of the three days at each period which will serve.

Better even than the lengthening of the days, is the rising of the sap. Candlemas (2nd of February) is conspicuously observed in our part of the country; and one preparation for it is, finishing off all planting of trees of every kind. Our woodmen and nurserymen say they will warrant the growth of nearly every tree they plant between Martinmas and Christmas, but not one after Candlemas. So we now see no more of the winter wains with their picturesque loads of living trees,—now a noble tree, anchored upright, with cables and chains; and now, a little grove of young hollies or oaks, each with its ball of earth about its roots, going to the square hole already dug for it, where buckets of water stand ready to make a puddle when it is in, that the soil may settle down well upon the roots. We shall see no more such processions till the leaves which are now in the bud have all fallen,—late next autumn.

Talking of leaves in the bud,—some have already come out. Besides the honeysuckle, we have now some sprouts just visible on the rose-bushes outside the porch. A few bright days further on in the month change the hue of the hedges, and of the woods, far and near, casting a tint of purplish red over them, which tells of swelling buds, and of life within the bare and rigid branches. By that time the leaves of daffodils and narcissus are showing themselves, all along the verge of the woods. As early as Candlemas we have the snowdrop,—the white lady of February, as it used to be called in days when that feast filled everybody's thoughts with the Virgin and her Purification. The religious association was hardly so strong as in the case of the passion-flower; but the snowdrop was the Virgin's flower, or her picture.

On the 2nd of February, in those days, the candles were blessed by the Church for the whole year. It is regarded for other reasons now. There are several records, and two or three proverbs, which show that sunshine on Candlemas day has always been considered a misfortune. It portends a protraction of the winter, in its severity; whereas a grey, lowering day promises a seasonable transition into spring. I do not know that my neighbours have their hearts in these portents, so much as their forefathers had. They are more occupied with getting their bills paid. Candlemas is the grand season for settling accounts with us, as Christmas is in the towns. Some of us think this the worst custom we have. Long credits are apt to be the rule in woodland districts, from the practice of distant payments for timber. The timber sellers having to wait for their money, make the tradesmen wait, and then the tradesmen make the artisans wait; and the artisans make their labourers wait; and so the evil practice goes the round. At great mansions, where there are a score of servants on the premises, the baker's bill for the year will be paid to-day, —a great trial to the honesty of more than one party concerned. From his single room the labourer goes forth, to claim the balance due to him for the year. He has been paid in part on account; but he has more to receive. The question is whether the balance will clear off what he owes for bread, bacon, potatoes, clothing, and at the publichouse. His wife looks after him from the door, wishing she might go with him, or in his stead; for he will be offered a little glass of spirits at every place of business; and it is nearly certain that a good deal of the balance will be left at the publichouse before the next morning. Our wives and daughters get home early, or keep at home on Candlemas day, because almost every man they meet is more or less overcome by drink, —even men who are sober every other day of the year. They are unaware of the effect of sips of whisky, repeated from house to house; and when they find it out next morning, they will discover that they have somehow or other made away with a great deal of their money. It seldom happens that two or three households, which ought to have been doing well, are not "sold up," within a few weeks of Candlemas. I consider the gentry answerable for most of this mischief. When the squire's beef and mutton are paid for

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only once a year, the journeyman will pay only annually for his bacon, and the cottager for his bread. Then the shoemaker is kept bare, for he must pay for his leather; and the clothier, who must also clear his way. With some trembling, they send in their bills in August,—at the half-year: but no notice is taken by the squire or dame; and then the workpeople say, "If the Justice and the Doctor, and the ladies don't pay till Candlemas, you can't expect us." When we, and our parson, and one or two more, first set our faces against this system of going on, we were called troublesome for making the tradesmen settle business on the spot, or send in weekly, or, at most, monthly bills: but our neighbours,—especially the wives,—are well pleased now that we do not swell the Candlemas receipts, but make our payments in a safer and more natural course. There is a somewhat lighter burden on several people's minds when they wake on that dreary February morning, on which they invariably find that, instead of a pretty sum over, as they

expected, they have by no means enough to clear them at the shops. Between bad debts on the one hand, and forgotten expenses on the other, the balance lies on the wrong side. If they could have supposed it, they would have denied themselves this or that indulgence, which they had fancied they could well afford. Thus goes the story, year by year; and herein lies the gloom of February to us and those about us.

There are some rainy days, and a few may show continuous rain; but the damp so complained of proceeds mainly from our having reached the close of the wet and non-evaporating period of the year. The springs have been filling since October, and if they are not full yet, it is because of the frost, which has intercepted the flow. Now is the time for completing the provision for the support of the vegetation of the year. By this time the drains, ditches, and watercourses ought to be clear and clean, for the whole capacity of every channel will be wanted. The frozen ponds show cracks first, and then masses of soiled ice, with stones lying on them. The meadows are streaked with lines of water, into which the snow is melt-

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ing down. This is not pretty, certainly; nor are the hills pretty, patched with snow and colourless grass; nor the roads, on which we find a mixture of mud, cinders, and dirty snow, where we were lately tramping a bright icy path, on snow as pure as the clear heavens. But it is not all ugly. The very drip from the eaves has its beauty, when it falls from a well-kept thatch which is drying in the sun. It is pleasant to see the wash going on in so many cottages where it is sadly wanted after the frosty season. Tubs and pails are set everywhere to catch the drip, and linen is flapping on the lines, or spread on the bushes in every garden, on a sunny day. On the hedge banks, where snow still lurks in the hollows, there are ugly patches of rotten weeds: but there is already a promise of renovation. Dandelions are open in sunny places, and the common crowfoot: and the pretty bright green of the wild strawberry catches the eye, and the wild parsley, and the shining hartstongue fern, and the maidenhair, in choice places, and the tufts of primrose leaves, getting larger and stronger now, and the speedwells, and, perhaps, best of all, the daisy. The first daisies are an honourable mark for February in themselves. In the hedge we find the catkins already hanging from the hazels, and over the pools the smooth shining grey buds of the palm willow, which children suppose to be the palms carried by glorified spirits, and gaze at with awe accordingly. The alder and the poplar show their flower buds, and on the common the whin or gorse is already bright. In seasons when fodder is scarce, we are thankful to gather the young sprouts of the gorse for cattle. They are fond of it, and it is an important resource in a moorland country, where a growth of whins covers miles of the surface.

This topic brings us to Collop Monday, the day preceding Shrove Tuesday. The name is now a mere traditional one; but it is worth preserving, in memory of the time when Lent was truly and generally observed, and when it also happened that fresh meat was a thing almost unheard of at the end of winter. This Monday was the last day of flesh dinners before Lent: and people cut up such meat as they had remaining into collops, to hang up to dry, or to lie in salt for the forty days. Eggs and bacon are, or lately were, called eggs and collops on that day.

The hens ought to be laying abundantly by this time; and they must have been well treated, and much coaxed in old times, to answer the still greater demand upon them. Eggs were wanted with collops on that Monday, and for pancakes on the Tuesday, and for egg sauce to eat with salt-fish and parsnips all through Lent. Few of us see enough of fasting in Lent or other times to have much idea what it is now like, but we can form some notion of what it was in old Catholic times. We must remember how much the rural labouring classes depended then on cabbage of one kind or another. "Kail wort" was cabbage food then, and not the particular vegetable which we now know as colewort. The cabbage soup of Russia and some other countries seems to us an unwholesome diet: but it was formerly the main diet of the majority of the English people. Fish was more common then than now, for the poor as well as the rich. At present, the gentry have, in Lent, cod to any amount, soles, skate, haddocks, codlings, and, towards the end, herrings. Turbot is for those who think proper to fast in a luxurious way. There are several kinds of fish which afford a meal not to be complained of when stewed with wine and spices. The oddest dishes to find set down in the programme of Lent fasting are young ducks, fowls, pigeon-pie, and, no doubt, lark puddings. On the whole, considering what beef was in days when cattle could not be kept alive through the winter, and the meat was therefore salt; and remembering the kale diet of the poor, and the abundance of fish and eggs and wild-fowl, there might be no great disadvantage to Lent, in its comparison with the rest of winter, in regard to diet. As for us, we have an abundant choice. It is the height of the pork as well as the beef season. Veal begins to appear in the market. There is house-lamb for those who choose to pay for it. We can get wild-fowl still, though one of the spectacles of the month is the departure of the wild swans and geese for the north. Hares can be had up to the 27th, and no longer. We wait for our pigeon-pies, for the nests are our object now. Next to the hens, which are laying—some or other of them—all the year round, the first eggs we have to show little Harry are pigeons' eggs. There are no other birds' eggs, we tell him, anywhere round, unless under the pair of ravens which live on the crag. He cannot go and see them: nobody can go, or there would not be young ravens every year: but this is the time when the hen raven begins to sit.

"When will there be more?" he wishes to know.—Very soon now, in the rookery. The rooks, which have shown themselves every morning and evening through the winter, are now noisy and busy in the extreme. They are pairing and building. The sparrows make no less bustle in their small way: they are pairing, and they chirp at a great rate. The woodlark and the chaffinch sing, and the hen chaffinches flock together. The thrush and the lark sing, and the bullfinch has been seen in the garden again. The buntings collect in a crowd, and so do the linnets, and the sportsman finds the partridges settling themselves for the season in the meadows or among the young corn.

Harry and I agree that all this bustle is like the waking up of the year, as our early voices and footsteps about the house show that the night is over, and the sun is about to bring the day. We remember how, amidst the strange sounds in the frost, there was scarcely one which came from beast or bird; and then, how silent everything was after a fall of snow. Not only was every sound muffled by the snow, but the creatures seemed to be struck mute and motionless. It is so different now, though it is still winter, that we go out early in the morning, just for the purpose of observing what the noises are.

We leave behind the noisiest creatures of all—the turkeys, which make a greater fuss than ever with their gobbling and strutting, and the hens clucking over their morning task. We cannot resist waiting a minute or two for the eggs, and carrying them in for breakfast, and then on we

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go. We could not have believed what a hubbub there would be in the park woods. In the middle of the day one may hear the wood-pecker and a singing bird or two, besides the chirpers and twitterers; but now, before sunrise, there is absolutely a din, as if every tree and bush were full of birds as busy as bees. Harry will understand Valentine poetry better after this. On the wall the magpies are running, all alive, and showing themselves in their flight from tree to tree on the lawn. We suppose the owls do not know how near the sun is, for they hoot from the thickets as if it were midnight. They have waked up, it is clear; so have the tomtits, for we see them hanging from the eaves of the barn, and from the thatch of Bircham's cottage. The frogs in the ditch are actually croaking; and, if we can meet with a toad, we will try to get his spring noise out of him. Bill Bircham tells us that the ditch will soon be swarming with tadpoles, and he wonders whether Master Harry would ever guess what sort of creatures they will grow into. Bill is going into the field to-day, to open his campaign against the birds. It seems full early; but he says, whenever the grain is sown, or the young blade appearing, there is mischief to be feared from birds and other vermin. He is to watch, again, the hares among the springing wheat; and he is to keep off the robbers who would dig with their beaks after sown grain; moreover, he is to keep watch for a pair of kites which have been seen once already this year, and which did so much mischief last year that the farmer has offered a reward for their bodies, which are to be conspicuously displayed in the poultry-yard. One has swooped already, though the first sitting-hen has not yet hatched her brood. The kite carried off a pigeon; and he will certainly come for more. So Bill is to keep an eye in the air, and spring his rattle when the enemy appears.

While we follow him to his field, to see what he can show us there, the sun has come up, and we find a cloud of insects on the wing under the hedges. The birds found many a good meal of gnats and flies on the snow, near the water, when the first frost came; but there are plenty left. We find in the field a man fumbling in the bank of a ditch, and stop to ask what he is doing. He is after the moles, which betray their whereabout, now the soil is soft, by throwing up their little hillocks on the surface of the meadow. It so happens that our gardener is vindictive against the moles, which not only hurt the appearance of the lawn, but injure the roots of his most precious plants, without the smallest consideration for their quality. So he declares; and he has quite set Harry against the moles. He is therefore for joining in the hunt when he finds the molecatcher on the track of a vigorous member of the tribe. The nest is just at hand, and what a change comes over my boy's face when it is laid open! A few inches underground there is a soft bed of moss; and huddled together, there are four little moles, so soft and tender that Harry does not believe they will ever do any harm to anybody. He is reminded that he once thought the same of the pretty mice which pop in and out of the old wall in our garden: but he heard yesterday what havoc they have made among the crocuses. His sisters took great pains with their spring flower-beds, and with several clumps and borders besides, where crocuses of various colours were to make a charming show: but now the prospect is sadly spoiled by those same pretty mice, which have helped themselves to so many roots that there are gaps in the borders, and the clumps are reduced to a few stragglers. These soft and tender moles, if there are enough of them, will soon be causing expense and trouble to man and horse. Molehills are such an impediment in mowing, that the field must be bush-harrowed before the grass makes its spring growth. Meantime the molecatcher is setting his traps on the ditch-bank, and examining some which he placed a day or two since. He tells us that he is going to be busy to-day after other vermin. At Farmer Black's they want a clearance made in the stackyard, as usual at the end of winter, at once of the bad stuff at the bottom of the stacks, and of the creatures that harbour there. If we like to go, we may see the rubbish removed from below, so that the hens may go in and out without fear. The hens will shelter and lay under woodpiles and stacks, in spite of all pains to teach them otherwise; and there is no end to the loss of eggs, and, further on in the season, of chicks, if a clear sweep is not made in good time. There are fine pickings for the poultry under the cornstacks, and good shelter under the hay and the faggots: and the poultry are worth indulging when the spring is coming on. Altogether, our impression is that spring is really coming on, and we announce it at home. Harry is rather disheartened at hearing that we cannot call it spring till March has come. A dozen, or a score of days, make up a very long time for a very little boy; but he agrees that we need not do nothing while waiting for spring, and that, in fact, there is as much to do as we are likely to get through.

While the damp and fog last, the greenhouse work may as well be done. It is an endless amusement to shift the flowering plants there, bringing forward and combining those that are coming into bloom, and carrying to the rear those which are going off. Besides this, the girls have now to make a thorough revision, throwing out inferior things to make room for new treasures. They set aside any plants that want a smoking, to get rid of insects. They cleanse the larger and thicker leaves with a soft sponge, and syringe with tepid water, and stir the soil, and put in leaf-mould, and do plenty of repotting. Harry's particular office is to find a ladybird in the garden, if possible, and put it on any plant where there are aphides.

It will not do in February to mind dirty boots; so we go about with a pound of soil on each foot, in the kitchen-garden and orchard. In the flower-garden, the gravel walks are little more than yellow mud; and a proper use of the proper scrapers is enjoined upon everybody. We have to thin the bunches of grapes, now just advanced enough to show their clusters. This is work permitted to nobody but myself, my wife, and the gardener. The whole value of the crop depends on the judgment with which it is done. We have to set potatoes in frames, if we mean to have any

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early ones, and to plunge certain choice potted strawberry roots into a pit, regularly spared for the purpose. There is plenty of sowing going on in the kitchen garden,—of spinach, and lettuce, and radishes, and parsnips, and various cabbages, and peas; and the rows have to be covered from frost and birds with spruce-boughs, or fern, or straw, till they are fairly up; and then the peas at least must not be left quite uncovered to the sparrows. Thorns which will admit air and sunshine, or nets must protect them till they have grown out of danger from the sharp little beaks which would crop them so mischievously. There are the wall fruit-trees to watch, now that the buds are swelling. I have known my apricots show blossom before February was out, and the peaches are not long after. We are preparing screens to succeed the warmer winter covering, when the time comes for guarding the trees during a part, and not the whole of the twenty-four hours. If we want work to warm us after the nicer tasks of pruning, potting, and sowing, and tying up raspberries, there is always plenty of stout digging to be done in the first February thaw. We can never be wrong in digging and manuring about the roots of anything that will bear. Then, if we want play, there is the brightening show of the flower-beds consecrated to the season. We can smell the mezereon some way off. Its little red flowers are out, and the green of its leaves is just beginning to show. Snowdrops abound of course; and there is yellow hellebore, and polyanthus, and limewort, and hepaticas,—red, soon to be followed by blue; and periwinkle, white and blue; and primroses of both colours. White crocuses are opening; and spikes of the yellow, and even of the purple (which is the latest), appear in the midst of their sharp leaves. Before the month is out, we shall have violets, and perhaps the single wall-flower, and, in sheltered and sunny corners, hyacinths and tulips, and the exquisite crown-imperial. Within the house, the bulbous array is splendid. Hyacinths, tulips, and crocuses are in their full glory. When I think how we have advanced in this cheap kind of luxury since I was a boy, and how sensible we have become of the beauty of evergreens in our gardens and shrubberies, it seems to me that we have got rid of much of the desolation of winter. There is a vast difference now between a cottage-garden where all the vegetation is dank and dripping, or rotten, or leafless and bare at this season, and one where there is a holly near the window, to be a sort of aviary all winter, and a laurustinus or two to yield blossom-clusters, and shine through the snow. On larger estates, it is the highest luxury to have a pine clump on any rising ground, in which to find refuge from wintry sights and sounds; and an evergreen walk in which one may find spring itself, in any interval of winter sunshine. I see no small difference within the last few years. When I enter our parish after an absence in winter, the bushes of shining green which overhang garden walls and palings are a treat to the eye, even when burdened with snow; and the belts and hedges of thick and never-failing verdure about all park and garden entrances and boundaries, give an air of warmth and liveliness in the worst days, and on the brighter ones reflect and enhance the sunshine.

Towards the end of the month, when the waters have gone back to their places, and the fogs have gone up from the marshes, and short and sharp gusts of wind have cleared the air, and dried our roofs, and walls, and roads, we may have days as pleasant for exercise as any in the year. The increase of the warmth and light is manifest; in fact, we do not desire warmer weather for walking; and early diners can stay out till tea-time. In my young days, it was the custom to have tea by day-light on St. Valentine's Eve,—the 13th. Some readers may wonder why; for the connection is not very obvious between the tea-hour on the 13th and lovemaking on the 14th. It was in a part of the kingdom where an ancient custom was kept up, which had long been forgotten elsewhere, and which is now, I believe, superseded even there by the innovation of the Christmas-tree.

This custom was to send presents, accompanied by verses, anonymously, and by a special method. Prodigious raps and rings at the house-door were instantly answered; and the packet was thrown in, and the bringer gone before he could be recognised. No pleasure of my childhood equalled the raptures of St. Valentine's Eve,—enhanced by the anxieties of an unwonted secrecy for weeks before. The buying or making the presents for each member of the family, and for several friends outside; the writing the verses; and the plots to get them sent without discovery, wrought up all children to the highest pitch of excitement; and then the deluge of gifts came to turn their heads altogether. All such pleasures have their drawbacks; and in this case the misery and terror were lest the packets should be snatched from step or doorway, or out of the very basket, and even the hand of the messenger. One of Mrs. Opie's tales turns on this incident,—a packet of family letters having been so snatched on one Valentine's Eve, and *not* returned, but circulated and talked about among such people as those who stole them from the hand of the mother who wrote them. There was more care used in carrying valentines after that misfortune. Now, I fear, the misfortune is that there are none to carry. The postman does it all, next morning, as everywhere else in England.

Old books show us that "Valentines" were "drawn,"—lovers assorted by lot,—in former times, in the same way as the personages at a Twelfth Night festival. This was the convivial method of fun. Then followed the observance with which we are most familiar,—the sending of anonymous love verses,—more burlesque than serious, no doubt, at all times, and in modern times wholly burlesque. By the stationers' shop-windows in town and village, and by the lateness of the post on the 14th, and by the Annual Report of the Post-Office, we know that the custom is still kept up: but it must be rapidly declining in extent, as it is certainly becoming vulgarised. There is nothing new to be said about the billing and cooing season of nature and valentines; and the mystery and devices of valentine-art,—once a small branch of art by itself,—must be pretty well

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exhausted, as the patronage of it has declined. St. Valentine and his observances will always, however, be a pretty tradition. With him the dead winter passes away, and the new life of another year comes in.

FROSTS ON THE THAMES.

A hundred years hence people will be comparing notes with the calamitous winter of 1860-61, just as we have been doing during the last few weeks with such scraps and fragments of description as have come down to us about the famous frosts, and tempests, and fogs, that visited this stupendous London of ours ages upon ages ago. But they will find us of the nineteenth century intolerably tame, when they contrast us with the ancients who flourished before the Revolution. They will learn that there was a frost in England which began shortly before Christmas, 1860, and lasted on and off pretty nearly a fortnight into January; that the thermometer presented extraordinary variations in different localities, as thermometers will do according to the manner and place in which they are hung, falling in one apochryphal spot, if the reporter is to be trusted, which I am confident he is not, down to 15° below zero; that at Hamburgh, where the birds were frozen on the trees, it was several degrees lower; that in some bleak parts of Lancashire, and elsewhere, the legs of waterfowl were frozen into the ice on the surface of lakes and ponds; that the ice on the Serpentine in Hyde Park was thirteen inches thick; that myriads of persons skated on it, night after night, by torch-light; and that at the moment when the enterprising public were on the point of inaugurating a Frost Fair, the wind shifted, and put an end to the fun.

What is all this in comparison with the mighty current of the Thames congealed from bank to bank, and the traffic and uproar of the streets, even to the tramp of Flemish horses, the amusements of the court, and the pastimes of the people, from cards and dancing to archery, football, and ninepins, transferred to the highway of the river? I must allow that it was a sight to see the skaters by torch-light upon the Serpentine. The tossing of the flambeaux through the darkness, and the glancing and leaping of links hither and thither, the hands that held them being invisible, had a lurid effect much like a revel in Pandemonium, as such scenes are represented to us by our Christmas poets. The brisk trade that was carried on in torches helped out the illusion, by suggesting to the pedestrian a momentary apprehension that he had wandered in his sleep into the infernal regions, his ears being eternally smitten with sharp cries of "Who'll buy a torch?" "A torch for two-pence!" while his eyes were exposed to the imminent danger of "total eclipse," the said torch being incessantly flashed into his face, partly in a spirit of elvish frolic, and partly in the way of business. Nor should the scattering homeward of the streams of population over the diverging tracks of the park, towards the small hours of the morning, be forgotten, illumed here and there by trails of light from dying brands flung upon the path, or by the alarming hilarity of some grimy Hymen, pitching his flaming torch, from time to time, into the thick of the crowd. But how insignificant such incidents appear beside the spectacle of the whole town in miniature bivouacking upon the Thames!

Mrs. Piozzi tells us that in her time a frost was reported to have shut up the river in the second or third centuries; but the first authenticated London frost took place in 1063, the year in which Harold hunted the Welsh into their fastnesses, when the Thames was frozen over for fourteen weeks. Thirty years later, under William Rufus, the Thames was again frozen, and the rivers through the country were so heavily locked in, that when the thaw came several bridges of stone and wood, and many water-mills, were carried away. The Christmas of 1281 was marked by a similar visitation, when five arches of London Bridge were swept from their foundations, and Rochester Bridge and others entirely destroyed. On this occasion a regular daily traffic was established across the ice between Westminster and Lambeth. In 1433-4, the river was frozen below bridge to Gravesend from the 24th of November to the 10th of February; and in 1506, and again in 1515, it became practicable for carriages and cattle throughout the month of January. The entry of Edward the Sixth into London, after he was proclaimed, in 1547, was marked by an intense frost; and in that nipping air, as the royal *cortège* passed, a fellow suddenly appeared on the summit of Paul's steeple, and, as swift as an arrow from a bow, ran down a rope that was fixed from the top of the steeple to a ship's anchor in Dean's Place.

In 1564, the year in which Shakspeare was born, the Thames at Christmas presented a surface as firm as the face of a rock. The streets were nearly emptied, so universal was the rush of the out-of-door population to the frozen river. The thoroughfare through the Strand and Fleet Street, and on to Cheapside and Lombard Street, was deserted, a more novel and agreeable route having been discovered on the ice the whole way from Westminster to London Bridge. Multitudes of people played at football out in the centre of the stream; and Queen Elizabeth, happening at this time to be at her palace of Westminster, went on the river daily, attended by her lords and ladies, to shoot at marks. The pastimes of the Court, we may be assured, were not confined to a play of mere bowman's arrows, for there were some in the royal train who saw—or affected to see—the bent bow of Love in the brows of Majesty, and his darts in her eyes:

> Both her brows bent like my bow—
> By her looks I do her know,
> Which you call my shafts.

Here, amongst the courtiers, was Robert Dudley, who, exactly twelve months before, had been proposed by the Queen as a husband to Mary Stuart, one of those inscrutable instances of State policy, or womanly craft, upon which historical investigation has hitherto failed to throw a solitary ray of light. Dudley was now on the high road to the dangerous summit of his ambition. New Year's Day was close at hand, when he might hope to

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outstrip the most magnificent of his contemporaries in the costliness of his offerings; and, perhaps, he had even already a prophetic inspiration of the happy fortune that was to crown his devotion in the following September, when "Great Eliza" conferred upon him the Earldom of Leicester, and the castle and manor of Kenilworth, where the famous revel was afterwards held. But who can look with confidence to the future from the vantage ground of present prosperity? Both favourite and frost came to violent ends: the one poisoned on a journey to that same castle in which he had himself secretly despatched two of his victims, and the other broken up suddenly into fearful inundations, upon whose rising waters houses, bridges, and vessels were borne down to the sea like the fragments of a wreck.

The winter of 1607-8 was still more severe. The frost began about the first week in December, and fluctuated on and off till the first week in January, when it set in with extraordinary rigour. At first, between the alternate freezing and thawing, and the disruption of floating masses of ice, the populace ventured only half-way across the river; but by degrees communications were opened from bank to bank opposite to Southwark and Lambeth, and then the general public took tumultuous possession. Most of the popular pastimes were at once established; and tents were set up for dancing and refreshments. Speculative tradesmen also transported their wares for sale to the crowded scene, and shoemakers and barbers pursued their avocations at temporary stands. Whether any particular kind of shoes, especially suited to the occasion, were offered for sale, does not appear; but chopines and pantofles were purchased in abundance, as gifts from city gallants to the fair ladies who ventured with them upon the ice. The barber, always popular with his gittern and lute-strings, was a centre of attraction. To have been shaved on the ice in the middle of the Thames was undoubtedly something to remember; and many an old man relieved the dull Christmas nights under the Commonwealth by relating to his grand-children how he underwent the operation, and what adventures befel him in that memorable winter. The frost lasted altogether nearly two months, the last four weeks being intense.

The allusions of Evelyn and Pepys to the state of the weather in their time are not satisfactory. "Now," says Evelyn, under date of the 22nd January, 1649, "was the Thames frozen over with horrid tempests of wind." Towards the end of November, 1662, there was a hard frost, which Pepys briefly dismisses by observing that "it is news to us, there having been none almost these three years." The fact is that science had made very little advance in the investigation of meteorological phenomena. The seventeenth century was not a whit wiser in the matter of frosts and storms and shooting stars than the twelfth or thirteenth. Ignorance and superstition, on the contrary, had resolved themselves into articles of faith. Dr. Dee's crystal was in general request, Dryden believed in astrology, and Sir Kenelm Digby dieted the exquisite Venetia upon viper wine to preserve her beauty. The weather was as great a mystery to these philosophers as it had been to the monks who tracked the course of time in their scrolls ages before. The Registers of the Grey Friars tell us, for instance, that there were great storms in 1203, when the hailstones were as big as eggs, and birds were burned on the wing; and that in 1221, during a violent tempest, fiery dragons and flying spirits were seen careering through the air.* The Royal Society, in the advanced era of Charles II., had meteorological marvels quite as astonishing to investigate. Amongst the problems they propounded for scientific inquiry were the cosmetic virtues of May-dew, the difference between the size of snow-flakes in Teneriffe and in England, and the productive virtue of a shower of rain which was alleged to resemble corn, and which Mr. Boyle and Mr. Evelyn, being great agricultural authorities, were requested to sow, to see what kind of crop it would yield.

It was during the frost of 1662 that skates were introduced into England from Holland. Evelyn witnessed what he describes as the wonderful and dexterous evolutions of the skaters for the first time on the 1st December. The performance took place in the presence of their majesties, on the canal which had then been recently cut in St. James's Park. Evelyn particularly notes the swiftness of the skaters, and the suddenness with which they arrested themselves in full career upon the ice. The Thames was frozen that winter, but the watermen contrived to keep a passage open for the gentry. "I went home by water," says Evelyn, "but not without exceeding difficulty, great flakes of ice encompassing our boat." With the exception of a fog in August, of all months, 1663, and another which overspread the river in the December of 1671, "the thickest and darkest," according to Evelyn, who was in the midst of it, "ever known in the memory of man," the weather does not appear to have undergone any remarkable aberrations, till we come to the winter 1683-4.

This season was distinguished by one of the most remarkable frosts on record, there not being an hour's intermission from the commencement of December to the 5th of February. The Thames was congealed into a solid mass of ice, eleven inches in thickness. A new city sprang into existence on the river. Streets of booths were erected, the principal of which, called "Temple Street," crossed the stream from the Temple Stairs to Southwark. It consisted of a variety of shops, richly furnished within to attract customers, and decorated gaily on the outside with flags, and signs, selected apparently for their singularity; such as the "Broom," and the "Whip and Egg-shell." The vast holiday market thus put into activity acquired the nick-name of "Blanket Fair," in consequence of the booths being formed of blankets, which, like Goldsmith's chest of drawers, did double duty, as

* The same Registers record a heavy fall of rain in 1552, which lay on the grass as red as wine. A similar phenomenon is stated, on the authority of the Professor of Chemistry at the University of Sienna, to have occurred in that town, on the 28th of December last, about seven A.M., when there was a copious fall of rain of a reddish hue, which lasted for two hours, a second fall at eleven A.M., and a third at two P.M., the colour being deepest in the first. The fall was strictly local, and confined to a small quarter, the rain in the immediate neighbourhood being colourless. During the day the thermometer varied from forty-six to fifty degrees Fahrenheit.

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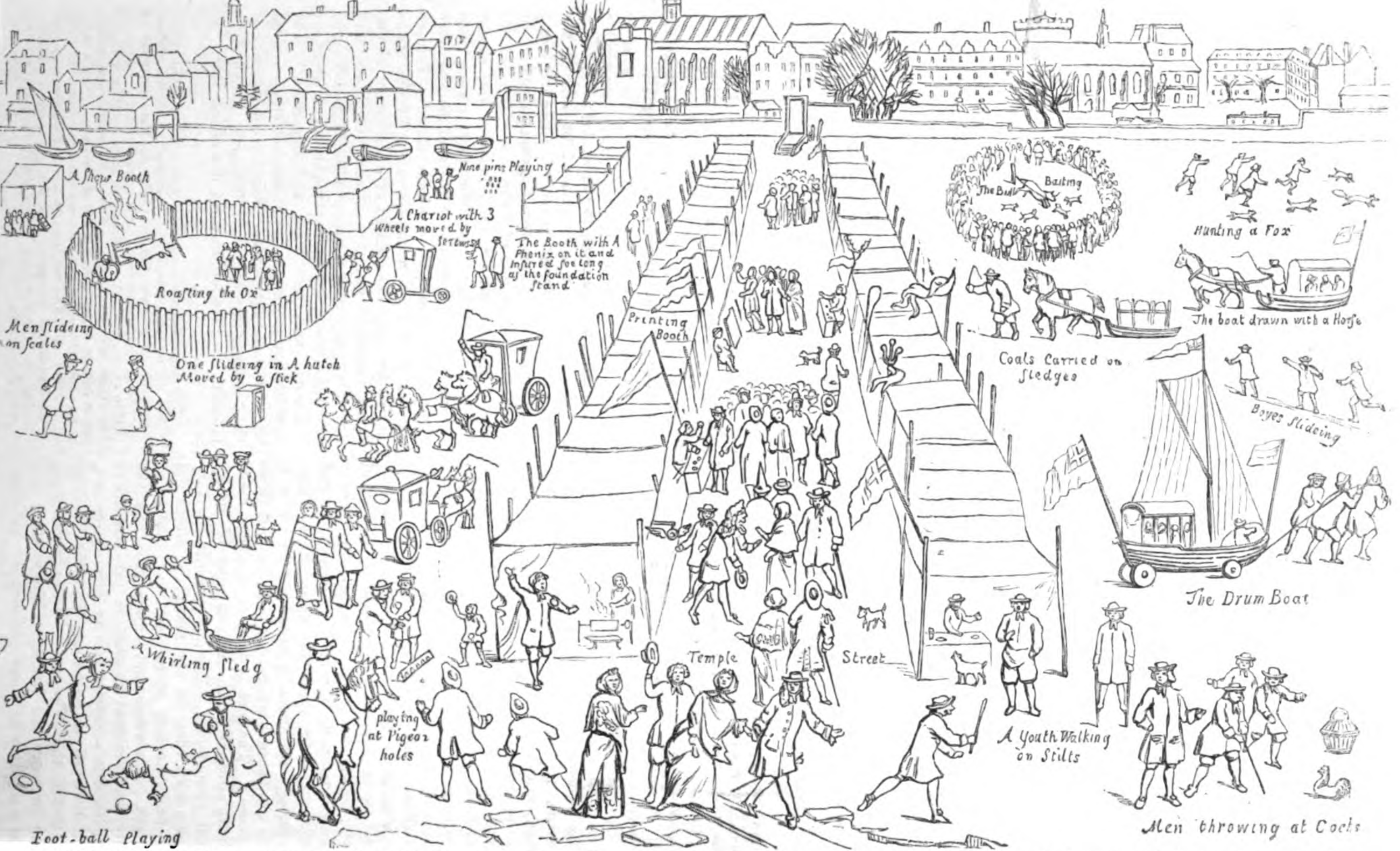


A WONDERFUL FAIR, *or a* FAIR OF WONDERS; *being a new and true Illustration and Description of the several things acted and done on the river Thames in the time of the terrible frost, which began at the beginning of December, 1683-4, and continued till the 4th of February, and held on with such violence that men and beasts, coaches and sledges, went common thereon. There was also a street of boothes, built from the Temple to South-wark, where was sold all sorts of goods; there likewise were bulls baited, a fox hunted, and an ox roasted whole, and many other strange things, as the Mapp and Description doth plainly shew.*

we learn from one of the doggerel broadsides of the day:

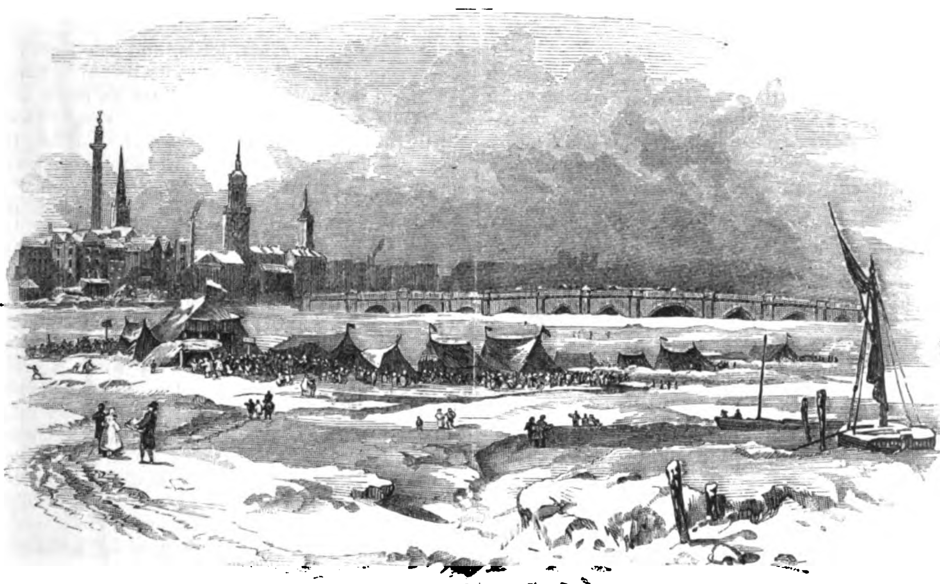
Like Babel, this fair's not built with brick or stone,
Though here, I believe, is a great confusion.
Now blankets are forced a double duty to pay,
As beds all the night, and for houses all day.

The booths supplied every conceivable kind of commodity, such as goldsmiths' work, books, toys, cutlery, ornaments, and refreshments, for which they charged exorbitant prices, a fact the rhyming historians of the scene have not failed duly to chronicle:

And such a fair I never yet came near,
Where shop-rents were so cheap and goods so dear.

Coals and wood, which even on land were nearly up to famine prices, brought enormous gains to the purveyors, and were conveyed over the ice on sledges, or on men's backs. Provisions were daily cooked in the booths, one of which, by way of speciality, took the title of "the Roast-beef Booth; and a whole ox (of which the king and queen ar said to have partaken) was roasted on the ice, i an enclosed space, to which the public were admit ted on payment. Carts and horses, and horsemen moved to and fro as upon a high road; and privat coaches crossed and re-crossed, amongst them th coach of Mr. Evelyn, which passed over fror Lambeth to the horse-ferry at Millbank, and coach and six which was driven from Whitehal nearly to London Bridge, the day before the ic broke up. Hackneys also plied for hire up an down the available extent of the river, supplyin the place of the watermen, who, driven from thei legitimate occupation, endeavoured to find employ ment by dragging boats on the ice, or setting u what the poet just quoted calls "fuddling tents:

And those that used to ask where shall I land ye?
Now cry, what lack ye, sir, beer, ale, or brandy?



Frost Fair on the Thames, A.D. 1814; from one or two prints of the time.

Several lines or stands of hackneys were established at the different stairs, and the familiar sounds of "Westward, ho!" and "Eastward, ho!" might be heard along the banks, without the professional addition of "Sculler, sir?" "Oars, sir?" The watermen were very sensitive to this usurpation of their calling, and in a ballad in which they afterwards celebrated the "melting of the Thames," they dwelt with particular satisfaction upon the resumption of those turbulent cries which formed a characteristic feature of the life of the river:

Let's tune our throats
To our usual notes,
Of Twitnam, Richmond, hey!
Sir, sculler, sir? oars, sir?
Loudly roar, sir,
Here's Dick, sir, you won't pass him by?

Bartholomew at its prime was inferior in variety of humours to this "Freezland Fair or Icy Bea Garden," as it is designated in one of the ballads There was some humour even in the signs an announcements of the tents. One was the "Horn Tavern," indicated by the antlers of a stag hoiste over the entrance; another was the "Phœnix, insured against fire as long as the foundation lasted." The diversions were endless, not the least extraordinary of them being horse and coach races. Ther were show-booths for rope-dancing, conjuring, an puppet-plays; music booths and lottery booths, miniature bear-garden, a ring for bull-baiting close under the Temple Gardens, and not far of might be enjoyed the singular pastime of huntin a fox on the ice, an incident selected for particula admiration by one of the river poets:

There was fox-hunting on this frozen river,
Which may a memorandum be for ever,
For I do think, since Adam drew his breath,
No fox was hunted on the ice to death.

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Throwing at cocks, foot-ball, bowls, nine-pins, cups and balls, and pigeon-holes were the principal sports. Bowls and nine-pins were played by both sexes in the seventeenth century; but while bowls was a common amusement among ladies of quality, nine-pins was confined chiefly to the wives of citizens.

A few professors of the yet exclusive art of skating mingled with the crowd; but the bulk of the people had not advanced beyond the primæval pastime of sliding, which was, here and there, somewhat improved upon by being practised in a hutch, propelled by a stick. Open boats and tilt-boats, dragged by men or horses, and chariots moved by screws, or teams of horses, afforded accommodation to thousands of spectators, who were by these means enabled to traverse the crowded surface in comparative safety. Tumblers, and boys walking on stilts, collected crowds of gazers, and contended for popularity with Dutch whimsies, and whirling sledges swept rapidly round in a circle by men drawing a rope fastened to a stake fixed in the centre.

The most successful of all the speculations seems to have been a printing-press which was set up in a booth about the middle of Temple-street, on the west side. Multitudes flocked to this booth either to buy ballads about the frost, which the pressmen were constantly occupied in throwing off, or to get their names printed on a little card, as a memorial of the scene. The printer made a rich harvest by his industry: he charged sixpence for printing a single name, and it was estimated that he made a clear gain of 5*l.* a-day. Lord Braybrooke saw one of the cards, and describes it as containing the following words within a treble border:

Mons. et Madm. Justel. Printed on the river Thames, being frozen. In the 36th year of King Charles II. February the 5th, 1683.*

Many of the nobility carried away similar memorials. The following most curious specimen of the

CHARLES,	KING.
JAMES,	DUKE.
KATHERINE,	QUEEN.
MARY,	DUTCHESS.
ANN,	PRINCESSE.
GEORGE,	PRINCE.
HANS IN KELDER.	

London:—Printed by G. Groom, on the Ice, on the River Thames, *January* 31, 1684.

Frost press is mentioned by Dr. Rimbault as being in the possession of Mr. Upcott. It consists of a quarter-sheet of coarse Dutch paper, in which, within a type border, measuring 3½ inches by 4, are printed the name of the king and the family party with whom, on one occasion, he visited Blanket Fair. It may be observed that he was not always there in equally good company, or at such reputable hours as to obtain access to the printing press.

The *dramatis personæ* in this little royal comedy speak for themselves: the poor, ill-favoured Queen Katherine; Mary D'Este, second Duchess of York; Ann, afterwards Queen of England; and her husband, the Prince of Denmark. The closing name, which, translated into English, means "Jack in the Kitchen," is, says Dr. Rimbault, supposed to be a touch of the king's humour. The supposition is, no doubt, correct, the touch of humour consisting in a gross allusion to the situation of the Princess Ann, which nobody but his majesty would be likely to have made.

The cold was so bitter throughout the continuance of the frost, that men and cattle died in the fields, trees split, plants, birds, and fish perished, and whole parks of deer were destroyed. Small-pox raged in London, as it appears to have done on other similar visitations; the streets were filled with the smoke of the sea-coal, blinding the eyes, and choking the lungs; the supply of water was paralysed; and the brewers, in common with many other contributors to the public comfort, were compelled to suspend their works.

It was in the midst of this rigorous season that the weak and impetuous Duke of Monmouth suddenly disappeared from his house in Holborn, and was seen a few days afterwards in Holland, on his way to the Court of the Prince of Orange. He had the true Stuart blood in him, a little diluted on the mother's side. He was vain, irresolute, and obstinate, suspected everybody, could do nothing in an open, straightforward way, and was eternally mixed up in plots and schemes. His father and his uncle at this very time, with all their show of pleasantry at Blanket Fair, were engaged in secret manœuvres to counteract each other; Charles plotting with Monmouth against the Duke of York, but doing it in such a way as to fill Monmouth with alarm for his own safety; Monmouth distrusting his father, and plotting against his uncle; and the Duke of York plotting against both. There is an historical completeness in the coil that exactly fits the family. It was in this winter, towards the beginning of February, when the frost was at the depth of its severity on the flat exposed surface of Holland, that Monmouth presented himself at the Hague. He was not alone. He was accompanied by the beautiful Lady Henrietta Wentworth, who had forsaken all to cling to him in the hour of adversity; and who, only a twelvemonth later, sold her last jewels to help out that miserable expedition which doomed him to the scaffold. The situation was embarrassing enough. Here was the Prince of Orange receiving at his Court a young pretender, who at that moment was acknowledged to be the hope and head of the party that was organised to keep his own father-in-law out of the succession, and who, to mend matters, presented himself with

* Either the frost printer or Lord Braybrooke is at fault here.

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his mistress in his hand. But neither prince nor princess had many scruples, political or moral. And looking to what happened afterwards to the whole family, and how near at hand was the time when the Prince of Orange was to drive his aforesaid father-in-law before him out of his own kingdom, the reception given to Monmouth, and the favours lavished on Lady Henrietta, cannot excite much astonishment.

Picture, then, this gallant and captivating youth,—for at this time he was only thirty-five—whose dazzling presence extinguished all rivalry at Whitehall, and who, De Grammont tells us, was the universal terror of all husbands and lovers, employed in the tenderest dalliance at the court of the Hague, teaching the princess new country dances, walking with her every day for hours together on the Mall, and teaching her to skate by the express desire of the prince. The picture is striking; but it would be imperfect without its pendant, which, while this handsome reprobate was at the Hague, shows us his father, the King of England, abandoning himself at Blanket Fair to midnight orgies, over which decent history drops a curtain!

A few years onward bring us to the sequel of these events culminating in the frost of January 1688. The last days of James II. are coming. The rabble are demolishing Popish chapels, and the town houses of the Popish gentry, not sparing even that of the Spanish Ambassador, which they pillage. The Prince of Orange has advanced as far as Windsor. James takes shipping for France, but is obliged to put in for ballast at Faversham, where he is so ill-treated by the populace that he returns to London. It is the fight of a rat with his back to the wall. Seeing that nothing is for it but to put the best face he can upon his helplessness, he sends the General of his forces to "invite" the Prince of Orange to St. James's. But the General, coming without passport or trumpet, is detained, and the King is warned to retire. James takes this message in dudgeon, but steals off, nevertheless, privately to Rochester, from whence he is persuaded to return, and then does a brave thing. His last struggle. He dines in public, and has a Jesuit to say mass. The next night a council; the next day a second flight to Rochester, and from thence to France, and all is over. The Prince of Orange holds court at St. James's, and all the world is there, admiring and wondering, and speculating upon his stately reserve and Dutch phlegm. And all this time it is freezing bitterly in the basin of the Thames.

Another revolution of years, and another frost, of seven weeks' duration, in the winter of 1694-5. In 1715-16, the Thames was frozen from the 24th November to the 9th February. An ox was roasted near Hungerford Stairs, booths were erected, and the sports of the fair of 1684 revived.

Of still more alarming proportions was the Great Frost, so called from its extraordinary intensity and long continuance. It lasted from Christmas Day, 1739, till the 17th of February following, when it began to thaw, and took nearly the rest of the month to disappear. The aspect of the river was like a model in the raw material of some select nook in the Arctic Regions, being covered with icebergs, rising on all sides in gigantic masses. A vast frost fair, rivalling the carnival of 1684, was speedily set in motion, a printing press established, and an ox killed in solemn form by a butcher in a rich laced cambric apron, a silver steel, and a fine hat and feathers, who claimed the office by inheritance, his father having killed the ox that was roasted in 1684, and he having been himself the executioner in 1715. The productions of the press, or presses—for there were evidently more than one—appear to have been rather numerous, and to have consisted, for the most part, of metrical scraps, inclosed in copper-plate borders, representing views of the fair, or fantastical designs. One of these legends will be enough as a sample. It will be seen that it was printed as far down the river as Queenhithe:

Upon the Frost in the Year 1739-40.

Behold the liquid Thames now frozen o'er,
That lately ships of mighty burthen bore;
Here you may print your name, tho' cannot write,
'Cause numbed with cold; 'tis done with great delight.
And lay it by, that ages yet to come,
May see what things upon the ice were done.

Mr. John Cross, aged 6.

Printed on the Ice upon the Thames, at Queenhithe, January the 29th, 1739-40.

On this occasion coals and water rose to a fabulous price, and the poor were reduced to the last extremity of distress. The watermen and fishermen went about the streets, carrying a peter-boat draped in mourning, and carpenters, gardeners, and numerous other workmen made long dismal processions through the town, exhibiting their useless implements also in mourning, and singing doleful frozen-out ditties. The breaking up of this stupendous frost was as disastrous as might have been expected from the peculiarities of its formation. The ice was rent in enormous masses, and drifted away with the rising stream; and early on the following morning the inhabitants of the west side of London Bridge were amazed to see detached settlements of booths, shops, and huts, of different shapes and sizes, without a human being in them, floating down under their windows, and dashing with violence against the arches below. Many of the houses, and portions of the bridge, suffered considerable damage.

In 1768 and 1785 the river was again frozen; but no further attempt was made at an ice festival till 1788-9, when there was a clear seven weeks' frost, from November to January. Most of the features of the previous years were repeated, and travelling menageries were added to the attractions. The ice was practicable from shore to shore at the lower reach of the river opposite the Custom House; but, notwithstanding the extent of surface frozen, the thaw came so rapidly that the lives of thousands of persons were placed in jeopardy by the terror and confusion it produced. As the ice cracked and broke away down the stream, many ships were torn away from their moorings, and a house at Rotherhithe was lifted from its foundations.

The last time the Thames was frozen over was in 1814. Violent storms of snow, and north-easterly winds, accompanied by an intense frost,

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prevailed throughout the month of January, after which the river was considered safe for foot-passengers. The watermen made rough paths strewn with ashes, direct and diagonal, from bank to bank, for which they charged toll, making a considerable revenue—amounting to as much as £6 a-day—during the short time the fair lasted. A street of tents, called the "City Road," afforded the usual recreations to visitors; printing presses were more numerous than ever, but the novelty was worn out, and the supply exceeded the demand; a sheep was roasted, and slices of the mutton were sold at a shilling a pound; and itinerant vendors of pies and gingerbread filled the air with their shrill cries. The vast quantities of snow that had fallen gave a peculiar character to the scene. Gathering into a species of glaciers against the shores, buildings, and bridges, sometimes broken off by the action of the tide and forming islands of ice crowned with pinnacles of fleecy drift, and sometimes carried away with perilous rapidity, the surface presented an appearance of a wild sea of ice and snow tossed by tempests, and never level or secure. The dislocation and dispersion of these frozen rifts was attended with great peril. A thaw set in all at once, with torrents of rain, and in a single night the Thames was strewn with the fragments of the merry fair. Some roysterers were carousing in a booth about two o'clock in the morning, when the tide rose, and, bursting the ice, carried off the booth with terrific velocity. The unfortunate bacchanalians, in their terror, set fire to the tent, which exposed them, without the possibility of human aid, to two modes of death. Dashed about from iceberg to iceberg, they leaped into a lighter, which soon afterwards struck against one of the piers of Blackfriars Bridge, where some of them escaped, the others flinging themselves into a barge that happened to pass. The incident is characteristic of the closing scene of the frost of 1814.

That winter was considered at the time the most severe ever experienced in London. There had been twelve weeks of incessant north and north-east winds. The cold was unexampled; masses of snow choked up the streets and roads; travelling was nearly impossible; the people shut themselves up in their houses, and the town looked as if it were deserted. Yet, it was in the depth of that winter, just two days after Christmas Day, Lord Castlereagh set out for Harwich, on his way to the head-quarters of the allies at Chatillon-sur-Seine. Nothing but an overwhelming sense of public duty could induce a man to set forth on such a journey at such a season: but these are items of which history takes no account. The day was so dangerous and impracticable, that the Prince Regent, who had left London in the morning to pay a visit to the Marquis of Salisbury in Hertfordshire, was obliged to return to Carlton House, being warned of the perils of the journey by the fact of one of his out-riders having ridden into a ditch at Kentish Town, then a suburban village.

But Lord Castlereagh was not to be deterred by roadside disasters. He started at seven o'clock in the evening in so dense a fog that, notwithstanding the blaze of a troop of flambeaux, his coach could hardly make its way through the streets. His route lay across marshy Essex, where, long after he had got safely beyond the range of the London atmosphere, he was still enveloped in thick vapour. The state of the weather was even more exceptional than the hurricane that swept the coast on the death of Cromwell; and if there had been any augurs abroad they might have predicted the worst conclusion to the mission in which the minister was engaged. But his lordship made his way safely, notwithstanding, to the allied camp, and so far as he was personally concerned, accomplished successfully the task he had undertaken.

And so ends the Chronicle of London Frosts.

ROBERT BELL.

A GENERAL PRACTITIONER IN CALIFORNIA.

I AM a surgeon. Finding the old country too thickly stocked with resident practitioners to afford a new comer like myself a chance, and being too poor to buy a practice, I resolved to emigrate. I went to California. There, too, I discovered that the chief cities contained quite as many doctors as could possibly make a living out of them; and when my purse was low, I was thankful to settle at Placerville, in Mariposa County. Placerville is a little town in the heart of the diggings, and depends entirely on the gold miners for its support. It has some large wooden buildings—namely, two chapels, six taverns, five stores for groceries and dry goods, a gambling house, and a printing office. All the rest of the dwellings are huts or tents—mostly tents. I had no skill in hut-building, and therefore established myself under canvas. I bought a second-hand tent for twenty-nine dollars, and purchasing a large piece of sail-cloth, contrived to rig up a partition, which divided the tent into two unequal parts. The largest of these compartments was my dwelling, and there I fixed my brass bed, my scanty baggage, and my few other requisites. The smaller compartment I rather grandiloquently styled the "Surgery," and there I spread out, on rough pine shelves and an unplaned table made by a Yankee lumberer, my small store of medicaments, surgical instruments, and general scientific apparatus. The latter I arranged so as to make as brave a show as possible. My stock-in-trade consisted merely of such drugs as were indispensably needful, a case or two of well-worn but carefully kept steel instruments, some splints, and other things likely to be in demand, a great jar of leeches, a microscope, a stethoscope, the implements of dentistry, a few chemical retorts and alembics, and several bottles containing preparations preserved in spirit. The lint and the leeches, the instruments and the drugs, I knew I should find absolutely necessary. As for the anatomical preparations in the spirit bottles, I must own that they were for mere show; I had bought them at San Francisco on the recommendation of a good-natured surveyor, who told me that the miners stood in great awe of such matters, and considered no doctor worth his salt who had not something curious wherewith to astonish them. The purchase of these articles, and of my camp furniture, had

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nearly exhausted my waning exchequer, but I managed to pay for a blue board, on which in gold letters was inscribed the word "Surgery," and this I erected at the entrance of the smaller half of my canvas abode. This board was neatly executed by a Boston sign-painter, and cost me six dollars and fifty cents, so much dearer is the ornamental than the useful. Four dollars procured me a sort of flag or banner, which I fixed between two posts in front of my tent, and which bore in red letters on a white ground, the words—"Dr. Edward Willis, M.R.C.S. Surgery and Physic in all branches. Sets bones. Draws teeth painlessly. Bleeds. Advice gratis." Before I had well perfected my arrangements, I had plenty of visitors; plenty of visitors, but few patients. It was rather a slack time at the diggings just then; all the miners were waiting impatiently for the rains, because the rivers and gullies were all but dry, and there was not water enough for the cradling to go on anywhere but in a few deepish pools, where some lucky gangs were hard at work. And as Mariposa County mostly consists of very hard dry soil, intersected by the auriferous quartz reefs, the pick and spade could scarcely scratch the baked ground until the rains should soften it; consequently the diggers had not much to do beyond "prospecting" for future claims, or lounging about the groceries and grog-shops. My surgery made quite an amusing place of resort for them, and I arranged my phials and pounded my drugs under the gaze of seldom less than half a dozen very rugged neighbours, in tattered jerseys and picturesque black beards. They would stroll in unceremoniously enough, those wild-looking acquaintances of mine, and spend an hour in lubricating the earthen floor with tobacco juice, as they chatted and asked questions, but they somehow never seemed to want any medicine; and yet there was only one other practitioner in Placerville, though I will answer for it, in a place in England that should have been equally populous and rich, there would have been at least half a dozen brass plates on as many doors, with coloured lamps over them, and monstrous bottles, crimson, green, and blue, flashing through the trim surgery windows at night. There was but one other doctor, an American born, from one of the Western States I believe, and who was said to be a man of learning and ability; but, unhappily, what skill Dr. Hullings possessed was not often available to the sick of Placerville. The doctor was generally too drunk to feel a pulse, much less to perform an operation, and the most part of the practice of California is surgical, on account of the frequent accidents and affrays among the diggers. Hullings was a tavern-haunter, a coarse, brutal debauchee, whose character was notoriously bad, and who never pretended to respectability. Report said that he had lost several excellent practices in the Southern States because his excesses rendered him unfit to be admitted into decent households, and being quarrelsome as well as profligate, he had been at last obliged to leave New Orleans for California to elude the law, of which he had incurred the penalties by manslaughter in a café.

"And a mild word manslaughter is, to use in such a case," said my kindly informant, the surveyor who recommended Placerville to me. "New Orleens ain't a squeamish town, I assure you; and if what I've heerd be true, I guess a Northern jury would have brought in murder, I do."

I mention this, not needlessly to blacken the memory of a man who has gone to his account, but to show that I was unlucky in having such a competitor, and how very difficult it would have been for the most pacific person breathing, under the circumstances, to have avoided the course I found myself in a manner compelled to take.

Briefly, in California, never a very moral atmosphere, Dr. Hullings sank from bad to worse. Seldom sober, he would drink "on end" for a week together, selecting the greatest scamps in the community for his boon companions, and his orgies seldom ceased till his pocket was empty. Then he would arise from sloth and self-indulgence, and go about with blood-shot eyes and uncertain gait, to seek for the means of providing future revelry. Being a very strong man, of a fine though much-abused constitution, he contrived in a wonderful manner soon to shake off the effects of his debauch, and to set vigorously to work. Once at work, he toiled like a horse, prescribing, bandaging, healing, dosing, and tooth extracting, with considerable skill. He managed the miners, too, uncommonly well, knowing their ways, and humouring their prejudices dexterously, so as while physicking and bleeding, to screw out of his rough patients such fees as would the sooner enable him to return to the bar of the tavern, its choice spirits, and cunning compounds. Once regularly settled among a jovial company, and with a pocket well replenished with nuggets and Mexican "boards," Hullings would scarcely have condescended to visit the sick bed of royalty itself; no bribe could tempt him, no entreaty move him, and indeed he was not long able to put forth his unquestionable skill on behalf of the suffering. It may be asked, why did not such a scampish and negligent doctor lose his practice? In England, of course, a person of such habits would have been speedily supplanted by more decent and useful practitioners. But California is a new and ill-organised land, where no crime is punished, save when the whim of the mob goes hand-in-hand with the decree of law; and duelling is regarded as needful, and even salutary. Now Hullings was a notorious duellist, who boasted of eleven antagonists killed or wounded, and who was always ready, pistol in hand, to warn off interlopers. Indeed he was one of the "crack shots" of the county, and was known to be willing to engage in mortal conflict with any one who should meddle with what he considered his property. My friend, the surveyor, had informed me how two or three young surgeons had attempted to settle at Pacerville, but had been driven away by the threats of Hullings, threats weighted by his formidable repute.

"But they, Doctor, were chicken-hearted young fellows, that weren't fit for California at all," said the surveyor. "Now, Doctor, do you take my advice—don't let Hullings crow over you. No need to quarrel any, and I know your temper's a good one; but don't let him hector too much at

starting, for there's nothing a bully respects like a quiet man with good grit in him."

And it is possible, though hardly probable, that if I had exactly adhered to the surveyor's well-meant counsel, I might have avoided a crisis. As ill luck had it, I sought to improve upon the advice, to conciliate and mollify, where I should have been hard and calm.

Well! it was soon after I got into practice that I first saw my professional rival.

The rains came, and with the washing and digging began my work, for soon there were patients. My first patient was a young miner whose comrade had awkwardly driven a pickaxe through his foot—an interesting case, involving exfoliations of bone, while I feared at first lest lockjaw should result; but by great care and seclusion from the whiskey bottle, I brought the miner through. The next case was that of a fellow who had been shot through the body in one of those duels over a handkerchief, so common in California. This man, too, I had the gratification of saving, though I was obliged to nurse him in my own tent, or his friends, with their eternal cordials and prescriptions of aqua vitæ, would soon have sent him out of the world. These cures caused my name to be bruited about, and then "the Doctor," as he was called, Dr. Hullings, made his appearance. He was nearly, but not quite, sober; a tall, bulky man, wearing a black coat, a Mexican sash round his waist, and velvet calzoneros of a bright green. He frowned on me for a minute or two without speaking, and at last addressed me in a hoarse voice that boded anything but goodwill:

"Halloa! stranger, do you know who I am?"

I was not alone; indeed one is seldom alone in California; there were three or four storekeepers in my surgery, chatting and smoking. I saw their eyes brighten as Hullings came in; they expected a row, but I was determined not to indulge them. I answered, civilly, "If, sir, you are, as I should imagine, Dr. Hullings, I am very glad to welcome to my tent a member of my own profession, and to have an opportunity of making your acquaintance."

Hullings stared like a baffled bull. My Yankee visitors sniggered among themselves.

"Member of my profession!" at length Hullings exclaimed; "you are a cool one, I expect. How do I know you're anything but some runaway loblolly boy or 'pothecary's errand lad, come here to poison our citizens, eh?"

To this I replied, with studied urbanity, that I was perfectly ready to submit my diplomas and certificates, London and Edinburgh, to his inspection, in testimony of my being a regularly educated and duly qualified practitioner. Dr. Hullings cut me short very rudely, telling me to keep my rubbish to myself, that the testimonials were very likely forged ones, and myself a London rogue; and, lastly, that free-born Americans wanted neither to be hocussed by the physic, nor sickened by the fine manners of any d—— Britisher!

I only smiled in answer to this tirade, Hullings stamped his foot, and made some very unwarrantable comments on Great Britain, Queen Victoria, and my unworthy self, but still I kept my temper. At last, the Doctor, shaking his huge fist unpleasantly near my face, as I was busy with pestle and mortar, pill-compounding, bellowed out:—

"The long and the short of it's just this—Placerville's a location belongs to me. I am not the man, I can tell you, ye skunk, to allow tampering with my patients, or poaching on my grounds. You'll have to make tracks out o' this, young man, if you'd keep your skin whole."

I politely assured him that I should *not* "make tracks" at any man's bidding. I had no idea of meddling with his patients, or in any way deviating from the rules either of professional etiquette or of good neighbourship—but there he cut me short with—

"You'd best not be a neighbour of mine too long, I guess, ye dratted British interloper!"

So, favouring me with a parting scowl, he jammed down the Panama hat on his shaggy head, squirted a stream of amber extract of tobacco from his wide mouth into the mass of pills I was rolling out, and, with a laugh of contempt, swaggered away from my presence.

I could see by the faces of the lookers-on that I had fallen considerably in their esteem by my meek conduct. They attributed this to fear, and the imputation of pusillanimity is a hard one for a young man to endure. Still I put a good face on the matter, and my practice decidedly increased, less on account of my own merits, than the multiplication of cases. The yield of gold was very good after the rains: fresh diggers poured in; new arrivals from Europe, many of them, who soon sickened with the hard work in the burning sun by day, the heavy dews they slept among at night, the scanty shelter, and the over-abundant whiskey. There were plenty of men down with various complaints, besides accident cases and hurts in quarrels over cards or drink. I had much to do, and before long I was able to pay my way, though little more; for living is fearfully expensive in California, and I could not subsist and pay ground-rent for the few square feet of valuable earth my tent occupied for less than six dollars a-day. Then, too, I found that my golden dreams, before I came out, were as deceptive as many another man's. I had imagined the miners to be careless, prodigal fellows, like so many sailors on a spree, rewarding the extraction of a tooth with a nugget as big as a hazel-nut, and recompensing my handfuls of quinine with handfuls of gold-dust. I found out my mistake, and that miners were just as resolute to have their dollar's worth for their dollar as any other class. Indeed, in spite of their gambling, and other expensive vices, I should call them a thrifty set, unless under strong temptation.

Still, I began to make a little money, and was able to put by a small nest-egg towards that treasure I had in view, and which was to buy me one of the very best connections at the West End, and send me to pay my visits in a smart pair-horse brougham, the envy of all beholders. Not only I made some little money, but, what was better in that lawless, heartless place, I made a staunch friend in one Paul Clam, a tall, lithe young American, from Virginia, and one of the best natured fellows in Placerville.

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Paul let drop hints on more than one occasion which showed me that Dr. Hullings saw my partial success with a malignant eye. The "Doctor" had been heard to threaten dire vengeance among his boon companions against the intrusive Englishman. He never mentioned me without a rolling accompaniment of curses, and Paul warned me that Hullings was not likely to be restrained by any scruples from ridding himself of a stumbling-block in his way.

Then, the Indian lad who carried out my physic was waylaid and roughly treated, the phials were emptied into the river, the pills and plasters flung after them, and there could be no doubt that the principal actor in this transaction was the rival surgeon. Probably Hullings wished to provoke me into challenging him, but this I would not indulge him in. Regarding, as I did and do, duelling as both wrong and foolish, I determined on no account to resort to a practice I so completely reprobated; and though I felt angry and annoyed, I resolved to continue my system of forbearance to the last moment.

My quiet endurance only seemed to exasperate the brutal disposition of my enemy. Not content with the foul abuse with which he always mentioned my name, he now showed some method in his malignity; for he made it his business to go round Placerville, and inform all who had leisure to listen, that I was a runaway druggist's apprentice from Britain, quite without learning, and a mere impudent quack who ought to be tarred and

feathered and drummed out of the township. My answer to this was, to affix to the door of my tent a notice, setting forth that my diplomas, testimonials, and other papers, were to be seen by any one who pleased to inspect them. A few miners, teamsters, and woodcutters *were* pleased to inspect them, and generally held them upside down, so that the perusal could not much have edified them, but no doubt the broad seals and stamps produced a satisfactory effect.

On the third day after posting the above notice, I was sitting in my surgery, pasting dried botanical specimens into a book—for my passion was botany, and California contains some rare and singular species—when my friend Paul burst in, flushed and breathless.

"Doctor!" said he, "Ned Willis! I've been taking your part at the tavern yonder, till I very nigh came to blows with that blackguard fellow, Hullings, the doctor. The way he goes on abusing you and lying's worse than a Mexicy smoothbore! And now he swears that since you won't fight, he'll force you to it, or make you slope out of Placerville. I left him, with a score of rowdies, just startin' for here, and I stepped out ahead, for he vows he'll draw the Britisher like a badger."

Here was pleasant news! My heart began to beat thick and fast, and my pulses to flutter, not exactly with fear.

"Ned Willis," said Paul, seizing my hand, "look here. I know you're a peaceful individual,

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and don't think duels the correct thing, but this air different. Hullings swears you've been showing the white feather, and twits me with keeping company with a coward. Now, I know better. You air no coward; but you've got some Bible notions agin the pistol. I don't say challenge him, mind that; but only promise me that if Hullings gets to downright violence, fight you will."

I returned the friendly squeeze of the Virginian's hand.

"I shall be true to my principles," said I, as coolly as I could. "No provocation will make me give a challenge, but self-defence is a different affair. If I am attacked, I promise you, I shall not act as a coward, nor give you cause to be ashamed of me."

The Virginian gave me an approving slap on the back.

"Hurrah for the old country!" said he. "I know'd you wouldn't skulk. Here they come, the scamps."

Dr. Hullings did indeed enter my tent, followed by several tipsy ruffians and some loungers recruited on the way. Outside might be heard the hum of a numerous crowd, gathered, no doubt, to see the fun and witness the performance of Hullings's boast to "whip the Britisher." The manner and look of my enemy were as hostile and offensive as possible. He swaggered forward with his hands in the pockets of his coat, and cried in a bullying voice:

"You pitiful eternal sneak, you—you slinking, psalm-singing varmint of a British-whelped bone-setter, dar ye look a man in the face?"

The crowd tittered and grinned.

"Dr. Hullings," said I, "I dare look you in the face, I can assure you. Why do you slander my name, sir?—why do you pursue me into my own dwelling in this offensive manner? If I have wronged you tell me how, but if not——"

"Hold your tongue!" said Hullings, gruffly; "we want none of your mealy-mouthed palaver here, I can tell you. You've had warning not to poach on my property. Will ye be off, before I quicken your steps with a cowhide? Yes or no?" and his voice swelled into a roar.

"Mr. Hullings," said I, "I distinctly refuse to comply with so unreasonable and unjust a demand. I was willing to live here on good terms with you. I have resented none of your insults, but I must beg of you to walk out of my tent."

Hullings knit his shaggy brows till they almost hid his bloodshot eyes.

"And if I don't choose to go?"

"Then," said I, feeling my cheeks in a glow and my eyes brightening in spite of myself, "I shall be obliged, much against my will, to eject you by force."

Hullings gave a shout of triumph, and flung about his muscular arms like the sails of a windmill.

"Huzza!" he cried, "I've drawed the Britisher! He can't go back of that, and I won't let him! I'm his man for rough and tumble, knock down and drag out, and let's see which is the cock that crows craven the first!"

"I'll tell you what's true, Doctor," cried Paul, firing up, "you're an everlasting rascal, you are, crowing over a stranger that never did ye harm to the value of a squirrel's skin. It's such loafing vagabonds as yourself that bring discredit on Columbia's Eagle o' Freedom."

Poor dear Paul, he could not help concluding his protest with that scrap of electioneering bombast.

"Waal! young man, I'll pluck a crow with *you*, when I've done with the British skulker," bellowed Hullings, thoroughly furious; "stand up, sirrah! and take your pick of ways to settle it. I give ye your choice—rifles or shot-guns, revolvers or duellers, bowie-knives in a dark room, or pistols across a handkerchief, or cutlasses, or bloody Indian tomahawks,—Dan Hullings is the man to settle your hash with any."

"Doctor," said I, "I shall not fight you. I decline your challenge; but I shall certainly not be deterred by your braggadocio from compelling you to quit my abode."

Hullings, instead of grappling with me, as I expected, turned with a grin to his whispering backers. They seemed to cogitate and hold a momentary council, and then Hullings with mock civility requested a sight of my diplomas, &c. Paul whispered to me not to comply, but I did not choose to take the advice. Called on thus publicly to show my papers, I could not refuse without giving a handle to malice. But the moment Hullings clutched the documents, he burst into a roar of laughter, echoed by his friends, deliberately tore the papers across the middle, and flung them at my feet as I sat, followed by a jet of tobacco-juice which deluged my face. Human patience could bear no more. Up I sprang at once, but quick as wrath made me, indignation had made another quicker, for Paul Clam was beforehand with me, and felled Hullings to the ground with one tremendous blow, like an ox beneath the poleaxe. Up the surgeon staggered, bleeding and infuriate, and drew his bowie-knife as he rose, and flew at my champion, but there were respectable men in the crowd, and the arm of the ruffian was forcibly restrained. He struggled and raved wildly.

"His blood!—I must have it," he cried; "the blood of the man that struck me!"

The young Virginian stood with folded arms.

"I'm ready," said he; "fair play, and I don't much mind what tools we use."

"No, Paul!" exclaimed I, coming between him and the Doctor. "This is my quarrel. You must not fight my battles for me. I'll meet him now matters have come to this, and Heaven forgive me if I'm driven to take his life in defence of my own."

"I'll take you second, Britisher," bawled the bully, as his friends drew him away; "the first round is for the villain that struck me, and I'll have blood for the blow."

And his companions huddled him out, cursing volubly.

Matters of this kind are quickly adjusted in California. An hour after, the affair took place. It was to be, by mutual consent, a "claim duel," that is, it was to be fought underground, in an exhausted mine, according to a not unusual Californian custom. Independent of my personal

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interest, there was something very strange and gloomy in the preparations. A "claim" was selected, which had been what the miners call "worked out," that is, all tempting strata had been ransacked so effectually that no gold could remain, and therefore the pit might be filled up at once, to serve as the grave of the defeated duellist. The excavation was a narrow and deep one—an oblong of perhaps twenty-four or five feet longitudinally. The depth was not less than eleven feet; the combatants had therefore to be assisted into this living tomb, from which one of them was never to emerge. My feelings may be imagined as I stood beside this yawning and darksome pit, among a crowd of reckless diggers, jeering and uttering comments in many languages. Paul stood beside me, cool and courageous, in his red-flannel shirt and trousers, capping his revolver, a large six-shot one. At the other end of the claim was Hullings, loading a similar weapon, and vaunting loudly of past triumphs, while making no secret of his sanguinary hopes. The combatants were to be posted at either end of the pit, and the umpire —who was no other than the sheriff—was to give the signal by clapping his hands. If Paul fell Hullings declared that I should take his place, and boasted that he would see the earth filled in upon us both before he went home to his supper. Paul was silent, rather, but his hand was quite steady in mine.

"If I'm dropped, Ned," said he, "there's still a chance for you, though I wish you'd had more practice with the pistol, I do. But I can draw a bead as well as most, and though it's easy to hit, the claim's so tarnation narrer! I'll bet a few that I hit the hardest; put your ear down and I'll tell you why."

I complied, and Paul whispered:

"This is old Moone's claim, and I helped work it. One end's broader than t'other, and, don't you see, I've managed to stick Hullings there, so I'll get a better snap at him, in what light there is. So, he's going down! Good-bye, old fellow, in case I never see the day agin."

Paul wrung my hand, and was slowly lowered into the pit, where Hullings already was. The men were allowed five minutes to settle themselves. Then the umpire began to prepare. He called out:

"Are you ready, below?"

"Ready!" answered Paul, cheerily.

"Ready!" growled Hullings, out of the gloom.

It was a moment of terrible excitement. It was strange and awful to hear those two men's voices speaking out of the darkness, from the depths of the pit that was to be the ensanguined resting-place of one, at least. *Both* could never come up again to the fellowship of living men. And if Paul were slain, I was to take his place, the second victim. But I felt no selfish fear; all my regrets and apprehensions were for him, the brave, kindly, young Virginian, facing death in *my* quarrel. My eyes strained to pierce the darkness. I could see nothing. I could only hear a rustling. The foes were stirring in the grave. The umpire called out—"Ready?" and clapped his hands. Crack! went both pistols at once, the red flashes lit up the abandoned mine, and showed the dark forms of the antagonists, then all was gloom again.

"Missed, by Geehoshaphat!" cried a fellow.

I gasped. Flash! again, and then quickly came a third double flash, lurid, through the darkness. And then there was a groan, long and thrilling; but the revolvers gave out their lurid gleam no more.

"Is it over?" called the umpire. No answer. We waited. The moments were agony to me. At last the umpire agreed that torches should be brought, and we descended—four of us—I the first. At the bottom we found Hullings lying stone dead, shot through the heart. The Virginian lay in a pool of blood, dead too, to all appearance. But, to my heartfelt joy, Paul proved to be alive, only badly hurt, having received two bullets in his side and shoulder, and swooned from the bleeding. We bore him gently up, and to my tent, and I nursed him through the fever and weakness as I would have tended my own brother, and he was as true as a brother to me, poor fellow! In six weeks Paul was about again. As for Hullings, they buried him just as he lay. That mine was his grave, and he never left it. I was the only doctor, now, and did well enough. And that was *how I got my Californian practice*.

John Harwood.

HOW I DID NOT PREVENT SEA-SICKNESS.

I am not ill at sea in the same manner that others are. Nobody will admit that he is. There is always a singularity in this business. You might as well try to convince a man that he is guilty of snoring in his sleep, as that he is affected in an ordinary way by crossing the Channel in dirty weather. That he has been extremely unwell he does not attempt to deny; but as for your supposing that his sensations were at all like those experienced by the people around him, the mere notion of such a thing is absurd.

Fanciful as may be the difference in other cases, I am morally certain that my sufferings between Brighton and Dieppe, or Dover and Calais, or Folkestone and Boulogne, really are *sui generis*. When I have the toothache, you are at liberty to have the toothache just as badly if not worse. I will allow you precisely the same throes, the same dull, distracting weight of agony, the same quick, sudden, spasmodic jumps of pain, like the downward bobs of an ill-regulated gas-jet. I have no objection to your being dyspeptic after my mode of dyspepsia; you may have the vertigo as I have it; and your liver may be out of order as mine is, chronically. I never had the gout, serpigo, or the rheum; I do not know what the second means, and never even heard of it except through Shakespeare; but if I have occasion at any time to curse one or all of these complaints, it will be in language that I shall not claim as copyright, but which you are perfectly welcome to apply to your own case, if you see fit. In short, you may be indisposed on land in any way that I have been, or may be; but you CANNOT be sick at sea as I am sick at sea.

Being alone in this particular, I might be rea-

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sonably deemed out of all ordinary counteractions, and past all ordinary help. What are common remedies and preventives to one whose disease is not common, but peculiar and unique? Still, there is no philosophy which will forbid a man's trying any simple specific against a disorder which causes him the utmost uneasiness; and if there were, I am not the philosopher to submit to the prohibition.

When, therefore, I was advised of a certain preventive of the terrible malady of sea, I simply determined upon trying it. I had put off a periodical visit to Paris until it seemed that the easterly gales never would abate, and there was no possible use in waiting any longer. So I went to the shop where I had been told that the wonderful invention was to be bought, and I bought it.

It was a thing like a chest-plaster in shape and size. One side was pink and the other yellow, or rather buff-coloured. The buff-coloured side was of the texture of German-tinder. The pink was a kind of thin cloth or stuff, on which was affixed a paper with printed directions. These were in French, with a translation for the benefit of English voyagers not familiar with that language. I subjoin the translation:

Please to apply this apparatus by the yellow side to the pit of the stomach and in contact with the skin, taking care to covering that part of the body in order to obtain a moderate warmth.

Fix it in this position by means of the strings adapted to his lateral parts, whilst the string forming the handle is passed round the neck and prevents his slipping downwhards.

This apparatus don't sticks to the skin, and leaves none trace.

Nota. Every apparatus which will not be invested with the two seals and signatures, will be regarded as a counterfeiting.

Well, be sure that I had the "apparatus" ready against my proximate voyage, and saw that the strings adapted to his lateral parts, as well as the string forming the handle, were sewn on, perfectly tight and secure. The German-tinder side had a queer fusty smell, which I had not the slightest doubt was medicinal. After all, the singularity of my sickness on the vasty deep was an affair of symptoms. The predisposing causes were the same with others as with me; and hence I reasoned hopefully that the stomachic application of the yellow or German-tinder side of the apparatus would be of quite as much good to me as to those who had doubtless found comfort in its "moderate warmth."

To pass over all trivial circumstances, let me merely allude to the soothing influence which the knowledge of my possession exercised on my mind as I travelled by South-Eastern express to Folkestone. The wind blew great guns, blustering in all directions, and pouring broadsides against the swift-flying train; but I hugged myself in the full belief that this anger of the elements boded no harm to me.

The boat which met our train happened to be a notorious old tub, called after some dowager duchess whom you will find mentioned in the "Almanach de Gotha," but as to whose title I have myself an orthographical difficulty. From old habit I selected a commanding position on deck to leeward. Heavens, how it blew! and how all the passengers were ill at once, with no preliminary pause whatever!

Excepting me. But I did not count too much upon that, at first. It is one of the peculiarities of my very peculiar sea-sickness, that I am always the last to be seized; and then—oh, gracious powers, and then!

It was not to be supposed that the dowager duchess would not break down somehow. She frequently did when the Channel was a duck-pond, so what would she *not* do now? I have very little doubt that the most experienced seamen on board expected her Serene Highness to settle down somewhere about mid-channel, and go serenely to the bottom.

She broke down this time in respect of her engines. There she lay, on that day, with seas actually breaking over her funnel, while heavy strokes of the engineer's hammer were heard resounding below. An irate old gentleman by the starboard paddle, wrapped up like others in one of the eleemosynary tarpaulin coats dealt out at the commencement of the passage, wanted to know what we were stopping for. Nobody could or would tell him; so he got more and more irate, in the intervals of emetic exercise, and declared that such scandalous conduct should be made the subject of complaint as soon as he got back "to town."

For a full hour no progress was made whatever. It was not inspiriting by any means to see the sailors twist a piece of bunting into a thick blue rope, and hoist it as a signal. But before aid could be summoned, the mishap in the engine-room had been remedied, and we were on our way again.

I have not stated how I felt about this period. It was very soon after the break-down that a sudden and well-remembered qualm came over me. But it was not altogether sea-sickness; no, it was as much the terrible recollection of an act of forgetfulness previous to my starting from London. Had I not left on my dressing-table in Furnival's Inn the precious apparatus on which I had built my fond hopes of immunity from malady of sea? Alas! alas! I had.

From that moment of dread remembrance my condition was such as may be imagined, but, as the poet says, cannot be described. Nothing but my scorn and hatred of the irate old gentleman in tarpaulin buoyed me up. I should have sunk but for the consolation of seeing him as miserable as an old gentleman in the most trying state of tarpaulin could possibly be. In sight of land, my sufferings knew no abatement or alleviation of hope. As we steamed along the seeming endless line of French coast I groaned in spirit, and wondered whether my stretched sides or throbbing temples would give way first. I should break something, I knew; most probably a blood-vessel; and I thought that the sooner it was over the better.

But we got into Boulogne harbour at last; and who that has known the respite of that tranquil pool—the cessation from horrible tossing, rolling, pitching, and the other participle which ensues

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from all these three—who that has known the deep ineffable peace of those blessed cocked hats on the quay, and the calm consciousness of travelling with only one article of luggage—who that has had these feelings, I ask, will not sympathise with mine in scrambling on French soil?

So to the Bedford, pursued by frantic touts, whom I placidly ignore. Once in my chamber I set to work in changing the disordered apparel which I have worn for the best hours of daylight. What is this? Amazement! Did I then *not* forget to "apply the apparatus to the pit of the stomach and in contact with the skin, taking care to covering that part of the body in order to obtain a moderate warmth?" Indeed, the apparatus was there, sure enough. Of what service it had been to me the reader has perceived.

I again applied the apparatus, according to directions, when I made my return-trip across the Channel; and this time I did not forget that I had not forgotten to take proper measures for the prevention of sea-sickness.

The weather was, if anything, rather worse—and so was I. GODFREY TURNER.

AUX BIEN-AIMÉES.

To meet you, and be parted;
The happiness—the pain—
To feel no more free-hearted,
Yet madly court the chain:

To be so sad and lonely
Amid the festive crowd,
To hear the one voice only
Where stranger tones are loud:

To watch in dreams above you,
To quiver at your name,
With love for those that love you,
With scorn for those who blame:

Though such our doom, we say not
One word of weak regret;
We faint not, weep not, pray not
That we had never met:

Soft words that left such traces,
Sweet smiles that wrought such ill,
In passionate embraces
We clasp their memories still.

But you, in all your beauty,
Its triumph and its power,
Have you no conscious duty
Linked, loved ones, with the dower?

Shine on in your own brightness,—
So we would have you shine;
Keep, keep your spirits' lightness,
And charm with look divine:

Still win all knees to wooing,
Still weave your weirdest wiles,
Still work the wild undoing
Of cruel, haunting smiles;

But, sought they ne'er so blindly
The fate 'tis theirs to rue,
Think sometimes on them kindly,
Poor hearts that ache for you!

RALPH A. BENSON.

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LAST WEEK.

The speech just delivered by the English Queen at the opening of Parliament has a great advantage over the recent public addresses of the French Emperor, of the King of Prussia, and of the President of the United States. Paris is the modern Delphi, and Louis Napoleon the Sibyl who utters oracular responses, which the hearers must interpret at their peril, yet which by their double meaning baffle all human comprehension. Translate into modern French, "*Cross the Mincio, and you will destroy a great kingdom,*" and you have a specimen of such an "allocution" as Louis Napoleon is in the habit of addressing to the diplomatic body on the occasion of a birth-day reception, or, still more probably, upon the first of the year. Scarcely have these sentences passed his lips when the Funds and the Public Securities fall a fluttering like startled doves. If he is diffuse, Europe gives him credit for an elaborate attempt to conceal his thoughts. Our English Cromwell was great in this kind; the ruler of France, to do him but justice, more commonly affects the pithy style, yet even so he only provokes criticism the more. If he "hopes" the peace of Europe may be preserved, the hope implies a doubt; and a doubt the slaughter of half a million men. Again, on what grounds does his "hope" rest? If upon good grounds, Europe trembles. He is too frank and cordial. At the same time that he hopes for peace, and is able to assign satisfactory reasons for that belief, he is known to be rifling cannon, calling out his reserves, and putting the Empire upon a war footing.

Our great ally protests too much. He is too full of confidence and gunpowder. On the first day of the present year the oracle was concise enough. Louis Napoleon hoped for peace, on the ground that such a perfectly good understanding reigned amongst the Sovereigns of Europe. The contrary is notoriously the fact, so what becomes of the Imperial hope? It lies deep down at the bottom of Pandora's box; but plagues, wars, and famines fly out, and brood over the surface of the earth, before we reach that meek-eyed Hope which is to prove our consolation in the midst of so much affliction. Louis Napoleon hopes for peace, and Europe is in arms.

The Royal Speech of the King of Prussia, read in the First Chamber this day week, is less enigmatical than the French oracle, yet ominous enough. Here is what the Royalty of Prussia says to his Chamber:—"We must not conceal from one another that we are perhaps approaching troublous times. In view of this probability everything depends upon the country through its representatives being united to me. *I hope*, I desire, and I expect this. It is thus only that we shall be strong both at home and abroad, and be able to await the future with confidence." Were ever more dismal words uttered from a king's mouth, or written by a king's pen? The gloom is in the sky, the chill has passed over the landscape, and the Prussian Ruler does but give utterance to the common feeling when he speaks of the coming storm.

He talks to the representatives of his people of "troublous times," as well he may. The four great military powers of Europe are, or rather were, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. France, with the help of England, has humbled Russia to the dust, and avenged the calamities of the retreat from Moscow. The power for aggressive warfare has departed from Russia for at least our generation. France, again, has struck Austria in her most vital point, has destroyed her military prestige, and has left her exposed to the fiery indignation of her most important province. Prussia alone is standing. The two great monarchies which should have stood by her side are humbled and hand-bound; and Prussia in 1861 is left alone to try conclusions with Louis Napoleon, as Prussia was now somewhat more than half a century ago, when Austerlitz had been just fought. The envoys who had been sent to threaten then remained to fawn, and uttered a blessing instead of a curse upon the head of the warrior who had just destroyed the power of their ally, and who was about to raise his hand and sweep them in their turn from the map of Europe. Prussia stands alone now, as she stood alone then, after that dreadful struggle.

Might one not suppose that, in the presence of such awful peril, the statesmen who direct the destinies of the Prussian kingdom would be setting their house in order, husbanding their powers, strengthening themselves by alliances, avoiding all causes of offence, and keeping the swords of their regiments sheathed until the time had arrived for drawing them in defence of the homes and landmarks of the land? In place of all this, and just at the moment that France is bristling with bayonets—that Russia is paralysed, and that Austria is devouring herself, we find that the Prussian King has delivered himself up into the hands of the reactionary party, and is threatening useless and unprovoked hostilities against a neighbouring sovereign—the King of Denmark—in a quarrel hatched up by the pedants of the German Universities. If Louis Napoleon be what many of his ill-wishers say, how he must hug himself as he marks the stupendous folly under the influence of which the Prussians—his last antagonists—are about to exhaust their strength, and to leave the road to Berlin open to the French armies, without even the trouble of a halt at Jena by the way!

It needs no great amount of political sagacity to foretell that if the Prussian regiments are once fairly engaged in the Duchies, the brunt of the struggle will fall upon them alone. Victory—if victory is to be theirs at all—will only come to them after heavy losses, and then the French armies are arrayed upon the threshold of the kingdom. Has France ceased to covet the possession of the Rhenish Provinces? Is Louis Napoleon the man to miss the opportunity when he sees an antagonist helpless at his feet? We remember to have read of one Harold, who, in former days upon the southern shore of these islands, dearly expiated a victory which he had gained on the eastern coast. The Prussian sovereign, if he engages in this foolish war, may gain a duchy and lose a kingdom amid the derision of Europe.

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Prussia, at the present moment, can look only to this country in the hour of need for any serious assistance. Russia lies too far off, and is hamstrung. If a rifle is discharged in Europe, Austria will be struggling for her own existence, and will scarcely be able to array an army upon the banks of the Rhine. As for the troops of the minor powers of the confederation, France has invariably given good account of them since nations have contended with regular armies at all. But will the English people—speaking by the mouths of their representatives—consent to engage in such a quarrel at all?—still more, would they consent to engage in it if the assistance of England were not sought until the nation seeking it had practically committed suicide? Prussia, with her armies and resources intact, is one thing; Prussia defeated—her capital in possession of a foreign invader, and her king in flight, is quite another. In calculating our own risks, we should consider the effective power of that nation and sovereign who may seek our aid.

Of course, in the present day, as far as this country is concerned, dynastic and sentimental considerations are out of the question. We all wish well to that fair young Princess who was so lately the ornament of the British Court. Could we make her husband's inheritance secure without calling down calamity upon our own people, we would cheerfully do so. This, however, cannot be: it is not by personal sympathies with royal houses that the affairs of the world are settled in our time. There would be serious danger to England if France should destroy, one by one, the great military powers of Europe, largely extend her frontiers, and obtain a complete preponderance on the continent. This is the only ground upon which any government could ask of the British people to engage themselves once more in the hazards of a continental war. In any case, if we were to do so at all—a matter not much in accordance with the present temper of the nation—we should at least claim a voice in council, and decline to prescribe for the patient, if we were not called in until he were dead.

Let us not deceive ourselves. Whatever turn matters may take in the coming spring, England can no longer afford to fight a continental war by subsidies. Nor, if we are commonly prudent, would we risk the small army which we absolutely require as a home-garrison, and as the nucleus of our own defence, if our own turn should come at last, upon the soil of the continent. It was all well enough to entrust what forces we could raise to the care of a commander of consummate skill, when, if we had been defeated, the reserve behind us was Europe in arms, and when France had been exhausted by the hostilities of a quarter of a century. The hazard was awful enough even so; but with the resources of France intact, with India upon our hands, and with the necessity in which this country stands of working at high-pressure in order to support its taxation, we cannot afford once more to expend an army of 30,000 or 40,000 trained troops upon the plains of Belgium. That would not be the most proper ground on which to make our stand if we were compelled to do so at all.

As though this miserable business of Schleswig-Holstein were not enough, the belief now appears to be that if Austria were attacked in Venetia, or if there should be a fresh insurrection in Hungary—and the second contingency is probable enough—she has obtained promises of assistance from without. Now in such a matter Russia could scarcely do again what she did in the days of the Czar Nicholas. Her own abortive efforts in the Crimea, and the deep ingratitude of Austria forbid such a conclusion. The aid then can only come from Germany; and here again the Germans would be but playing the game of France, and leaving the Rhenish provinces exposed to the covetous grasp of the French Emperor.

Under such circumstances the sentences of the speech just delivered by the British Queen to her Parliament, will be scanned with unusual interest. The formal phrases of "continued assurances of friendship from all foreign powers," though expressions of course, have a meaning in the lips of Queen Victoria. What she says at least is known to be the truth. Even the habitual calumniators of England are aware that we have not, and cannot have any dreams of ambition, or of territorial aggrandizement upon the continent of Europe. Our interest, and our inclination concur in the maintenance of peace. Never did British statesmen have before them a nobler, or a more difficult task than during the present year. In their hands lie the only chances for the preservation of the peace of Europe—and these chances may well be neutralised by the folly and fatuity of foreign statesmen. Throughout the session which now commences our minds must be far more intently directed to foreign affairs than to those great questions of reform and domestic interest, which we would more gladly take up. We must put these islands in such a state of defence that, upon any contingency which may arise, any continental sovereign would desire to leave us at least in peace. Even if Louis Napoleon indulges the dream at all, the time for measuring his strength with Great Britain is not yet come. It is only when Europe is at his feet that he will venture to run the risk of a maritime war with the British navy, despite of his iron-cased frigates, and the great preparations already made in the arsenals of the empire.

From the considerations mentioned then it would seem to follow that those clauses in the Royal Speech which treat of foreign affairs are those which most especially deserve attention. With such a spring and such a summer before us, it would be vain to expect that the two Houses of Parliament should carry through any large measure of Reform, or indeed any considerable change in our domestic arrangements. The Session opens with a taxation of 70,000,000*l.* (independently of local rates and taxes)—with Europe in arms, and with grievous danger that the great Confederation on the other side of the Atlantic may be dissolved into two or more groups of independent states. We cannot pretend, with any feeling of confidence, to see far into the future. One thing is clear—that we must be prepared for any contingency; for it seems as though, in the long run, Great Britain must be prepared to stand alone. The pressure of

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taxation meanwhile upon the industrial energies of the country is fearful. If matters are to stand as at present, the weekly bills of the British nation may be set down at about one million and a half sterling a-week. In this calculation we scarcely take account of local burdens—as county rates, &c.—which may be looked upon as payments for service actually performed; nor of Indian *deficits*, for the responsibility for these has not yet been fixed upon the British tax-payer. Nor is it easy to see how this alarming sum total can be modified, in the present position of Europe. The figures of the interest on the debt are engraved upon bronze. The chisel of the Financial Reformers cannot reach them. The expenditure upon the two services may perhaps be handled to a certain slight extent, but never in such a way as really to relieve the nation until the continent is tranquil again.

The suggestions, however, for legal reforms inserted in the Royal Speech might be carried out, whatever may be the turmoil upon the continent. It would be an inestimable advantage to the mercantile classes if this last attempt at Bankruptcy Reform should prove successful, for Sir Richard Bethell's bill of last session—with the exception of the two propositions which were so summarily and so deservedly negatived last year—was framed in accordance with their views. The public, however, must not look for 'finality' in Bankruptcy Law. Englishmen of middle age have already lived through three or four systems, and if they attain the average term of man's existence, they will in all probability see three or four more. Considering that the subject-matter of Bankruptcy Law is the cheapest, the speediest, and the most efficient method of winding up the affairs of bankrupt traders, it is not wonderful that the additional experience of each successive decade should suggest improvements. It is otherwise with regard to the cases of Real Property Law, and to the maxims and definitions of Criminal Law. Property must rest upon secure and unshifting foundations. The harmless act of to-day must not be the crime of to-morrow. The great principles of law should remain unchanged—alter forms of procedure as much as you will. It is to be hoped that the various measures for the consolidation of the Criminal Law, introduced last year, may also be carried through this session; for this would have a great tendency to promote clearness and simplicity in a branch of jurisprudence in which these qualities are much to be desired.

A fearful tragedy, which happened at the beginning of Last Week, may possibly suggest to our legislators the propriety of raking up from their archives the recommendations of one of their own Select Committee. The reference of course is to that miserable accident by Wimbledon, and to the untimely end of poor Dr. Baly. One would grieve to hear that any human being had been cut off in this untimely and tragical manner; but, in the case of Dr. Baly, we have lost one of the most useful Englishmen of his time. He had just attained the age when his skill, as a scientific and practical physician, was at its maturity. For thirty years he had been sedulously engaged, night and day, in studies and attendances which had qualified him to hold the foremost rank in his profession; and, according to all probability, there were before him yet another twenty years during which he would have brought consolation and relief to suffering humanity, and have saved or prolonged many a life upon which the lives of many depended. Now of all this there is an end. That wise head and kind heart can no longer be summoned to counsel when the agony of the sufferer, and the anguish of those to whom he may be dear, are at their highest. As we have been told, Dr. Baly, after a hard day's work, was on his way to visit a sick child, when he himself was killed as by a thunderbolt. Better, since it was to be, that the death should have been so sudden, in the case of such a man.

Now, some three or four years ago, there was a Select Committee of the House of Commons which sat to take evidence upon the subject of Railway Accidents. They met, they took evidence, and they published a report. In this report are contained the most valuable suggestions for giving additional security to the passenger-traffic upon railways. We may presume that the inquiry was fair and ample, and certainly the railway interest was largely represented both on and before the committee. All that is now necessary is that Parliament should give authority to the Board of Trade to see these recommendations carried into effect, and comparative security in railway-travelling would be the result. This matter affects us all, and any Member of Parliament who would take the subject up might be very sure that he would be heartily supported by the people and the press of this country.

Two other notable events were recorded Last Week. The one was the final closing of the inquiry in the Road Murder case, by the decision delivered by the Queen's Bench with regard to the coroner, and the direction for a fresh inquest. Practically, the affair came to nothing, and the result matters but little; for if the police did not succeed in getting upon the traces of the murderer or murderers within twenty-four hours after the deed was done, the inquiry became one of mere hap-hazard. We may know all about the Road Murder yet, but Chance and Conscience are the only two detectives who can help us now.

The second event is the departure of Garibaldi from Caprera. It seems, the guerilla chieftain has departed from his island, yet no one is able to state whither he has gone, or by whom he is accompanied. Last year he disappeared in like manner, and conquered a kingdom. Upon the present occasion, the suggestion is that we shall hear of him next upon the coast of Dalmatia, or perhaps in Hungary. If so, this means insurrection in Austria, and Austria in desperation may endeavour to meet the attack by a forward movement in Northern Italy. We now see why Garibaldi refused to accept military rank under Victor Emmanuel. As a private individual, he does not drag the new-born kingdom of Italy at his heels. His acts are his own; but if he is able to give a formal shape and colour to the national movement in Hungary, he will not have laboured in vain, and his present action will have greater political significance than even what he accomplished during the year 1860.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXX.

Acting under orders, of the most explicit character, from his imperious mistress, M. Silvain abstained from paying a reconciliatory visit to Adair, lest so prompt an offer of the olive branch should excite the suspicion of the enemy, but the Frenchman sought an opportunity of meeting Ernest as if by accident. Chance favoured him, and he encountered Adair in one of the roads leading to Versailles, a solitary road, and so narrow that no two acquaintances could pass without recognition. M. Silvain played his little part well, and seemed disconcerted at seeing his late antagonist, and as if inclined to turn and avoid him. Adair, however, hastened to hold out his hand, and press it upon the apparently reluctant Frenchman.

"Why," said Ernest, retaining the hand of the other while speaking, "you surely do not bear any malice, Silvain. Life is too short for such folly."

"It is impossible for me to forget in a moment," said Silvain (their conversation being in French, as before), "that at our last meeting you used language, Monsieur, which ——"

"Which was perfectly justified, Silvain. Not by anything you said or did, except by your unfortunately coming at a time when I was in the highest state of irritation about some matters which, if you knew them, you would allow to be an excuse for anything. I was in a white heat of rage, and your persistence in talking about things which seemed comparatively trifling made me a brute."

"I believe that I found you reading a novel," said Silvain.

"Trying to read it, my friend, trying whether somebody else's nonsense would take me out of my own trouble. I cannot tell you what this was, but be generous, and believe what I say."

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"I have no right to doubt the word of a man of honour."

"Pooh, pooh, don't stand on stilts, there's a good man. I am not a man of honour, in the world's sense, as you know perfectly well. But I am a good fellow, when people trust me and treat me well; and I have not behaved badly to you in serious matters. As for anything I said, I only know that I was in a demon's temper, and I heartily apologise to you for every word. What more can I say?"

"I do not claim to ask so much."

"Come, Silvain, you are not so brave a man as I believed you, if that little affair with the foils rankles in your mind. You are a much better fencer than I am, but that day I suppose the devil that was in my heart did me the favour to help my hand, in the hope that I might do a friend some deadly harm. But I was luckier than Faust."

"There is an end of the affair, M. Adair."

"That is well," said the other, again shaking hands, "and now walk with me, or I will walk with you—where are you going?"

"I was returning home; but I have no errand of importance."

"Then come my way, for a stroll. And before we say any more, I feel that you were so right in your anger at my hasty conduct to Matilde, that I do not know what amends to make. I can only say that though I knew you were paying her attention, I had no idea that it was an affair of heart, or I should have respected it. Make my peace with her, and trust to my good behaviour for the future."

"I will endeavour to do so, Monsieur."

"Very well," replied Adair, "and we will drop the question. I hate to quarrel with anybody, but my impulses are always leading me into scrapes. If I ask how business prospers, you will construe it into an indiscretion."

"No, Monsieur, not after your frank assurances. I am glad to say that the business is satisfactory. I have just had a handsome order from the house of M. Urquhart."

"I am glad to hear it. But that you owe, of course, to the good offices of Mademoiselle."

"I should be proud to owe her anything," said Silvain, "but I do not think I am her debtor in this case."

"No. Come, don't look so mysterious. Have we made an impression in a higher quarter? Ah, Silvain, what chances our profession has."

"I dare not flatter myself to that extent," said Silvain, with a smile. "And the lady who has honoured me with her commands is an acquaintance of your own—the lady from England."

"Eh," said Adair, quickly. "Madame Lygon."

"A charming lady."

"So she is, very charming, worth a dozen of her sister. So—she has given you a handsome order. I see," said Ernest.

And he smiled, for a moment, as one who imagines himself to be detecting the spring of a device against him.

"A hundred and fifty francs, or more," said Silvain, complacently.

"What caprice! Have not Atkinson's and Rimmel's, scent-men of London, better than all the sweet waters of Paris?" said Adair, with one of his favourite irreverences of memory. "But I rejoice in a friend's luck. And perhaps you may owe it to me," he added.

"How so?"

"Madame knows that we are acquainted, and may mean a delicate attention to me," said the other, eyeing Silvain keenly.

"I should be glad to think so," said Silvain, "but nothing of the kind was said to me."

"Of course," said Ernest. "Women can, sometimes, hold their tongues at the proper time. Come, my dear Silvain, this is a noble proof of your loyalty to me. You understand the object of the lady's order just as well as I do, and you tell me of it. That is a brave forgiveness of wrongs."

"You pay me an unmerited compliment, M. Adair."

"I will not hear you say so. Mrs. Lygon knows of our intimacy, and favours you with this order to ensure your giving Mademoiselle exact information as to anything I may do. Well, you will not be party to any scheme against your friend, and you reveal the fact of the bribe. You shall be rewarded for your devotion, and you shall earn more orders."

"How you see through everything," said Silvain, with a look of admiration. "I swear to you that I did not regard the matter in that way. Ah! you are happy to have interested such a creature as Madame."

"We will not be vain," said Adair, caressing his moustache, and taking a sharp side-glance at his companion.

"I never saw a better excuse for vanity," said Silvain.

"Come, come, my friend. I am going to be jealous. Do not be so earnest on the beauty of Madame. What would Mademoiselle say?"

Silvain shrugged his shoulders.

"Mademoiselle, however, admires her as much as you do," continued Ernest. "Regards her as an angel."

"I have reason to believe to the contrary," said Silvain.

Again the keen eye was turned upon him, but the Frenchman affected to look inscrutable.

"Does not admire her?" said Ernest.

"You can conceive that I am not at liberty to repeat anything that Mademoiselle may have confided to me, and I might injure her with Madame Urquhart by indiscretion. But I have a right to form an impression of my own."

"Which is that Matilde does not like Madame."

"I will not say that. But the coldness with which she received my praises of the English lady, and I swear to you, M. Adair," said Silvain, with well acted warmth, "that she is divine—this astonished me in a young person of good taste—"

"For she had eyes and chose *you*," quoted Ernest.

"And," said Silvain, "this left me to draw an inference, which I will reserve until I know more of the matter."

"You are too honest and honourable a fellow to be a good deceiver," said Ernest Adair, "and

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you are not deceiving me. Matilde has told you something about Madame Lygon."

"It may be so, but Matilde has made some mistake, has misconceived some words. Madame Lygon is an angel."

"This is a good deal of homage for a hundred and fifty francs, my dear Silvain, unless I take the more flattering view of the case, and suppose that you are praising the lady to please me."

"I speak from my heart," said Silvain, impressively. "I am grieved that Mademoiselle's estimate of her differs from my own, but I retain my own, nevertheless. But I must say no more on that subject."

"Well, we may talk of something better than women, I dare say," said Ernest. "I will pour out some of my sorrows to you, but of course, in the strictest confidence. Nay, I don't mean that I doubt you, but when a man has a serious affair of the heart, he gets very untrustworthy, for the time. I don't know a more demoralising thing than falling in love—it destroys all a man's ideas of the sacredness of friendship, and makes him sacrifice anything and everything in the hope of pleasing somebody who is laughing at him all the time, and whom he will heartily hate in twelve months."

"Frightful creed!" said Silvain. "Do not trust me."

"Yes, I will, because you have a brain as well as a heart." What *have* they been telling this ass, thought Ernest. Surely nothing of the truth—three women in council would know better than that.

"My dear Silvain," he said, linking his arm in that of his companion, "I am so glad that you don't play."

"Why, I never could afford it in the days when I desired to play, and now that I can afford it, I don't care about it. So I have no merit."

"I wish I had as much, on that head. I have been most unlucky."

"Lately?"

"Yes, this week. I have been constantly losing. I have been into Paris three nights running, and every night I have come away with just enough to bring me back. Another visit, and I shall be without a napoleon. Pooh, my dear fellow, take your hand out of your pocket. I do not speak literally, and certainly I would not plunder a man who is making arrangements for marriage. Besides, you could not do what I want. I owe a good deal, and, in fact, I must instantly apply to a certain source which I hate to trouble, but one must live."

"You are fortunate in having friends."

"Yes, I have two friends who will do a good deal for me, though not with any good will. But it will not do to be fastidious."

There, thought Ernest, if you are what I suppose, take that information back with you for the delight of those who hire you.

"You reject my purse?" said Silvain. "If you took it, you would give me a better proof of your friendship."

"Then I *will* take it," said Ernest, laying hand something abruptly on the *porte-monnaie* produced by Silvain, and dropping it into a coat pocket. There was a touch of humour on his part in the transaction, and perhaps a touch of ill-humour, or at all events of surprise on that of M. Silvain, who might not have expected to be taken so promptly at his word.

"I will take it," continued Ernest, gazing kindly on Silvain, "but chiefly to show how completely I consider any little differences between us adjusted for ever. There cannot be much here, and very much is needed for my immediate wants, but whatever is here I will repay to the last centime before I leave France."

"Do not speak of repayment," said Silvain, with a very good grace. "If I ask you to return the purse itself, it is only because—"

"Ah, I should have thought of that," said Ernest, taking it out. And he deliberately removed the entire contents of the purse,—some seven or eight napoleons and some silver—and pocketed them solemnly. He then handed the *porte-monnaie* to his companion.

"A *gage d'amour*. May it be luckier to you than anything of the kind which I have ever had."

"Do you mean to abandon play, M. Adair?" asked Silvain.

"Why should I? It is true that I lose; but then, as I have told you, I possess friends who have sufficient good feeling to minister to my needs, though not enough to do so graciously. No, I have no other happiness, and I shall not deny myself that single solace."

"No other happiness," repeated M. Silvain, "and you are appreciated in a certain quarter?"

What *have* they made him believe, thought Ernest again. "Ah, my dear Silvain, if you knew all."

"I know nothing. But I have my surmises."

"They make me a happier man than I am," said Ernest, in the tone in which men of his class say that which they wish should be disbelieved. And M. Silvain, understanding this, again shrugged his shoulders, and thus was performed the little drama, talk and pantomime, in which a thousand honours have been lied away, and so will be many a thousand more, until that drama comes on for damnation. But, in this case, the actors were differently circumstanced, the one playing the part of a scoundrel, the other but affecting credulity. He would have liked to fight Ernest again, for the tone in which he had spoken, and, like a man with his feelings under proper control, he made a very different proposition.

"If instead of going again to Paris to-night, you care to come and smoke in my little apartment—" he said.

"Well, I will, and re-baptise our friendship in your excellent cognac. You could not please me more than by the proposal. Shall we be alone?"

"Unless you wish it otherwise."

"I would sooner talk to you than anybody else, my dear Silvain. But then I would also sooner rob anybody else than you, my dear Silvain. So if you happen to meet any one who has a taste for *écarté*, and a few Napoleons to justify such

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n indulgence, I should be happy to afford him ny amusement in my power."

"You have met a few persons of that kind at ıy house," said M. Silvain, archly.

"I have; and if they preserve as pleasant ecollections of me, as I do of them, there is a ood deal of agreeable reminiscence scattered bout the world. But fresh faces are almost as ecessary to one as fresh air, dear Silvain."

"*Connu*," responded his companion. "I will o my best. But you will not be proud, and my friend should not quite come up to your tandard of elegance—"

"What are we that we should be proud," said dair, relapsing into his old bantering manner. 'Worms, dust, ashes,—what does it matter with hom we play at *écarté*, if he have money in his urse?"

"I think that I can manage an agreeable intro-uction, and not an unprofitable one."

"Expect me at eight, then, prepared, if you ucceed, to show my sense of your hospitality, and you do not, to favour you with some more of ıy troubles. And you will make me very happy, I find you are able to tell me that I am forgiven y Mademoiselle."

"I shall not see her to-day," said Silvain.

"Miserable man—and yet great man, for even ı your own distress you can take thought for the dvantage of your friend. Jonathan and Pythias were but types of you, my dear Silvain."

The Frenchman had heard of Pythias, though ever of Jonathan, and made fitting reply.

When they had separated, Ernest Adair solilo-uised after his usual fashion.

"I am a clear gainer by this transaction. I ave got those napoleons, francs, and half-francs, nd I have got the information that they think t necessary to watch me, and therefore have lanted their spy. That's fair enough. But, in evenge, I have sent a bombshell into the camp f the enemy, and it will be lighted there by heir own man. I will not be driven into spoil-ng a good game by hurrying it; the true artist akes his time, and never permits himself to row impatient—but there is reason in all things. f they are plotting to get money for me, and nerely wish to keep me amused while they are oing it, that is a considerateness for which I iss their hands. And if they are growing nervous hile the delay occurs, and wish to know how am conducting myself, and therefore employ I. Silvain, I can only feel complimented at the hought they bestow upon me. Therefore, pleased, nd thankful for all mercies, let us prepare our-elves by a quiet dinner, for showing M. Silvain's ew friend the art of turning up the king, or ather let us remember that *ars est celare artem*."

CHAPTER XXXI.

When Robert Urquhart had seen the train in notion, and had waved his farewell to Lygon, he Scotsman, for the first time perhaps in his busy life, walked off in a slow and sauntering nanner, and took any streets that came in his way, whether they were also in the way to the otel or not. He was greatly troubled in his nind, and nearly trod many sprawling children to death in his elephantine progress, answering the shrill remonstrances of the mothers with a growl, and a bit of exceedingly plain Scotch nomenclature.

For though in his heart he believed what he had called upon Lygon to believe, and he doubted not that the problem of Mrs. Lygon's journey to France would be solved by some revelation of feminine absurdity, committed under the influence of feminine terror, both of which attributes of woman Mr. Urquhart held in considerable dis-esteem, he had a double reason for being much displeased at Laura's conduct. In the first place he had strong Scottish views of the marriage tie, and of the extreme impropriety of a wife's ever presuming to act without the sanction of him whom the Scripture declares her Head; and in the second place, he had a keener insight into the character of Arthur Lygon than might have been supposed by an indifferent spectator of the almost rough passages in their second interview. On the former point Urquhart might have felt that he should have little to say, should Arthur Lygon choose to take an indulgent view of Laura's proceedings, but Robert Urquhart had his own reasons for believing it more than doubtful whether Lygon would really take that view, and whether what the Scot considered a very wrong, not to say wicked step on the part of the wife, might not permanently alienate the affections of the husband. It was in this doubt, and from Urquhart's most earnest desire to prevent evil and estrangement, that he had laid so much stress upon the assurances which he gave Lygon of the absolute certainty of Laura's coming with honour from the ordeal; but Robert Urquhart was very, very far from feeling towards her, when he began to reflect upon the circumstances, anything like the cordiality he had expressed when endeavour-ing to work upon the heart of Lygon. Urquhart had said, truly enough, that nothing should have induced him to try to defend Laura, were he not convinced of her innocence, but when he had done with the defence, and had parted with his friend, and had leisure to weigh her conduct in the balance, he pronounced it greatly wanting. Indeed the more he reflected upon it, the more harshly he felt disposed to judge her, and as for the kindly thought and suggested kiss with which he had closed his appeal, these he utterly retracted, and became as little inclined to deal gently with her, as ever Knox showed himself with regard to the unfortunate Queen of Scots. Nor was this severity merely the result of a habit of placing a severe interpretation on the words of the marriage-bond.

Urquhart, as we have said, knew Arthur Lygon well. They had been a good deal thrown together in earlier life, and although their natures differed, there was in them that amount of difference and that amount of resemblance which, in union, draw together those whom the world is surprised to see closely attached. On the special features in the character of each it may not be necessary to dwell, until these are developed by subsequent incidents, but upon a single point it is desirable to say enough to explain the state of mind in which Urquhart found himself. Intimately acquainted with the

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nature of Lygon, Urquhart trembled for the future of Laura's husband from the first moment when he had doubted her. Devoted, thoughtful, cheerful, proud of his wife as well as earnestly attached to her, affectionate in his manner as well as in his heart, and, in brief, what is rightly considered the model of a husband, Arthur Lygon, blessed with health, energy, and worldly prosperity, seemed a man destined to a long life of tranquil but not stagnant happiness. But Urquhart, who knew all this, knew more. He knew that Lygon, admirably and lovingly as he estimated his wife, was by no means unconscious of his own high qualifications, and that though nothing could be more removed from his nature than a vulgar self-complacency, Arthur Lygon placed on himself as just and liberal an estimate as he formed of another. He was proud of himself, of his successes, of his good fortune, and though he had far too much taste to permit this pride to appear, it was not the less potent for being latent. He was thoroughly sensible of, and we may add grateful for the numerous advantages of his lot, but he was not hypocrite enough to affect to say that he had not deserved them, and that they were not the legitimate reward of intellect and resolute will. Among the prizes of his life the chiefest was the beautiful woman whom he had loved and won, and for whom he retained so warm an affection; but beautiful, and gifted, and good as Laura was, her husband did not esteem himself rewarded above his deserts in possessing the first and only love of that pure and gentle heart. I do not say that this self appreciation was a fault, but it is needful to heed that it was a characteristic, and Robert Urquhart was well aware of its existence.

From this habit of mind would naturally arise —should circumstances evoke it—a sense of wrong done to himself, should aught that appertained to Arthur Lygon in the way of love, friendship, good fortune, deteriorate—or seem to be deteriorated—by any of the events of life. Having made up his mind, or rather holding an instinctive belief that he deserved all that he had obtained, the diminution of this wealth, by one jot or tittle, was depriving him of a portion of his deserts. And, thought Robert Urquhart, as he moodily pondered over the story, and wished that he had used even stronger or more reiterated arguments, when Arthur Lygon shall have had all this strange business explained to him, when he shall have declared himself satisfied, and gently rebuked Laura for not having at once confided in him, and their hands and lips have again met in token of perfect reconciliation, will he be again the happy, confiding husband of other days? Reason would bid him resume his old, calm happiness; but when did reason ever make the heart hear her? Rather, thought Urquhart, will Lygon become thoughtful and moody. He will mentally cast up a private balance-sheet of his dealings with Providence, and he will convince himself that in one of the items he has not been fairly dealt by. The wife who was supposed to be all love, frankness, prudence, has wounded and mystified him, and has done one of those weak, wild things that might be expected from a romantic school girl, not a thoughtful matron. He has had nights of sorrow, days of harassing travel and search, and he was sent home to England in a state of doubt and gloom. This wife is not what she was taken for, and the admirable husband has been grievously wronged. When that is the form taken by a husband's meditations, she must be a wife strong indeed in her love and truth who can lay such ghosts—for they are not mere fantastic phantoms, but the spectres of things that *were*.

Not in words like these, but in his own shrewd language did Robert Urquhart mutter his forebodings, and he ended by saying:

"I doubt he'll never quite forgive her. They'll never be quite one again."

He had business in Paris, and determined to remain there another night, so he sent on Lygon's letter to Bertha, putting a word or two on the cover, to intimate that Mrs. Urquhart was not to expect him. And then he should have gone about his business, but Laura was still uppermost in his thoughts, and it was in vain that he essayed to work out, in his head, the calculations which were at other times so easy to his cool intellect. After three or four attempts, and as many discoveries that he was not doing himself justice, he resolved, with characteristic caution, to postpone the interview he had desired, which was one of importance. "For I'll be sure to forget some point," he said, "and then the beggars will have an advantage over me. I'll see them when we are on even terms."

Nor was his own wife entirely omitted in his consideration of the circumstances. He had nothing to lay to her charge, except that she had not written and told him that Laura had arrived, and as there was a general understanding between himself and Bertha that he was to hold no news to be good news, and not to be troubled with letters, which he hated, except in case of necessity; and as, moreover, he had been moving from place to place, and might easily have missed a letter, he really had not much ground for complaint. Doubtless Bertha would have plenty to tell him next day. But as regarded Laura, his wrath against her became hotter and hotter the more he meditated on her conduct, and I fear that with some adhesion to the doctrine of special judgments, as understood in the north, he brought himself to say, with an ominous shake of the head, that it would be but meet and right if, when she reached her own door, she found one of her children almost at that of death. But he grew more placable as he realised this image, and thought of what he had seen of the idolatrous affection of Laura for her little ones. "I hope that the woman is with them," he growled. "Perhaps they will plead for her with Arthur better than I could do myself," a supposition which mothers may not consider irrational.

The letter from Lygon was duly delivered in the avenue, but Bertha, though in some measure recovered from her bewilderments and terrors, was unable to comprehend its meaning, and sought counsel of her sister.

Laura was in the secluded apartment that has been described, and was writing.

"A letter from Arthur, but I cannot tell what it means."

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Laura hastily took the letter, and her heart throbbed as the well-known handwriting met the wife's eyes.

"There! See how you wronged him," she said, her face in a glow.

"I wronged him?" said Bertha.

"Yes. You were afraid that he might, by accident or design, say something to Robert that would compromise you. Not only has he not done so, but in all his own trouble he has had thoughtfulness enough to plan a letter that should tell you exactly how much it has been necessary to say. He is kindness itself, Bertha."

"But what does he tell me?" said Bertha. "Please to explain, for I cannot understand him."

"You really do not deserve the pains which is taken for you, Bertha," said her sister, impetuously. "No, I don't mean that, dear, but how can you fail to see his object? You told a story about papa having got into difficulties here, and this he has passed on to Robert—Heaven knows whether Arthur was deceived or not—but he writes to let you know that such is the story Robert is prepared to hear."

"Oh, does it mean that?"

"Of course, and you had better consider how to tell the same thing to your husband."

"To-morrow will do for that," said Bertha.

"It may," said her sister, looking compassionately at her.

Laura used the word without much intention in it, but some hours later it was recalled to her recollection.

She was still occupied in writing when Mrs. Urquhart came hurrying down the little staircase.

"He is come — he is come," said she in a tremble.

"Who—Arthur returned?" said Laura, starting up in almost as much agitation. "My husband?"

"No, Robert."

"Well—well, dear child," said Mrs. Lygon, recovering her breath, and her firmness, after a moment or two of pause, "now you must be calm, and very likely you will find that there is nothing to be feared. You have not spoken to Robert."

"No; I saw him from the window, and darted down here."

"What madness! Go up and receive him."

"I told Henderson to say I was out walking. There, do not look so displeased. The sight of his face drove all my thoughts out of my head, and I know that if I had attempted to talk to him, I should have betrayed you."

"If I were certain that Arthur had returned to England," said Mrs. Lygon, "I would confront Robert myself."

"Oh, if you could!" said Bertha.

"I dare not run *that* risk," said her sister, turning pale.

The two women remained together, and the heavy footsteps of Robert Urquhart were heard, as he paced the apartments above. Henderson had, no doubt, answered him as satisfactorily as might be, and would have the sense to come down, in due course, with bonnet and shawl, and manage that her mistress should appear as from a walk. Meantime Laura did her best to re-assure her sister, and to impress upon her by every argument in the world that the secret which Arthur had learned, Arthur had kept. But that a more immediate and encircling terror hemmed herself round, Laura would have been in an agony over the fatal addition to their sorrows, but her heart had its own bitterness, and aught that was more remote menaced her in vain.

After some time, Robert Urquhart, weary of waiting in the rooms above, descended to his own large room on the ground floor, and the sisters could hear him trampling to and fro, and apparently in no amiable mood, clearing a table, and sending a clattering cataract of miscellaneous articles down to the floor. Then they heard him execrating the dust, and vigorously opening the window, to let in ventilation. All was then comparatively silent, and he might be supposed to be laying a sheet of drawing-paper, and preparing to sketch.

"Henderson should come now," said Mrs. Lygon, in a low voice. "He is drawing, and you might go into the room. Indeed, I think you had better do so without waiting for her—go up-stairs, and it will seem that you had taken your things off."

"I am afraid," said Bertha. "No, let us wait for Henderson."

"Are you sure that you have a coherent story?" said Laura. "I am sadly afraid that you will fail. I am sure that you will fail. If I were only assured that Arthur had gone to England, and had not merely evaded Robert, and returned to search for me!"

"Robert can answer that."

"How can Robert do so? Even if he saw him off, as most likely he did, what is to hinder Arthur from getting out at the first station, and coming back? Well, dear, you must do your best, and we must trust to be delivered. There, listen, Robert is whistling at his work. Now, go up-stairs, and then run down to him. Such a way of receiving him will take away much of your flurry, he will be so glad."

"Stop, I hear Henderson, I think."

"Never mind her. Go up."

Bertha, however, listened for a few moments, and the next sound she heard was a dissatisfied exclamation from Urquhart, and something dashed on the floor. Then Laura and Bertha heard him say in a loud voice:

"There's no seeing anything in this d—d dark room. I'll have those trees cut down, every one of them. Eh! I'm a fool. There's a capital west light in yon room."

He made three strides to the door between the two rooms. It was locked, and the key was not in the door. There was an angry exclamation, and an exertion of a strong man's power, and in another moment the door had given way, and Robert Urquhart stood in the presence of Bertha and Laura.

Bertha uttered a faint cry as her husband entered. His look of surprise, as he perceived her, had nothing of an alarming character about it, and had she been alone, Robert would have

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seen nothing in the incident, and would have supposed a mistake by the servant, who might have believed that her mistress was out. But the next moment he turned to see who was her companion —a lady whose face was towards the window. The recognition was, of course, instantaneous. The Scot's countenance at once assumed that stern scowl which had come upon it during the interview with Lygon. He looked at Laura for a moment, and then, without a word, left the room.

(To be continued.)

REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN.

WIVES—MADAME LAVALETTE, LADY FANSHAWE, MRS. PATTON.

It is rather amusing, and sometimes more than amusing, to an old bachelor like me, to be reminded of the widely differing doctrines, theories, notions, or professions which have been put forward in different conditions of society in England, as to the proper characteristics of a good wife. There has been some change of view even in my time. More than once within this century, society has inclined towards this, that, or the other idea of the best sort of wife, as she would be drawn in literature. It seems to me that during the war, half a century ago, men of the middle and upper classes liked a stronger tone of mind, and more activity of habits in their wives than it has of late been the fashion to admire. Some of our literary men, at least, have been trying of late years to spread among us their taste for the wife who is always at her husband's disposal, for his amusement in the intervals of work. This is to be the criterion of her value. She is to be at all times punctual to a moment, or in waiting for his commands: she is always to be at complete leisure—not worn or anxious about the children, for whom money can purchase attendance: she is never to be too tired or anxious for perfect brightness and comeliness: she is to do no coarse or ugly work; but is to be dressed in black velvet, or something of that kind, embroidering cambric, or nothing: to be ready to play and sing, or go to the theatre, or have a capital dinner or supper set out at short notice, without disappearing from the room, or touching the domestic burden with one of her fingers: she is to appreciate and be constantly delighted with her husband's achievements, in whatever line they may be, from completing his stock-taking to writing his tragedy, or making his great speech of the session; and, at the same time, she must not be learned, nor fond of books, nor liable to hold any opinion which she does not know her husband to entertain. This is the ideal of a wife which has been set up before our eyes with much energy and perseverance for some years past, as other images have been adored by former generations: but it may be observed still, as at any former time, that a genuine case of supreme wifely excellence overthrows all fantastical notions and exclusive doctrines, and "makes the whole world kin" by that vital "touch of nature" upon the common heart of mankind. One writer, Lady M. Wortley Montague, or Mr. Urquhart, or Mrs. Poole, or Mr. Milnes, may write accounts of Moslem wives which set society disputing about whether women had better be shut up or live under the free heaven; a cynic may praise the Mongolian wife, who is her husband's Jack-of-all-trades and maid-of-all-work; while a saint would have women walk in long gardens, among Passion-flowers, and carrying each a tall white lily: but they will feel alike, and like other people, when an incident of true conjugal heroism or devotedness occurs within their ken. There may thus be representative wives, as truly as representative soldiers, or statesmen, or adventurers; that is, there is a common agreement in regarding them as a complete exemplification of the idea of their class.

I need not spend many words on the plain fact that the good wife of one state of society is very unlike that of another, in regard to the cultivation of her mind and the employment of her time. There are Irish villages, and Scotch glens, and English towns at this day where the Mahratta or Thibetan or Red Indian wife would be regarded as the model of her sex. Such a spouse carries the tent, or rides the bullock or pony, with all her children hanging about her, while her husband rides on before, in showy trim. At the resting place she pitches the tent, or excavates an apartment in the snow; lights the fires, shampooes her husband while he smokes, and then feeds and waters and shampooes his horse; cooks the meal and serves her husband with it; and then feeds the children, collects food for the animals' next meal, perhaps catches fish, or shoots a few wildfowl, and, long after the whole family has been asleep, lies down at her husband's feet, or in any corner where she can find a spare bit of mat, aware that she must be the first up in the morning. This Asiatic or American wife is, in a manner, the representative of a considerable number of wives now living within the United Kingdom; but we consider that method of life a remnant of barbarism, which will disappear before the advance of education; and meantime we have no particular desire that the phase should be preserved by any express representation. Wives who do all the work for lazy husbands, and bear all humiliations from despotic ones, are not model wives in the eyes of English society, though they are regarded as inestimable conveniences by individuals of the nation.

The favourite image of the wife in the imagination of the greatest number of civilised nations is perhaps that of the mediæval matron, at the opening of the age of chivalry. When we would think of a noble woman, under our own system of morals, our minds recur to the Crusader's wife, living in her castle or mansion for years together, without tidings of her husband, commanding the domestic garrison, and superintending the cultivation of the lands, providing for the retainers, ruling the tenants, controlling the dependents, employing the household priest to write all despatches, as no one else could do it; revising and checking the accounts of the steward; keeping the purveyors, military and civil, up to their duty, that the place may always be fit for defence; and, when necessary, standing a siege, in her husband's name, for her husband's sake, and often with his ability and courage. It is true such an ideal, if

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now proposed from imagination, instead of history, would create a certain outcry. We should talk a good deal about woman's sphere (comprehending the modern drawing-room with the half-forbidden outlying regions of the kitchen and the nursery); we should be shocked at the notion of women who looked after archers and cross-bows, and whose talk was of beeves; we might think it a bit of the wisdom of our ancestors that the priest should hold the pen; but we should be scandalised that a woman should mount a tower to look upon a battle, and order flights of arrows, and the discharge of hot stones and liquids; and perhaps we might even now—and certainly should, up to the time of the Crimean war—express disgust at the thought of a gentlewoman dressing the wounds of men. Yet, because this order of wives has existed, and been honoured and adored by our forefathers, and been exactly what the spirit and circumstances of the times required, we all agree in regarding the worthy mediæval wife as a model for all ages. There were ladies then, who were no more capable of administering the affairs of a domain than many a modern wife is of keeping her husband's house. There were weak and spoiled women, who regularly aggravated all misfortunes by their grief and lamentations. There were fond brides, who insisted on accompanying their husbands to Palestine—just as too many of our countrywomen embarrassed our good soldiers in India during the mutiny, by choosing to go into a scene where they could be nothing but a burden and an anxiety: but the image of the noble wife of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries remains one of the loveliest pictures in the great gallery of history. During the preceding ages, women had been in a very low condition—the influence of the Church having been of a broadly ascetic character. The use of the worship of the Virgin, in the magnitude which it assumed after the celebration of the Immaculate Conception in A.D. 1134, had a strong effect on the social position of women throughout Christendom; and they soon rose to be the companions of their husbands in counsel as in recreation. Poets and novelists represent them as queens of beauty, and prizegivers at contests of arms and wit and poetry; but they were also the advisers of rulers, the partners of their husbands in serious responsibilities, and their representatives in all the actual business of life when military duty called them from home. Their powers, duties, and mode of life would no doubt be offensive to the artificial taste which calls itself refinement in our own time—and especially in a considerable portion of its literature—if the self-constituted appointers of woman's sphere dared say what they feel: but the general sympathy with native nobleness, and the potency of moral tradition carry all before them, so that when we would praise a heroic or devoted woman in our own day, we say she is worthy of that olden time.

One great moral of the case should never be lost sight of. Women were more valuable then than ever before, from the slaughter of men. This opened to them the succession to lands and offices, over nearly all Europe. Their new dignity, authority, wealth, and independence certainly called forth unsuspected powers, intellectual and moral; and thus the world beheld the converse of the familiar case of women becoming less capable in proportion to the contempt with which they were regarded, and less worthy of honour as they were less respected. The deterioration of slaves and victims, at all times and everywhere, is as constant a result as any other effect of a known cause: and here we saw the reversed process,—of women rising in ability and character to the height of their loftier destiny.

In our own century we have seen something of this. One of the most striking things we found in France, when we obtained access to it after the war, was the ability of the women in practical life. They had succeeded to the business and the property of a host of men destroyed by the wars of the empire; and we thought them like no other women that we had ever seen for sense, shrewdness, independence, and accomplishment in the methods of business. They are so still, in another generation; and it seems to be generally true that French women of all ranks are more habitually in the confidence of their husbands, fathers, and brothers, about the business of life than women of other nations are. We might except the Americans—or some of them. At both ends of the country, the women have a character of efficiency which is very marked. In New England there are so many more women than men, that a considerable number of girls take early to some occupation by which they can live when their brothers, and those who should naturally be their husbands, go to the West. In the Slave States it is common for women to possess land and slaves; and the duty which then devolves upon them is that of administering the affairs of a small community. Some are idle and atrociously selfish: but some, also, are so able and up to their duty, that we may be sure that the material which made Crusaders' wives exists still in abundance. Of German women, the general impression seems to be, that they are not to be surpassed as wives, while they are ill-adapted to single life. There can be no general rule in such a case; but if they are brought up with a view to marriage, it is natural that they should wander in sentiment and passion, or suffer from *ennui* when left without due occupation and interest. On the other hand, the capacity of devotedness in German wives is so great that the conjugal interest brings out, apparently, any sort of faculty that events may demand.

It is, after all, the devotedness that captivates us every one, in the contemplation of special conjugal cases. The devotedness is the vivifying power of the ability, and therefore greater than the ability; and it is full of sacredness and charm where the superior faculty does not exist. We could not possibly feel more than we do for the wife who would not leave her husband when he was broken on the wheel, but tended him, wiped the sweat from his face, upheld his courage, and promised him speedy relief when death was near. We could not honour her more than we do, if we knew her intellect to have been as great as her heart. Perhaps we might say that it requires a universal greatness of character and capacity to exercise so stupendous a self-control as this. But,

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put it as we may, it is the devotedness which occupies us wholly in thinking of that first of wives.

So it is in the case of wives who have risked their lives to save their husbands, like Madame Lavalette and many others. The one incident absorbs us, and we inquire no further than the capacity to do the deed. M. Lavalette lay under sentence of death for high treason at Paris, in 1815. His wife was in such miserable health, through her anxieties and terrors, and her efforts on his behalf, that she could hardly stand. She made this weakness available for M. Lavalette's escape. She went to the prison in a sedan chair, and was carried without stopping to a passage within the turnkey's department; and when she went home, she entered the chair at the same place. On the December day in 1815 which was to have been the last of her husband's life, she went to the prison at four in the afternoon, her daughter, eleven years old, walking beside the chair. The fashion of the time, in regard to head-dress, was favourable to disguise. We do not forget the remark made when the Duchesse d'Angoulême entered the Tuileries, on the return of the Bourbons, and appeared there as the heroine of the most mournful story in all royal experience: the remark of the by-standers was,—"She wears the small bonnet!"—the small bonnet being the English mode, and the French a particularly large one. In such a large bonnet, and moreover with an ample veil, Madame Lavalette stepped out of the chair; and the turnkey supported her on one side, and her child on the other, upstairs and to the door of her husband's apartment. She dined with her husband; and in an hour and a half from her arrival, the turnkey was summoned to assist her to her chair. The veil was down; and no doubt the man was silent from compassion. It was an hour before any one entered the prisoner's room; and then the prisoner, wrapped in the well-known cloak, appeared to be reading by the light of a candle on the table behind him. The gaoler spoke twice, and, receiving no answer, advanced into the room, and went to the front of the prisoner. Further concealment was impossible. Madame Lavalette looked up with a smile, saying, "He is gone," and immediately fell into convulsions. She had been full of dread of the treatment she should receive when discovered; and the solitary hour of watching and terror she had passed had been too much for an exhausted invalid. She rejoined her husband, however, beyond the frontiers of France, whence he had escaped by the agency of Sir Robert Wilson and Mr. Bruce, whose trials for the act (only half-voluntary on their part, and an act of simple benevolence), all elderly Englishmen remember.

There is no end to the true stories of the devotedness of wives of political prisoners, whether they could effect deliverance, like Madame Lavalette and Madame Kinkel, or could only mitigate, more or less, the sufferings of captivity. The sympathies of a whole generation were with the Countess Confalonieri, in her incessant struggles for her husband's release from the atrocious inflictions of the late Emperor of Austria; and when her reason gave way, and then her life, so that she had no enjoyment of his freedom at last, her fate was felt almost as a personal sorrow by more than one nation.

Madame Kinkel's health also gave way under the stress of terror and grief, inflicted by the late King of Prussia himself and by his too faithful servants, in their passion of alarm and wrath at the events of 1848; but she lived a few happy years with her husband in his exile before the heart-disease which she had incurred in the struggle caused her death by a fall from a window, to which she had rushed for air in a spasm. Again and again she had been told that he had only one day to live, or that he had been shot that morning; and her persistence in moving heaven and earth on his behalf was met with intolerable insolence, indifference, or cruelty. The indignity to which M. Kinkel was subjected, of being made to spend his days in spinning wool, was at length converted into a retribution on his oppressors. The yarn he had spun during the day hung from his window at night, to fetch up the implements by which he effected his escape. I believe the method of escape has never been made known. All the gaolers knew was that the bird had flown, and then that he had joined his patient and constant mate; and again, that they had made a nest for themselves in a region where the liming and snaring of the best birds of the wood is an unknown practice.

When we speak or hear of wives attending on their imprisoned husbands, all minds revert to the two wives whose interests were engaged on opposite sides during the great rebellion,—Mrs. Hutchinson and Lady Fanshawe. Lucy Hutchinson's life is so well known by her Memoirs of her husband, that her mere name and her husband's mention of her with his dying breath are enough. "Let her," said he, "as she is above other women, show herself, on this occasion, a good Christian, and above the pitch of ordinary women." She was his friend and partner in all transactions in which she could share; his deputy when two offices had to be fulfilled at once; and her superiority in judgment, knowledge, and ability was a subject of gentle and dignified exultation to him, —in striking contrast to the sense and experience of a great man at the very moment.

Milton has left us his testimony of the need that such men have of intellectual capacity and cultivation in a wife. Without it, he says, "there must come that unspeakable weariness and despair of all sociable delight which turn the blessed ordinance of God into 'a sore evil under the sun,' or at least to a familiar mischief, a drooping and disconsolate household,—captivity without refuge or redemption."

Lady Fanshawe candidly tells us how she went to work to be her husband's, Sir Richard Fanshawe's, political comrade; or rather how she—a mere girl—was wrought upon by designing persons, to try to get at his secrets, when the fate of the Stuarts was trembling in the balance, and an indiscreet word from man or woman might possibly determine the fate of an empire. She tells us ingenuously and merrily how she pouted and sulked, and how her husband gaily and lovingly bore with her, and gave her time to

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recover her good sense; and then spoke a few wise and kind words of explanation of his duty to his prince which set her right for life. "So great was his reason and goodness," she writes, "that, upon consideration, it made my folly appear to me so vile, that, from that day, until the day of his death, I never thought fit to ask him any business but what he communicated freely to me, in order to his estate or family." About such things he did communicate freely from the day when they married upon twenty pounds, in the most private way at Oxford, where the king's servants began their training in hardship, to the last of their joint lives: and when they could no longer converse and consult in privacy, at home, they daringly talked in the open air from the window to the ground. Of course, this was in the dark, and when they could communicate in no other way. He was imprisoned at Whitehall; and she went there from Chancery Lane every morning before daybreak, with a dark lantern, on foot, alone, and in all weathers, slipped into the entry upon which her husband's window opened, carried him news, and received his directions. After the first time, when he did not expect her at four in the morning, he never failed to put out his head instantly, in answer to her soft call. Sometimes she was so wet with the rain that it went in at her neck and out at her heels; but that was no matter, if she could learn how best to make application to Cromwell on her husband's behalf—a thing which she did successfully, owing, as she told her children, to the Protector's great respect for their father.

She once showed an equal disregard of another kind of rain,—an iron shower from an enemy at sea. A Turkish galley menaced the vessel in which the Fanshawes were going to Spain; and the only chance of escape from slavery was by putting on a warlike appearance, and hiding all the women and the merchandise. So the ladies were locked into the cabin, whence indeed Lady Fanshawe had been too sick to move. Now, however, when her husband was in danger on deck, she never rested till she had brought a cabin-boy to the door, got him to open it, and possessed herself of his blue thrum cap and his tarred coat. She put half-a-crown in his hand, and he let her pass up to the deck, where she stole softly to her husband's side, "as free from sickness and fear," she tells her children, "as, I confess, from discretion." This time her husband had no rebuke ready for her indiscretion. Looking upon her he blessed himself, and snatched her up in his arms, saying, "Good God! that love can make this change!" He bethought himself at length of chiding her; but it was with a laughing and a glistening eye,—both then and ever after.

We have some of us heard a story lately—full of a more solemn sweetness than this—a story as animating as it is mournful, of such a wife with her husband at sea. Each age has its own mode of disclosure of the moral greatness of the men and women of the time; and in this case, through the ways and circumstances of our century—of even the latter half of it—we see in Mrs. Patton the mind and soul of the best wife of the noblest Crusader of six centuries ago.

One February day, four years since, the people who happened to be on the Battery at New York, saw that a sick person was being carried in a litter from a ship to the Battery Hotel. Beside the litter walked a young girl, as a careless passenger might have supposed: but others were struck by the strangeness of such youthfulness in one with so careworn a face. She was also obviously near her confinement. She was twenty, in fact, and had been married three years to the man in the litter. She had been brought up in gaiety and indulgence in a prosperous home in East Boston, and had married a gallant young sea captain. In the first days of the honeymoon, Captain Patton was offered the command of the Neptune's Car, a ship fitted out for the circumnavigation of the globe, and delayed by the illness of the commander. Captain Patton declined this great piece of professional advancement, on the ground that he could not leave his bride, for so long a time, at an hour's warning. He was told she might go with him; she was willing, and they were established on board within twelve hours from the first proposal being made.

They were absent a year and five months; and from the outset she made herself her husband's pupil, companion and helper, to his great delight. She studied navigation, and learned everything that he could teach her, and was soon habituated to take observations, steer by the chart, and keep the ship's reckoning. In August 1856, they sailed again in their beloved vessel for California, making sure that the ship they were so proud of, and so familiar with, would beat two others which started at the same time. The race which ensued disclosed to Captain Patton the evil temper and designs of his first mate, who was evidently bent on defeating his purpose, and, for some unknown reason, on carrying the ship into Valparaiso. Before Cape Horn was reached, the captain was suffering from anxiety and vigilance. There it was necessary to depose the mate; and under the toil of supplying his place, Captain Patton's health gave way entirely. A fever was followed by congestion of the brain; but he had had time to put his wife in full possession of his purposes. The ship was by no means to go to Valparaiso; for the crew would desert, and the cargo be lost before the consignees could arrive. His honour and conscience were concerned, he said, in going to the right port. This settled everything in his wife's mind. The ship should go to her destined port, and no other.

Her husband became hopelessly delirious; and the mate seized the opportunity to assume authority. He wrote a letter to Mrs. Patton, warning her not to oppose him, and charging her with the responsibility of the fate of every man in the vessel, if she presumed to interfere. She replied that her husband had not trusted him while he was well; and she should not trust him now that her husband was ill. She assembled the crew, told them the facts, and appealed to them. Would they accept her authority in her husband's place, disregard the first mate, and work the ship under the orders of the second? Every man of them agreed, and she had nothing to complain of from them. They did what they could to sustain her. They saw her at her studies, as they passed the

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cabin windows, and regarded her with reverence and pity,—a young wife, soon to be a mother, alone among men, with her husband to nurse and control, the crew to command, and their lives to preserve by her learning and professional skill! There she sat at her desk by lamplight,—now studying medical books which could instruct her on her husband's case; now keeping the reckoning, and making entries in the log. At noon and at midnight she was on deck, taking an observation. She marked the charts, made no mistakes, and carried the ship into port in fine condition on the 13th of November.

Captain Patton was a Freemason: and the Freemasons at San Francisco were kind, sending them back to New York by the first ship that could take them. They arrived wholly destitute, —the husband, blind, deaf, delirious, dying;—the wife grave and composed, but bent upon reaching Boston before her confinement. This aim she could not accomplish: her husband was too ill to be removed, and her child was born in a strange place. The New York underwriters immediately sent her 1000 dollars as a gift; and the owners of the vessel and cargo at once took steps to testify their sense of her conduct. Under singular extremity, she had considered the interests of the crew, and saved a vast amount of property to the owners; and the valour and conscientiousness of this lonely young creature were thoroughly appreciated. The truth was, it was to her husband that she devoted herself. She wrought out his purpose, and saved his honour.

From the verge of his grave she disappears from sight. We may never hear of her again: but we scarcely need to know more. What could we ask further, after being presented with the true image of a perfect wife, heroic in proportion to the extremity of her trial? I, for one, am thankful to know that a Mary Patton has shown the full glory and beauty of wifehood in our day.

INGLEBY SCOTT.

CONFESSIONS OF ST. VALENTINE.

LONG ago (*as mortals reckon*),
Long ago, in Rome I dwelt;
Dwelt and moved, and had my being;
Felt, as all on earth have felt.
I remember, that sweet Spring-time,
When there came a little maid,
Seeking shelter of my mother,
Seeking love and friendly aid.

And my mother look'd upon her,
Look'd with pity on the child,
Kiss'd her pallid cheek and forehead;
Through her falling tears, she smiled,
Saying, "You shall be my daughter,
Darling, I will love you well:"
Saying, "Valentine, embrace her,
She has come with us to dwell."

Then I stoop'd, and softly kiss'd her,
Just above her half-clos'd eyes,
Saying, "Will you be my sister?"
"Yes," she said, with glad surprise.
She was Lino's only daughter;
Lino, bravest of the brave,
Who upon the field of battle
Fought for glory—found a grave!

Lino, stern, yet tender-hearted,
Leader of a noble band,
Fighting under Claudius Cæsar,
Died to save his native land.
Many a Goth fell down before him
Ere his hero-life was done;
But the tidings kill'd the mother
Of his child—his darling one.

So Paulina came among us,
Growing dearer day by day;
And her fair sweet face seem'd fairer,
When her tears were chas'd away.
Tall and stately grew the maiden,
But I call'd her "Sister" still;
Though whenever I drew near her,
All my being seem'd to thrill.

Then I trembled in her presence,
And I shunn'd her more and more,
Though a thousand times more deeply
Did I love her than before.
Yes, I loved the maiden truly,
And my inmost heart was stirr'd
When sometimes she call'd me to her,
Or perchance her voice I heard.

Often did I plan to tell her
All my love; and how it grew
Daily out of pain the sweetest
And the strangest that I knew.
But my lips refused to utter;
Summer, winter pass'd away,
Almond trees were full of blossom,
All the world look'd bright and gay.

Then there came a stranger, saying,
"I was on the battle-field
When the noble Lino perish'd:
I it was who bore his shield;
I was Lino's armour-bearer,
Ere my beard began to grow;
And with him I cross'd the mountains,
Where the icy torrents flow."

Then he turn'd to where Paulina
Stood as one entranced,—and sigh'd,
Saying, "Lady, I will tell you,
How your father lived and died."
And Paulina loved to listen
To the tales he lov'd to tell,
Of the fights beyond the border,
Where her father fought so well.

Then I wander'd in the woodland
All alone, to seek for rest,
(For my home was home no longer,
While the stranger was our guest).
Birds among the leafy branches
Built their mossy homes above;
All alone, I listen'd sadly
To their joyous songs of love.

Musing dreamily, I listen'd
Till their singing seem'd to say,
"Seek your sweet one—lest you lose her
Ere the Spring-time pass away."
Up I rose, to seek Paulina,
Letting Love my footsteps guide
Through the wood, and through the marshes,
Till I reach'd the river side.

But my troubled heart forewarn'd me
That Paulina I should see
With the brave young armour-bearer—
Pledged to him and lost to me!

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Yes, I heard the song of warning
All too late ! I saw them stand
On the bridge ;—her eyes down drooping,
While he clasp'd her willing hand.

Marcus saw, and came to meet me ;
And Paulina softly said,
"Brother ! I must have your blessing ;
Put your hand upon my head.
Bless and love me, oh, my brother,
Still my guide and guardian be !"
Marcus said, "My Christian brother,
Let your love extend to me !"

Then, with all my heart, I bless'd them,
And submitted to my fate,
Praying God to give me courage
To be silent, brave, and great.
Soon my soul grew calm and stronger ;
And the marriage rites were seal'd ;
And I saw how Lino's daughter
Loved the youth who bore his shield !

Marcus, true and gallant-hearted,
Was a Christian ! He had heard
From the lips of sweet Paulina
Echoes of the Gospel Word !

Valentine's Day.

Time pass'd on : and "Persecution
Of the Christians !" was the cry :
Day by day the martyr'd heroes
Left the world without a sigh.

Then it was that I was Bishop ;
And though Cæsar's arm was strong,
Yet I shelter'd many a victim
Of his tyranny and wrong.
And I suffer'd death for helping
Marcus and his wife to fly ;
But to save my sweet Paulina
I was well content to die !

And I died—with joy and gladness,
Mocking all the earthly pain
That a Cæsar's wrath inflicted,
Singing, "I shall rise again."

Then my spirit wander'd freely,
Mounting up from sphere to sphere,
Traversing the well-known places
To my earthly life so dear !

Often, in the early Spring-time,
Timid lovers I inspire,
Till they tell the oft-told story,
Bravely, and with words of fire.
Still the birds among the branches
Build their nests, and seem to say,
"Seek your sweet one, lest you lose her
Ere the Spring-time pass away !"

Mary Eliza Rogers.

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MY ADVENTURE IN SEARCH OF GARIBALDI.

I HAD never seen Italy, its palaces and picture galleries, and all the other glorious sights which Mr. Murray kindly catalogues in red, and Mr. Coghlan in blue. So I crossed Mount Cenis, and went gradually southward from city to city, allowing myself just time to rush about the chief towns, with a guidebook in my hand, and a Cicerone at my heels, and to get a satisfactory stare at the lions, whether of marble or bronze, or painted canvas, or mouldering and mossy stone.

Rome, I confess, although it was the unhealthy vintage season, when the Campagna is a nest of fevers, and timid folks feel the malaria in every hot puff of wind that blows over the brown plain, —Rome, I confess, detained me too long. I could not get away; I could not get through my round of sight-seeing, though I worked like a horse in a mill, plodding through miles of pictures and acres of statuary, and consuming much of the time I meant to devote to martial proceedings. In spite of my own hurry, and although I wore out and expended in my service two of the stoutest *laquais de place* in the Eternal City, I spent ten days in Rome. But when I started, I could not blame myself for thus lingering. I had little prospect of seeing Rome again for many a long day. My aunt's legacy, on the strength of which I became a voyager, was waxing less and less, and I had no particular chance of another bequest; so I was right to make hay while the sun shone, and see all I could while my purse was still fairly replete.

Off I went at last in the Naples estaffette, with a team of half-wild Roman horses, screaming and biting each other, and tearing along the dusty roads in proper courier style. My head was in a perfect whirl, stuffed with great ghostly churches, classic ruins, wildernesses of noseless busts, chipped urns, and truncated idols, to say nothing of priests, pictures, and theatrical peasantry. But, presently, the memory of all these things began to give place to the anticipations of what I was going to see, real, spirit-stirring war, genuine combats, and all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of a grand historic struggle, of which I was about to be the spectator. Why not chronicler, as well as spectator? and why not more than either? This was a theatre where the audience every now and then sprang over the footlights, and took a share in the stage business, hand in hand with the regular performers. So might I. I had read in the "Times" how amateurs had suddenly stepped forward under a heavy fire, and led into action some scattered company of Garibaldi's Redshirts, who always appeared but too happy to follow these improvised captains. Even my learned elder brother (if he will allow me to call him so) of the English bar, had towered in the front of battle, counselling heroes, chiding laggards, and recommending or directing the summary execution of runaways. Why not I? At any rate, among so many impromptu warriors, I might try my hand and my nerves, go where I was certain to be shot at, and see how I liked it; and if I did like it, why, I might spend all the rest of my holiday with the adventurous gentlemen "in front," and have something to relate to admiring grandchildren in the year 1890, or thereabouts. How sweet, when relating the Liberation of Italy, to be able to add the words, "Et quorum pars magna fui!" Thus I thought as we trotted and galloped along the causeway that traverses those pestilent Pontine Marshes; and then, after a hurried meal of fruit and chocolate at Terracina, we approached the frontier of Naples, where estaffettes are changed.

With all our speed, we were behind time,—no uncommon event in Italy. In fact, we were eight hours overdue, half the delay lying at the door of the Papal Post Office, and the other on a smashed axletree which gave way in the heart of the Marshes, and procured us a delectable sojourn among the poisonous swamps, until a smith could be brought from Terracina to complete the repairs. No wonder that we found the Neapolitan courier in a rage, swearing like a pagan, and predicting his own dismissal on account of *our* delay. Very ill-humoured was the man of boots and bullion, as he locked the letter-bags and more sacred despatches in the boot of his dirty vehicle, which still bore the royal arms, to my surprise; though, when the versatile Neapolitan recovered his good temper, he showed me a fine silken flag, of the three magic colours, white, green, and red, wherewith he could cover the obnoxious Bourbon blazonry when he got within the Garibaldian outposts.

"Then why bear the royal arms at all?" asked I, with unsophisticated curiosity.

"And the garrison of Gaëta, then?" screeched the courier, with a shrug, and a grin of scorn at my obtuseness. "Madonna mia! I value my skin too much to offend the soldiers of King Francis. They would grill me like a carbonado, those *bricconi*, if they caught but a glimpse of the pretty silk banner that I am obliged to carry into Naples; know you that, Signor?"

So far, so good: and though the mail was dirty and the seats hard, the lean horses went a famous pace, until we reached Fondi—dark, dirty, brigand-breeding Fondi, where our team was to be changed. Up we flashed to the post-house, but only to be received by open doors and wringing of hands, and the heathen howls of ostlers and postilions. I never heard the body of Bacchus so frequently invoked before or since, or so many oaths, curses, and prayers, as the distracted denizens of the post-house gave vent to in five minutes. Our courier, that gold-laced Ganymede, who now divided his allegiance between King Francis and Garibaldi, soon caught the alarm, and tore his hair, and flung up his arms, and blasphemed with the best of them.

What *was* the matter? I partly guessed, but wanted some assurance, and I got it at last from a dishevelled woman with grey hair, who looked like an elderly Fury, but was, I believe, only the postmaster's grandmother. The story was brief and simple. The King wanted horses for his artillery train, and a party of Bavarians had just swept up every four-footed creature in Fondi, not leaving the postmaster a single hoof in his stable. Of course, the mail could not proceed. No wonder the courier was hallooing so piteously to Hercules and St. Januarius for help, mixing up all creeds in a breath, as Italians will. But it suggested itself to me, and to the other passengers, too, that if there were no horses, perhaps there were some

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mules. Italian mules are fine, strapping brutes, and, with a peasant to each, we might yet organise a very decent team, and reach some station not yet pillaged of its equine treasures. But this crumb of comfort was soon dashed from our lips. If *we* thought mules might, at a pinch, serve instead cf horses, it seemed that the same luminous idea had suggested itself to the Royalist General of Artillery. The foragers, who had swooped on the horses, had also driven off every serviceable mule. Nothing was left but a humble ass or two, the property of some poor peasants. Here was a clinching argument. Of course, it would be ludicrous to suggest that the royal mail should proceed with a squadron of donkeys. But I contrived, while the Italian passengers, with passive fatalism, engaged flea-haunted beds in the dismal and garlic-perfumed locanda, to hire a stout ass by private contract. It was not my intention to emulate Sancho, by ambling across the province on this long-eared quadruped: I was a capital walker, and hardly sorry to have so good an opportunity of stretching my legs, while the donkey, I thought, would serve to carry such light baggage as I had, and help me on to some town where I could get a vetturino carriage, and rattle on the rest of the way to Naples.

Accordingly, I started, glad to get away from

the voluble lamentations of the courier, and pretty sure that, sleep where I might, I could hardly light on a more unsavoury resting place than Fondi. The ass, which bore my portmanteau and bag, was a sturdy, well-conditioned ass, with plenty of red tassels and brass bells about its bridle, and a stout peasant lad to ensure with his cudgel that the pace was a fair one. Much of the summer heat was over, and though the air was rather heavy and oppressive, we made very good progress for about seven miles or so. At about that distance from Fondi lies a group of cottages, a mere hamlet, too small to possess a church, and where, to my disgust, no hospitable bush, hanging over a door, told of purple wine within. I was very thirsty. My mouth was an oven, and my tongue painfully parched, and I would have given its weight in gold for a tumbler of frothing Bass; but even country wine seemed denied me. The peasant boy who drove the ass talked patois, and my Italian was chiefly learned out of Dante and other classics of the Arno, so we were not very intelligible conversationists; but he seemed to indicate that if I could hope to get refreshments anywhere, it would be at a solitary wayside dwelling, about a hundred yards a-head. On I went, and there, sure enough, was an open door, and a leafy bush above it.

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In a chair outside sat an old man, apparently enjoying the evening sun.

"*Buon giorno!*" I called out; "let me have some wine, and iced-water, too, if you have it, for I'm——"

Here I was cut short by not knowing the Italian word that stands for thirsty. The old man never moved. Asleep? I drew nearer. Yes, asleep, but in that last long sleep that none can break,—the solemn sleep of death. I started back with an involuntary cry. I had been addressing a dead man. The occupant of the chair was an old—probably a very old—man, for his wrinkled skin was yellow as an antique parchment, and the long but scanty locks that fell from under his black skull-cap were as white as snow. The hollow cheeks, the sunken features, told of gradual decay, and though the glassy eyes were open, the jaw had been carefully tied up, and a fair white linen cloth was folded around the breast of the corpse, while the hands were decorously disposed upon the lap, the withered fingers extended as if in prayer. On a nearer scrutiny, I observed that a small wooden platter was between the hands of the dead man, and in it lay several small coins of silver, and a much larger heap of copper. I now breathed more freely as I recollected to have heard of a singular custom which prevails in Italy, and with which all old residents are acquainted. When a death takes place in an indigent family, it is very usual to deposit the body, dressed in its holiday clothes, and with a plate between its hands, either at its own door, or in some public place, and to compel, as it were, this dumb and insensible mendicant to solicit alms of the charitable. The money obtained in this strange way goes to pay the expenses of the burial, *not* for the coffin, since bodies are buried uncoffined, but for masses, flowers, professional mourners, consecrated candles, and a sort of funeral-feast. This custom explained the presence of this ghastly guardian of the threshold, but still I shrank from it.

We Northern folks cannot but feel shocked at the callous manner in which Death, that dim, solemn mystery, is greeted by the natives of South Europe, and I admit that I felt a very great inclination to pursue my way with thirst unslaked, when a comely dark-haired woman, wearing the square kerchief of the Neapolitan peasantry of that province, came curtseying out to ask what could be done for my Excellency's service. Ashamed to run away from the presence of a dead body, I conquered my repugnance, entered the cottage, and asked for what refreshments I needed. The hostess, a buxom young matron, with a picturesque jacket of some bright colour and an immense rosary instead of the usual golden ornaments, was very chatty and pleasant, and told me that the Royalists had passed by that very afternoon on their foray for beasts of burden, but that she had no doubt but that, at Gaviaglio, or some such place, I should procure a carriage. I drank my wine-and-water, munched a few delicious grapes, and treated my guide to wine and the ass to water, all for a few carlini, and was taking my leave, when the hostess asked, with an apologetic smile, if I "would bestow a trifle on grandfather?"

"On grandfather?" said I, turning to where the rigid figure sat, propped with cushions in its arm-chair; "do you mean that that is your grandfather, that——"

"*Si Signor*," answered she, "the best of parents, the dearest, kindest old soul—so pious too—ah! what a loss! Ah me!"

Wonderful how the moods of those Italians change! She was actually sobbing, that smiling sunny-featured woman, who had seemed, while tripping about to fetch me a cool flask of the best, or playing between whiles with her two plump-cheeked children, perfectly happy and content. But how little can we judge from mere outward show, and how often do we find the face a sorry index to the heart! She was evidently much affected by the mention of the old man—her husband's father, she said—who had died that very morning about dawn, at a great age. The platter was to collect money to buy masses for his soul, she said, "not that he had many sins, poor dear;" and then she sobbed again. I am as good a Protestant as any, but whatever I might think of masses in the abstract, I felt that here was a case where all the logic of Exeter Hall would be wasted—these poor simple folks—it was plain that nothing but the ceremonies of the church they were bred in could carry balm to their bruised hearts, and I felt that I should be a brute if I were to deposit less than a dollar in the plate. I laid down a dollar, accordingly, said a kind word or two in my broken Tuscan, and departed, but not before the grateful woman had insisted on kissing my Excellency's generous hand, and wishing my Excellency a prosperous journey.

We stepped vigorously out along the dusty road, the boy, the ass, and I, and though night was falling, I cared little; now we were among the blue hills, and out of the Pontine marshes, where the night air is deadly, blowing as it does over many a foul morass. For a league we pushed on gaily enough, but then came a broad blue flash, and then a roll of thunder, and then a burst of hail and heavy rain, while the flash and roll were incessant, and the sky grew pitchy dark. Wet, and blinded by lightning, there was no chance of making our way to the next town; indeed, the road was no longer to be seen, except when a flash showed it; so, after a short council of war, back we scampered to the little wayside hostelry that we had so lately left, and where alone, according to the boy, we could hope for shelter. Soon did British traveller, donkey, and lad, stand before the porch of the small house of entertainment, but though less than two hours had elapsed, a change had come over us all. The donkey shook his dripping ears, and hung his sleek head wretchedly, the boy was wet and alarmed, and I was a draggled object to look upon, but eagerly bent on obtaining shelter and a fire to dry my clothes. Of course we found the door shut, and the arm-chair and its mute occupant removed into the house. Nay, but for the drenched bush that the wind was buffetting backwards and forwards, we should not have known the house from any other cottage, seeing it as we did by the transient glare of the blue lightning. I lifted the latch, and, flinging wide the door, entered without ceremony. I found a family group assembled around their supper-table. There

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was my buxom friend of the afternoon, with her two little ones nestling close to the maternal apron, there was a stout bronzed peasant, her husband, and a tall black-haired girl, who might have been the sister of husband or wife, and three sturdy younger brothers, in brown jackets and crimson sashes, eating brown bread and fried beans in a way calculated to have given Lord Chesterfield a heart-ache.

I must not forget the other member of the family—the dead man—whose chair stood now in the chimney-corner, which no doubt had been his place during life, and whose blank gaze and wan face were turned towards the crackling fire of sticks. The platter had been removed from between the stiffened hands, the linen-band untied from the jaw; this I noticed, but in no other respect had the body been disturbed. Not a look, as far as I could well see, was turned towards the inanimate member of the company. The careless Neapolitans were laughing over their meal as if there were no such thing as Death at all. But my arrival created a sensation I was at a loss to account for. The family jumped from their seats, with confused and terror-stricken faces, uttering a profusion of imprecations more or less pious, or the reverse, and seemed more perturbed than they ought to have been at the arrival of a chance traveller. I accosted the hostess as an acquaintance, mentioned the raging storm, and announced my intention of staying all night, if they could accommodate me. I cannot say that they seemed anxious to house so distinguished a guest! Indeed, they gave me a clear idea that, but for shame's sake, they would have pushed me out again into the rain. Of course they were too humble—their poor little hut was not fit for such as my Excellency, nurtured in palaces, &c., but at last they gave way, and promised to make me up a bed in one of the little rooms up-stairs. The boy and donkey they absolutely refused to shelter. No plea of mine or entreaty of his prevailed: boy and ass were ruthlessly denied accommodation, and I was obliged to dismiss them, with double pay, into the howling storm, to reach Fondi as they might. Then the door was shut and locked, and a wooden bar put across it. Sticks were thrown on the fire, and I stood before it, drying myself as best I might, my baggage lying at my feet. The people went on with their supper, but not quite as light-heartedly as before; their mirth was not so loud, and I thought they often cast a look askance at me. Then the hostess remembered her courtly manners, and deferentially asked if she could have the pleasure of setting anything before the Signor Inglese. It was not to be supposed that his English Excellency could eat beans, but perhaps an egg? *so* fresh, or some milk and chocolate? or a rasher of winter bacon? But his English Excellency, though he was hungry, said not a word in reply. I could not have spoken, had my life depended on my oratory. My heart leaped, and then stood still; my hair rose bristling, my brow grew damp with fear, my eyes were riveted with horror and half incredulous marvel on the white-haired, venerable corpse of the patriarch in the arm-chair. And no wonder! *I saw the dead man move!* The glossy eyes rolled horribly in their wrinkled orbits, the jaws relaxed into a yawn, the arms were stretched as the arms of one awakening from sleep, and the old man's body rocked and quivered in the arm-chair. The sight of that yawning, glaring, moving corpse was almost too much for my nerves. I clutched the arm of the hostess; with a shrinking hand I pointed to the horrid sight—the hallucination—as I deemed it, of my fatigued senses. Ha! she sees it too, but I see no fear on her face. Some annoyance, perhaps, and a covert smile; surely I am mistaken; but—no, those dead lips move, work, speak! Audibly fall upon my agonised ear the hollow accents of the departed. What are those words that break the silence? What fearful revelation to the living necessitates such a breach of the laws of Nature? What secrets of the prison-house are about to be dragged into light? Let me listen to the dead man's awful speech.

"*Che ora è?*"

"What's o'clock?" that was all he said, upon my honour, as a gentleman. "What's o' clock?" A disembodied spirit bursting the gates of night, and intruding on the living, to ask what o'clock it was! They heard it. They all heard it. And my tortured ear was next insulted by such a peal of hearty horse laughter, begun by one, chorused by the rest, as I had seldom listened to. My brain reeled. Here was I, in presence of a corpse that demanded to know what o'clock it was, and the whole company were laughing like a menagerie of hyænas! "*Che ora è?*" repeated the dead man, into whose eyes there gradually stole more speculation than becomes the defunct, on the Swan's authority. And still the peasants laughed, and the deceased patriarch became more and more palpably alive. I gasped for breath, so utter was my amazement. I had read of trances and apparent deaths, and resuscitations, during funerals or after interment, but never had I heard of the dead alive being welcomed back into the bosom of their family, amid peals of uproarious laughter, as if their revival was a rare joke. But when the old man made an effort to rise, I could bear it no longer, but rushed to the door. To my surprise, one of the young men sprang up and set his back against it, grinning but resolute. Another jumped from his chair to reinforce.

"Scusa! Signor!" said the landlord, "but you cannot go just yet."

I insisted, tried to force my way, and was good-humouredly baffled. I got into a towering passion, but in vain. They were four to one, and they swore by all the saints that I should not stir a step. I had come for my own pleasure. I should stay for theirs.

"Do you want to rob me, you villains?" I shouted.

"Gracious Signor, the idea!"

"Are you brigands?"

"Signor, what a blunder! We are poor, but honest."

Then why would they not let me pass? "Signor, grandfather,"—that word explained all. I turned; the old man was actually seated at supper, affectionately waited on by his two daughters, and playing a capital knife and fork for one who had shuffled off this mortal coil.

"Then," said I, as I viewed the hoary humbug,

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who I now saw was as completely alive as myself, "your precious parent was not dead, after all?"

They confessed that he was not.

"And his pretended death was produced by—"

"By this, Signor carissimo," said the hostess, opening a cupboard and exhibiting a bottle labelled chloroform.

"And this atrocious deception," I began, but was again interrupted with:

"Signor Excellency, have a little pity! We are poor industrious folks; we farm and we sell wine; but we have many mouths to feed, and there are debts. This is a harmless plan we have devised of raising a trifling sum to buy seed-corn and oil for winter. If grandfather were really dead, nobody would grudge a few carlini for his burial, and those kind souls who give under the belief that a dead hand holds out the platter, will be all the better for it in purgatory. The worst of it is, that your Excellency cannot go—"

"Cannot go!" I boiled over with wrath.

"If your Excellency could make shift with very poor accommodation until Friday?"

"Until Friday!" I could only repeat the impudent proposal. But the landlady and her spouse, with one accord though many words, proceeded to lay down before me the following propositions: imprimis, that I had most inconveniently popped behind the scenes and pried into a Blue Beard chamber I had no right to know the secrets of; secondly, that unless the delusion were kept up, no profit could be expected, but rather popular vengeance; thirdly, that the two next days would be marked by a concourse of pilgrims to Fondi, for the festival of the holy and miracle-working St. Somebody, and a plentiful crop of small coin was expected. The fourth proposition was, that I should remain with them till the festa was over and the pilgrims gone home, that I should be fed, cherished, and lodged as well as could be expected, for the moderate remuneration of one scudo per day, and that then I should be permitted to depart, on giving my promise not to say a word about my unlawful detention, while within the kingdom of Naples.

Who would not have stormed in such a case of false imprisonment? I flew into a passion, and threatened dreadful revenge. I would go to the judge, and the intendant; and the archbishop, I believe; and the British consul, I am certain. Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should hear of it, and so should Garibaldi's Englishman. What did they think Lord Palmerston would say? To my chagrin, they had never heard of Lord Palmerston at all. They were obdurate, for their profits were at stake. After an hour's fiercely verbose argument, and five minutes' wrestling with one of the stout young cubs who held the door, I was forced to surrender at discretion, and accept the terms of the conquerors. *Væ victis!* What a miserable three nights and two days did I spend under that roof-tree, guarded like a prisoner of war, in spite of my parole, for there were always a couple of young peasants at my elbow, and they watched lest I should reveal the secret to any stray pilgrim! I slept in a little cockloft, well garnished by an interesting colony of mosquitoes; my bed was not a very bad one, with its clean brown linen and its ticking stuffed with the husks of maize; they waited on me—the womankind, that is,—civilly enough, and they fed me with the best they had for my scudo a day, not too high a price, when one considers their enforced monopoly of my custom. I was not very uncomfortable, physically speaking, and had I chosen to stay for my own pleasure, should have been content. But upon compulsion! I roared inwardly with bitterness of spirit, as I saw the humble devotees troop by to the shrine of St. Somebody, and seldom fail to drop a few baiocchi, at least, into the platter of the venerable old scamp, who sat outside in his chair, as rigid and senseless as chloroform could make him. And then, the torment of seeing that aged impostor, as it were, off duty, and in the family circle, nightly to witness his recovery from the stupor due to the drug, to see him yawn and stretch, with a vivid remembrance of my original terrors, and then to lose my own appetite in witnessing his abominable performances as a trencherman. I never thought, when I heard that every one had a skeleton in his cupboard, that I should ever be forced into intimacy with such a grisly piece of property, that I should breakfast and sup every day with the family skeleton occupying the head of the table, and generally demeaning itself as the founder of the feast.

He was not a bad old man either; a cackling, child-petting old grandsire he seemed, when desisting from his praiseworthy exertions for the benefit of his relatives. His third appearance before the public was, I am happy to say, the last. The pilgrims had ceased to flow past, and the carlini to rattle in the plate, and the Dead Alive had already obtained a hatful of money. Besides, the old gentleman's health might suffer from further chloroforming, his affectionate relatives being resolved to postpone his final and legitimate exhibition as long as filial piety could contrive it. For these various reasons the show came to an end, and my imprisonment along with it. The neighbours were called to witness the happy recovery of grandpapa, who had been three days in a trance, and suddenly awaked amid the congratulations of his kindred. All incredulity was repressed by the presence of the four sturdy peasants, who were ready with cudgel and fist to maintain, if necessary, that their progenitor had been as dead as Julius Cæsar, and was now as living as Mazzini. And the timely gift of a brace of dollars brought in the alliance of the church, the curé of the next village publicly avowing the resuscitation as a pure miracle, not wholly unconnected with the Immaculate Conception, nor entirely divested of reference to the future triumph of Papal authority over heretics and red shirts; by which we may guess that the curé was of the reactionary party.

I departed in sullen silence, answering no word to the salutations and blessings of the Phœnix and his offspring. And they wished my Excellency a good journey, and called me their preserver, the hypocrites! I got somehow to Naples, through the burned and pillaged country, but the time lost was irrevocable: my holiday was spoiled. I went to the front. I plunged into the midst of Garibaldi's ragged heroes, and I nearly got hit by a shell or two from the fortress, but skirmish or

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battle royal saw I none. Brief as was my stay, I missed the homeward-bound steamer, had to wait a week for another, and finally reached Dover just on the last day of the vacation. JOHN HARWOOD.

RECENT EXPLORATIONS IN AUSTRALIA BY JOHN MACDOUALL STUART.

An obscure surveyor employed by the colonists of Australia to mark out the limits of their "runs," has recently merged into fame by the astounding and dauntless explorations he has made into the interior of that vast continent. We allude to John Macdouall Stuart. Leading a precarious life on the outskirts, this explorer has evinced his nationality of character as a Scotchman, by persevering in the endeavour to be the first to cross Australia from south to north; and besides dissipating the geographical error as to its Sahara-like interior, has greatly enlarged the Adelaide territories by discovering new fields of pasture, springs, and water-holes in that dry and parched land.

Unfortunately, Stuart had been an unsuccessful settler, and hitherto his explorations have been made on behalf of Messrs. J. & J. Chambers, large stock-holders in South Australia, who are generally believed to have reaped the fruits of so much daring. Small as the results are when compared with those realised by Livingstone in Central Africa, we have no hesitation in saying (after years spent in the Adelaide bush) that the party who, under the leadership of this fearless man, penetrated to 18° 47′ S., underwent far greater sufferings than the celebrated African traveller. With the thermometer ranging from 90° to 135° Fahr., travelling over burning sands and stony deserts, going without water sometimes for three or four days together, reduced to drinking from muddy and salt pools, or the more stern necessity of living on the blood of their horse, escaping often as if by a miracle (the mere chance of coming upon a native well, or a "clay pan" full of rain water) from the miserable deaths which have overtaken Leichardt, Gellibrand, Coulthard, and others, and swelling the number of those whose bones at the present day lie whitening where they fell, Stuart and his party, who planted their flag on the Central Mount, and actually travelled the extreme distance from south to north, though they did not reach the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, have earned for themselves the imperishable fame of having crossed Australia.

Smallest and least favoured of the many colonies which fringe the outline of that continent, this niggardliness of nature, like the law of necessity in individuals, has aroused the energies of the Adelaide colonists, and forced them to put forth more than their share of exertion to increase their habitable territory, which consists merely of the coast-line extending along the margins of St. Vincent's and Spencer's Gulf, Yorke's Peninsula, and a pasture country stretching for about 200 miles in from Port Augusta.

What a goodly tale has this colony to tell of the dauntless efforts of her adopted sons! Who has not heard of Sturt, long called *par excellence* the father of Australian exploration, who reaching unexpectedly the unknown waters of the Murray, allowed himself to be borne along on its bosom till he arrived at the sea through its embouchure into Lake Alexandrina: who, in 1844, started from Adelaide at the head of a large party, on an expedition into the interior, and reached the then unprecedented distance of 26° S.; a journey which, though profitless in its issue, occupied many months, and exposed them to unheard-of dangers, and for which endeavours on their behalf the people of that colony allotted him a pension of 700*l.* a-year? Or of the hair-breadth escape of Eyre, who, conceiving that if a river entered the sea anywhere between South and West Australia, he must necessarily cross it by travelling along the coast from Adelaide to King George's Sound, actually accomplished the feat, though his fellow-explorer perished, and he was rescued from impending death by accidentally attracting the notice of a whaler, standing in towards the shore. Nor must we forget the names of Brown and Cadell, the one an enterprising and successful colonist, the other the spirited navigator of the Murray. In 1853 the latter, accompanied by Sir H. Fox Young, then Governor of South Australia, steamed up the Murray for a distance of 1300 miles in the "Lady Augusta," and since then has been indefatigable in his efforts to establish navigation on the Darling, Gundagai, and Murrumbidgee, besides assisting in the formation of a fleet of Murray steamers, and clearing the bed of that river of its many snags.

But the fame and endurance of all these pioneers of the Australian wilds sink into insignificance when compared with the renown and daring of Mr. Stuart. Long residence on the outskirt runs, where he gained a scanty livelihood by mapping out their boundaries for individual settlers, had inured him to hardship and privation, more especially to scarcity of water, that curse of South Australia, which has led to its meriting the name of Deserta, in contradistinction to Victoria, formerly called Australia Felix. So little indeed was thoroughly known of the immense tract marked out in the face of New Holland as the Adelaide territory, and of that little, so scanty a portion was available for depasturing flocks and herds, that the Colonial Government had been continually fitting out one expensive expedition after another, under the charge of Goyder, Babbage, Freeling, and others, in the hope of being able to relieve the already overstocked runs, and find new fields of enterprise for the increasing number of stock-holders. Here, however, as in other parts of the world, private efforts have far outstripped Government research, and all the discoveries that have of late been made have issued from individuals, who, penetrating into unknown country at their own risk, have carved out sheep-walks for themselves, and added materially to the interests and prosperity of the colony.

In the month of July, 1857, at a period of the year corresponding to our winter, when rain is more likely to be met with, and the "clay pans" to remain full for a time, the Messrs. Chambers, finding themselves, like many other large stock-holders, cramped for room, despatched Mr. Stuart on an exploring expedition to the westward of Lake Torrens, that mythical inland sea which

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drains the flat country forming Central Australia, and empties itself into Spencer's Gulf, but which the researches of this traveller, coupled with the observations of Hack, Babbage, and Warburton, have proved to be a series of disconnected lakes of brackish water. Leaving the western bank of the mighty swamp, Stuart, in this his first expedition which brought him into notice, kept towards the north and west, sweeping round the Gawler Range, and though furnished with provisions for only three weeks, he and his companion remained out for six, suffering great hardships from the inclemency of the weather, and from living on reduced allowance; nor were the privations they endured in any measure recompensed, since the country they passed through proved quite unavailable for pastoral purposes.

It had been often noticed in the account given by Eyre of his perilous journey, that cool breezes and flocks of birds always came from the north; and though the design on which he planned his route did not allow of his taking advantage of this fact, it bore fruit in the course followed by future explorers. In 1856 Mr. Babbage, prosecuting a Government research in the north, came upon a tract of country comparatively well watered, which he designated Blanche Water in honour of Lady Macdonnell, but here, with the exception of one or two, the runs put up to auction found no bidder. In 1857 a large and very stony piece of country was made known by Mr. Swindon, but so badly grassed, and so ill supplied with water, as to repel the idea of occupying it for pastoral purposes. In 1858, however, Mr. Stuart, acting on information gathered while resident at Oratunga, a station belonging to Mr. Chambers, situate 400 miles from Adelaide, in what is termed the far north, and again provisioned and supplied by that gentleman, set out on a second expedition, keeping to the north and west from the head of Spencer's Gulf, the direction from which Eyre had noticed the occurrence of cool breezes and flocks of parrots.

On this occasion he was eminently successful, discovering a tract of 16,000 square miles of new and available country, together with a large creek now known by his name, and many immense water-holes. After shaping his course for three or four weeks to the north-west, he, fearing that the water in his rear might be dried up, turned nearly due south, and made for the stations situated on Streaky Bay, near the eastern end of the Great Bight. It was on his return from this trip that we had an opportunity of hearing the details from his own mouth, while present at a conversazione in Government House, given by Sir R. G. Macdonnell to the members of the Adelaide Philosophical Society.

As the law then stood with regard to the waste lands of the Crown, Mr. Stuart was quite entitled to put in a claim for lease of the whole, or part of this new territory; accordingly, he or his patron forwarded an application to Government, praying to be permitted to occupy 1500 square miles of it on the usual form of tenure. Unable to ignore the great services he had rendered to his adopted country, the Legislative Assembly granted him a fourteen years' lease of 1000 square miles, to be selected from any part of it.

It may give some idea of the paucity of results earned by the Government expeditions, as compared with those of private enterprise, to say, that at the same time that Stuart in six weeks had made these astounding discoveries, Mr. Babbage had spent six months at the head of an expedition costing an immense sum, and had hardly got beyond the settled districts, or sixty miles from Port Augusta. In the succeeding year (1859), this indefatigable traveller still prosecuted his researches, backed, of course, by the inexhaustible funds advanced by Messrs. Finke and Chambers; and though he added further to the revelations of good pastoral country already made known by his exertions, the crowning effort was reserved for the Australian winter of the present year (1860).

In the month of March, Stuart and his two companions—Kekwick and Heed—started from Oratunga, situated on Chambers' Creek, and returned after an absence of five months, having in the interval crossed the continent nearly on the mesial line, and attained to within one hundred miles of the sea-coast on the Gulf of Carpentaria. It was his intention to have kept more to the north-west, and have reached the Victoria River, made known to us by the travels of Mr. Gregory, the Surveyor-General of Moreton Bay (Queensland), but all his efforts in this direction were checked by an extensive plain, devoid of grass, and covered with nothing but spinifex and gum-trees. Three times he endeavoured to cross it, and was driven back, being saved the loss of his horses, which had been three days without water, solely by the accidental discovery of a native well.

Nothing daunted he made two more attempts to round this "horrid plain" to the eastward, but with similar want of success. He then withdrew, and observing from the top of the central Mount Sturt (a hill situated about three miles to the north of the centre, and named after that celebrated explorer whom Stuart accompanied on the expedition of 1844), that there were ranges of hills to the north-east, giving indications of better country in that direction, he resolved to shape his course accordingly. Having reached latitude 19° 32′ S., by longitude 134° 18′ E., he determined to make one more effort to fall in with the Victoria River; but after journeying to the north-west for several days over a heavy sandy soil, exposed to a burning sun, and losing three horses, owing to their being without water for a hundred and eleven hours, was obliged to abandon that project as hopeless. Stuart now changed his plan, and decided on pushing towards the Gulf of Carpentaria. With this intent he reached latitude 18° 47′ S., and had already got into excellent country, well-grassed and watered, when his further progress was stopped by bands of savages, who, attacking him and his party, and endeavouring to cut off their pack-horses, necessitated a precipitate retreat.

These natives are described as being the most powerful and muscular yet met with on the Australian continent, and so fearless that it was not till they had been repeatedly fired upon, and several of their number killed, that Mr. Stuart and his two companions could retire unmolested. Opposed by such a dangerous enemy in front—having sustained the loss of three or four horses,

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being themselves much weakened by such long exposure, provisions, too, getting low, and the dry season coming on when possibly the water might be evaporated at the camping places where he had previously stopped on his journey—Stuart very unwillingly turned his horses' heads homewards, and arrived at Chambers' Creek, after having spent five months in a country hitherto unknown.

During this period he had travelled (including the various detours) upwards of three thousand miles—had all but reached the sea-coast—had overlapped in latitude the track of Gregory on the Victoria by a hundred miles, and had approached it, both on the east and west side, to within two hundred miles.

From March till August 26th scarcely any rain fell, at least, to use Mr. Stuart's own words, "not so much as would wet a shirt through," consequently we can easily imagine that the sufferings of both men and horses, from the want of this necessary element, must have been very great, and owing to the lateness of the winter rains, many of the water-holes at which he had stopped on his journey northwards were so much evaporated on his return as barely to furnish a drink for the horses. The rations requisite for men going so long an expedition, and who must almost entirely depend on what they carry with them, have to be reduced to the smallest possible bulk, and at the dinner given to our old friend at Adelaide, the Attorney-General made a most amusing comparison between the sumptuous repast just laid before them and a piece of gelatine belonging to Mr. Stuart's stock, about the size of an exaggerated cigar, estimated to form the food of thirty men for one day. It was owing to the sameness and scantiness of diet that Mr. Stuart became attacked with scurvy, and so debilitated in body that he could scarcely sit on horseback, while the movements of his companions (who were not above five-and-twenty years of age) became so enfeebled as to resemble those of men upwards of a hundred years old.

So incredible indeed did the fact seem, that three men should traverse the continent from south to north, return again, and, in so doing, journey upwards of three thousand miles in five months' time, that many of their neighbours in Victoria at first refused to place credence in the assertion, but the character of Stuart as an explorer, established under Sturt, and the corroborated authenticity and accuracy of his previous discoveries, leave no doubt as to his having achieved this great feat.

The expedition having been fitted out entirely at the expense of Messrs. Finke and Chambers, the Colonial Government had to make some arrangement (to us unknown) before they would deliver up the information gained by Mr. Stuart, which being settled, his journal and documents were locked up in the Government offices. Owing to this transfer of services from the employ of Mr. Chambers to that of the Government, as well as to the discretionary wisdom of the latter in concealing the various geographical points of Mr. Stuart's route, until he shall be again well advanced into the interior, lest the Victorian expedition under Burke, or any private party should rob him of the laurels all but won, we are kept much in the dark as to the minutiæ of this extraordinary journey. The existence of a large salt lake, supposed to be of great depth, the presence of the potato, and the Australian-like contradiction of the natives consuming the apples instead of the tubers, form some of the most striking features of this as yet unrevealed narrative. The party at the head of which Stuart is now no doubt far advanced on his previous route, consists of twelve persons well armed, with thirty-five pack and saddle horses, fitted out by a Parliamentary vote of £2,500; and in order to anticipate the liability of being outstripped by Mr. Burke at the head of his camels and horses, Mr. Chambers kindly placed all his stores at Oratunga at the disposal of the Government, so as to save the time which would have been expended in forwarding the necessary rations from Adelaide.

Apart from the geographical interest connected with Mr. Stuart's journey, one cannot fail to see how important is the bearing of the few facts made known to us on the establishment of communication, whether telegraphic or otherwise, across the continent with India. Nor can we pourtray this in a stronger light, than by quoting the statement of his Excellency Sir R. G. Macdonnell, that whereas the cost of a telegraphic wire carried all round the coast, whether east or west, would amount to upwards of £800,000, one carried right across, besides being more easily repaired, and having no marine cables, would not amount to more than £400,000.

The journals of the day have amused themselves at the expense of the petty rivalry of the South Australian Government in concealing the details of Stuart's narrative from their more powerful neighbour of Victoria, but the poor colony has done more than that, she is applying for territorial extension northwards to the seaboard, with an eye no doubt of including the future line of transit. It has been pointed out to Stuart that, in the present exploration, his great aim must be to connect his most northerly point with the Victoria River. Should he succeed in doing so (of which there seems to be little doubt) a settlement would soon spring up in the fertile territory around the mouth of that stream, and communication and transit being ere long established across the continent, Adelaide would be in the most favourable geographical position to reap the lion's share.

Federation, so often mooted by the various colonies, will one day obliterate all these petty rivalries; meantime it must be the ardent wish of every scientific man, that this dauntless traveller may accomplish the rest of his journey, and return in safety to enrol his name among other distinguished travellers—Bruce, Park and Livingstone.

TAKE WARNING.

Once lived a comely maid who, proud
Of charms before which all men bow'd,
Wax'd over scornful;
'Twas in those good old ages when
Our grandsires were but grandchildren,
But human nature now as then
Of pride is born full.

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Altho' this maid to lovers' prayer,
To lady-killer's deep-laid snare,
Bade bold defiance.
She ne'er intended to remain
A votary in Diana's train,
But form with some well-favour'd swain
A fit alliance.

Years glided by ; full many a chime
Told new year's eve when ruthless time
Her charms invaded,
But thought she not of tell-tale streak
Which scarr'd her brow, of sunken cheek,
Of pallid lip, of voice grown weak,
Attractions faded.

At length still fewer and more few,
Behold ! aspiring suitors grew ;
At festive meeting
No more did youth on youth advance,
To claim her hand for distant dance,
Nor combat for one witching glance,
With heart high-beating.

"Alas," quoth she, "I'm sore perplex'd,
My beaux desert ; the very next
Whose means are ample,
Woos not in vain :" but ah ! no more,
Did anxious lover seek her door.
Young ladies, in your bosoms store
This sad example. N. J.

THE STORY OF THE THREE WONDERFUL COMPANIONS.

A BOHEMIAN FAIRY LEGEND.

There was once a king, who was very old and had only one son. One day he called his son, and said :

"My dear son, thou knowest that ripe fruit falls in order to make room for other. My head is growing riper day by day, and perhaps ere long the sun will shine on it no more ; but before I die I would gladly behold my future daughter, thy wife. Take to thyself a wife, my son."

And the prince answered :

"Gladly, O, my father ! would I fulfil thy wish, but I have as yet no bride. I know not one."

The king then thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew therefrom a golden key, which he gave to his son, saying :

"Go up into the highest room in the tower, and when thou art there cast thy eyes around thee and tell me which of the brides which thou shalt there see pleases thee most."

The prince departed immediately. He had never before been in the tower, and knew not what was there to be seen.

When he had reached the highest chamber but one he beheld on the ceiling a small iron door like a lid, and it was locked ; but he unlocked it with the golden key, lifted it up, and went in through it.

There was a large round room, the roof of which was as blue as the sky on a clear winter's night, and silver stars glittered upon it. The floor was covered with a green silken carpet, and the room had twelve high windows in golden frame-work : in each window a virgin was painted on crystal glass in the loveliest rainbow colours, with a royal crown on her head, and in each window was also another upon a different ground, but each was more beautiful than the other, so that the prince was quite dazzled. And as he was gazing on them in full astonishment, not knowing which to choose, the lovely figures began to move like living beings, and looked towards him and smiled upon him as if they wished to speak.

Then the prince saw that one of the windows was concealed by a white curtain, which he drew aside in order to see what was behind it.

There stood a virgin dressed in white, with a silver girdle round her waist and a crown of pearls upon her head. She was the loveliest of all, but sad and pale as if she had risen from the grave. The prince stood long gazing on the figure, and seemed like one in a dream, and whilst he was thus looking at her his heart was sorely grieved,

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and he said, "Her alone will I choose, and no other." And as soon as he had spoken these words the virgin bent her head, and a red hue like that of a rose spread over her cheeks. At the same moment all the other figures vanished.

After he had left the tower and returned to the king his father, he told him all that he had seen, and which of the virgins he had chosen. Then the old king was filled with sorrow, but in a moment he raised his head, and said :

"Thou hast chosen ill, my son, and done wrong in uncovering that which was concealed. Thou wilt also meet with great dangers for the words which thou hast spoken. This virgin is in the power of a wicked magician, imprisoned within an iron castle, and none of those who have gone to set her free have ever returned to their homes again."

The prince now departed from the king his father, and rode forth towards the iron castle that he might obtain his bride. When he had got a long way on his journey he came to a dense wood, and rode into it until at length he lost his way. And as he was wandering through the wood and amongst rocks, not knowing which way to turn, he heard a voice behind him shout :

"Holla, there ! stop !"

The prince turned round and beheld a very tall man who was hastening towards him.

"Wait and take me with you," said the voice. "If you take me into your service, you will never have cause to repent it."

"Who art thou ?" cried the prince ; "and what can'st thou do ?"

"I am called Longbody, and can stretch out my limbs to a great length. Do you see the bird's nest yonder at the top of that high fir-tree ? I can reach it down for you without having to climb the tree."

And thereupon he began stretching himself out and his body rapidly grew longer and longer, till he was as high as the tree itself. Then he reached forth his hand to take the nest, and when he had taken it his body shrunk in again, and he handed the nest to the prince.

"Thou understandest thy business well," said the prince ; "but what is the use of birds' nests to me, if thou canst not help me out of the forest ?"

"Hm ! that is easy enough !" replied Longbody, and he stretched himself again till he was three times as high as the tallest tree in the forest. He then looked around and, pointing in a certain direction, said, "From yonder side is the nearest road out of the wood."

Then he drew himself in again, took the horse by the bridle, and went on in front. Before the prince had time to observe it they had already left the forest behind them. Before them lay a great plain backed by high gray rocks, like the walls of a large town, and mountains covered with forests.

"Yonder goes my companion," said Longbody, pointing to the further end of the plain. "You ought to take him with you, too, for he could render you great services."

"Call him hither, that I may see what there is in him."

"It is rather a long way off, master," answered Longbody. "He would hardly hear me if I were to call him ; besides, it would take him a long time to reach us, for he has much to carry with him. I would rather go and fetch him."

Then Longbody lengthened himself again towards the sky, till his head reached as far as the clouds, made one or two steps, seized his comrade by the arm, and placed him before the prince. He was a large muscular fellow, with an immense belly.

"Who art thou ?" asked the prince ; "and what canst thou do ?"

"Master, I am called Broadbody ; and can swell myself out to a great breadth."

"Let me see," said the prince, "what you can do."

"Ride with all speed into the forest," returned Broadbody : and immediately began to swell out his body.

The prince was puzzled to know why he should ride away so quickly ; but when he saw Longbody running with all his might towards the forest, he spurred on his horse, and hurried after him. And lucky it was for him that he did so, or Broadbody would soon have crushed him and his horse to death ; for he increased so rapidly on all sides, that the whole place was soon filled with him, as if a mountain had rolled down upon them. Then he stopped swelling himself, and blew out the air with such tremendous force that he made the forest shake, and appeared again as before.

"Thou hast driven me into a sad plight," said the prince ; "but such a fellow as thou art is not to be found every day, so come along with me."

They proceeded further on their way ; and as they were approaching the rocks, they met one who had his eyes bound with a cloth.

"Master ! that is our other companion," said Longbody. "You ought to take him into your service, for surely he will not eat his bread for nothing."

"Who art thou ?" demanded the prince ; "and why hast thou thy eyes bound in that fashion ? Surely thou canst not see thy way."

"Oh, sir ! quite the contrary," replied he ; "it is just because I see too clearly that I have my eyes bound, for with them bound I can see as well as you can with yours free. If I take away the cloth, my sight penetrates through the thickest substance ; and if I look rather hard at anything it either takes fire, or flies into a thousand pieces. For which reason I am called Keeneye."

He then turned himself towards the rocks that stood opposite them, removed the bandage, and fixed his fiery eyes steadily upon them. Presently the hard rocks began to crackle, the pieces flew in all directions, and in a few minutes nothing was left of the rocks but a heap of sand. Then they saw in the midst of the sand something shining like fire. Keeneye fetched it, and presented it to the prince, who on beholding it found that it was a lump of pure gold.

"Truly, thou art a valuable fellow," said the prince : "he is a fool who would not make use of thy services. But since thou hast such an excellent eye, just look and tell me how far we are from the Iron Castle, and what is going on within it at this moment."

"If you rode alone, master," answered Keeneye, "you would not arrive there in a year ; but with

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our help you will be there before the day is over. They are at this moment preparing the evening meal for us."

"And what is my bride doing?"

"She is sitting alone
In the gloomy tower
Cruelly bound
By magic power."

Then said the prince: "Let him who is my friend help me to set her free."

And they all three promised to give him their help. So they journeyed on through an opening between the rocks, which Keeneye had made with his eye, far away over high hills and through dark forests; and whenever any hindrance came in their way, the three companions soon removed them.

As the sun was going down the hills grew smaller, the forests thinner, the rocks were hid beneath the brown mountain heather, and the castle was seen a short distance before them. But as the sun was leaving the earth, they crossed the iron bridge that led to the old castle-gate; and when it was quite set, the iron bridge raised itself, the gates closed, and the prince, with his three companions, stood prisoners within the Iron Castle.

The prince then gave his horse to be led into the stable. Everything was prepared for them; so, after they had seen round the courtyard, they entered the castle hall. Everywhere, in the courtyard, in the stable, and in the hall they saw by the twilight many people in rich attire, both men and women; but not one of them moved—they were all turned to stone.

The prince and his companions, after wandering through many apartments, came at length to the banquet-hall. It was brilliantly lighted, and in the middle stood a table covered with a profusion of rich viands, and laid out for four persons. They waited a long time thinking some one would come; but finding that nobody appeared, they sat down and began to eat and drink till they were filled. When they had finished their meal they looked about to see if they could not find some place where they might sleep. As they were thus occupied the door suddenly flew open and the magician walked into the room. He was an old man dressed in a long black robe, and bowed down by years. His head was bald, but his grey beard flowed down to the knees, and instead of a girdle three iron rings surrounded his body. He led by the hand a most lovely princess clothed in white. Around her waist she wore a silver girdle, and upon her head a crown of pearls; but she was pale and sad, as if she had risen from the grave. The prince knew her again in a moment, sprang up, and went towards her; but ere he could speak, the magician addressed him in these words: "I know why thou art come hither: thy intention is to bear away this princess. Good. Be it so! It is permitted thee to claim, after thou hast guarded her for three nights together without allowing her to escape. If thou failest, thou and thy three attendants will be turned into stone, like all those who have made the attempt before thee." He then led the princess to a seat, and withdrew.

The prince could not turn his eyes away from her. She was so very lovely. He began to speak to her, and to ask her many things; but she answered not, nor did she even smile or look upon him, but remained like a marble statue. He sat down by her side, and resolved not to sleep during the whole of the night, so that she might not escape.

For greater safety, Longbody lengthened himself to the fullest extent, and lay all round the room. Broadbody placed himself within the doorway, swelled out his body, and stopped the way so completely, that even a mouse could not get through. And Keeneye stood in the middle of the room like a pillar, so as to keep watch. In a little while, however, all three growing weary fell asleep, and slept the whole night as soundly as if they had been at the bottom of the ocean.

When the morning twilight began to dawn the prince first awoke, and when he saw that the princess had disappeared he seemed as if he had been struck at the heart with a knife. He lost no time in arousing the three companions, and asked what was to be done.

"Do not be in the least troubled, master!" quoth Keeneye, looking out of the window, "for I see her already. A hundred miles from this castle is a forest. In the midst of that forest stands an oak, upon that oak is an acorn, and that acorn is the princess. Longbody shall take me on his shoulders, and we will soon get her back again."

So he got upon Longbody's shoulders, who stretched himself out, and left the castle. Each step he took measured ten miles! Keeneye showed him the way, and in less time than one requires to go round a cottage they were back again. Longbody gave the acorn to the prince, and said: "Let it fall upon the ground!" The prince did as he was told, and at the same moment the beautiful princess stood before him.

And as the sun began to show himself above the hills, the door flew open with a loud crash, and the magician entered with a fiendish laugh; but as soon as he beheld the princess there he appeared gloomy. And as he was muttering something between his teeth, in an instant one of the iron rings that were round his waist snapped asunder and fell to the ground. He then took the princess by the hand and led her away.

The next day as the prince had nothing to do, he wandered through the castle and all around it, to see everything that was most remarkable there. On all sides it appeared as if life had been stopped at one blow. In one of the halls was a prince holding with both hands a sword over his head. He seemed on the point of cutting some one into pieces, but had been turned into stone ere he could finish his stroke. In one room was a knight who appeared, whilst flying with outstretched arms towards some one, to have stumbled against the threshold of the door, and was falling, but had been turned into stone before he reached the earth. In another room he beheld a man-servant sitting before the fire-place with a piece of meat in one hand and another piece in the other, which he was raising to his mouth; but had not brought it so far ere he had become a mass of lifeless stone. And many others he saw in the same petrified state, each in the position in which he was when the magician uttered the words—"Become stone."

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He also saw many beautiful horses, both inside and outside the castle, which had shared the same fate. Death and gloom were on all sides. There were trees, but they had no leaves on them; meadows without grass; and a river in which the water did not flow. Not a bird was to be seen that could sing; not a flower that could bloom; nor a fish that could swim in the water.

At morning, noon, and evening the prince and his three companions found a sumptuous meal ready for them. An unseen power served up the viands and poured the wine into their glasses, so that they had nothing to do but to eat and drink.

Scarcely was the evening meal over before the door opened and the magician again appeared, leading the princess, who was to be guarded a second night by the prince. Now, although they had all firmly made up their minds to withstand the influence of sleep this night, yet it was of no use, for they soon fell into a sound sleep. And

when at early dawn the prince awoke and found the princess gone again, he sprang up, and shaking Keeneye by the shoulders, cried: "Ho, there! bestir thyself, thou of the sharp eye. Knowest thou where the lady has fled to?"

Keeneye rubbed his eyes a little while, then looked around him, and said:

"I already see her! Two hundred miles from here stands a hill; within that hill is a rock; within that rock is a precious stone, and that precious stone is the fair princess. If Longbody will carry me on his shoulders, we shall soon recover her."

Longbody then took his comrade on his shoulder, lengthened himself out, and departed from the castle. Each step he made measured twenty miles! When they arrived within sight of the hill, Keeneye fixed his fiery eyes upon it, and immediately it began to crumble, and the rock became a burning mass, in the midst of

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which the precious stone was seen to glitter. They took it up, and brought it to the prince, and as soon as he had thrown it on the ground the princess stood again before him. Then, when the magician came and saw her there, his eyes flashed with anger, and before he had time to speak, a second ring snapped asunder and fell from his body. The magician growled with rage, and led the princess away.

This day passed like the one before it. After the evening meal, the magician brought in the princess again, and, looking with a keen glance into the prince's eyes, said, with a fiendish chuckle: "It will now be seen which is the mightier of us two; whether thou or I will gain the victory." Whereupon he left the room; and all three being firmly resolved not to sleep that night, determined not even to sit down: but in spite of their efforts, one after the other soon yielded to the power of sleep even while walking. And the princess escaped a third time.

In the morning, the prince was the first again to discover the disappearance of the princess. He ran to his keen-eyed companion, and, shaking him violently, cried: "Ho, there, Keeneye! Get up, and tell me where the princess is."

He of the keen eye stood looking for a long time. "I see her at last," said he. "She is a long way off, master, a very long way off! Three hundred miles from here is the Black Sea; in the middle of that sea, lying at the bottom, is a mussel; in the inside of that mussel is a golden ring, and that ring is the princess. Do not be troubled, master, for we shall get her yet. But we shall have to take Broadbody with us this time, for we shall want him."

Longbody then, taking Keeneye on one shoulder, and Broadbody on the other, started on his way. Each step he took measured thirty miles!

When they had come to the Black Sea, Keeneye showed his companion what part of the sea the mussel was to be found in. Longbody stretched out his hand as far as he was able, but could not reach the bottom.

"Stop, comrades, stop a little!" exclaimed Broadbody, "and let me help you." When he had spoken these words, he began swelling himself out as far as he could: he then laid him down on the shore and began to drink. As he drank the water fell, until at length it was low enough to allow Longbody to reach the bottom with ease, and to bring up the ring.

Then he bade his companion get upon his shoulders again, so that they might lose no time in returning. But on the way he found it impossible to run fast enough, for Broadbody, who had drunk up half the sea, had grown so much heavier. So when they arrived at a valley he shook his companion off, who in falling to the ground made a tremendous noise, something like that of a sack falling from a high tower. In a few minutes the whole valley was filled with water, and resembled a large lake. Broadbody could hardly crawl out of it.

Meanwhile in the castle the prince was growing very uneasy. The rosy morn was already rising from behind the hills, and his attendants were not yet back. As the morning grew brighter his fear grew stronger, and a cold sweat covered his brow. Soon the sun was visible in the east, like a thin streak of fire—in a moment the door flew open, and the magician appeared in the doorway, and cast his eyes slowly round the room. When he saw that the princess was not there, a grin of malicious delight spread over his face, and he came forward into the middle of the room. But before he could utter a word, the window was smashed into a thousand pieces, the ring fell on the ground, and behold! the princess stood again before them.

For Keeneye, when he saw what was going on in the castle, told Longbody what great danger his master stood in. Longbody then made one rapid step, and stretching forth his arm, threw the ring through the window into the room. The magician roared with anger so that the castle trembled. In an instant a third ring snapped asunder and fell to the ground, and at the same moment the magician was transformed into a raven, and flew away through the broken window.

Then the beautiful princess began to speak, and as she thanked the prince for her freedom, a soft blush, like that upon a rose, spread over her cheeks.

Everything in all parts of the castle was filled with life. He who held the raised sword in his hand struck one blow through the air, so that it whistled, and then returned the weapon to its sheath. The knight who appeared falling, fell to the ground, but in an instant sprang to his feet again, and put his hand to his nose to see if it were still whole and safe. The servant before the fire-place put the piece of meat into his mouth, and went on eating, and in the same way each one finished that which he was about to do before the words of the magician struck them into stone. In the stables the horses stamped and neighed right lustily. The trees about the castle put forth their leaves like evergreens, the meadows became covered with varied flowers, the larks trilled aloft in the air, and hosts of fish were swimming in the fresh running streams. All was life! All was gladness!

Meanwhile, a large number of knights entered the room where the prince was, and thanked him for having given them their liberty. But he answered. "You ought not to thank me; for if my faithful companions had not been with me, I should, ere now, have been what you were."

The prince now began to think of returning to his father's palace with his bride and faithful companions. They all started out, and on their way met Broadbody, whom they took with them.

The old king wept for joy at the good fortune of his son. He had already given up all hope of ever seeing him again.

Three weeks after this the happy wedding took place; the feast lasted three weeks, and all the knights whom the prince had liberated were invited. When it was over the three comrades told the young king (for he was now king in his father's stead) that they wished to go again into the wide world to seek employment.

The young king tried to persuade them to stay with him.

"I will give you whatever you wish till you die, and you will have no need to work," he said.

But they were not content with such an idle life, so they went away, and even at this day they are wandering about in some part of the world.

W. Bruce.

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LAST WEEK.

The Session has scarcely begun, and yet in the speech delivered by Lord John Russell at the beginning of Last Week we have a very satisfactory exposition of the views of the British Ministry with regard to foreign affairs. Now foreign affairs, and various measures of legal reform—mainly those connected with the criminal and the bankruptcy code—are the legitimate business of the present session of the British Parliament. When all has been said and done that can be said and done upon these subjects during the hundred and twenty evenings of which a session consists, there will always be a vast amount of business which yet enlists no warm political sympathies, and arouses no great share of political excitement, but which requires time in order that it may be thoroughly performed. As long, too, as a popular assembly retains its character, a certain period of its sittings must always be devoted to the discussion of merely personal questions, for its members are not machines, but men with feelings and passions which will occasionally lead them astray. Happy will it be for us if, when the 12th of August arrives, the two Houses have really got through a considerable amount of practical business, and during the course of their session have served as apt exponents of the views and opinions of the British people upon the many mighty questions which are at the present moment agitating the minds of the Continental nations. Happier, still, will it be if such expression of opinion serves in any material way to preserve the peace of Europe.

The one great omission in the Royal Speech, and in the programme of the Ministry, appears to be that of all question of Reform in our parliamentary institutions. Is this question of Reform, therefore, abandoned, because it is adjourned?—or because the present Ministers have arrived at the conclusion that in the actual temper of the Houses and of the country, it cannot be dealt with by any large and comprehensive bill? Surely not. Lord Derby, unwillingly enough, brought in a very bad bill, but, bad as it was, it was at least a proof of how far he and his party were willing to go. Lord John Russell, again, brought in a bill which did not satisfy anybody. That bill was the measure of the intentions of the Whigs and Ministerialists upon the subject of Reform. Mr. Bright brought a scheme under the notice of the constituencies; but, as it turned out, the constituencies regarded it with such indifference, that it was not thought worth while to bring it under the serious consideration of the House. What is to be done? Conservatives, Ministerial Liberals, and Radicals, have each in turn endeavoured to deal with the question, but the endeavours have invariably proved failures. It is undeniable that throughout the country there exists an apathy upon this matter which it is impossible to stimulate into action, or to overcome by the ordinary machinery of political agitation.

One of two inferences must be the correct one. Either this question must be left to a more convenient season, or it must be handled in some manner upon which our statesmen have not yet hit. Possibly piecemeal legislation and a Consolidation Bill at a distant period, may furnish a proper solution of the question. Possibly, when the ferment of men's minds with regard to foreign affairs is at an end, and they have time and opportunity to turn their thoughts once more to the consideration of domestic affairs, they may be more inclined than they seem just now to compel the statesmen of this country to sink their differences, and arrive at a fresh and comprehensive settlement of a question which, however frequently it may be settled, must always remain an open one, amongst a free people.

As long as the Whigs remain in power, and until they see that their power is seriously threatened by an adjournment of the question, it may now be considered as put aside. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the public announcement in Parliament, from the lips of Lord John Russell, that he and his colleagues have determined to abandon it for a time, has weakened their hold upon the support—such as it was—of Mr. Bright and the extreme Radicals. Again, since the Whigs have declared thus openly their intention to give up their Reform Bill, the great obstacle which impeded the return to power of Lord Derby and his followers is removed.

What is to happen in Continental Europe during the next six months? That is the question which is uppermost in the thoughts of us all at the present moment. Lord John Russell this day week, in answer to a question from Mr. Fitzgerald, gave it as his own opinion that, despite of the warlike rumours which reach our ears from all sides, the peace of Europe may yet be preserved. It is to be presumed that this expression of opinion represents the views of his colleagues; but at the same time it may be remarked that the speech delivered by the French Emperor on the opening of the Chambers the other day was not very encouraging. No words spoken by him, it may be, could have restored confidence to Europe, for his words and his acts have too often been at variance. A suggestion, indeed, for the reduction of the military and maritime forces of France, had it been carried out in act, would have been acceptable enough, and might have afforded substantial grounds for belief in his sincerity. No such suggestion was made; but on the contrary, it is notorious that he is pressing on the construction of a war-fleet, with all expedition—that he is laying up vast quantities of warlike stores—that he is putting his land forces upon a war-footing, and even calling out his reserves. It is asserted in political circles, that the protest of the sixty members delivered the other day to Lord Palmerston, and pointing out the necessity for a reduction in our expenditure, was made public just in time to give a more warlike colour to the phrases of the French Emperor's speech. It encouraged him to calculate upon our internal divisions; for if the British nation is not determined collectively—that is to say, with the exception of an inconsiderable minority—to maintain the forces of the country at such a point of efficiency as may enable us at any time to make our authority felt in the discussion of European affairs, Louis Napoleon is not the man to respect our protests or our

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scruples. Whatever British statesmen may believe, the opinion of the Prussian king and his advisers certainly is that the independence of Prussia is threatened.

At the opening of the Chambers at Berlin the other day, the king expressed himself in the gloomiest manner as to the turn events might take, and that ere long. Here, then, we have contradictory statements made—with the interval of but a few days between them—in Berlin, and in London. The Oracle at Paris is not very clear; but what meaning can be disengaged from its mystic phrases would rather seem to be of an ominous kind, and that the more when it is considered in connection with the warlike preparations urged forward in such haste throughout the length and breadth of the French Empire—more especially upon the Rhenish and Eastern frontier.

LAST WEEK, again, we received intelligence from Berlin that M. Von Vincke's amendment during the discussion upon the address had been carried by a majority of 159 against 146 votes in the Chamber of Deputies, and that despite of the most determined efforts upon the part of Baron Von Schleinitz and the Ministerialists. But in truth here is somewhat more than a check to a Ministry: the carrying of this amendment is a positive veto imposed by the country on the policy of the sovereign. The terms of the amendment were to the effect—"That we do not consider it to be either for the interest of Prussia or of Germany to place obstacles in the way of the consolidation of the unity of Italy." It was in vain that the Minister protested that the Prussian Government had not the least reason to be opposed to the development of Italy: that although it did not consider the principle of non-intervention as binding, it had not actually interfered in Italy: that the position of Venetia was, in a military sense, too important to Austria directly, and indirectly to Germany, to allow of its cession being advised by Prussia: that in all probability both Austria and Sardinia would content themselves with the maintenance of a defensive attitude, and that through the influence of the Great Powers a final contest would certainly be postponed, and, possibly, might be altogether averted: and, finally, that the Prussian Government had resolved not in any way to interfere with the national Italian movement, so long as it remained a national movement and did not assume a development which seemed to carry with it a threat to the stability of German power. Every effort, in short, was made to meet the amendment half way, and to treat it as though all that was really vital in it had been actually incorporated into the policy of the Prussian Government, but only with such prudent reserves as would recommend themselves upon the most cursory consideration to the easy acceptance of every German Liberal. The Prussian deputies were well aware that this was but a hollow pretence, and that even if no positive engagement subsisted, there had been an understanding between the sovereigns of Southern and of Northern Germany that Prussia would not fail Austria in her need, if the Austrian possession of Venetia was seriously attacked. What renders this event the more remarkable is, that M. Von Vincke, who is really a man with some claim to be considered a Liberal in the English and parliamentary sense of the word, and who was a very foremost man indeed in the Frankfort Parliament after the events of 1848, has, by proposing this amendment, abandoned the ground which he then occupied. In those days he struggled—no man more effectively—to liberate Germany from the great and petty despotisms under which she had been groaning since the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte. When the question, however, of the liberation of Italy was mooted amongst the German Liberals of that period, it found but few abettors—and certainly M. Von Vincke was not amongst the number. Twelve years have made a difference in his views; and, let us hope, in common with the other German Liberals, he now sees that in the interests of Freedom and Independence it is better that a nation should be surrounded by free and independent nations, than that it should have this or that river, this or that mountain, as its boundary. It would be difficult to struggle for the cause of Freedom on one side of the Alps, and for that of Slavery and Oppression on the other.

This is a very notable event, that the German Liberals have resolved at last to give up that which hitherto has been to them a point of national honour and pride—namely, the right of keeping the Italians in thraldom. It would be an illustration of this change in the political and public opinions of Germany, if we Englishmen were to carry our thoughts back to the time when penal laws, political disabilities, and religious exclusions pressed most heavily upon the people of Ireland, and to imagine how an English Radical would have been received amongst his fellow Radicals, if he had proposed that there should be an entire end of English dominion in Ireland, and that, in fact, England ought to give up Ireland altogether. This resolution of the Prussian Parliament is pre-eminently the event of LAST WEEK; for whatever importance may be attached to the proceedings of the British Parliament, and the declarations of the British Minister, these at least were foreseen. We knew well enough that the inhabitants of these islands had no ambitious designs to be carried out upon the continent of Europe. It was also clear that any Minister who endeavoured to entangle this country in engagements with foreign powers, or to commit us to hostilities with foreign sovereigns, could scarcely reckon upon any prolonged lease of office. If we are forced into a quarrel, we must be forced into it indeed! Other nations—pre-eminently France—have intervened in the affairs of foreign countries from selfish motives. Our forefathers alone were so ill-advised as to be carried away by whiffs of sentiment and enthusiasm, and thus committed themselves to a series of deadly struggles, now in the Spanish peninsula—now in Belgium—now in South America—and they reaped their reward in the ingratitude, not to say in the abhorrence, of those whom they had endeavoured to assist with all their might. If the English people have learnt the great lesson of moderation and sobriety of thought in matters connected with foreign policy, this has been the result of bitter experience, and many a fruitless sacrifice. We feel at last that

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enough has been done. If foreign nations would win their way to freedom and independence, they must do as we have done,—they must gain these precious advantages for themselves, and hand them down as an inheritance to their children to be preserved by prudent heads—by stout hands—and by fearless hearts.

How much wiser are the nations than their rulers; and how thankful we should be that, in this country, at least, the rough collective wisdom of the many ever prevails against the polished ambition of the few! The recent decision of the Prussian Chambers may well preserve the country from the horrors of a French invasion: it may suffice to restore tone and consistency to a population which, although divided into many petty sovereignties, may be numbered at 60,000,000 of human beings apt enough for war, although inclined by constitution and habits to peaceful pursuits. In Germany, not in France, lies the real solution of the great problem of European peace. If the Germans are but united amongst themselves they will present such an obstacle to the ambitious designs of the French Emperor as must compel him to seek for a field of action other than the territories of his immediate neighbours. Now when a French sovereign aims at any conquests save those which lie upon his immediate frontier, he must needs go to sea, and a French navy is not invulnerable. History is there as a witness of the fact.

Let us, however, be just to Louis Napoleon. Truly enough it seems immediately due to him that at the present moment we are expending something like £30,000,000 annually in armaments and warlike preparations; but it must be remembered that he is but taking advantage of the faithlessness and folly of the sovereigns who have ruled over Continental Europe since 1815. But for their treachery—but for their impotent endeavours to reduce the European nations back to a condition of spiritual and political serfdom, we should not have heard of the Revolutions of 1830, nor of 1848—we should not have gone through the trials of a Crimean, nor the anxieties of an Italian war. Napoleon Bonaparte was the avenger of the misgovernment of two centuries; his nephew and successor would never have ascended the throne of France, nor moved a regiment across his own frontier, but for the tacit coalition in favour of despotism which has prevailed amongst the sovereigns of Continental Europe since 1815. Louis Napoleon, Emperor of the French, and Conqueror at Magenta and Solferino, is the natural successor to Prince Metternich. There will be no peace in Europe—and no reduction in the English income-tax—until the millions of Continental Europe are really contented with their condition, and have a decisive voice in the conduct of their own affairs. France has turned two dynasties adrift. Italy has shaken off her purple rags. Russia is settling accounts with her serfs, and now Germany is declaring to her sovereigns that what has been shall be no more: but that, come what may, the people will set aside the decisions of their sovereigns when these appear to be at variance with the true interests of the German name.

We are living at a period of which no Englishman appears to appreciate the true importance, because, whilst the game is being played out, we are not suffering any other anxieties than those which follow from excessive taxation. How often have Englishmen now in middle life asked of those who have gone before them: "How did you contrive to live through the struggles of the war with Revolutionary France? How was London affected when Lord Whitworth was dismissed from Paris, and the Peace of Amiens was broken? How did you bear the suspense of Trafalgar—the ague-fit of Walcheren—the fever of Salamanca, Talavera, Waterloo?" The answer invariably was—"Quietly enough!" Why not? Why should not these lesser historical vicissitudes have been tolerable, if we are going peacefully about our daily business, even whilst the greatest experiments ever made by the human race in despotism and self-government are turning out failures, and are being cast aside like Brummel's cravats? There is the Papacy, in which mankind have more or less believed for something not very short of 2000 years, and its present representative is a peevish old man railing against the unfaithful Faithful under the protection of French bayonets, General Guyon stands between the inheritance of the great Gregory and destruction.

On the other side of the Atlantic the work of George Washington is also well-nigh undone. He and his fellows, when they sought to assert the independence of human beings, and that no man should pay suit and reverence to any, save to his Creator alone, could little foresee that in less than a century the free Confederation which they had founded would be dissolved into its elements, that too upon the question of whether the model freemen of the far West should retain their fellow-creatures in slavery. Turn from Pio Nono, and President Buchanan, to the East of Europe, and what do we see there but the dissolution of that famous old Austrian Empire, which had increased in volume and strength since the days of Rudoph of Hapsburg like a rolling snow-ball, and which seems destined like a snow-ball to melt away in the times of Francis Joseph? The recent address of the city of Pesth to the Austrian Emperor, which was published in the English journals in the course of LAST WEEK, is calculated to dispel the last illusions which might have been entertained upon this point even by the most bigoted partisans of the Imperial faction.

The Hungarians—at least, so say the Liberals of Pesth, who, amongst their countrymen, are remarkable for moderation—refuse to give money or soldiers to the Austrian Emperor unless these are voted by a national and independent parliament. They demand that the government of Hungary shall be replaced upon the old footing such as it was before Maria Theresa tampered with it—before Francis betrayed it—and before Felix Schwarzenberg trampled it under foot. The cry of Hungary finds its echo in the Italian Peninsula, and now Northern Germany has declared that it will not, to please its sovereign, interfere in the course of events upon the other side of the Alps.

Surely here is a sufficient suggestion of the great historical events which have occurred during LAST WEEK.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"WHAT will become of me?" exclaimed Bertha, as the sound of her husband's footsteps ceased. "He knows all. I am lost."

"Why do you talk such folly?" said Mrs. Lygon, impatiently. "What more has Robert learned than he knew ten minutes ago, when you were going to meet him, except that I, whom he supposed on my way to England, am still in his house? Be calm, Bertha."

"This agitation will be too much for me to bear," said Mrs. Urquhart, in her helpless manner. "I shall break down under it."

"Give way *now,*" said her sister, in an undertone of strong determination—almost menace, "and we never speak to one another again in this world."

Bertha merely gazed on her; and, indeed, seemed deprived of all power of action.

"Listen, Bertha. It will now be for me to explain to Robert why I am here again. You thought that I had left for England. There, it is dreadful to have to say what is false, but saying *that* is the simplest thing for you to do, and I see well that you can do no more. You must leave the rest to me."

"Oh, why did you ever come here?" replied Bertha, repiningly.

"Bertha!"

The word was repeated, but in another and a sterner tone. Mr. Urquhart was heard summoning his wife.

"I will go," said Laura.

"Bertha will come," replied Robert Urquhart, in a voice which awed even Laura, and which his wife, in white terror, hastened to obey. With a piteous gesture of her hands, she went through the doorway into the larger apartment. There Robert received her, and with an imperative sign motioned her to precede him. They went up to

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the drawing-room, and Mr. Urquhart placed a chair for his wife, which she took without a word.

"Why is Mrs. Lygon in my house?" was his demand.

"I thought—I believed—that she had gone home, Robert, indeed I did," said Mrs. Urquhart, trembling.

"I know that you thought so, Bertha, for you told her husband so," said Mr. Urquhart, sternly. "Do you suppose that I am suspecting you of a falsehood?"

"You ought not," said his wife, whose feeble courage was restored by a word, and as easily dispelled.

"I know that I ought not, and I do not. Now, why is she here, or what does she tell you is her reason for being here?"

Thus urged, and in some measure reassured by the language of her husband, from whom she had expected far different treatment, Bertha rallied as well as she could, and answered with some firmness:

"You know what she came about, and why she went to Paris. She has come back to say that she has succeeded, and is going to return to England directly."

"Is going to return to her home?"

"Yes, certainly, Robert, dear. Where else should she go?"

"Anywhere else," he said, to himself, however, rather than to his wife.

"Anywhere else?" she repeated. "What can you mean?"

He came up to her, and took her hands in his own.

"Bertha," he said, gravely, not harshly, "I have always done a husband's duty by you. Maybe I have loved you so well that there was no merit in that. But you have nothing to lay to my charge."

"I, Robert? You have been kindness itself! Have I ever said anything in my life in the way of accusing you? Why do you say this to me? I owe you everything in the world, and I only wish that I were worthier of you."

And, if a shallow nature can be truthful, she was, at the moment, speaking truth in those last words.

"Nor have I ever complained of you," he replied, without noticing those words. "It will be an ill day for us when I complain, but it will be a short one."

"Robert!"

"All that I would say to you, Bertha, is, that I am sorry you have weakly allowed yourself to be the dupe and tool of your sister. She is a much cleverer woman than yourself, as you have often said to me; and this should have made you cautious. But I know full well that she has not dared to tell you what my wife ought not to have heard."

"Indeed she has not, Robert; but I cannot understand the mystery in your words."

"Better so."

"You frighten me to death, Robert! Tell me what you mean."

"I will not. That is not our business now. How long has she been here?"

"She came back yesterday," stammered Bertha, unable to consider what would be the best reply, and answering at random.

"Ay. Just so. She remains here, when she might have been by this time where a wife and a mother would long to be, if she were fit to be there. So she has slept in the house again. I am sorry for it."

"Sorry that Laura should sleep in this house!" echoed Bertha. "There is some dreadful thought in your mind. And you will not tell it to *me?*" said Bertha, who, now that she felt herself safe, ventured on a tone of wifely reproach.

"It is not so to be spoken of," returned Urquhart, darkly. And he gazed on Bertha, for some moments, in silence. Then he said,

"She must leave the house instantly."

Slight as were Bertha's reasoning faculties, her instinct told her that she must make some stand against such a decree. Her own sister must not be turned from her house without some reason assigned for the act. Submission to it would imply that Mrs. Urquhart believed in the existence of a cause for such treatment of Laura.

"Robert," she said, "you are the master here, and have a right to say who shall stay with us. But Laura is my sister, and must not be insulted."

Something, resembling a smile of satisfaction, came over his face for a second, and disappeared.

"Insult means wrong treatment, Bertha," he said, "and I never willingly do wrong. You are right to protest, but, as you say, I am the master, and for once I must ask to be obeyed without dispute. In some time to come I am afraid you will have to thank me. Now, you must be content to obey me. But I will spare you all the pain I can. Go to your room, and I will dismiss Laura Lygon."

"Robert, I cannot behave to my sister in that way. What you mean I know not, and you refuse to tell me. But I must speak to her, and make her feel that if I am to part from her, it is in obedience to your wishes, and that I know nothing to blame her for."

"Nothing to blame her for? She has deceived you, and caused you to deceive her husband, and make him the victim of a trick. Is that not enough to separate you for the rest of your lives? If that were all, Bertha, I would be sorry indeed to hear you call that woman sister again."

Here failed Mrs. Urquhart's power of resistance. Unable longer to defend the position she had taken up, she burst into tears. They were tears of real sorrow, but the cowardly and selfish nature would make no further effort for the sake of another. Let Laura go. What did it matter what Robert thought of her—she would be far away. And these schemes which Laura was trying, it would be better if they were at an end. Bertha could not understand them, and they would lead only to scenes of terror and agitation—let Laura go.

Such were the sisterly thoughts of the woman crying behind her handkerchief, and such was the repayment she meditated for what, so far as she knew, was a perilous and loving effort in her own behalf. We are commanded to help the weak-hearted, and we must obey the merciful command;

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but assuredly it is not at their hands that we must look for the reward of our deeds.

"I feel for you, and with you, Bertha," said her husband, kindly. "It is not often that I have brought the tears to your eyes."

"No, dear, no," sobbed Mrs. Urquhart.

"And right glad I would have been to save them now. But there is no mid-course between right and wrong, and Laura Lygon must leave this house at once, and without further speech with you."

"You are wronging Laura, I am certain, Robert," said Mrs. Urquhart, sadly.

"She has succeeded in so deceiving you, that you believe I am wronging her, and your love, your natural love and affection, helps her in preserving the delusion. We will say no more upon it while she remains under my roof, and that shall not be long. Now, Bertha, accept my counsel, and go to your room."

As he spoke, Mrs. Lygon entered.

Urquhart looked at her sternly, and Bertha, who had risen, and had been standing beside her husband, sank upon a couch.

"I heard angry voices," said Laura, with as much firmness as she could muster. "My being here has caused unhappiness, and I am very sorry for it."

"There were no angry voices, Mrs. Lygon," said Urquhart, "nor have you any right to interpose between myself and your sister. As for your sorrow, there is no doubt abundant cause for it, but it need not be expressed to me."

His haughty manner awakened the pride of Laura, and it was with a calm loftiness of bearing that she replied—

"While you are in entire ignorance, Robert, of the circumstances, you will do well to avoid saying that which you will hereafter be sorry for."

"You ought to be on your knees, Laura, imploring your Maker to forgive you," said Urquhart.

"Be silent, Robert, until you have heard me," said Laura.

"I have no wish to hear you," he replied. "It is your wronged husband who has to be your judge. I have only to take care that the contamination of your example does not injure my own happiness and honour."

She flushed over face and brow, and with difficulty said,

"You must be mad, to use such words."

"I am not mad, Mrs. Lygon. What your husband may become, in consequence of your conduct, I dare not think."

"You have been with him. He is not ill?" gasped Laura.

"Were you in the home you have abandoned you would know. But I could wish to cut this short. I shall order a carriage for you."

"This must not be," said Bertha, roused, in very shame, by the presence of her sister, "Laura must not be wronged. It is my duty to speak for her."

"Silence, Bertha," said her husband.

"No, it would be wicked, Robert. Laura will not tell you—"

"I too say—silence, Bertha," said Mrs. Lygon, approaching her sister, and taking her hand.

A terrible expression came again upon the face of the husband as he beheld this action. He strode across to the couch, removed Laura's hand from that of her sister, and led the former to a chair at some distance.

"Let the innocent hand hold off from the guilty one." And turning, he rang the bell violently.

So, there were confronted the husband, the wife, the sister. The man believed himself to be acting wisely and justly. What the women knew, neither dared to utter, but in the look each turned on the other might have been read an agonizing comment on the judgment that had been given. Then, overcome by her conflicting emotions, Bertha again sank sobbing on the couch, and Laura, after one long, compassionating look upon her sister, turned to Mr. Urquhart, and regarded him for a moment with a quiet and searching gaze, like that of one who would fix something for perpetual remembrance. In silence, but with the calm and almost proud bearing natural to her, Laura then withdrew.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

It had been Mr. Urquhart's intention to have the carriage brought round for Laura, but this courtesy was rendered unnecessary by Mrs. Lygon's leaving the house in a few minutes after the interview which has been described. In going out, Laura took the precautionary measure of mentioning to Henderson, that she should probably walk in the gardens of the palace for an hour, before taking the train for Paris.

In the gardens, therefore, she awaited the explanation which it was impossible that her sister should not endeavour to send. Her watch for a messenger from Bertha was a long one, but it did not surprise her that it should be so. Bertha was timid and irresolute, and might herself be watched. But it will easily be surmised that Mrs. Lygon had more than enough at her heart to make the time seem alternately to pass with strange rapidity, and to drag with a wearisome, torturing slowness. The scene which she had gone through—its sudden occurrence, and its hasty conclusion, would have made it seem a dream, but for the vividness of its chief incident, and the unspeakable humiliation which it had brought.

Judged, her conduct was to be, she knew, but she had thought of the judgment as something deferred, until at least her errand should be fulfilled or abandoned. But suddenly and rudely her husband's most valued friend had taken her case in hand, and she was already driven out of the presence of her sister, and pronounced unworthy of her companionship. No wonder the woman's heart shrunk under the blow so unexpectedly delivered.

But, she asked herself, what did Mr. Urquhart know, that he had presumed to judge? Had the enemy been at work with him, too? And was this but the prelude to a final and fearful stroke?

It seemed to the over-wrought mind and dimmed eye of Laura so natural a thing that the enemy should appear, that when Ernest Adair

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advanced towards her, she received his bow as something that she had been expecting. There is a kind of inferior second-sight in many who undergo strong trouble, and they will often tell you incidents which, to your calmer mind, seem startling coincidences, but for which they declare themselves to have been perfectly prepared.

"How considerate in you, Mrs. Lygon," said Adair, after a few words of commonplace, scarcely replied to by her, "how very considerate in you to leave the newly arrived husband to receive the congratulations of his wife, without the presence of a third person, even a third person who would be so welcome as yourself!"

"Have you any object in addressing me, Mr. Adair? If you have, spare any useless introduction—if not—"

"Spare me your presence, you were going to add, Mrs. Lygon, with the amiable frankness I have so often had to admire. Believe that I should not have ventured to intrude upon you, unless I had had an object."

"What is it?"

"Although you are good enough to imply that introduction is needless, I feel ashamed of being too blunt on such a theme. I was about to offer some preliminary excuses."

"They are needless."

"Yet not the less due,', persisted Adair. "I will only presume to inquire—no. I will only presume to remark that whenever either of two ladies who have my interests very much at heart shall have anything to communicate to me, the information will be most welcome."

"I understand. Be assured that no unnecessary delay is taking place."

"The assurance is more than sufficient. I may infer that the arrival of Mr. Urquhart will not interpose any new difficulty."

"Why should it?"

"Only by rendering the intercourse of those ladies more difficult."

The words seemed to imply a knowledge on the part of Adair of what had taken place in Mr. Urquhart's home that day. But had he avowed such knowledge, Laura would have felt no surprise; or, rather, would have scarcely given a thought to her surprise.

"Nothing will prevent the carrying out the object," she said, coldly.

"I must say no more, or if I again venture to hint that there are reasons why promptness would confer a deep obligation upon me, I must couple that hint with the hope that it will disturb none of the admirable plans which I am sure are being forwarded."

"I shall endeavour to act for the best."

"And you will succeed. Should I be trespassing in asking whether in saying, 'I,' Mrs. Lygon implies that the management of the affair is entirely in her hands?"

"There is no use in entering into discussion. You are well aware that the business *must* be completed, and that it can be nobody's wish to prolong it."

"I accept the painful intimation that the sooner I am disposed of the better. I have only to add, that if Mrs. Lygon finds Mr. Urquhart inclined to any misconceptions upon the subject of her visit, and those misconceptions should take a disagreeable form, and one likely to interfere with what I may call *our* object, I might think it desirable to remove them, without her aid."

"Do anything like that which your menace implies," said Mrs. Lygon, "and you destroy your own hopes."

"But I substitute for them—certainties," replied Adair. "I am sure that I am understood; and, as here comes Henderson, with a message (no, a letter, by her keeping her hand in her pocket so carefully), I will not longer trespass on your time."

He bowed, and passed to another part of the gardens.

"I saw him, Madame," said Henderson, looking with a tigerish glance in the direction he had taken. "I would have waited until he had gone, but it was of no use. He knows of master breaking the door open, and, I suppose, a good deal more."

"He still obtains information from the house, then, Mary?"

"I can't quite bring it home to her yet," said the girl, "but I know that Angelique had not a sou of money last Sunday, and she has bought herself a gold cross to hang round her great red neck. I guess where that money came from, but I cannot prove it yet, Madame. When I can, she and me will have a word of a sort. I suppose the sound of the money was too much for her fears of the ghost; and yet I thought I had frightened her into a fit. I know I tried my best, Madame."

"You are sent by Mrs. Urquhart?"

"I have a note, Madame, and perhaps you would be so kind as to let me stand near you while you read it, for he might make a rush to get it."

"I am not afraid of *that*," said Mrs. Lygon, taking the note.

It was from Bertha, who had written a few hasty lines.

"Dearest Laura,

"I cannot explain, and I dare not come to you. I think that you had better go home, before worse comes of it, and leave me to manage in some way with A. You know what R. is when he takes anything into his head, and he will not hear a word in your favour; but of course you know *my* feelings. I will write to you to London. God bless you.

"Your affectionate "B."

A heartless letter wounds more than a heartless speech. It is not that the deliberation of the act of writing implies studied unkindness, for many cruel letters are more hasty than many cruel words; and most letters are less kindly than the intentions of the writer; but there is in a written message of unkindness the blow given by one who instantly recedes into the distance, out of the way of reproach or expostulation. So Laura felt this epistle. This was the return for all that she had done, and sought to do."

"There is no answer," she said, with a smile to the expectant Henderson. "Only say that you

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delivered the note. Was Mrs. Urquhart's headache better?"

"I did not hear of it, Madame. She seemed cheerful enough with master, laughing at his rough hair, and what not."

"O, I am glad of that. Perhaps you had better not wait any longer, Mary."

"You would be offended with me if I was to say something, Madame, and yet I should like to say it."

"I do not take offence, Mary, where it is not intended. No one should do so."

"Far be it from me to mean offending, Madame. But it is a bold thing in me, and I think I am always saying bold things. Only this, Madame. I do not know how ladies feel when one lady, who does not deserve it, is made the scapegoat for another who does, but I know how I should feel if the other one did nothing to set me right with other folks. But my feelings are nothing, and I beg pardon for speaking of them. Only this, Madame, that, mistress or no mistress, you may rely upon me to the end of the world, and letters to the house might not be safe but sent to me to the care of M. Silvain would be always delivered instantly or I would know the reason why. Good day, Madame I'm sure."

All the latter part of this speech was delivered with great rapidity, and yet with nervousness, the speaker fearing to be interrupted before she had done. And when she had concluded she hastened away, and then, at the distance of some yards, made, in shame and with much elaboration, the curtsey with which she had intended to finish.

"Servants overhear. One sells the secret to my enemy. The other offers me her friendship and assistance. A fit ending to a day like this," thought Laura, bitterly, as she crunched up her sister's note.

M. Silvain was in his neat little shop when Mrs. Lygon entered it, and great was the delight of the former at beholding the English lady. But with the tact of his class in France, he abstained from any excess of demonstration, and it was only by the sparkle of his eye that his pleasure at being thus visited could have been detected.

"You are very well acquainted with Versailles, M. Silvain?"

M. Silvain had had the honour of being born in Paris, but his parents had removed to Versailles, when he was six years old, and since then it had been his home. Could his perfect acquaintance with every nook and corner in the place be of the slightest use to madame?

"I wish to remain here for a short time—how long I cannot exactly say at present—but I do not wish to go to an hotel. Do you know of a respectable lodging where—"

Might M. Silvain interrupt? It might be less trouble to madame to assent to his supposition, to correct him if wrong, than to speak. Madame desired a perfectly *confortable* lodging, in entire seclusion and privacy, where the persons would be more than content with the honour of entertaining madame, would ask for no other name than that which she pleased to give, and whoever might inquire for any other name would obtain no information. He had been so fortunate as to describe what madame wanted? In that case, if madame would allow him one half-hour, such a place should then be ready, and she would have but to take the trouble to walk to it.

And Silvain was as good as his word, and in another hour Mrs. Lygon had taken possession of an apartment in a pleasant white house, some distance from the avenue, and in a somewhat retired situation. A few hasty purchases, and a few general directions to the clean, withered-apple faced old lady, to whom the place appertained, and Mrs. Lygon had nothing to think of but her life's one business, and the many sorrows arising to her therefrom. With such thoughts for her companions, let us leave her for awhile.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"AVENTAYLE'S Paris agent has made his inquiries," said Charles Hawkesley, hastily entering his wife's room on returning home.

"Well, and has news?" said Beatrice, starting up.

"Yes, indeed, if it may be depended on, and he is a man of business. He sent out, of course privately, to Versailles, and ascertained that somebody, who certainly answers the description of Arthur, had been at Robert's, and had left in the middle of the night."

"And Laura?"

"He was informed that no such person had been there. But it seems that the man who was sent was of a shrewd character, and though he does not send this message as part of his official answer, he has reason to think that a lady, not one of the regular inmates of the house, is staying there, and that she is English."

"How did he know, dear?"

"That, of course, he does not explain. I consider that we had a right to make the inquiry in the way we did, because it might have caused alarm, had we applied direct to Bertha, under the circumstances, but I take it that the messenger has used other means to find out the truth than I should have desired."

"No matter, in a case like this. I hate meanness, but I would peep through a keyhole if I thought somebody inside the room was hurting any one I loved. Then you think that we may set our minds at rest so far?"

"I think that Arthur and Laura are in Paris, but as for setting our minds at rest, I fear that we are not much further advanced, dear."

"Why not, if they are together at Bertha's?"

"I do not gather that they are together. To tell you the truth, it looks very much as if one were in search of the other; and as we know that Laura left home before Arthur did—"

"You have told me all you have heard?"

"Every word. I hurried home to do so."

"It is a great thing, Charles, to have ascertained that she is with Bertha."

"It is something; but—"

"Nay, is it not an answer at once to all the wicked suggestions which we heard that people had dared to make? *We* wanted no assuring of her perfect innocence, dear soul; but it will lighten Price's heart to be able to say that her mistress is with Mrs. Urquhart. I will write to her immediately."

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"Not without some more consideration, dear."

"I hate consideration. Do let me tell Walter; it will be such a pleasure to see the sunshine come over his face."

"Poor dear boy, yes, but a minute's sunshine may be bought too dear. We may be wrong. Are you not unconsciously adopting the story I suggested as possible—the idea of some religious motive having actuated Laura?"

"There would be a much simpler way of accounting for it all, if Laura were another kind of woman."

"Some quarrel? Out of the question. Such a thing would be almost as possible between you and me."

"No, don't say that. Your temper is a better one—naturally, I mean, sir, than Arthur's. He could be roused by a woman's tongue."

"So could Hawkesley, mind that, much as he has endured. But there has been no quarrel. It is impossible. If, indeed, Arthur had been another kind of man, and Laura could have imagined, or discovered anything to make her unhappy——"

"Do you mean, if he had got into difficulties?"

"No, in that case would she have left his side?"

"I mean difficulties he had concealed from her."

"When a man conceals such things from his wife it is her fault. She has not convinced him that she can bear his troubles with him. Arthur has not to learn what Laura would be in the hour of trouble. No, I meant—what it is almost wrong to suggest—even when we are trying all conjectures. I mean if she had reason to suppose that his heart had gone astray."

"Charles, dearest, if that were so, those children would not be here. She would have fled away with them all."

"Would you have done so?"

"Don't raise such a thought, darling," said Beatrice, clutching at her husband's hand, and the next moment dropping it, and adding, saucily,

"Yes, of course, but not until I had given you laudanum, and set fire to your house, and paid a hundred men to go and hiss your next play, and written to the 'Times' to say that you were a wretch. Then, we are not to tell the boys."

"Let us wait a day or two longer. Arthur may be returning, and then we shall know all. Meantime we have done our duty by the children."

"Poor dears. Charles, by the way, I have something to say to you. I have been setting your study to rights."

"Humph."

"Don't be absurd—it was in a shocking condition, and I have put everything where I found it. But I want to know where you got a play, which is not your own, and which you have been pencilling and marking."

"Why, what of that?"

"Where did you get it? tell me."

"From Aventayle. He wanted me to see whether it would do for him."

"Do you know whose writing it is?"

"I forget the name, but I have the letter that came with it."

"The writing is that of our writing-master at Lipthwaite."

"What!" said Hawkesley. "Are you sure?"

"Certain. If there is one handwriting in all the world that one would know, it is one's writing master's. Not that he was mine so much; he came when Mr. Frost went away, and I had been his pupil, but he taught the other girls."

"His name?"

"I told you the other day—Adair, Ernest Adair."

"Yes, that's it," said Hawkesley. "I recollect quite well. That is the name in the letter."

"How odd that you should have to sit in judgment on him! But that is nothing. Have you read the play?"

"Yes, it will not do."

"I should think it would *not* do," said Mrs. Hawkesley indignantly. "Why, he has founded it upon Lipthwaite scandals, and I am perfectly certain that the character of *Manacle* is meant for himself."

"Lipthwaite scandals! Do you know, Beatrice, that you are putting some very extraordinary notions into my head," said the author, thoughtfully, and "trying back" upon the fable of the piece in question. "Have you left it on my table?"

"No, it is here," said his wife, taking the MS. out of a work-table.

"That is called leaving things as we found them," said Hawkesley, "but give it me."

And he turned over leaf after leaf with rapidity, reading passages as he went on, and finally becoming so absorbed in the play that Beatrice addressed him in vain.

"Yes," he said, gazing hard at her, as he concluded.

"Yes, what?" she replied. "I have asked you half a dozen times what you had discovered."

"I beg your pardon, my dear. So this is founded, you think, on Lipthwaite scandals?"

"I suppose not altogether, but he has taken such things as his groundwork. The part of the plain, ambitious, scheming, sly girl who loves *Manacle*, and whom he pretends to like for the sake of obtaining the situation, I know very well who that was meant for."

"There are worse things than that, in fact that is rather good comedy. But what do you say to the device by which *Ellinor* loses her character, although perfectly virtuous?"

"I overlooked that. But there is another part, that of *Miriam*, the daughter of the clergyman, who is deceived by the tutor, and becomes so vindictive. That he is a bad man for using, because the poor old man's heart was broken by the disgrace—it really occurred, and very nearly in the way Adair must have been told it, in confidence, for no one would have willingly talked about it."

"But her vindictiveness is nothing to that of the plain woman, what's her name? *Sophia*, who is so in love with *Manacle*."

"That was Marion Wagstaffe, I am certain. They said that she was desperately in love with Mr. Adair, but that after he had amused himself

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by flirting with her for a long time, and got something by her friends' influence, he threw her over, and it was said that she tried to poison him, but I don't believe that. She married an old attorney afterwards. I have forgotten his name."

"Then the ex-writing master has been dramatising Lipthwaite, in short. I wonder none of the Miss Vernons came into the drama."

"Perhaps that suffering angel, brought in for contrast, *Eugenia*, is meant for one of us," said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"Yourself, perhaps," said her husband, laughing. "No, Betty, dear, I do not think you are exactly adapted for the *rôle* of a Suffering Angel."

(To be continued.)

LIFE AT CHARLESTON.

IN QUIET TIMES.

We hear so much just now of South Carolina, and of the proceedings of the people of Charleston, and the issue of the present excitement there must be so important, that persons who have never been there may like to know what is the aspect of the city, and what are the ways of the people of Charleston. I will therefore note down a few particulars, as they appear to a resident of a different part of the country. As a fellow-citizen under the general government of the United States, I am qualified to enter into their minds in a general way, while the broad differences in climate and its consequences between New England and a Southern State, may enable me to note and report peculiarities of manners and customs as a foreigner would do. Let my readers, then, think of me as a merchant from Massachusetts, visiting his sisters in their southern homes, first, during an ordinary period of repose; and again, at a time when public affairs were supposed to look threatening. This last condition is a not uncommon one. Since the marriages of my sisters, I have three times been called to them, to see what could be done with them and the children, in case of political or social convulsion.

Once I went by sea, for air and coolness. Approaching the city in that way I saw a long stretch of the coast: and I must say I thought it a very dreary one. The even line of forest on the low sandy shore; the shoals; the wide flats at low-water; and the sameness of level within the whole horizon, make up a scene of monotony such as I had not anticipated seeing anywhere on our side the Gulf. When we came within sight of Charleston the dreariness did not go off. The city occupies the point between the two rivers Ashley and Cooper, spreading (as I afterwards saw from a church steeple) like a fan from the apex of the sandy promontory which it occupies. On either hand of our channel lay the islands, which produce some of the best cotton in the world. A few groups of dwellings appeared in front of the pinewoods on the main land. A few masts bristled on the water off the wharves of the city; and a vessel was on the bar, coming out as we went in. On our right was Fort Moultrie on its island; and on the left, Fort Sumter, apparently growing out of the sea at high water. The most lively element in the scene was perhaps the black buzzards which are always moving about the harbour. They are as safe there as the doves in St. Mark's Place at Venice; they are the unpaid scavengers of the city, and are not to be meddled with. It is an odd sight at low water, to see a long row of these ugly birds perched on the line of stakes left uncovered by the ebb. There is nothing to be said for the beauty of the view from the shore at such an hour; and at high water, the sea is scarcely visible. It is a distant grey line, seen through either the reek of the slime of the harbour, or the haze of that sultry climate. I am always glad to turn my back upon the sea at Charleston, and shall always reach the place by land if indeed I ever go there again.

We New Englanders are supposed by Old Englanders to know something about woods; but I doubt whether the railway cutting in South Carolina is less striking to us than to European travellers. It is a sensation worth knowing to stand on the piazza, in front of one of the sheds which serve for stations, and look at the railway one is about to embark on. There is nothing whatever to be seen but the track and the sky. The track is walled in by two lines of dark trees, cut as clean as if they had been sliced at one stroke. Between them the rails run in perspective till all four unite in one, which is itself lost just before the apparent meeting of the two lines of forest. It is impossible to conjecture how many miles away it is. At length some means of judging arise. The station-master's practised ear catches the tokens of a coming train. After a few minutes his eye discerns what the stranger cannot see; but a moving object is at length visible to all,—a point of a somewhat different hue from all else. For several more minutes it seems doubtful whether it enlarges; and one again and again supposes it has halted. It has approached, however, steadily at the rate of nearly twenty miles an hour. Before it comes up, exactly the same process is going on, on the precisely similar road on the other hand, on which the train I am expecting is travelling towards us.

Once off, there is an alternation between the two ordinary objects,—the forest and the swamp. Both have great charms to my eye. The tall pines rise sometimes clear of branches to the very canopy, and sometimes screened with climbing plants, hanging out blossoms, red, yellow, and white. The grey moss of the tysandria floats from every bough and stem. The young aloes spring under the shelter of fallen trunks, and quick little lizards run along the prostrate stems. The silvery sand, scarcely tinged by wiry grass, spreads its soft surface as far as one can see under the trees; and the springs of water which ooze out from the roots of some old tree, run clear as crystal in sun or shade. In the swamp we see to some depth, as the rails rest on piles and trestles, above the water. We can see water-snakes in the intervals of the flowering reeds and flags, waving in any casual current. I prefer passing these swamps in the day; for by night the frogs are too noisy for endurance. It is all a chance, however, what hour you pass any given spot. Time is of no value in these regions. Punctuality is not dreamed of, and no guest is expected till he appears. One may reach Charleston at any hour of the day or

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night; and the traveller should be prepared accordingly.

If he arrives by day, he will have seen some country houses, within the last few miles; houses surrounded by some sort of tillage, and most likely cotton. The piazzas which run round to the back may be either of decaying wood, unpainted and bare, or shaded with honeysuckles such as are never seen elsewhere,—large globes of luscious bloom,—and yellow jasmines, before whose blossoms the humming bird is stationary while sucking the sweets, poised on quivering wings. In the fences, the yucca appears,—the most northerly of the palm tribe; and the splendid Cherokee rose sprawls over hedge or rail, in long lines of blossom, here and there converging into a mass of flowers.

At length I arrive at Charleston. If by night, I perceive only that the streets are singularly quiet, underfoot and around. Underfoot is the deep sand still; and still liable to the holes which in the roads so aggravate the fatigue of travelling; and on the pavement nobody is to be seen or heard except the soldiers, who are never absent. The guarding of this city is as singular an illustration of eternal vigilance as could be found in any part of the world. The sense of security is absolutely unknown there; and the sleepless mood, and practice of suspicion and watchfulness, have become a second nature. If I am obliged to go to a hotel, from the lateness of the hour, I prepare for thorough discomfort. The negroes are lying asleep about the passages; the fires are out; no beds are ready, or none that a Yankee is disposed to try. I may have a draught of liquor, but there is nothing else; so I wait in the saloon for morning,

If I enter by day, it is a very different affair. I walk from the station to my brother-in-law's house. There is an oriental air about the place very striking to a man from spruce, bright New England. The buildings have a hue of age, from the heat and moisture of the climate. The sandy streets in which no footfall is heard; the mulatto women, carrying water-pots or baskets of fruit on their turbaned heads; the tropical vegetation of the scattered gardens, and the precautions to secure shade everywhere, remind travelled men of oriental countries. The influence seems to have spread into the minds of the residents, if I may judge from some of the conversation I hear. One gentleman, who is a sort of social oracle in the city, has told me with complacency, more than once, that South Carolina society is "rapidly advancing towards Orientalism," pointing out to me as evidence the increasing discountenance of any sort of useful employment among ladies, their growing fastidiousness, and the exclusiveness which proscribes literature that is not of native growth, and the tightening restrictions which fence about the mind and manners of South Carolina. Since my last trip thither, I have seen in several southern newspapers a characteristic paragraph. Some New England, or perhaps Old England, newspaper had announced the fact that Lady Byron had left a legacy to Mr. Follen, of Boston, as an assistance to him in the difficulties he might encounter as an abolitionist. At the end of this paragraph, the Southern papers inserted the observation that they could assure her ladyship (some time deceased) that if the South had been aware of her ladyship's abolition tendencies, her husband's poetry would not have obtained that currency which it had enjoyed in that region of refinement. I need not show English readers the points of this notice which must be intensely amusing to them.

But it is time I was arriving at my sister's house.

These Yankee hostesses certainly make their guests more comfortable than the native ladies can do: but it is at great cost. The native ladies let things slide, as we say in America. If they can carry a point by one effort they do it; if not, they yield it. If they can get an order obeyed by reasonable endeavours, they do so; but if not, they yield again. The northern wives, to whom time, comfort, and a sense of achievement and success are necessaries of life, are apt to fret and fidget. The astonishing patience of the southern gentry,—not conspicuous in Congress, certainly, but truly amazing in their own homes,—is a virtue beyond the reach of most Yankees; but, as a set off, the house of a northern mistress is cleaner, the beds are better made, the meals are somewhat more punctual, the negroes less wheedling and wilful;—in short, daily life goes on less languidly and with less disorder; and the good manners of the northern guest are less severely tried. I own, however, that one thing that I do dread in paying these visits is the besetting nuisance of the servants. When one wakes in the morning there are their black faces, one at each bed-post, staring at one; and it is no easy matter to get them out of the room at all. They are apt to be offended at being sent away; whereas the real insult is in the license permitted them as inferior beings. They are allowed liberties in common with the dog, the cat, and the canary. I never could reconcile myself to the domestic habits existing where the servants are slaves; but all sense of the distastefulness to myself is lost in the concern I cannot but feel for the children of the household. No attempt is made to separate them from the negroes. The thing could not be done. Their nurses are negroes; their playfellows are negroes; and what they hear from these companions is, in regard to the moralities and decencies of life, much what the dog and the cat would say, if they could speak. Among themselves the negroes have the same inborn decorums that other people have,—the same native purity. I could give a hundred illustrations of this. But the whites who treat them as another order of beings, place themselves out of the reach of the instincts which render the blacks decorous in their own homes, and must not wonder at anything the children may hear from "body-servant" or playmate. I am sure this is the worst of the many troubles inflicted on mothers by the "peculiar institution." My sisters struggled with it for a time, endeavouring to keep their little ones always with them: but that did not much mend the matter. Negroes will talk; and the affair always ends in leaving the children to their chance, in the hope that their innocence may be their safeguard.

After getting up from my hard bed—truly as hard as the table, as it should be in a hot climate

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—and admiring the supply of cold water in one corner of the room, and turning out the fellows who do not like my way of waiting on myself, I see what may help to account for their intrusion. On the window-seat is a tray of fine fruit, prettily dished up in leaves. On the floor is a basket of delicate vegetables. Tray and basket show the cards of old acquaintances at Charleston; and so do the three bottles of a rare wine in the other window. On the dressing-table are two or three bunches of hyacinths, jonquils, jasmine, roses, &c., and there is a heap of envelopes containing tickets for lectures, orders of admittance to public institutions, &c. I am plunged into the flood of Southern hospitality already; and I am told that, if I had brought my wife, there would have been some rare ribbon, or collar, or fan, or bit of lace, or possibly all these. Considering the energy with which the Southern citizens proclaim themselves poor (and often with great truth), these methods of hospitality are remarkable. They are graceful, and not a little romantic, however.

After breakfast, my sister and I lounge for a while in the balcony which overhangs the court in the rear of the house. Below, we see the children, busy with their confidences and their play, each little white having a little black to play with and command; and very affectionate they look, going about with their arms round one another's neck. When the sun gets a little higher, the young masters and mistresses must come in to lessons.

The clergyman's wife—a Northern woman, who has far outstripped her native neighbours in her advocacy of slavery—happens to be calling when the children come in and get their books out. She ironically remarks that lessons are a sad necessity, and bids me observe that my nieces see little Nancy and Flora to be more free than they are themselves. My sister corroborates this, by relating how busy my nieces had been yesterday dressing little Nancy for a party, when they certainly thought her the privileged child of the household.

It is no desire of mine to talk on this eternal subject in a place where such discussion is never rational, never fair, and always useless; but neither I nor any one else can escape it. I have, now and then, felt tempted to relate at night the contradictory statements and arguments about slavery that I have heard in the course of the day; but I never introduce or prolong the subject which makes every advocate appear to disadvantage in one way or another. When with my brother-in-law in the city, at public institutions, at his club, or after dinner at a friend's house, I observe that I am never let alone ten minutes about "the peculiar institution." Everybody's mind is full of it—full of consciousness of the world's opinion of it; and by incessantly dwelling on it in a mood of party-spirit, the citizens have become unable to speak accurately or moderately on this subject, or to open their minds to any other. I find it truly a monomania. I am inclined to think that the citizens make their own case worse, by their way of talking to ladies. "The chivalry," as they call themselves, behave to ladies as might be expected from gentlemen who talk of their society "advancing towards Orientalism." Their talk is light and gay, gallant and flattering, and the unreasonableness of the ladies on the subject on which they talk most exceeds all bounds. I mean—of the ladies who do talk of it. Some are silent. They have dropped enough to my sister and me to show me why they are silent. I will only say that if native or stranger desires to know the worst of "the domestic institution," he need not seek the abolitionist, or inquire in the streets for an honest man who will tell him the truth. Let him learn what is thought of it by sensible, unsophisticated mistresses of Southern households, and he need go no further.

This incessant recurrence to one topic of controversy, when nobody wants to controvert, is one sign of the great characteristic, in my eyes, of Southern manners—the absence of repose. I am struck with this even in the society of the most languid ladies; but I find much more of it in my morning walks with my brother-in-law. The citizens are always finding mares' nests, it seems to me. Wherever I go, I see them fuming about some conspiracy, some defection or insult at Washington, some wound to their self-love, or to the dignity of the Palmetto State. On the wharves I am questioned about the intentions of the North in regard to the abolitionists, and when the South may expect redress from them. In the public library and any reading-room, I can never get through a newspaper without hearing of the power of South Carolina to stand her ground against the assaults of a hostile North. In the mansions we enter, the books on the centre table, and the newspapers generally, show the cast of politics of the household. The minority, who dread a severance from the Union and civil war, seek me, and try to learn how matters really stand in my own State, and whether we really want to crush South Carolina: and they tell me more than they dare tell their neighbours of their longing for peace and quiet, and for some freedom in reading, speaking, and corresponding. At other houses, I hear these loyalists denounced as disloyal. It is chiefly on suspicion, for the minority are extremely cautious; but I hear one man of business tell another that they must expect no good of A. or B., who shows no loyalty to the Palmetto flag, and none of the spirit which should distinguish the chivalry. After dinner in the balcony, or among the ladies in the drawing-room, I hear low-voiced communications, or loud censure of C. or D., who is suspected of receiving letters from Washington, or publications from the North, which should never be carried in a Southern mail-bag. The clergy and the ladies catch up such hints, and incite one another to exaggeration, till, at some unlucky moment, a citizen who desires nothing but to follow his own business in peace and quiet, finds himself held up to social execration for taking in abolition papers which ought to be burnt by the hangman. Then the postmaster is sure to have a call from some dozen of the chief men of the place, who inquire about the correspondence of the suspected neighbour, and advise the zealous functionary to make known to the authorities any remarkable phenomena that may present them-

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selves in the way of printed or even written papers. Some of the citizens have sons at college in one or another of the Northern States; and I find myself questioned by their acquaintance about the supposed opinions of this or that college, and the probable effect on the mind of youth. I even see the parents themselves scrutinising their sons' letters, watching for traces of "bad opinions," and for evidence whether they are, or are not, upholding on all occasions the institutions of their own State. If I feel the wear and tear of this kind of chronic agitation during a visit of two or three weeks in ordinary times—called quiet—I cannot but be sensible of the evil of a perpetual residence in so troubled a social atmosphere.

When the children are at play with me, pulling me about at their pleasure, one or other of them is sure to want to know why I don't come and live with them. Then they tell me they wonder how I can bear to live among those terrible people by whom I am surrounded. On inquiry, I find that these terrible people are the working class, who are, as I am now informed, all dirty, all starving, all desperate, and so degraded, that they can only hide themselves in dens, and die like heathens. Like other children, these enjoy hearing stories; so I tell them the real story of the working men and their families in my neighbourhood. I tell of their white frame-cottages, with green venetian blinds; their shelves of books and evening studies; the church they have built; the lecture-room in which they hear lectures from some of the first men of the country, whom they have engaged to give them a course. Amidst frequent interruptions, to know whether Uncle is in earnest, whether Uncle means really so, I give a sketch of the working-day and Sunday of the fisherman, the shoemaker, the cotton-spinner, the cultivator, &c.; and it is all very surprising, considering the general belief that all white labourers are famishing paupers. Still, the children prefer their own ways. They have artisans of their own: papa can make them do what he likes. Perceiving that I rather doubt this, little Lizzy tells me that they can all do what they like with the servants; and that she got "a boy" flogged last week for not doing what she bade him. My sister caught my eye at this moment, and explained that Carlo (a man of five-and-thirty), had been insolent, and that it was necessary to bring him to a sense of his duty. It did not seem to occur to the mother that the lesson would do more harm to the child than it could—in the most visionary sense—do good to the "boy" (as negro men are called to their latest day).

With the quick instinct of childhood, my nieces divined, without a word said, that I was displeased: and they hastened to tell me what "a fine boy" papa had in the country—meaning a capital fellow who could do anything. This is a story one hears in almost every house. Every family has, or has possessed, a singularly able negro, who is boasted of by his owners and by himself as a nonpareil. In each case I believe the thing is true; but it is not a fact fertile in consequences. Nobody perceives that it has any bearing on the question of negro capacity. In each case, it is a phenomenon to boast of, and yet an appeal to magnanimity to admit that a negro can be so clever. My sister smiles while Lizzy and Emma talk, and, as soon as we are alone, sounds me as to my admiration of their appreciation of the virtues of dependents, and of the fine feeling they showed, when they spoke of a passionate neighbour as "ungentlemanly" for having maimed a "boy" who had displeased him. She hoped I should admit that her children had at least not suffered morally from the circumstances amidst which they were reared!

Our drives are pleasant at the spring season I have described. I never grow tired of the woods, or the mansions, framed in their evergreen background, or the hedges of Cherokee roses, or the distant sea view. The heat is great enough to make one wish that these drives could be in the evening, and by moonlight. But the negroes ought not, as a habit, to be out of their quarter after sunset; so we must take our moonlight in the balcony, or enjoy its effects in a walk through the hoary old streets. If we dine out, we return early. The last time we went to the theatre we were at home within two hours. There was an obstinate whistler in the pit, who coveted the musicians for another purpose; and he took advantage of the habitual caution of the public. He was aware that the whole public would yield to him rather than risk any disturbance; and he gained his point. We all rose and went home before the play was done: and when bed-time came, we were still listening from the balcony for any token of "something being wrong." The streets are profoundly still at such an hour. Many a time have I seen all Broad Street or Meeting Street lying in the moonlight as if they were avenues of a deserted town: the sand flecked with the shadows of the yuccas or of the dancing roses above the wall; and the blackened ruins of St. Philip's Church (after the second fire) standing up against the sky. I have been told twenty times over that a negro was presented with his freedom for giving the alarm about the fire, and helping to put it out; and I have as often wondered at the information being given by the same persons as those who insist that liberty is a mere curse to a negro, such as only the enemy of mankind could desire for him.

The fires at Charleston seem to create awe in the mere mention. The fire-bell has rung twice during my visits; and I shall never forget the impression. No great damage was done in either case, but it was agreed on all hands that the incident was becoming more common. Of course, the Abolitionists were concluded to be at the bottom of it. My sister came to rouse me, and bid me dress and look to my arms; her husband bade me stay with his family while he went to do his duty. The mother dressed her children with her own hands, and did her best to quiet their alarms. They asked me what their cousins did when there was a fire, and were surprised to learn that they had never happened to see one, as their mother and I had not wakened them. For this I was judged to be very remiss, "because," as Lizzy sagely said, "we never know what may happen."

One night in the week is lively enough—the Saturday night when the negroes hold their

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market. They sit behind rows of lamps, their faces and their fruits shining in the glare. Some sell sweet potatoes of their own, and some the bananas, pine-apples, and imported fruits which belong to their masters. Others display bedsteads, baskets, boxes, and various implements, made by themselves. These usually pay a fixed number of dollars per week to their owners for liberty to make and sell these things. The sociable creatures look merry, for the most part, and talk as for a wager: and the spectacle is one of the Orientalisms of the locality.

Of the other distinctive market,—that in which these people are themselves sold,—I will say nothing. To those who have not seen it, there is no use in describing it; because sensations are not objects of description; and those who have seen it are not likely to forget it.

Such is Charleston in spring. In summer, the gentry are, for the most part, gone. The clergyman's wife told me that there is something really very pleasant in spending a favourable summer at home, as her household had done the preceding year. They thought they would try for once; and they lived in the open air and shade, and enjoyed such leisure! At first, she feared lest her husband's duty should lead him into danger; but he was mercifully guided about that. One day, he was summoned to the bedside of a member of his church; and he had reason to suppose it a case of fever. He desired the messenger to wait, shut himself into his study, and prayed for guidance. He walked to and fro for half an hour, and found his mind settled. As the father of a family, his first duty was to take care of his own safety; so he ordered the messenger to go, and not apply again. All such messages were stopped at the door; and thus the serenity of the family was complete. My sister and I agreed afterwards that in our part of the world a clergyman who obtained such an answer to prayer would have his gown pulled over his head, and be dismissed from leading other people's devotions: but, as she observed, it is somehow different here. People become so engrossed with the luxuries and graces of life, and so satisfied with themselves, as an aristocracy, that the pastor's duty becomes that of gratifying his hearers on Sundays, and celebrating marriages and christenings. Deathbeds,—deathbeds from fever, at least,—are out of his line. It would have been different with our friend and his wife, if they had remained in the Land of the Pilgrims.

I have left little space for the aspect of Charleston in a time of trouble. Its enjoyments and hospitalities during the loveliest season of the year have been pleasanter to dwell upon than anything I have now to say.

I paid a winter visit to my sister, for family reasons: and I made such speed in travelling, that she could not stop me on the way, when she and her husband wished it. One of those sudden alarms, or quarrels, under which South Carolina has repeatedly menaced secession, reached at once such a height, that my relatives would gladly have warned me not to come within reach of suspicion and possible insult. I could not but see, from the moment of entering the State, that I had listeners always at my heels at the stations, and by my side in the cars. Every possible endeavour was made to draw me into conversation on sectional topics; and when I pretended to be asleep, to get some respite, I was aware that I was watched, my newspaper looked over, and the address of my hat box well scanned. When I reached Charleston, my brother-in-law awaited me with some ostentation, and patronised me in a way more novel than agreeable. He apologised for it, as soon as we were in the carriage, saying that it was the only way of atoning for having carelessly allowed me to come at such a time.

He looked worn; and not without reason. He had more duty on his shoulders than any man could get through. He took me everywhere with him, as the lesser of two evils. He was severely blamed for showing a Free State man the resources and preparations of South Carolina: but he would have been more blamed still, if he had shut up a Northern man in his house, as if he was ashamed of him,—a spy, of course.

I found myself unwelcome in most of the houses where I had been familiar before. The "Union-savers" were afraid of admitting me,—being a depressed minority, dreading further humiliation. Two or three opportunities of private conversation showed me that they were greatly to be pitied, though I believe that a little more timely spirit would have set them fairly on their feet. They could have stood their ground against their equals, they said: but their dread was of the "Poor Whites," by whom they were sure to be informed against and pillaged, in case of a revolution.

These "Poor Whites" (non-slaveholding whites, too proud to labour, and destitute of means) wore a rampant air. I saw the State members from Congress address thirteen of them who called themselves the troops—saucy, ill-conditioned recruits, to whom Senators, and Governor, and Commander paid homage by addressing to them harangues about patriotism and the proposed destinies of the Palmetto flag. I saw the arsenal, Yankee as I am! I dared not laugh; but it suited only too well with the regiment we had been reviewing. In a former year I had not seen it, because "the key was not on the premises." Now the place was bustling enough, with the cleansing and giving out of arms. But such arms! and such a pittance of them! More had been sent for, however.

There was an attempt at gaiety, and especially a State-Right's ball, where every citizen was present, lest he should be supposed disaffected. I went; for I had no concern in the quarrel, and wished well to both Washington and Charleston. I saw that I had better not ask any lady to dance, for I was regarded with suspicion by the zealots around me. The ladies wore no jewels. They had thrown them all into the public treasury, and now wore flowers or nothing in their hair. They were weary of collecting old linen, and making lint and bandages, some of them told me; and they looked wistfully at me when I said they would find their toil needless. All the day, and all the night, we seemed unable to get out of sight and

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earing of soldiers, drums, bugles, and gunfire. ur household never really believed in war; but a few days we were suffering many of the inconveniences of it.

Our letters reached us in a state which showed s that they had been read; and several failed to rrive, as I found when I got home. The new taxaon fell so heavily on the opulent citizens that they aid all security of property was disappearing. My rother-in-law was disposed to send my sister and e children northwards with me, the next week, hen all our plans were overthrown by the arrival f a deputation who called at night—(at night, "to pare our feelings")—with a recommendation om the authorities that I should take my eparture immediately. A carriage was waiting the next street which would convey me, sufficiently escorted, to a country station on the railay. If I did not go, it was feared that the ouse would be mobbed, and perhaps burned, next orning. This left me no choice. There was no harge against me but that of being an inhabitant f a Northern State.

Arrangements were made for my sister and her hildren to follow, unless public affairs should ome round very soon. I was rather amused at the nxious questions about whether she could travel afely in the Free States if known to be from harleston. I could not help being proud in saying at little Lizzy and her mother might travel alone r together from Canada to the Delaware without ear of molestation from man, woman, or child.

Charleston has been quiet once and again since; nd I have been once more in its society, enjoying any a laugh with the authorities and their wives nd daughters about the alarms of that winter. ut I told them then—and I hope they may not ave forgotten it—that such little rebellions ay happen once too often. I have always eared that they might have to learn this from xperience; and I now apprehend that the time as come.

A Son of the Pilgrims.

THE MAIDEN MASQUE.

HOWING HOW TURGESIUS THE DANE INVADED IRELAND. HIS BARBAROUS RULE, AND CRUELTIES COMMITTED THEREIN, AND HIS FINAL OVERTHROW BY MAOLSEACHLIN, KING OF MEATH, A.D. 866.

Fytte the First.

'Twas a thief audacious,
One call'd Turgesius,
A Dane pugnacious from the frozen sai;
When the ice was melted,
Away he pelted,
Swoorded and belted, all for Dublin Bay.
He had no flocks,
For his own bare rocks
Wouldn't feed a fox, much less a sheep:
Without a flitch in
His stinted kitchen,
Some prog to pitch into he went to seek.

There's no denyin'
(Unless through lyin'),
That given to flyin' was the Pats that day:
Thy sons, Milaysius,
The fierce Turgesius
Compell'd most spaciously to clear the way.
With fierce aggression
He took possession
(The thievin' robber!) of the Emerald Isle;
And his bad behav'or
To every neighbour
In tears soon dhrowned that nation's smile!

For 'twas his ordhers
That at free quarthers
His throops should live upon the natives then,
Which made it hardher
To keep the lardher,—
For them Danes was mighty purty trencher-men.
Of a feast right hearty
That would feed a party
Of a dozen Irish—ay, and sparin' some—
One Dane was able
To clear the table,
And wouldn't lave the flies a single crumb.

If a widow lonely
Had one cow only
To feed her orphans with a dhrop o' milk,
In that the ruffi'ns
Would steep their muffins;
And the young Hibernians of their breakfast bilk.
They saw no harm in
To see *them* starvin',
So for their *own* selves they got enow;
And if any glutton
Had a taste for mutton,
He scorn'd the widow and kilt her cow.

'Twas hard times thin
For the thrimblin' hin,
As her screechin' chickens all disappear'd:
In deep despond, sure,
She paced the pond, sure,
And wish'd 'twas ducklins that she had rear'd!
For his posterity,
In loud temerity,
The cock did crow all in bitter wrath,
Foreseeing clearly
How very nearly
His own fate tended towards chicken-broth.

Then the Heirarchy
Grew starin'-starky
Mad and outrageous at these goin's on,
And proclaim'd at last
That a solemn fast
Should be kept, with prayer, until the Danes were gone;
But the starvin' crowd,
With a murmur loud,
Cried, "Fasts can't save us, you must allow:
Could fasts bring freedom
We should not need 'em,—
For we can't fast faster than we're fastin' now!

Turgesius ruled, then,
An ounce of goold, men
Of Irish blood ev'ry year should pay,
Or of each defaulther
He the face would alther
By loss of nose on the thribute day.
What noses *then* cost
The art my pen's lost
In sterlin' value to calculate;
But now, at Mint price,
'Twould (at the stint price)
Be three pounds seventeen and tinpince nate.

All eddication
From out the nation

He next detarmins to undhermine,
And who refuses
To renounce the Muses
The floggin' cat is his tuneful nine.
The Sates of Larnin'
(Arm-chairs so charmin')
Was knock'd to smithers by the Tyrant's tools,
Till, in saycret places,
Each professor taches :—
The sates of larnin' but three-leggéd stools.

No Irish wench, sure,
Could ever venture
To take a walk in the rurial shade;
For the Danes,—the blackguards,—
Did haunt the stack-yards,
And small attintion to manners paid.
So the girls kept knittin',
To keep them sittin'
At home, unknownst to these furrin' Turks,
In saycret spinnin',
Or weavin' linen,—
A thrade that still in this nation works.

No lady's scarf flow'd
By sweet Clontarf road,
The sai-breeze coortin' in the settin' sun;
For, if Dane did spy it,
To saize he'd thry it,
And for her life was Beauty forced to run.
If the robbers *could* close
With her, the good clothes
From off the Irish ladies' backs they tore,
Their own dhrabs dhressing,
With much caressing,
In silks and satins they ne'er saw before :—

While the rags *they* cast off
Were basely pass'd off
Upon the lovely Irish ladies fair,
Who, mad as hatters,
To match their tatters,
Began (no wondher) for to tare their hair!
But stars disastherous,
When they o'ermasther us,
Sweet Pity plasther us at last bestows
For wounds past bearin' :—
And so poor Erin
A friend in need found to aise her woes!

'Twas one Maolseachlin;
And not in Lochlin—
Renown'd by Ossian that Prince of Bards—
Could one be found who
Was more profound,—who,
In game of life, betther play'd his cards.
He had the knack, sir,
To cut the pack, sir,
Where'er the king might approach the knave;
And though odd thricks
In his acts might mix,
His honour always he conthrived to save.

His head was long, sir,
His sinse was sthrong, sir,
His manes was narrow, but his shouldhers broad
To bear the griefs
Such as Irish chiefs
Time immemorial have sustain'd unaw'd.
His voice was low,
And his speech was slow,
So his timper quick could not get the start
Of that hesitation
Which gave contimplation
Full time to measure what he said with art.

He had a daughther
Of "the purest wather,"
A jewel rarest from beauty's mine!
If Hunt and Storr, sir,
Had such, be-gor, sir,
From all their stock it would take the shine!
And fierce Turgesius,
That brute salacious,
This princess proud when he chanced to spy,
He kick'd up a shindy
At her dhrawin'-room windy,
And swore that none should his love deny!

So the king, her father,
Though he would rather
(If he had his will) knock the villian down,
With smiles dissemblin'
His rage and thremblin',
He plann'd a deed that gave him much renown.
He knew that Cupid
Makes people stupid,
Knowin' no differ betune wrong and right;
Or like thrav'lers silly
That wispy Willy
Deludes to death with his false rushlight!

"O, Great Turgesius!"
Says the sire sagacious,
"'Tis well you know that you cannot wed;
The Church declares
We must love in pairs,
Nor exceed the measure of a double bed.
Therefore, Turgesius,
Your heart capacious
Expands beyant the bounds of Canon Law:
But as you're a dashin'
High man of fashion,
'Tis little *you* think of a small *faux pas*.

"Now 'tis well known, sir,
Bone of your bone, sir,
You have already an ould scraggy dame;
Though you'd like betther a
Plump young *et cætera*,
You know it can't be without sin and shame.
So some restraint, sir,
In this Isle of Saints, sir,
I hope you'll put upon your passions wild,
Nor in this nation
Mar the reputation
And the marriage prospects of my lovely child!

"Not but upon her
I know 'tis honour
That you should cast your discernin' eye,
And, like a bellows,
Thro' her window-threllis
Fan love's soft flame with your stormy sigh.
But love's bright candle
Might enlighten scandal,
Which soon explodes with an amorous spark;
So my advice is,
In this tindher crisis,
We use some prudence *to keep it dark*.

"Think how they'd boast, sir,
In *The Morning Post*, sir,
Of this *escapade* made in circles high;
And how ironical
The *Morning Chronicle*
To cut a joke at our cost would thry.
And think what rhymes
Would o'erflow *The Times*,

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And how *Th' Observer* would in riddles speak ;
And what lucubrations,
With illustrations,
Would illume the columns of ONCE A WEEK.

"Now my suggestion
Will avoid all question
Of a lady's honor, I'm sartin' sure :
Let her repair, sir,
To some back stair, sir,
Near the posthern-gate—*vulgo*, the back-door—
Of your castle splindid,
Where she'll be attinded
By fifteen vargins of beauty bright,
And you may revel,
Like the Barber of Seville,
That coortyer famous and ladies' knight."

Now here the Bard
Dhraws his breath so hard
At this bowld ascent up Parnassus Hill,
That, to win your smile,
He would rest awhile,
And slake his thirst in Castalia's rill.
Refresh'd thereby,
He will proudly thry
In the second fytte, to record such deeds
As far surpasses
Owld Halicarnassus,
Historic craving who so amply feeds.

FYTTE THE SECOND.

Now Turgesius, smitten
Like some foolish kitten
That plays deludher'd with a sthring and cork,
Of the sweet delusion
Jump'd the conclusion,
And to Fox Maolseachlin he play'd The Stork.
For the divil a taste
Of a dainty waist
Did the Irish king think to give the Dane ;
But, through this invintion,
It was his intintion
The land's redimption for to obtain.

Turgesius home went,
And not a moment
Was lost in summoning a bowld fifteen
Of scamps he cared for,
And then prepared for
Such feast of love as they had seldom seen.
While the Irish king went,
On mortal sting bent,
Among the purtiest youths his coort could brag,
Round the brimming cup, too,
Saying, "What are you up to ?—
Have you the pluck Turgesius fierce to lag?"

"And no mistake !"
Cried each beardless rake.
With that a chest of ladies' clothes was brought,
And with bib and tucker,
And flounce and pucker,
They were transmogrified as quick as thought.
"Don't sthride so wide, boys,"
The king then cried, boys,
"And keep your swoords undherneath your gown ;
Could you hide your swagger
As well as your dagger,
I'd be prouder of it than half a crown.

"But why so meekly
Of half crown speak we ?
We'll win a whole one by this night's work !
I'll freely bet it,
Our fish is netted—
Them Northern sharks !—worse than pagan Turk!
Now no more gostherin,
But to the posthern
Conduct the Princess, and keep her snug ;
Don't look too bowld, boys,
Till you get your howld, boys,
Then give the tyrants 'their tay in a mug !'"

But 'twas not tay
That the Dane would lay
On his rampant table, that night to hail ;
In the chamber upper
Of his castle, supper
Was laid upon a most extinsive scale.
There was shins of beef,
And in bowld relief—
(As the sculpthors say—and likewise the cooks)
There was divill'd turkey,
And—(rather murky)—
A pie of crows—meant to pass for rooks.

There was no lack, sir,
Of puddin's black, sir,
With flour well dhredg'd, in a goodly row,—
They cut such figure
As might a nigger
Who had lately pass'd through a storm o' snow ;
There was bacon rashers,
With eggs for thatchers,
And thripe and cowheel, with ingyan sauce,
And other dishes—
That famed Apicius,
If he was there, would have had no loss.

With latch half-rais'd
And the hinges grazed
Of the sly back-door, to prevent a creak,
That no sharp senthry
Might mark the enthry
Of the gentle vargins with blushin' cheek ;
Turgesius waitin'
At the little gratin'
To watch their comin' himself did stay,
And when they came, sure,
With tindher flame, sure,
He said, "You're welkim as the flow'rs in May !"

Through crannies crooked,
In many a nook hid,
Turgesius layding, away they goes,
And along the passages
The smell of sassiges
Was mighty plazin' to the native nose.
And one young lady
(Call'd Jack O'Grady),
A great admirer of that luck call'd "pot,"
With an awful snifther
Alarm'd each sisther,
And very nearly bethray'd the plot.

For the soundin' snort
Stopp'd the party short,
"What noise is that?" fierce Turgesius said ;
When the Princess sweetly
Replied discreetly,
"My cousin Onah's got a cowld in the head ;
'Tis a sevare case,
And up this staircase
A blast is blowin' might turn a mill ;
So hurry up, sir,
And let us sup, sir,
For our walk has given us a right good will."

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"Faix, little jew'l, sure,
You're not a fool, sure,"
Says fond Turgesius, in a loving tone;
"You're in the nick, dear,
Of time,—so quick, dear,
Pick your steps up-stairs, and then pick a bone;
And to wet your whistle
I've a purty dhrizzle
Of mountain-dew as did e'er impearl
The flow'rs of fancy,
Which best we can see
With a jug o' punch and a purty girl!"

Now the Danes were dhrinkin',
Their cans loud clinkin',
Anticipatin' Love's comedié,
While the *Male*pomenes
(The Irish *homines*)
Were just as aiger for the thragedié.
They soon did clamber
To the festal chamber,
Where the dhrunken Danes was at jinks so high,
And with shouts did greet
These young vargins sweet,
Who curtsheed low with a downcast eye.

The Danes advancin'
With saucy glancin',
Each of a maiden would make a prize.
But the hug he got
Made each dhrunken sot
To open first—and then close his eyes!
For to the hilt,
With a home-thrust kilt,
Each Dane was spitted in a minute's space,
And the Clargy boasted
They'd all be roasted
In proper time, in the proper place.

For the Bishop stepp'd in
As Maolseachlin leap'd in,
With a hundhred sojers in steel complate,—
For one (Tim Riley)
Of the vargins slily
Stole back and open'd the posthern-gate.
The Danes they leather'd,
And Turgesius tether'd
Like a calf for market, by neck and heels,
And exposed him proudly
Next day, while loudly
The joy-bells clatther'd in merry peals.

The Danes, dishearten'd,
Their movements smarten'd,
To run away "while their shoes were good,"
With sail and oar, too,
From Erin's shore—Whoo!—
They made the most of that mornin's flood;
The tether'd king
Did the Irish bring
To special thrial, to find a way
The best for killin'
So great a villin,
When ev'ry talker had his word to say.

The paviours, gronin',
Proposed a stonin';
The gamblers wish'd to choose his death by lot;
The hangman's hope
Was the good owld rope,
While the sojers shouted to have him shot.
Some wish'd to starve him,
As right 'twould sarve him
Who starved the Irish through his evil days,
And the larnéd cronies
Cried "Lex talionis!"
But that Latin sintince did not seem to plaze.

Some gentle Quakers,
Who were coffin-makers,
Proposed to bury the Dane alive:
They would not kill,
And, who had the will,
Though screw'd down tight, to get out might sthrive.
If he *could* get out,
Which they much did doubt,
'Gainst his future doings they could say "nay;"
And this proceeding,
While it spared all bleeding,
Would quiet keep him for many a day.

But Maolseachlin, wiser
Than each deviser,
Cried, "Let *me* say how the Dane should die.
From sthrongest dhrink, boys,
He ne'er would shrink, boys,
And the more he dhrank he the more was dhry.
Now hear my plan, boys:
To ev'ry man, boys,
Who's never happy except when dhrunk,
The direst slaughther
Is to die by wather:
So let Turgesius in the sai be sunk!"

The Dane was dhrownded,
And Maolseachlin crownéd
Upon the spot, by the Bishop's grant,
On Maolseachlin's poll he,
As monarch solely
Of Ireland all, a goold crown did plant.
He first assoil'd him,
And then he oil'd him,
To slip him aisy through his future reign;
With oaths then probed him,
And then he robed him—
Och! the like I'm sure will ne'er be seen again!

And now I've indid
This record splindid
Of the Maiden Masque, which success did crown;
'Twas the grandest lesson
(By all confessin')
That e'er proceeded from cap and gown!
The king's bright daughther—
Sweet cause of slaughther—
By monarchs coorted both high and low,
Made a right good marriage,
And kep' her carriage,
And all this pass'd a thousand years ago.

And so my song—since
It is so long since
That airly date—it might come to pass
That scribes persuadin'
May be mislaydin',
For fact is fadin', as flesh is grass.
While lies engendhers,
Through false pretendhers
Patching Clio's robe with their figments new,
So the tale foregoin'
There is no knowin'
But not a word of the same is thrue.

Samuel Lover.

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WOMEN'S WORK.

DESIGNING PATTERNS.—II.

THE first application of the principles of relation and fitness falls in very naturally with the occupation of designing patterns, as pursued by educated women. From her cradle to her grave the taste of a refined and cultivated woman is directed to beauty. In matters of enjoyment, as well as general selection, whenever her decision is required the great point of consideration is beauty—beauty in form or colour—beauty in dress or ornament—beauty in skill or movement. She may call it grace or elegance, but it is still beauty, under modified, and, most frequently, conventional forms. Her words, her looks, her actions are regulated by beauty as the highest law to which she is amenable in what we understand by polished life; and if, beyond this, she is capable of deep feeling, her very soul becomes imbued with beauty as an element of her existence. Hence, then, her own relation to the study and delineation of beauty, and her fitness for the occupation as an art.

The sharpness of female perceptions in detecting little anomalies of assortment and incongruities of taste is proverbial. What so quick as the female eye to perceive the inharmonious colours on her neighbour's bonnet, or the wrong placing of furniture in the rooms where she visits? And we cannot but suppose that, on the other hand, the same perceptions are equally quick to discover beauty and harmony wherever they exist. With many women this is a natural gift, with many more a science, in which their faculties become sharpened to a degree which is perfectly wonderful; so that they never enter a house, nor glance over a costume, nor inspect any assortment of ornamental forms and colours, but they see at once what is out of place, or disproportioned, and also what is right and perfect.

There are women, and not a few, who can so arrange a bouquet of flowers that it becomes a lovely and even a glorious picture. They know exactly how every colour will be best contrasted or brought out; and beyond this, they act, perhaps unconsciously, upon the true principles of relation and fitness which have regard to proportion, weight, size, &c., by placing the heaviest flowers low in the group, light ones around the body of the group, and spiral ones pointing always more or less upwards. In fact, their hands appear to work wonders without their knowing that they are doing anything extraordinary, because Nature has endowed them especially with this faculty, and it constitutes a large portion of the active life of a lady to exercise it upon materials supplied either by Nature or art.

It is a mockery of common sense to suppose that the hand which can so skilfully arrange a bouquet of flowers could not, with a very little mechanical assistance, draw and paint one; unless indeed there should be some physical defect to hinder. But the fact is, that so few ladies ever try, or try in the right manner; the worst fact of all is, that so many are content to occupy their leisure time in mere machine employment requiring no faculty at all, except that of abject servility.

The early history of almost all uncivilised people might teach us valuable lessons in this respect. I have beside me a pattern as remarkable for pure elegance as any which the fabrics of England or even France display. It is upon Tahetian cloth, not woven, but simply composed of cocoanut fibre, first reduced to a pulp, and then beaten out thin, so as to resemble paper. The ground is white, and upon this there is the impress of a broad and beautiful fern leaf, or frond, just gathered most likely from the valley where it grew beneath the palm trees, then dipped in some brown colouring matter, and laid flat upon the cloth, but turned alternately to right and left, so as to form a most beautiful border of perfect symmetry and elegance.

It is not easy to contemplate this exquisite pattern without being reminded of the sprig of parsley gathered by the young Peels, when the brother and sister talked together, after their early meal one summer's evening; and while thus talking, and placing the sprig of parsley on a white ground, first one way and then another, laid the foundation of that structure which, for its mechanical prosperity and power, and the moral dignity with which it was associated, became scarcely less remarkable as a source of family distinction than of national glory.

The peculiar products of different countries, when adopted as national emblems, have always afforded favourite subjects for the designer. Hence the variety of forms under which we behold the papyrus of the Egyptians delineated, sometimes with the stalks gathered into groups, and so constituting the flutings of a column, but more frequently with the leaves folded over at the base, and the young bud slightly unfolded at the top. The idea is beautiful, whatever the form may be; and it can scarcely be without pleasure that we linger over these ancient yet almost imperishable records of a people to whom the long waving leaf of the papyrus served as the depository of their highest mysteries and their profoundest wisdom.

The ancients, however, until the time of the Greeks, were not so careful to represent forms of beauty, or beautiful ideas. Hence much that was grand and imposing to them appears occasionally grotesque, and even ridiculous to us; as, for example, the winged bulls of the Assyrians, in which we are too apt to lose sight of the idea that they were the result of deep study mingled with devout reverence, being the utmost grasp of minds which struggled to combine in one figure the ideas of power and wisdom—the power of the bull and the wisdom of the man—and then, in order to reach even up to that of omnipresence, found no alternative but to supply the swift-moving wings of the bird.

It would but little serve any of the purposes of mechanical art in the present day—still less would it teach the ends of remunerative employment—to attempt to embody merely beautiful ideas. We must have forms of the finest proportions, and colours of the most perfect harmony. Chemical science and mechanical invention are both in advance of our ideas of beauty: the lower productive powers which belong to us as a nation are in fact running over, and outstepping the higher. Instead, then, of there being no work for educated women in this department of occupation, owing to our manufactures advancing so rapidly, I cannot

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but think the exact opposite is the case, and that we want more than ever fresh inventive forces bringing forward in order that our general advance may not only be curious and astonishing, but actually an advance towards a higher order of beauty in all the designs which our exquisitely wrought fabrics are so well calculated to display.

S. S.

FISHES.

Fishes are those animals which possess red cold blood, which move by means of fins, and which breathe by gills lying deep at each side of the neck.—Blumenbach.

The very element in which fish are found makes it difficult to observe their habits and different faculties. Having myself fished much in shallow waters (not troubled ones), and having had many opportunities of watching them, I will give the result of some of my remarks.

HEARING OF FISH.

I had an opportunity of ascertaining the fact that fish have the organ of hearing. There were, at one time, upwards of 1000 gold-fish in the large basin in Hampton Court Gardens, and which were fed by crowds of people assembled round the margin. The fish evinced no fear, and took the crumbs of bread and biscuit which were thrown to them, quietly but greedily. As the military band was going to play, I got the man who beat two large double-drums to stand outside the crowd and strike his drum as loud as he could. On doing this, I observed the fish to dart away from the side quite as if alarmed at the sound. This experiment was tried more than once, and always with the same result.

ORGAN OF SMELLING.

As I was trolling with gudgeon one day in the Diana Water of Bushy Park I had no success. Having, however, a smelt in my basket, I put it on a set of hooks. The water was perfectly clear and shallow, so that I could see everything. No sooner had the bait began to spin than I saw three pike eagerly dart at it, and it was seized by one of them, nor did I ever afterwards troll with smelts unsuccessfully. Now, we know that smelts have a strong perfume, and therefore I argue that pike can smell. They will turn away from a stale bait.

FISH ACT IN CONCERT TO PROCURE FOOD.

I have more than once seen a great number of small eels in the long canal in Hampton Court Park, and also in Windermere Lake, form themselves into an extensive half-circle, and drive the small-fry, probably roach, to the bank, and, when thus enclosed, the eels would greedily feed on them. Eels have also been frequently seen to attach themselves by the tail to a weed, and then suffer themselves to be moved up and down in a sharp stream like the pendulum of a clock. Small fish would then swim fearlessly by, and were seized by the eel. They looked more like a stick than a fish of prey. I have seen pike conceal themselves under weeds, leaving only their heads exposed, and as small fish fearlessly passed by they would dart out and seize them.

HOW SOME FISH WILL ACT WHEN ALARMED.

I was in the habit of having baskets put into the water in Hampton Court Gardens, in order to catch tench. These baskets were wide at the mouth, but narrowed to a point like a mouse-trap just large enough to allow a fish to pass through it, thus rendering it difficult for them to make their escape. If, however, the basket was taken up to see what was in it, and then replaced in the water, the fish invariably made their escape; otherwise, they would remain quiet for any length of time.

NOISES MADE BY FISH.

The gurnard, or piper, makes a sound when taken up in the hand from the sea; and on a calm warm evening these fish will put their mouths out of the water and make a grunting noise, which may be heard at a little distance, and it is continued for some time. I have caught tench, and while taking the hook out of the mouth they have uttered a distressing cry. The *Cottus cataphrastus*, I believe, makes a noise.

AFFECTION OF FISH FOR EACH OTHER.

I once caught, in Staffordshire, a female pike full of roe. Amidst all its struggles before it was landed it was followed by a male fish, which continued on the spot long after the other had disappeared, and which I could also have captured with the most perfect ease. It was evident that they had paired, and that affection for his mate led the male fish to disregard all danger to himself. The miller's-thumb, or bull-head, never quits the spot where it has deposited its spawn until the young come forth, when it is said to remain with them as long as they require care.

RAPID GROWTH OF FISH.

Plot, in his "History of Staffordshire," tells us that that county is famous for its pike. In a large pond in this county with which I am well acquainted, and which was well supplied with small fish from a stream which ran through it, the pike grew to a large size. This pond was let out and fished every seven years regularly, when every pike under 6 lbs. in weight was returned into it. On one occasion I saw three pike taken out, two of which weighed 36 lbs. each, and the other 35 lbs. Now, supposing that they were 6 lbs. each at the beginning of the seven years, they must have increased in weight at the rate of upwards of 4 lbs. each year. I sent the skin of a carp, caught at Pain's Hill, in Surrey, which weighed, when taken, 26 lbs., the largest I have heard of in this country. I also had a perch sent me, and which was caught under an archway where there was a great abundance of live bait, which weighed 6¼ lbs. A trout was taken in Sir Robert Peel's park at Drayton, in a stream which runs through it, which weighed 22½ lbs. It was stuffed, and is now to be seen in the fine collection in the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. A painting of it—sent to him by the late Sir Robert Peel—is in the charming lodge in Richmond Park of my kind neighbour, Professor Owen. I have often thought that there is no limit to the growth of fish, as long as they have abundance of food and escape accidents. A pike was caught in the pond at Pain's Hill, in Surrey, many years ago, which weighed 48 lbs., when

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that piece of water had, comparatively speaking, been made recently.

GILLS, USE OF.

AS fish have no lungs, and as respiration is necessary to them, air is introduced through the mouth into the gills, from which it is expelled through the bronchial aperture: nor is this the only use of the gills—they act, I believe, as a sieve by retaining small insects and animalculæ, which are then preyed upon as food. I was led into this supposition, by having frequently observed the gold-fish in Hampton Court Gardens dart sideways over the sandy deposit in the fountain, thus stirring it up, and appearing to feed amongst the earthy water they had disturbed.

BLADDERS OF FISH.

THE bladder, as is well known, greatly assists fish in swimming. When the air is pressed out by means of the abdominal muscles, fish can swim easily at a great depth; if, on the contrary, the abdominal muscles are relaxed, the swimming bladder is distended, and the fish swims easily at the top. Now, in order to prevent the cod which are caught on the Dogger Bank, and placed in large well-boats for the London market, from beating about and bruising themselves, each fish has the air let out of the bladder by means of an instrument shaped somewhat like a shoemaker's awl, only much larger; this is inserted under the dorsal fin, and when the puncture has been made, the fish is incapable of moving about in the well-boat. In this way they are packed almost in tiers one upon another, and are taken first to the brackish water of the Thames, to accustom them to the change from salt water, and are then brought to Billingsgate Market, where they are taken out as they are wanted. Very few die under the operation. A Dogger Bank cod may always be known by looking for the puncture under one of the dorsal fins. Fish that have no swimming bladder, such as the flounder, keep at the bottom.

THE TONGUE OF FISHES.

THE tongue of fishes must be well supplied with nerves, for when I have hooked a fish by the tongue it has always struggled more violently, and showed more pain, than when hooked by the lips.

FOOD OF SALMON.

MY friend Mr. Walter Campbell informed me that he once had a wonderful haul of salmon at Islay, in an estuary of the sea. He landed 716, and many of them escaped. As the net approached the shore, he saw the fish discharging the contents of their stomachs, which consisted of small eels: this will account for the fact well known to fishmongers, that food is seldom found in the stomachs of salmon brought to market.

BLENNIUS PHOLIS (THE BLENNY).

THE following account of this fish, sent to me by an observant naturalist, may not be uninteresting. He informs me that a small specimen of this fish was brought to him, and he placed it in sea water, where it remained quiet for several hours; at length it became restless, jumping and plunging as if it wished to throw itself out of the vessel. It then occurred to him that on a former occasion he had a *Gattoruginious* blenny which frequently got on a stone placed in a glass globe with sorbusta and actinia (sea anemone); he therefore placed a piece of ironstone in the glass with the fish, when it immediately threw itself on it quite out of the water. My informant then went to the front of the house, which gave him a view of the river Exe, and, as he expected, found it nearly low water. Being assured that the flood-tide would make about ten o'clock that evening, my informant watched the fish till that time, when he was delighted to see it plunge into the water and remain perfectly quiet. This wonderful exhibition of instinct as to the exact time is most strange, as from the first of the ebb the fish appeared uneasy until it had the stone to rest upon. Now, these fish are left by the receding tides on the rocks, sometimes in small pools, but frequently on the sea-weed, till the flood again sets them free. In consequence of the high temperature of the room, it would be more liable to suffer from dryness of the gills than on the wet weeds and rocks. Their construction therefore differs from that of fish in general. On leaving the water a perfect change of colour took place, the whole skin assuming a lighter tinge; whilst in the water it was dark brown with darker transverse bands, with occasionally a tinge of green on the back. This blenny fed freely on boiled rice and small bits of dressed meat, always preferring white meat: for instance, it would prefer chicken or rabbit to beef. This food was always taken from the hand: and, when dinner was brought in, the fish was aware of it and began striking the sides of the glass. When satisfied, it turned and struck playfully with its tail or rubbed against the fingers of the person who fed it. During the winter months, although the same as to distance of tide, yet it did not remain so stationary, but was restless. In its natural state, perhaps, at this season it seeks deep water for a greater degree of warmth. It lived eleven months in the glass, and died when full of spawn.

EDWARD JESSE.

WHO IS MR. REUTER?

ALL the world is asking this question. Is the mysterious individual who tells us through the public press what battles have been won or lost—what kings have decamped, or what words emperors have spoken an hour since in far-off countries, which will shake the political world to its foundation—is this Mr. Reuter an institution or a myth? Must we count his name like one of those which have an existence in the heathen mythology only, or is he a man like ourselves, having "feelings, organs, dimensions," &c.? If he be, by what extraordinary organisation does he manage to gather up over night a summary of events over the entire continent, and to place it before us as a startling interlude between coffee and toast at the breakfast table? Nay, how is it that through his mouth, if we may so term it, we hear for the first time of a successful battle in China, or of the madness of the Southern slave states of America? To answer all these questions is the purpose of the present paper, and we may claim for this journal the privilege of being the first to satisfy the public inquiries rela-

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tive to this very interesting subject. That Mr. Reuter, omniscient as he may appear to be, shares our common humanity, the very excellent photographic portrait we give of him will satisfy our readers; and his history is like that of all courageous and energetic men, who, seizing upon a new idea, work it persistently and silently, until one fine morning, from comparative obscurity they suddenly find their names famous.

The practical success of the first working telegraph on the continent—that between Berlin and Aix-la-Chapelle in 1849—convinced Mr. Reuter, in common with every thinking man on the continent, that a new era in correspondence had arisen, and he determined to avail himself of its facilities for the public advantage. The first office for the furtherance of telegraphic communication was opened at Aix-la-Chapelle, an admirable spot, lying so conveniently between the east and west of Europe. This office formed the first centre of that organisation which has since gathered up into the hands of one man for all general and public purposes the scattered electric wires of the world. In order to correct breaks in the most direct line of transmitting news he had to supplement the wire with contrivances of his own, so as to ensure priority of information. Thus, the better to gain time in the journey between Aix-la-Chapelle and Bruxelles, he employed a service of carrier-pigeons. By this means on this distance alone he was enabled to anticipate the mail train between the two places by six or eight hours. In order to

From a Photograph by Messrs. McLean, Melhuish & Co.

ensure regularity and safeness in transmission, each message was dispatched by three different pigeons, which made the passage from Brussels to Aix-la-Chapelle in an average period of one hour. When the telegraphic line was extended from Aix-la-Chapelle to Quievrain, on the Belgio-French frontier, and the French Government extended their line from Paris to Valenciennes, there remained a gap of only five miles in the line of telegraph between the French and Prussian capitals, but insignificant as this space was, the delay thereby occasioned was enormous. To obviate this, relays of saddled horses were always kept in readiness to forward despatches between the two points.

As line after line was opened in succession, each was made subservient to his system, and when the cable between Calais and Dover was successfully laid in 1851, Mr. Reuter, who had become a naturalised subject of Her Majesty, transferred his office to London, which thenceforth was put in connection with the principal continental cities. Up to this time Mr. Reuter confined his attention to the conveyance of commercial despatches, but it now struck him that the time was arrived for making the telegraph the handmaid of the press. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the British press is the vast expense to which it goes for obtaining exclusive intelligence. The principal morning papers were in the habit, at this time, of running expresses at an enormous cost. The "Times," for instance,

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possessed a fast steamer, which conveyed to England news from Calais the moment it arrived from Paris. M. Reuter offered to supply the obvious want; but without success. The obstacles presented by the existing system were not yet to be overcome; and besides, a certain prejudice had been excited against political telegrams in consequence of the errors they so often contained. Sometimes they had to be translated into three or four languages before they reached the British public, and errors were but too likely to creep in under such circumstances. A second time, too, he was equally unsuccessful.

Mr. Reuter did not lose heart, however, as he foresaw that the days of daily political telegrams were near at hand. "All good things are three," says the German proverb, and for a third time, in 1858, Mr. Reuter made his offer to the press. This time, however, he sent his telegrams for one whole month to all the editors in London, leaving it to their option whether they used them or not. The quickness with which Mr. Reuter received his telegrams, and the accuracy of the information they contained were soon appreciated, and one newspaper after another became subscribers. His telegrams did not attract particular notice, simply because no great public event gave him an opportunity of showing the value of his system. So matters went on until the 9th of February, 1859. On that day the Emperor made his famous speech in which he threatened Austria through her ambassador. His ominous words were uttered at 1 P.M. in the Tuileries, and at 2 P.M. the speech was published in a third edition of the "Times," and had shaken the Stock Exchange to its foundation. This was a dramatic hit, and thenceforward every one looked out for Mr. Reuter's telegrams. The war in Italy followed, and in order to receive authentic accounts from all quarters, Mr. Reuter sent special correspondents to the French, Austrian, and Sardinian camps; and on one occasion it happened that he published three different telegrams of the same battle from his correspondents in the different armies. Many of these telegrams were, from their very nature, short; but on occasions, important speeches, parliamentary debates, and other political intelligence of especially English interest were telegraphed *in extenso*. The adoption by the English press of the few short but decisive facts communicated by the telegraph did not, however, do away with the "exclusive special correspondents" of the chief morning papers; on the contrary, it allowed them more time to elaborate their information, and to go into detail. A dozen lines gave us the fact of the victory at Solferino; but the battle itself a week afterwards stood before the British public with all the photographic strength and completeness of the "Times'" special correspondent's pen.

The impartiality and accuracy by which Mr. Reuter's telegrams were characterised succeeded in procuring him the confidence of the press. The newspapers of the chief provincial towns were not long in availing themselves of his system, which ended in depriving the metropolis of the monopoly of early intelligence. The daily papers of the great towns of the north of England and of Ireland possess exactly the same early telegrams as the London daily papers, by means of Mr. Reuter's system, which posts England as well up in the news of the world, at her furthest extremities, as she is in the metropolis itself.

News from England is in the like manner conveyed by Mr. Reuter to all the chief continental cities. Thus the people of St. Petersburg may read every morning abstracts of the previous night's debate in the British Houses of Parliament.

What Mr. Reuter has already done for Europe, he is about to do for the other quarters of the globe. It will have been observed that all our earliest information from America, India, and China, the Cape, and even Australia, is derived from this gentleman's telegrams. In all these countries he has located agents, who transmit him news in anticipation of the mails. There being no direct telegraphic communication between England and those countries, Mr. Reuter avails himself of every telegraphic line *en route*. Messages from America, for instance, are telegraphed up to the latest moment to the last port in the Atlantic where the steamer touches; they are then landed either at Queenstown, Londonderry, Galway, Liverpool, or Southampton, whence they are telegraphed to London. News from the East is received in an accelerated manner, by a similar method. All the telegrams first come into the hands of Mr. Reuter, whose day offices are near the Exchange, and whose night offices are in Finsbury Square—thus this gentleman is without doubt, as regards the affairs of the world, the best informed man in it. He gives his political telegrams to the press alone, and never allows them on any account to be communicated beforehand to merchants and bankers for the purpose of speculation.

In order to make the separation between the political and commercial departments of his establishment the more complete, he has removed the former to Waterloo Place at the West End, whilst the latter remains at the City offices. These offices are open day and night; the day staff of clerks working from 10 A.M. till 6 P.M., and the night staff, a far more numerous one, in consequence of the far longer hours of work, being engaged, in relays, from 6 P.M. one evening till 10 A.M. next day. All the offices are connected together by the electric wire, and to still further facilitate the transmission of telegrams to the different newspapers, the wires are being continued from the West End office right into the editor's room of each journal, who, by means of Wheatstone's universal telegraphic apparatus (a description of which we shall give in an early number of this journal), is enabled to read off his own messages instead of receiving them, as heretofore, by messenger. The pedestrian, as he walks along Fleet Street and the Strand, will perceive high over head what might be termed the political spinal cord of the metropolis; every here and there it gives off right and left fine filaments; these are going to the "Globe," the "Sun," the "Morning Post," the "Herald," the "Standard," the "Telegraph," and all the other daily papers which line this great thoroughfare. These are the lines by which Mr. Reuter puts the whole British

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public in possession of the thoughts, and records the actions of the rest of the world; and as we watch the wires ruling their sharp outlines against the sky, for all we know they are conveying words which may affect the destinies of millions yet unborn. A. W.

THE PARISH CLERK'S STORY.

For twenty miles round Bentholme there was nothing but talk about Squire Sigister's quarrel with his son and heir, young Mr. Robert, such a jolly young gentleman as you don't meet every day. He was quite the life of the neighbourhood. All this happened when London was ten times as far away from us as it is now, and people hadn't taken so much to papers; though, as for politics, we were glad enough to read about battles and that. What I mean is, that what affairs there were in a little place, made more noise there than a rumpus in Parliament makes now. The papers take all the talk out of us now. Leastways they have first say, and I don't say that they don't have best. So concerning young Mr. Robert, it was understood that it might be partly the young gentleman's fault, but before anybody knew anything of the case, everybody agreed that the Squire had been hard on him. And we couldn't be far wrong either, knowing what a choleric, easily-put-up, sort of a rough old file he was. Sound at bottom, for he was liked by rich and poor, and that's a safe sign; but the poor rather feared him, and there really were one or two cases where he had been positive unjust. That was his temper. Come to him, and say: "Squire, I've done wrong, and am sorry, and hope you'll look over it," he'd as good as acknowledge *he* was hasty. Stop away, and he'd think himself in the right, and go on thinking it till the Judgment Day. So the news of the split between the old and the young one caused plenty of conversation, you may be sure; and will Mr. Robert go down on his marrowbones? and what has he done? was all the question. When we heard what he *had* done, we decided it would be the best for him if he did go down on his marrowbones, but it was pretty certain that he wouldn't. For Mr. Robert, he also could be stiff when he pleased—he was a chip! Hearing how it stood, we thought speculation a little in advance, and so we waited. But I must tell you. The fact was, Mr. Robert, as was generally known, had for a very long time been what is called sweet upon Susan Dawson, and she was something to be sweet upon: a plump, open-faced, young lass, not over-vain, and sensible, though, of course, we couldn't think that, with her talking of one day marrying young Mr. Robert, which she did, till her father, being one of the Squire's tenants, properly stopped it, not before it came to the Squire's ear, though. Talk of electric telegraphs! Village gossips used to be just as quick in the conveying of intelligence, and gave you a great deal more at a time. I don't object to the invention, because it gives you good news as well as bad, whereas the old system only worked rapid and true when the news wasn't quite so agreeable. So the Squire, who wanted Mr. Robert to marry one of his own class, he on with his top boots and his round hat, and down he goes to farmer Dawson.

"Dawson," says he, "I hear that boy of mine hangs about your doors a good bit. You'd better see to the locks and bolts. He's a sharp fellow, and don't give his time for nothing."

"Squire," says the farmer, "if he chooses to act scarecrow outside there, I've no help for it; but I'll take care he don't get to be a fixture inside."

"Keep a sharp eye on your daughter, Dawson," says the Squire.

"One in a family's enough, Squire," says the farmer. And he must have spoken heavily, for his niece, Martha Green, had gone away in a bad manner out of that very house where he sat. Some said it was Mr. Robert himself who had beguiled the poor girl, and was now at the same game with her cousin: others thought better of him as to that, and were sure it was his college friend Mr. Danby, who had been seen about with her during his visits at the Squire's. She left farmer Dawson's house after one of these visits. Mr. Robert was away at the time, and that gave a colour to what was said against him. But his friends didn't believe it, if his enemies did.

Now, when Mr. Robert found the farmer's door banged in his face, he was mighty wrath, you may credit me. Worse when he heard it was through the Squire having been down there on particular business. What does he do but go straight to the Squire and ask him what he meant. The Squire retorts by asking him what *he* means. That's how the split began. The servants said that Mr. Robert burst out of the library, swearing he would go and marry Susan Dawson on the spot. He didn't do that, but he managed to appoint to meet her by night. She went, as she'd have gone through fire and water. Then he asked her to go off with him to London to be married. While she was debating about it—for I suppose she hesitated—up came Will Green, her cousin, Martha's brother. Will was whistling, and stood with his hands in his pockets, looking at them. He was an odd indifferent fellow—one who made you believe that nothing affected him. "Don't think you'll astonish *me*," was his customary expression. So, he says, "You're going after Martha, are you, Susan? Make my compliments to her." And then he turned on his heel and sauntered off. Susan had a shock at the mention of Martha. The upshot was, that she went home and so did Mr. Robert, and the next morning the great quarrel took place, for the Squire somehow had heard of Mr. Robert's meeting with Susan. They got to high words. The Squire threatened to kick him out of the house, and as Mr. Robert had money, he said he would go, and not return till he was asked. He went in a huff with us all. We heard of him spending money like fire. He was away two years just, when we heard he was in prison for debt, and one morning Miss Susan was missing. Didn't the gossips fly about! Farmer Dawson hung his head awhile, and then he woke up again and was cheerfuller than could be expected. By-and-by Susan returns. The farmer took her in, which he was much praised for, and he was kind to her, and wouldn't let the vicar rebuke her, which rather went against his cha-

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racter, in our place. However, things passed like of old. The Squire seemed to have forgotten Mr. Robert; Susan was mum, Will Green did his farm-work, and sneered away at his superiors.

You must know that we had fine roads round Bentholme. It lay just between two market-towns, and was not such a distance from a tolerable-sized city. The roads were lonely, and people used often to say, they wondered more bad work wasn't done. They even gave up wondering. The vicar rode home one night cleaned out, and saving my respect for his memory, in as awful a fright as mortal man can be. A highwayman had stopped him. A pretty commotion there was in Bentholme. Within a month we had as many as twelve downright open robberies—three to a week! There was a meeting of magistrates,—constables were moved about, and all the farmers said they'd be cautious. But farmers never are cautious after market-days. Besides, this was a terrible fellow. He not only knew who they were, and where they were going, — he knew always exactly how much money their purses contained, and used to name the sum! That was what unmanned them more than anything. They gave up at that. It didn't look human. How we came to know this was through Farmer Burmess. He was riding home from Ockham market one night—plenty of ale in him, and up trots my gentleman.

"Good night, Farmer Burmess," says he.

"Good night," answers the farmer, looking at him queerly, for he had a veil on his face.

"I am rather in want of cash to-night," says the other. "Can you accommodate me?"

"It's an uncivil request civilly put," says Farmer Burmess. "No, I can't, so good night again."

"I'm sorry to have to enforce it," says the other; "but I'm only a borrower. You'll have it again some day, which you can't say for your brains, if they go."

With that he outs with a pistol. The farmer stopped short. He was a cool hand, but he had no weapons. Says he:

"You seem pretty clever. Now, if you'll tell me what money I've got about me, to a shilling, I'll hand it out. If not, we'll part as we are. Is that fair?"

"Quite," says the highwayman.

"Then it's a bargain!—how much is it?" says Farmer Burmess.

"Hand out 22*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* and I am satisfied."

The farmer started—he didn't want telling how much he had. He and his purse parted company. The highwayman called out to him: "Mind! it's only *borrowed*," and rode his way. Farmer Burmess told the story, and from that time the terrible highwayman was called the Borrower.

Suspicion somehow fell upon Will Green. He dressed better—got a watch, and other things costing money. Will didn't mind a bit. "Wait till I'm caught at it," he said. But he began to badger poor Susan. He wanted the girl to marry him. Once he was heard to say he could make her wretched for life, if she didn't. Then suddenly she began to grow thin and miserable as a starved kitten. She couldn't put her hand to a thing—she that used to be the freshest serviceablest creature in all the county. People said it was because of Will's nightwork, and that she had begun to care for him.

One night the Squire had been dining in or about Ockham. He ordered his horse to be saddled, and while he was in the hall, one of the gentlemen said to him: "Look out that you don't have to *lend* your money to-night, Squire!"

"How much do you want?" says the Squire, whose fist was never shut to a friend.

"Oh, I'm not the Borrower," says the gentleman, laughing, that set them talking about the robberies on the road of late.

"Well," says the Squire, "I'll wager you the fellow doesn't borrow a penny from me."

He took two of the gentlemen at a bet of fifty pounds apiece. He set out, and shortly after they mounted to follow, and see fair play. The night was fine, the moon was up—one of those pleasant summer nights when you'd rather be awake than asleep. The Squire trotted on merrily. He turned when he came to the lane leading down to Bentholme river, and stood up under a hedge, and presently he heard the two gentlemen trot past. He suspected a trick, do you see, and when he saw one of them turn into a gate some way down the road, to make a short cut, thinks he: "I know what they're up to, but I'm their match." So he drew his hat low down over his head, and on he went. Bentholme Meads is a lonely place. You're a good couple of miles from any habitation: you have the river on one side of you, and Spenth Woods on the other. Just as the Squire was riding round the hedge out of the road to have a gallop on the grass, a man on horseback leaps in front of him. The Squire pulled back into the shadow, and, disguising his voice to have a moment's fun, "Hulloa!" he sings out gruffly, "be you Mr. Borrower?"

"I am," says the other.

The Squire was expecting the voice of his friend. Not hearing that, he saw that it was no joke. Keeping still in the shadow, he drew his pistol—he was peppery—cocked it, and fired point-blank. The highwayman's right arm fell, and he gave a groan. His hat dropped off, his face was bare.

"Good God!" cried the Squire.

Just then he heard his friends coming up behind the hedge.

"Here it is," the Squire sang out in his assumed voice, and thrust his purse out for the highwayman to take. He seemed surprised, but hearing voices, he turned right about and galloped off.

When the other two gentlemen had managed to push through the hedge, they could hardly believe their senses to see the Squire as pale as death, trembling like a child. They told him he had lost the bet, and he said they should be paid next day. The story flew like wildfire. People shook their heads. They couldn't believe the Squire a coward. But what were they to think? The Squire had paid the money, beyond a doubt.

After that, Squire Sigister shut himself up. He was aged twenty years by that night. He walked to church like a very old man. Nothing more was heard of the Borrower, and the roads got safe again. One day Susan was sent for to come to the hall. She put on her best Sunday dress, and went in a dreadful flurry, not knowing

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what to think of it. When she came back she looked brisker. The truth was, the Squire had said to her, "Find out my son, wherever he may be: fetch him here alive, and I'll marry you both within a week, so help me, Heaven!" We only heard this later, for Susan kept her own counsel.

Susan knew that Will Green was aware of Mr. Robert's whereabouts. I needn't tell you what women are, and what they'll condescend to do when they want to worm anything out of a man. Susan began her cajoleries with Mr. Will. He swore afterwards that she had deceived him. I fancy she made him think, in some wonderful woman's way, that she cared no more for Mr. Robert, and that perhaps her mouth was commencing to water for Will Green. At any rate, by Will's aid, she managed to light upon Mr. Robert in a cottage twenty miles off. She brought him home to the Squire, with his arm in a sling: father and son were reconciled: and then came the extraordinary thing. Susan refused to marry Mr. Robert!

This caused her, of course, to be very much observed and spoken about. She was called a number of names; but she didn't seem to care for it, and this was vexation to one of our gossips, Mrs. Gillott, the grocer's wife. She put on her bonnet, one evening, and proceeded to pay Farmer

(See page 246.)

Dawson a visit. The farmer was out, but she hit upon Susan alone.

"Well, Susan," says she, after rounding about the business, "so you're to be married at last!"

"I?" cries Susan, "you're mistaken, ma'am."

"Not at all," replies the old lady. "And now that he's reclaimed from the error of his ways, it's very proper you should."

Susan grew pale. "What ways?" she gasped.

"Well," says the old lady, "you know how the whisper goes. The robber doesn't rob now, and Will Green stops at home. I make no accusation."

"Will Green!" Susan pronounced the name, and from close upon a faint, she burst into a laugh. "Do you suppose, ma'am, I am going to marry *him?* Pray, undeceive yourself instantly!"

"Yes! there's two to speak to that. Pray, undeceive yourself instantly," says Will Green, in person, as he marches into the room.

He didn't look so delighted, but he was jaunty and careless, as usual. When they were alone, she said to him, "I hope you're not offended, Will."

"What at?" he shouts, savagely. "Because you won't marry me? Lord bless you!"

"Because I said so rather hastily," Susan put in, as soft as she could. "You know, Will, I'm not going to marry at all."

She fell to crying, as she spoke. Will jumped

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up from his chair. I must tell you that he wasn't a black-looking, or a black-hearted fellow: only strange, and loose, uncertain and full of his moods.

"Susan," says he, "it's better you should marry Robert Sigister than keep pumping salt-water all day long."

"Marry him, and ruin him!" says she, pumping harder.

Will was fond of Susan, and he had Mr. Robert in his power. The sight of her tears gave him a sort of melting feeling, and the knowing what they were shed for, pricked him like poison. Between the two sensations, Will was wrought upon to say a kind thing and mean a black one. Or, perhaps, he meant nothing till circumstances were too much for him. However, he said to her, "Marry Mr. Robert, Susan."

Oh, no! She wouldn't. And then she would.

"Will you be at the wedding?" she asked.

"I'll be at the wedding," says he.

The Sigisters were all married openly—walking from the hall to the church, and back again from the church to the hall. Children strewed flowers along the way, the bells pealed, there was feasting and fun for everybody. It was given out that Mr. Robert was going to be married to Susan Dawson, by consent of the Squire: the day was named, and all arrangements made. Just three days before the wedding, a lady and gentleman came to the Gold Stag, our village inn, and put up there. The gentleman appeared to be a friend of Mr. Robert's, and, after Mr. Robert had seen him, he sent word round that he wanted to speak to Will Green. But Will was nowhere to be found. He had sauntered away with his hands in his pockets, apparently caring for nobody. When the marriage bells were ringing, Will was still missing. This did not make Susan happier, for the poor girl feared he had done himself a harm. However, she was obliged to look as cheerful as she could. The morning was fine, and the procession set out. There was the Squire, looking glad and gay, Mr. Robert with his stiff right arm, bride and bridesmaids, all blushing, as in duty bound. The whole village had turned out for a holiday, and lots had promised themselves to get tidily intoxicated before dark, as poor fellows will, when they haven't a chance every day—and we musn't be too hard on them.

On the little bit of common, in front of the church, an old elm stands. The trunk is hollow, but the branches were in leaf. Leaning against the bark, with his back to the procession, a man was seen, holding a horse by the bridle. He wasn't noticed till we came near, and then people began to ask who he was, and talked of his manners. When we got close, he faced about suddenly. Farmer Burmess sung out: "The Borrower!"

He had a veil over his eyes and nose. Mr. Robert was white as a sheet at the sight of him. The man took off his hat, and discovered that he was no other than the missing Will Green.

"Stop!" he cried, "I've a word to say to this."

There was a dead halt. Susan made an effort to go forward to him, but one of the handsome young ladies waiting on her had to hold her.

"What's the matter, Will?" said Mr. Robert, trying to be calm and easy.

"Ruin for ruin," Will answered. "I swore I'd have you, and now's the time. Don't you think me a fool, sir? But you'll find *I'm* not a woman. You're going to be married. Now, here, publicly, I say you shall be married in your Borrower's uniform, or not at all. That's my word."

Everybody was stunned. The old Squire walked between Will and his son, and put out his hand.

"A hundred pounds," he whispered.

Will waved him off: "Not for a thousand!"

"Will," said Mr. Robert, huskily "what have I done to you to deserve this? Is it because I'm going to marry Susan?"

"Pish!" quoth Will, "I never cared for a girl so much as that. Will you take it or not?" And he held out the highwayman's mask.

Mr. Robert shrank back, and, seeing his bride's condition, attempted to laugh it off.

"It won't do," cried Will. "You're in my hands. What do you think I took this trouble for? Because you're a gentleman, and I'm a poor devil, whose sister's to be played with like a toy?"

"Stand aside!" said Mr. Robert, sharply.

"You won't submit to the terms? Good!" cried Will, and, stepping close up in front of them all, so as to block the way, he shouted, "Listen!"

But what he said was unintelligible, when a lady, the same that was stopping at the Gold Stag with the gentleman, rushed out, threw her arms round Will's neck, and called him "dear brother!"

Will looked stupefied, but presently, thrusting her out at arm's length: "Aren't you ashamed to appear here?" he said.

"No, Will; not when my husband is by me;" said Martha.

Mr. Danby, Mr. Robert's friend, now came up to Will. They talked to him hastily, and seemed to be turning his head this way and that, and round and round. Then Will, with a dash of the back of his hand across his eyes, got from them, stood out before Mr. Robert, and said, in a low tone, "I've judged you wrong, Sir. I've been a black villain to you; I led you into evil on purpose to ruin you, and revenge myself. That's my fault—I can't forget an injury. Do you forgive me?"

Mr. Robert took his hand.

"And you, Susan?" She faltered a kind word.

Then Will, collecting himself, called in a strong voice: "People of Bentholme! I was interrupted just now. I was going to tell you something. You've been troubled by a certain Borrower, for some time, lately. You may rest quiet in your beds from this day. Stand back. Give me a clear start. I'm the man!"

With that he jumped on his horse, that he'd been holding all the while, and, nodding once, away he went, and we all breathed deep.

You don't want to hear any more, do you? Why, you may be sure the Borrower, whoever he was, paid back the moneys he'd borrowed to a fraction, and with tidy interest, too. And what's more, he did it through a legal gentleman, and had his acknowledgment for the same. As for Will, he never appeared in our parts again. We heard of him over in America, doing well, on a farm twice as large as the Squire's estate. Mr. Robert spoke of him for ever after as the finest fellow he had known in the course of his life. But he had a twist in his character, that I declare.

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LAST WEEK.

Gaëta has fallen. Italy is by one step—but what a step!—nearer to independence, and in her case independence means freedom.

Turkey is not free, but independent—because of her very weakness. The mutual jealousies of the nations which are covetous of the Sultan's inheritance, for all practical purposes, act as well as though he were at the head of numerous and well-appointed fleets and armies. At the present moment the French are in military occupation of Syria. They are there to do the Sultan's work—to maintain his authority, to prevent his subjects from tearing each other to pieces. The French Emperor has been permitted to play the Sultan's game, but as soon as he endeavours to move the pieces on the Eastern chess-board on his own account, Europe is in arms. There is to be a conference at Paris with France and Russia on one side—England and Austria on the other, and the end will certainly be just what the end of all such attempts has been during the last half-century. The Power which has endeavoured to speculate upon the weakness of the Sultan will be compelled to retire. Turkey is independent, and there is a great calm at Constantinople, just as there is a calm in the centre of a circular storm.

Russia again is independent, but not free. Woe to that power which shall attempt to wage offensive war against the stubborn genius of Frost! The great historical failure of the First Napoleon is there to warn all conquerors of the consequences of a campaign against Nature. It is not in vain that a million of warriors were frozen to death. Other nations may endeavour to draw down the forces of the Russian empire to a frontier point, and to confront them there, as was done in the Crimea, but such a campaign as that of 1812 will never again be taken in hand. In Russia, the power which undertakes the marching is doomed to destruction. But is Russia free? Send for a Russian newspaper, and procure some friend who can act as interpreter to explain to you its contents, and you will soon find the measure of freedom as the term is understood at St. Petersburgh!

In France again we find independence without freedom, if by freedom is meant self-government. The best expedient which has been yet devised in France to reconcile the theory of freedom with its opposite in practice, is the election of a despot by universal suffrage. It is the will of all that one should rule. The minority are bound by the voice of the majority, and the decision of the majority is, that to Louis Napoleon shall be entrusted an entire control over the liberties and resources of France. Under such circumstances a nation is powerful abroad, because a nation is an army; but it sacrifices the advantages if it escapes the inconveniences of freedom.

Of our own country let nothing be said. We leave it to others to judge us as we judge them. The time is happily gone by, when a few platitudes about the majesty and matchless wisdom of all English arrangements could command the sympathies and cheers of an assembly of well-educated Englishmen. The days of post-prandial eloquence and of unctuous cheering are at an end. Well nigh half a century has been spent in unravelling the blunders of our forefathers. The work of one generation—and nobly has this work been done!—in the main has consisted of the repeal of statutes. From 1815 to 1829 there was the collapse, and then the collection of strength for a series of efforts. From 1829 to 1846 disabilities of all kinds—religious, political, and commercial—were removed by our reformers, until, substantially, reform has become a matter of detail. The battle of principles is over, in the British Islands at least.

But now Gaëta has fallen, and unless some very untoward event—such as would disappoint all expectation—should occur, we may shortly look forward to a time when Italy will again be called upon to play such a part in the comity of nations as she has not played since there was a schism between the western and eastern branches of the Roman Empire. We can afford to maintain the argument now that Italy stands once more upon the threshold of independence. Genoa and Venice had their days of magnificence and glory. Time was when high state was kept at Milan. Florence could boast not only of its splendour in the arts, but of its struggles for freedom, which, through their very excesses, terminated under the Medici, pretty much as such struggles upon a far grander scale have terminated in France under the Bonapartes in our own days and in the days of our fathers. There was a period in history when the Kings of Naples counted for something in the counsels of Europe—although upon that burning soil, whilst a grain of independence existed, the rivalry of dynasties killed the nation's strength. No doubt there was also a period when Roman priests ruled in Europe; but such rule as this—necessarily dependant upon opinion, and not reposing upon its own absolute strength—from its nature fluctuated according to the vicissitudes of opinion, and now seems to stand at its lowest ebb. From the days of Pagan Rome until those of Victor Emmanuel, Italy has never been a Power, as Spain, France, and England have been: and now it becomes a question of the highest importance, what course will be taken by Italian statesmen as soon as they have contrived to purge their country of thraldom to the foreigner, and of domestic superstition.

Italy, however, is not independent yet. All that we can say with safety is, that by the fall of Gaëta Italian matters are placed in such a condition that the French Emperor can scarcely attempt to check the course of events by further acts of authoritative interference. The order to detain the French fleet before Gaëta has already cost him dearly, not only in the opinion of Europe, but in the minds of Frenchmen themselves. It may have been a last clumsy endeavour to carry out the policy announced in the famous pamphlet which was published under his authority before the Italian campaign. As such it has signally failed. It has led to the destruction of the regiments which still remained faithful to the cause of the young Bourbon, and which certainly might have been used to better purpose than to be destroyed in and about Gaëta without a result. If Louis

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Napoleon supposed that by upholding the defence of Gaëta he was playing into the hands of the reactionary party, and enabling them to keep the Two Sicilies in such a state of turmoil that European interference might have become a necessity, he has also been disappointed in this respect. A flying column of Sardinians, with the hearty co-operation of the peasantry, has been sufficient to restore order. It has been proved to conviction, that brigandage as a reactionary element is of no great account. If the prolonged defence of Gaëta has not been available for the purpose of promoting disorder, in the most vulgar acceptation of the term, neither has it influenced the elections. What between Louis Napoleon's exertions on the one side, and the efforts of Signor Mazzini on the other, the Neapolitans have had the sense to see that the safety of the Two Sicilies depended upon their remaining staunch to the cause of Italian unity. They have done so—and have accordingly elected men of moderate opinions, but well known as true lovers of their country, to represent them in the Italian parliament.

Again, if the French Emperor intended by the detention of his fleet before Gaëta to give satisfaction to the Absolutist and Ultra-Montane faction in his own country, that satisfaction has been transitory indeed, and has been replaced by the bitterest disappointment. It will now be said that he has betrayed the young Bourbon's cause, simply because he upheld it for a brief space, and then abandoned it in despair. Nor has Gaëta proved a very formidable breakwater for the defence of the Pope's temporal power. Now, as before, he is surrounded on all sides by the hostile bayonets of the Italians, and is defended from day to day solely by the French troops in garrison at Rome. So thoroughly is the government of the Pope and the priests execrated in Italy, that were the French to evacuate Rome to-morrow, the presence on the spot of a few Sardinian regiments would be instantly necessary, in order to save the priests from the anger of the people. Let devout Roman Catholics explain the matter as they will, such is the fact.

It is difficult, however, to believe that the fall of Gaëta will lead to decisive action at Rome. All we know is, that the French garrison, both at Civita Vecchia and at Rome, has been heavily reinforced, and that the French army generally has been placed upon a war-footing. This does not look much like concession. At the same time, Louis Napoleon must soon make his election between an act of violence, such as would stultify his own previous policy, and prove to his subjects that their sacrifices of blood and treasure in the Lombard campaign had been thrown away; or, he must prolong the occupation of Rome and the Patrimony of St. Peter as heretofore, and thereby render himself and the French name odious to the Italian people; or he must come to some arrangement with the sovereign who will no doubt soon be acknowledged as King of Italy for the safeguard of the Pope as a spiritual ruler. Politically speaking, this must be done by the Italians themselves. They could never tolerate the occupation by foreign troops of a central point in the peninsula, in easy communication with a fortified harbour and arsenal, which in the hands of a strong naval power would be practically impregnable. The Pope, after all, must be somewhere; and no doubt the Italians would be willing enough to acquiesce in his residence at Rome, so that he remained there simply in his spiritual capacity. Nor is it likely that they would urge any strong objection to a guarantee of the Roman Catholic Powers—so the terms were simple, and such as would not easily expose them to the danger of foreign intervention upon frivolous pretexts.

Such an arrangement with regard to the Pope, and the purchase of Venetia from embarrassed Austria, would be the natural settlement of the Italian question; but we must look for many evil days, and many struggles yet, before Italy and Europe arrive at so favourable a conclusion. Meanwhile the existing evils are not wholly without compensation. As long as the Italians are threatened from without, they cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of domestic dissension. There does not, indeed, exist the shadow of a reason for charging them with such an inclination; for the moderation, forbearance, and sobriety of thought, of which they have given proof since these troubles began, have been almost without a parallel in history. Again it is only in times of difficulty that the foremost men of a nation rise to the direction of affairs—and for a generation or two to come Italy is much in need of the counsels of her wisest men. It is only under continuous pressure, moreover—as far as the multitudes are concerned—that the temporary exaltation of the moment is hardened by habit into real power. All men—at least most men—are brave and prepared for self-sacrifice by fits and starts; but the soldier is brave, and prepared to give his life for his country when a drum is beaten, or a trumpet calls him forth. Now, what Italy requires is the disciplined courage of the soldiers—not the violent, but transitory enthusiasm of the mere patriot. Italian independence must be maintained with the old prosaic helps of strong armies, well-appointed fleets, and well furnished arsenals. The government which is powerful to maintain independence against the foreigner, will also be strong to maintain order at home. That also is an Italian necessity. Nor should it be forgotten that one of the most serious dangers which threatens Italy, is lest she should degenerate into a satellite and satrapy of France. Now, if Louis Napoleon should persist in his present policy, he will blot out the recollection of his past services, and make his own name, and that of France, odious throughout Italy. In Rome and throughout the Two Sicilies, even as it is, the French are not very popular. The continued occupation of Rome, and the detention of the French fleet before Gaëta, are quite sufficient to explain this result. In the north of the Peninsula the extortion from Piedmont of Savoy and Nice, as the blood-money for Magenta and Solferino, has not particularly improved the relations between the Italians and their French allies. Nor in Central Italy have the efforts of the French Emperor to realise the clauses of his Italian programme had much tendency to maintain the enthusiasm of the nation for his name at fever point. After Villafranca, Louis Napoleon was

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considered half an Austrian. He had removed the great obstacle to Italian independence, and then in his turn became the obstacle himself.

Here in England we need not make ourselves seriously uneasy about the progress of French influence in Italy. The more it is enforced—the more the spirit of the people will revolt against it. After so many centuries of oppression, it is not the object of the Italians to exchange yokes, but to have done with the yoke altogether. Besides, if they win their way to independence in any thorough manner, their future destiny is that of a great naval power in the Mediterranean, and their position, therefore, antagonistic to that of France. We have many a bloody page in our history which bears record of our folly in attempting to do for others that which they were perfectly ready to do for themselves. In Spain, in Germany, in Italy, after the invasions and successes of the First Napoleon, the very sound of the French language was abominable in the ears of the nations which he had reduced into submission, and plundered, and insulted in a hundred ways. The Italians will choose their own time for casting off the leading-strings; but that they will not rest until they have done so we may be sure.

In looking over the events of LAST WEEK we find the two great questions of European policy, and of the turn which affairs may take in the United States, to be still the only ones of great and permanent interest. What does it signify to our readers that Sir John Trelawny has again introduced his bill for the abolition of church-rates?—that Sir Richard Bethell's "fragmentary" measure for the improvement of our bankruptcy laws has passed into committee?—that Mr. Monckton Milnes has again brought forward in Parliament the proposition for legalising marriage with the sister of a deceased wife? These matters are, so to speak, the very bread and water of a parliamentary session. The point which is really remarkable is, that whilst other nations are struggling for national existence, or endeavouring to settle questions which our forefathers and fathers settled, as far as we are concerned, in the days of the Long Parliament, of the Great Revolution, and between 1829 and 1846, we find ourselves at liberty to deal with the smaller matters of legislation. The government of India, and the most efficient method of keeping that country in such a state of armed preparation that the sovereigns of Europe must be content to leave us in peace, are the only two great points of policy which remain for the consideration of the British people. Of course we must endeavour to reduce our taxation; of course we must examine into the working of our Poor Law, as Mr. Charles Villiers has proposed we should do; of course we must strain every nerve to educate the masses, and to admit them, not grudgingly, but in a free and liberal spirit, to their share of political power; of course we must endeavour to purge our Statute Book of irksome and antiquated laws; but such matters as these are the ordinary day-work of a nation. At the end of this century the British Islands and their dependencies should constitute the best governed—because the least governed—community of which there is record in history. No doubt our law of real property, the corporation of the City of London, and many difficulties of the like kind, still exist—but when these are all disposed of, little will remain at the beginning of a session for the Sovereign to ask of the Noble Peers and Faithful Commons but that they shall vote the supplies, pass the mutiny act, and depart each man to his house. The British people, however, will never stand in need of occupation with Australia and India as fields of enterprise, and with the sea and earth open to their ingenuity and industry.

It would be idle indeed at the end of this brief notice of the transactions of seven days to attempt any comment upon the great events which are now passing on the other side of the Atlantic. Rather, since we have begun with the Italian question, let us confine our attention to it for this week. The key of the situation at the present moment lies in Hungary. The Hungarians seem disposed to impose their own terms upon the Austrian Emperor, and to hold him almost at their mercy. Another generation has grown up since the days when the Russian emperor rushed into the shambles to help his young Austrian friend. Children, who were then but six or seven years of age, are now capable of bearing arms. The nation appears disposed to treat face to face with the sovereign who represents to them the violated faith of Royalty. If they force his hand, the cause of Italian independence is won, and Italy is liberated at once from the leading-strings of France. It should never be forgotten that this result is due in large measure to that great man, who, starting from the little island of Caprera, not only won a kingdom, but did more, inasmuch as he proclaimed this principle in the ears of the continental sovereigns—that nations themselves were to take in hand the cause of their own regeneration. If the key of the "Italian difficulty" lies at the present moment in Hungary—and in a very handy way—this result is far more due to the imprudence of Garibaldi than to the diplomacy of Cavour. Since he proclaimed this principle, the Hungarians have called an emperor, and the Prussians a king, to account. They will no longer be led or driven against their will. Garibaldi has unloosed a force against which the discipline of trained armies, and the resources of cunning diplomatists will not avail in the long run. The mere announcement of it, illustrated by his own achievements in the Two Sicilies, has already lighted up an insurrection in Hungary, and even warmed the sluggish blood of the Prussians to a nobler life. Surely the name of Joseph Garibaldi will endure to future generations as amongst the noblest of his race.

Even whilst we write, it seems to be uncertain whether the Austrians will not take courage from their very despair, and cross their own frontier to seek the Italians, as they did in 1859. If so, the dynasty is lost. Louis Napoleon has already intimated to the Cabinet of Turin, that if Italy remains quiescent, and Austria commences the attack, the plains of Lombardy will once again be covered with French troops. On the other hand, if Francis Joseph declines the awful hazard of a last cast, empire is gradually slipping from his hands.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE same evening, late, there came a rather timid knock at the door of Mr. Hawkesley's house. The author was sitting, with his wife, in the dining-room, and there had been mention made to Walter Lygon of the fact that such a thing as a bedroom candle might be had on demand—a hint which that young person, deep in Robinson Crusoe, had not been prompt to accept. In accordance with the custom of his order, he had preferred any other post for study than that suggested by such common-place articles as chairs and tables, and he had deposited himself on the rug, and was reading hard, somewhat in the attitude of the celebrated Magdalen, though by no means with the repose so exquisitely indicated by the painter. His good-natured uncle had once or twice suggested that restlessness was opposed to careful examination of history, but Walter continued to wriggle and shift over the conversion of Friday, until dismissal became imminent.

"Oh, Auntie!" exclaimed the boy, listening intently, as the servant was heard answering the person at the street door. The next minute he sprang to his feet, as the parlour door opened.

"I knew it was," he said. "I knew the voice."

It was Clara.

Her brother had the start, and had kissed her with a boy's violence, and received her hearty kisses in return, before Mr. or Mrs. Hawkesley could speak; but their welcome to the child was a gladder one than even kind relations are in the habit of according.

"But are you alone, darling?" said Mrs. Hawkesley, when the first affectionate embraces were over, and Clara stood with her aunt's arm round her.

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"Yes, indeed, aunt. And I thought I should never get here."

"And where do you come from, dear?"

"From Mrs. Berry's, aunt."

"Who is Mrs. Berry, love?—I don't know her, do I?"

"At Lipthwaite, aunt."

"And you have come up from Lipthwaite?—By yourself?—Surely not?"

"Yes, I have. I *could* not stay any longer. I hope papa will not be angry."

"Not he," said Walter, promptly. "I'll make it all right with him. I am so glad you came. It was jolly of you."

But Clara did not look as if there were anything of jollity in her fortunes. She was pale, and indisposed to speak, and as soon as the excitement of her reception was over, she began to cry hysterically.

"Ah, that's a case for you, Dr. Betty," said Hawkesley. "I should prescribe a large glass of hot negus, and twelve hours in bed, before I asked another question. But I never interfere with the faculty."

An hour later, Walter having been at length disposed of, Mrs. Hawkesley returned to the parlour to her husband.

"Asleep, I hope?" said he, laying down his book.

"She soon will be now, dear; but she would speak, and on the whole I thought it was better to let her have her way. My dear Charles, that child has the strangest story to tell."

"Tell me this before you go into it. What about her mother?"

"She knows nothing about her mother, except that the woman with whom she has been staying has been filling her mind with the most painful hints and insinuations, telling her, in fact, that Laura is not a good woman, and that the best thing that can happen to Clara is her never seeing her mother again."

"But who is the hag, and how did the child get to her?"

"She is Mrs. Berry, of Lipthwaite, the wife of an old gentleman down there, whose name and existence I had entirely forgotten. They live, it seems, in a pretty house out of the town, but it is a house that must have been built since I left, so far as I can make out from her description. I have so completely lost sight of the place and the people that I cannot identify the woman; but Mr. Berry is an old friend of Arthur's."

"Berry. Why, Beatrice, of course he is. I have heard Arthur speak of him as his confidential adviser, and all the rest of it. He is an old attorney."

"No, no, that is quite another person. That's Mr. Allingham. Everybody knew him in my time. He lives, if he is still alive, quite in the town. He was one of our great little men there, chief clerk, or something of that sort."

"Town clerk, perhaps? I am positive, though, that Berry is the name of Arthur's friend. But how did Clara get there?"

"Her father took her down, the day after Laura went away, and left her in the charge of this woman."

"While he went—where?" asked Hawkesley, eagerly.

"He did not tell the child, but the wretch with whom she was has made her think that he was gone on a very sad errand."

"She said *that*," replied Hawkesley, slowly.

"Yes, and worse; but Clara does not believe it, and I would take the child's word rather than any one's. She says that he went away in good spirits, and smiling, and that she was not to be deceived."

"All this looks very bad, my dear one," said Hawkesley, gravely, almost sadly. "Very bad, dear; and painful as it is to say so, I fear that we have something to hear which will be most bitter."

"And are you—you who loved Laura so well—going to believe ill of her, Charles, before we know anything at all? No, I am sure that you are not."

"I do not believe, dear Beatrice, that even your affection for her is much greater than mine; but I feel that we ought to be prepared for bad news," said Hawkesley. "But, tell me, why has Clara left the place where her father desired her to stay?"

"Because, like any loving and high-spirited child, she could not bear to hear the things that the woman said, day by day, and night by night, about her mother. I love the dear thing from my very heart for refusing to bear it any longer. As for the wretch at Lipthwaite, she ought to be transported."

"My dear, we had better discover her crimes coolly, and then we shall be better able to judge how to punish them. Clara is a good child, but a child's report of people it does not like is not always to be taken literally."

"What do you say, then, of a woman, who is not only always insinuating to a child that her mother is bad, but who actually writes out a prayer for her, and makes Clara go on her knees and ask that God will be pleased to forgive her erring mamma? Clara tore it up, and was kept on bread and water for two days for doing it, and told that very likely an evil spirit might come to her in the night and punish her for such wickedness."

Hawkesley broke out with a word which we may forgive, as his wife forgave it.

"Yes, I knew *that* would be too much for you," said Beatrice, laying her hand on his. "Think of such cruelty."

"One would rather not think of it," said he, "unless for a reason. Arthur, of course, could have no idea what sort of a woman he had placed his child with."

"I hope not."

"Nay, you are sure he had not."

"I don't know. Men think nothing about these things; and when a child has gone through a persecution that is enough to make it melancholy mad for the rest of its days, they think it is enough to say that the tormentor acted very injudiciously, but that many conscientious people believe with Solomon that you ought to be always beating children."

"That is not to be said of me, I think, Beatrice."

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"Of you, dear? Not for a moment—how dare you suppose such a thing? But Arthur, with all his kindness of nature, has some hard notions—I think his father was a Baptist, or something of that kind, and brought his children up very sternly. He dragged them to chapel three times on Sundays, and scolded them if they went to sleep, or did not remember the texts. I know they rather hated him."

"I never saw any sternness about Arthur."

"You have never seen him except at pleasant times. I have been much more in the house, and I have watched. I never heard him say an unkind or ungentlemanly thing, but I have seen enough to make me believe that, on provocation, he would deal hard measure."

"Serve anybody right who gave a good man provocation."

"Ah! Charles, dear, I don't know that that is the rule we ought to go by. One thing I do know, that it is not yours."

"Mine! No. I'm afraid I resemble Lord Ogleby, and like my own frailties too well to be hard upon those of other people."

"Do not you speak as if you were ashamed of being a kind, forgiving man. If you do, I shall be ashamed of *you*, for the first time in all my life."

"Beatrice, dear," said her husband, "I do not wish to return to a subject which—well, which does not grow more pleasant as we recur to it, but we must look it in the face. Arthur Lygon puts his daughter out of the way, while he goes on an expedition which may or may not be what—what has been said, but which his friend's wife must believe to be so. This Mrs. Berry would not dare to invent such a story, nor is it likely she would. Arthur himself may have suspicions only, but I think you must see that he has imparted his suspicions to his adviser at Lipthwaite."

"It is not the name," persisted Mrs. Hawkesley.

"Is it probable that he would have two confidential friends there?—besides, I am certain of the name, now. I recollect some foolish joke I made about it one evening—something on the word berry, and Arthur's answering with an imitation of the stock speech a snob makes: 'Put that in your next play.' The name *is* Berry."

"Then Mr. Allingham must be dead."

"Possibly. But do not you see the force of what I say?"

"My dearest Charles, I am determined to see no force in anything until I have had Laura's two hands in my two, and have asked her with my own lips why she went away."

"I only hope that she may be able to place her hands in yours, my dear, for that would mean that all was right indeed."

Beatrice looked earnestly at her husband for a moment or two, and then said, in a lower voice:—

"I fear you are all alike."

"I do not quite understand, dear."

"Let me alone. I won't say what I mean—you do not deserve that I should. Yes, you do, and I will," she added hastily, taking his hand. "I mean that you, like other men, will be ready utterly to condemn Laura, if it should prove that she has done wrong."

"I have said no such thing."

"Dear, you said it this moment. You said that if I could take her hand she must be innocent. That is a man's thought."

"And a woman's, I trust," said the husband.

"And suppose—we have no right to do so, and you know that I have no secrets from you, and that I have no right whatever to suppose such a thing—but if this Lipthwaite hag—"

"She deserves the word, but do not you use it."

"Let me speak. If there should be a foundation for anything that the woman has said—if—"

"If Laura has wronged her husband—there?"

"Yes, and were kneeling before me on that rug, as she used to do in the old days when we were girls, and as the youngest she often would say her prayers so—and if she told me of her sin, and what had led her to it, and poured out her heart in shame and sorrow—my hand is yours, Charles, what should I do with it? No, do not say that you hope such an hour may never come, but answer me as frankly as I speak to you."

"I know how one man whom you honour would reply—I mean Robert Urquhart."

"He is a religious man, in his way, and he would quote the Bible, and tell her to go and sin no more; but he is a proud man, too, and he would never speak to her again in this world. But what would *my* husband say? Answer me. Would he ask me to stand up, and tell Laura that with all desire to make every allowance for her, I could find no excuse for her conduct, and though we should willingly make every effort to place her out of the way of future temptation, it would of course be impossible for us to meet her any more?"

"I think that is a speech which, if repeated in the Divorce Court, would be unanimously pronounced as quite worthy of persons of our high character, and as combining tenderness for the erring with a proper regard to what is due to ourselves and to society."

"And you would have me say this to Laura, if she were kneeling here?"

"Wait until we hear her at the door, and then I will tell you," said Hawkesley.

"I know you better, my own one," said his wife, impetuously. "And though God grant the day may never come, and that there may be no reason for its coming," she added, tearfully, "if it ever should come, I will trust your heart as I will trust my own, and though you do not often quote the Bible," she said, with something of a smile through her tears, "I know that you have read about One who did not break a bruised reed."

"I will trust, with you, that the reed has not been bruised," said Hawkesley.

But as he looked into the pretty little room where Clara was sleeping,

"A dove, out-wearied with her flight,"

Charles Hawkesley vainly struggled to hope for the best. The sister's affection bore her over doubts and fears, but the man of the world saw before him a child who had been placed, by an indignant father, out of the way of harm, perhaps out of the way of her own mother, while he

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should follow upon the traces of the woman who had deserted him. And hateful as Mrs. Berry became in his eyes, on the instant that he had heard of her cruelty to the child, it was one thing to detest an unworthy woman, and another to refuse all credence to her words. Had it chanced that Laura had just then returned, and come, not penitent as her sister had pictured her, but calmly and proudly as she left the room at Versailles, her brother-in-law might have held out no hand of greeting. Sadly enough he gazed on the sleeping child, who had innocently done so much to shake his faith in her mother. Beatrice, who had entered with him, looked at the expression in his face, and answered it by bending over Clara, and pressing her fair cheek with a kiss, which meant hope and belief, and, still more emphatically, love and protection.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"I don't want to compliment you, Hawkesley," said Mr. Aventayle, the manager, as after the "reading" of the author's new play, and the distribution of the parts, they went up from the green-room to Aventayle's room, which has been described, "but I never heard a much better piece, or one much worse read."

"Did I read badly?" said Hawkesley.

"I hate to say a severe thing, but anybody else in the room would have read it better. Your mind seemed to be anywhere but among the *dramatis personæ*, my son."

"I dare say that it was. I have had some perplexing family business to think about."

"Ah! Don't you hate relations? I do. It is right and proper that we should, moreover."

"I dare say it is," said Hawkesley, once more taking the nobleman's chair, "but why?"

"Do you understand natural history? Of course you'll say you do. Well, out of any stock —say horses for instance—only two or three are really noble animals. The same rule applies to a family, and we, who are of course the noble animals of our families, have a right to contemn and despise the rest, who are rubbish. Sport that doctrine next Christmas, at a family party, when you are pretending to respect your uncles, and trying not to hate your cousins."

So spoke Aventayle, but as in the case of many other theorists, his practice was unworthy of his enlightenment, for he maintained about a dozen relatives of every degree of consanguinity, and found employment in his theatre for half a dozen more, for which two modes of treatment he was of course elaborately abused by each set; by the first for treating them as pensioners and beggars, instead of giving them work, and by the second for exacting service from them in return for his mean pay, instead of making them an allowance, as he could do in the case of other people.

"And now," continued the manager, "how do you like the cast?"

"I suppose that you have done the best you could."

"That's simply a most ungrateful, disrespectful, and intolerable way of looking at it. I have cast the piece capitally."

"Grayling did not seem very enthusiastic, and yet that is as good a part as he ever had in his life, if he knows how to bring it up."

"My boy, if you had three eyes, you would know better. But as you have only two, and use both of them when you are reading, you cannot observe the face of the folks you are reading at. I was watching Master Grayling, and I saw that he was perfectly happy, though much too old a bird to flutter his feathers to an author."

"Can Heygate do that footman bit?"

"He'll be capital. You want a stolid party, a Pyramid, don't you?"

"If he laughs at Whelker, who can't help gagging, the scene is spoiled."

"He will not laugh. He has stood the fire of a man who was even harder to resist than Whelker. Years ago, he had the part of a sentinel, who was to be unmoved by anything that could be said to him—it was in one of those charming little pieces which Charles Lance used to write—in exchange, as he said, for the Pulvis Olympicus—and Heygate had a long scene with Whiston. It told so well, and the house so recognised Heygate's share in the fun, that Whiston, who had his jealousies, determined to force the sentinel into a laugh. Night after night he tried grimaces, sudden bits of nonsense, anything that could discompose Heygate, but it was of no use—he never laughed. But one day the author was at the wing as the scene ended, and Heygate came off. His face was pale through the paint, and drops stood upon his forehead as if he had been tortured. 'You resisted Mr. Whiston's attacks bravely, Mr. Heygate,' said the author. 'Yes, Mr. Lance, I thank Providence that I had the strength to resist, sir. But,' he added, in the tone of a man who has been plundered of all his savings, or has had his wife stolen by his best friend, 'it is very cruel of Mr. Whiston, very cruel indeed. But, Mr. Lance, I will drop down a dead man upon that stage before I laugh at Mr. Whiston.' .

"I never heard that story. I am proud to have such a hero in my service. If I had known it before, he should have had another speech or two. And now, Aventayle, what do you say about Miss Tartley?"

"Ye-e-s," said the manager, drawing out the word, as if approaching an inevitable grievance. "I thought you would come to her. Well, she is not Mrs. Curling or Mrs. Seeley. But that's not her fault."

"No, it isn't. But it is her fault that she is a lump of affectation, without a single natural action or accent, and utterly unable to learn either."

"There are a great many people who like her, and think her very pretty and clever."

"Who tells you such nonsense?"

"People who ought to know, because they have it direct from herself."

"It is really too bad to have to put a character into such hands."

"You can't say anything against her hands—they are daintiness itself—to say nothing of the rings. Be just to her."

"I suppose we can't help ourselves, but she will mull the wife's temptation scene for the sake of showing those rings. By the way, make her play

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it without them, and then she will keep her hands out of the face of the audience."

"I'll try. But if she loses her self-complacency, away will go that smile which sends the half-price youths spooney to the Albion."

"Eheu, eheu! Then, too, I'm afraid Brigling will make an awful mess of the *Colonel*.

"A joke there. Note it down. Colonel ought to be superior to a mess. Put it elegant. That's a sparkler."

"Worthy of Brigling."

"Why do you abuse Brigling? You should see him on horseback. He rides like a trooper."

"But the *Colonel* isn't a trooper, and moreover can't come into the room to the wedding breakfast on horseback. I can't think what you gave him the part for. I thought we settled that Oysterley was to have it.

"*L'homme propose—le Jew dispose*—our friend Oysterley, between ourselves, finds it convenient to be out of town for a short time, for the benefit of his creditors."

"You might pay them, and secure him for the piece."

"Well, that's true," said the manager, gravely. "So I might. I'll secure him for the next, if you will be so good as to get to work again."

"I'm sorry for Oysterley, though," said the author, "for I thought of him all through the part."

"Humane man! But Brigling will do it very well. He has been on his mettle ever since his little hit in the *Green Stocking*. Nothing succeeds like success, and it does a good fellow a world of good to be patted on the back."

"So I'm told. Nobody ever tried it with me in the days when I wanted patting. You, for instance, were most icily disagreeable when I brought you my first play."

"No more of that, Hal, an' thou lovest me. It was my keen perception of character that made me severe, because I knew that you were a nature that would improve by being kept down, like the palm-tree—*crescit sub pondere virtus*."

"Where did you get that bit of learning?" said Hawkesley, laughing.

"Confound your impudence. Do you think nobody can read a book but an author? Charles the First had his head cut off before Whitehall."

"Yes, I credited you with being aware of that fact," said Hawkesley, "but do you suppose he talked Latin on the scaffold?"

"Who said he did? But there is a book called *Icon Basilikè*, whatever that means, and it is about the aforesaid king, and in its frontispiece is a picture of the aforesaid palm-tree, with that respectable Latin; and if you deny it, I will show you the book, which I bought at the corner of Craven Buildings for the sum of one and sixpence. Now then?"

"Well, I accept your eighteenpenny excuse for your conduct to a young author whom you ought to have taken by the hand. But it's always the way. I dare say you have snubbed another, this very day, whom ten years hence you will be inviting to work for you."

"By Jove, you may be nearer right than you think, for on your opinion, I have declined to produce that piece I gave you to read—Mr. Adair's."

"I should like to see that gentleman," said Hawkesley.

"It may easily be managed for you, for I wrote very civilly, and told him that I should be happy to see him if he would call, and that though this drama did not suit my arrangements, another effort might be more acceptable, and all that one says to a gentleman."

"You never said it to me, mind that. It was as much as I could do to get my first piece out of your hands."

"Don't keep harping on old times. I dare say I tried to hold it back out of love for your reputation, as it was so bad."

"It ran a hundred and twelve nights at the Frippery, to your intense mortification and despair," said Hawkesley. And though there were nine-tenths of banter in the speech, there might have been one-tenth of something else. For even a mother does not like to hear her first-born lightly spoken of; how much less can an author bear depreciation of the child of his youth?

"Yes, I sent in people to hiss it, of course."

"Anyhow, I was told that you did, and had not then heard that it was the custom with every manager to send in "enemies" on all first nights."

"I believe that some people think it's true," said Aventayle. "By the way, I don't suppose that there's anything in this piece that will give offence to our friend, the Lord Chamberlain."

"I hope that there is plenty," said Hawkesley. "I want another stand-up fight with that amiable institution. Let us see. I dare say he'll find offence in the title."

"What—where?" said Aventayle, "*Reckoning Without The Host.*"

"Yes—what will you bet that he does not write and say that the *Host* may be construed by the Catholic world into a concealed sarcasm at their rites, and though he knows nothing can be further from the author's meaning, the name had better be changed into *Reckoning Without the Landlord.*"

"I've had a much less likely message from the Censor than that," said the manager. "I expect some day to be told that I must not allow turtle soup to be lightly spoken of, for fear of hurting the feelings of the Lord Mayor. But we'll hope for the best. You have not put as much low life into the piece as I wanted, my son.'

"I hope I have not put any. I did not intend it."

"When I say low life, my son, do not mistake. I do not mean vulgarity. But what I want, in a theatre like this, to which the Swells resort—"

"They resort to every theatre where there is anything worth seeing."

"And there is always something worth seeing here," replied the manager, with lofty dignity, especially when the plays of one Hawkesley of Maida Hill are enjoying their brief run. I was going to state, for your instruction, that years of

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observation lead me to say that, in an aristocratic theatre, pieces of low life, or of broad fun, should be the staple."

"The contrary opinion hath its upholders, Aventayle the Discoverer."

"It may be so. But the thing stands to reason. These Swells come to the theatre to be amused. They do not want to see transcripts of their own life, with inelegant representatives of themselves, doing queerly what the folks in the private boxes have been taught to do properly from their gilded youth upwards—gilded youth is a pretty phrase—*jeunesse dorée*, eh?"

"You are evidently engaged in pirating some French piece. But let us hear about the gilded youths—I once heard of a spangled officer in a melodrama."

"Spangled officer—that's a pretty idea, too. Harlequin in the Guards. Very good notion. Well, sir, touching the pieces you won't write. The upper classes want to see something new to them, different from what is always before their eyes, and they have, I suppose, a curiosity to see the habits and customs of their inferiors. Therefore, instead of trying a weak reproduction of good society, fill your boxes with Countesses by exhibiting the home life and troubles of a costermonger. Do it well, of course; and let it be understood that the sorrows of a costermonger are, on the whole, rather grotesque—and you have got what you want, and the street is blocked with carriages."

"But I am not acquainted with the home life of a costermonger, you see."

"No more are your spectators, so they can't find out your mistakes. Besides, I suppose a costermonger is a human being—if you tickle him, shall he not laugh?—if you poison him—"

"If you make hack quotations to him, shall he not yawn?"

"Then, again, my son, touching farces, which belong to another department of the drama. I should like, instead of putting up delicate little comediettas, with the idea of pleasing the Ten Thousand, to give them the broadest fun that can be got upon the boards. Their lives are delicate little comediettas, which they play with more grace and finèsse than we can show them. But as for fun—"

"True. I don't suppose that in Belgravia a footman very often drops the tray with the tea-things and falls on his knees, or sits down upon the baby of the house, and says he has squashed it."

"There are other means of obtaining a hearty laugh than those, Mr. Scoffer, though those are to farce what the red-hot poker is to pantomime, and I shall regret to see the day when China or baby is deemed too sacred to be demolished before a British audience."

"You have evidently thought deeply over an important subject."

"Paley, sir, holds nothing unimportant that contributes to the harmless enjoyment of multitudes. Paley, sir."

"I am rejoiced to see an evidence of *your* Christianity, my dear Aventayle, and I shall leave you in that becoming state of mind."

"Stop a bit. I see you are out of sorts, and like any man out of sorts, you have been angular and unpleasant, but I have not done with you yet. One word, by the way. Shall I give you a cheque?"

"Thanks, no. Keep it for the present."

"You've only to say the word," said the manager, who, at other times, would merely have answered "Very well," but whose experience taught him how many of the troubles of life connect themselves with the state of the banker's account, and whose liking for Hawkesley was very sincere.

"I know that," said Hawkesley, and looking straight at Aventayle, he caught the kindly intention in the manager's pleasant face. "My dear fellow, I comprehend. But there's nothing of that kind now. We are fundholders and all the rest of it."

"Two gowns, and everything handsome about you," laughed Aventayle. "You know that I could not mean to be obtrusive, but your harping upon old times, and, as I said, your general out-of-sort-ish-ness (which one notices in a cheerful man: a Mulligrubs may sulk unquestioned), made me think that some infernal relations might have been tugging too hard at the purse-strings."

"Thanks again, my dear Aventayle. But they have not been doing that."

"Well, you are too wise a man to let anybody tug at your heart-strings," replied Aventayle, who had once actually interrupted the run of a prosperous drama, in which he was acting, in order to attend the death-bed of a little child.

"Some day I'll tell you something about what has annoyed me," said Hawkesley, "but I can't now."

"Make it into a play," said the man of business. "That's the way to utilise your troubles. And if you do nothing else, you can revenge yourself on your enemies by putting their names to all the bad characters. I knew a young author who was much persecuted to pay his just debts, and who always consoled himself for having to hand over law costs, by sticking into his next piece some character he could describe in the play-bill as "Macgriddle—a low thief—Mr. So-and-so," the unhappy Mac being of course the plaintiff, or the attorney. It was delightful to my young friend to find every wall placarded with this pleasant little analysis of his creditor's character."

"I am afraid that I have no enemy at present."

"You'll have a good many in the morning after *Reckoning Without The Host*, if it is as successful as I hope it will be."

"Aventayle, you have a bad opinion of mankind."

"And womankind—have I not reason, beldames that they are? There is another letter from that woman I sent the private box to, and she says that she should not have intruded upon me, but for my kindness in obliging her before: and now she wants to send some of her husband's constituents to the theatre. Also, she is good

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enough to add, that as the post is irregular, and she should like to know early, would I kindly send out the note to Peckham Rye by one of the many men who must be hanging idle about the theatre all day? I believe there is no created being so confident as a rich woman."

"Nobody ought to be more confident. She has everything in the world—and irresponsibility."

"Do you call that a moral observation, or only an observation on morals, as poor Elvaston used to say?"

(To be continued.)

TRIMMINGS AND TRIMMERS.

THE river rolls sluggishly and drearily, this damp March morning, past the Temple Gardens, whilst the mist which lies heavily on its surface floats on shore, partially obscuring from view the evolutions of the Inns of Court Volunteers, who, in spite of the unfavourable weather, are exercising in this favourite summer resort of the surrounding inhabitants. There they go, at quick time, across the once well-kept lawn, making a regular "slough of despond" for the gardeners to fill up at some future time: "right and left," "advance," "retreat," "present arms," "forward," are the cries that ring hoarsely through the misty atmosphere, as skirmishers dart behind trees, spring out from quiet corners, or fall into line at the word of command. Strange, that in this Christian nineteenth century the noisy note of preparation for war should rouse the echoes of the brave old Temple, even as the clang of the barbed war-horse, and the clash of mailed footsteps, awoke them in the chivalrous times of Richard the Lion-hearted! With what scorn, we fancy, would the quiet inmates of those sculptured tombs in the haughty Templars' ancient church gaze upon yonder cloth-robed warriors, could they rise from their long sleep, and view the mimic foray. And yet, no steel-clad Knight of the Cross, struggling for possession of the Holy Sepulchre, ever fought with truer courage, or more determined bravery, than these simply-clad Volunteers will strike for the holy sanctuaries of hearth and home; and the same dauntless ardour that laid Acre in ruins will hold Old England's shores free and unsullied from the footprint of a foreign foe. But hark! the clock strikes one, two, three—ten, warning us that our business lies far beyond the historic, time-hallowed precincts of the mighty dead! A few steps, and the turmoil of active Fleet Street bursts upon the ear, as we turn westward. Pausing a moment to cross the road, a group of grey-coated riflemen brush hastily past, and, as the simple braided uniforms meet our eye, we forget war and all its attendant miseries, and wander far away to the busy haunts of commerce, where that very trimming to the Volunteers' coats was manufactured. And this reminds us that the history of "Trimmings" still remains one of those things which ought to be and are not. Turn over the leaves of any periodical published within the last fifty years, and therein we find written, "The life, death, and last ashes of a cigar"—"The tale of a coat"—"History of a pin"—"Adventures of a needle"—"Travels of a piece of cotton"—"Walks of a stocking"—"Glass-eyes, and those who use them"—"Something about shirts"—"A word on wigs, by a hair-brained bald pate," &., &c., and so on to the end of almost all manufactured and unmanufactured articles. But never, to our remembrance, do we recollect seeing one single word about "Trimmings." And without "trimmings" what would man or woman be? How shorn of all that gives the finishing effect to their appearance without trimmings! As well walk bootless as dress without "trimmings." Kings and queens, warriors and statesmen, lawyers and clergymen, doctors and merchants, old ladies and young ladies, pretty women and ugly women, high and low, rich and poor, all pay their homage at the shrine of "Trimmings;" and these few sheets shall be our offering to their departed glory. Yes, alas! departed. They are not what they were. But we will speak of them in the pride of their prime, ere war and fashion robbed them of their "fairest proportions," and the French treaty gave the finishing blow to the declining trade.

Going back, therefore, to 185—, we will enter one of the most celebrated and oldest-established "trimming-houses" in the City. But a few words first may not be out of place respecting the rise and progress of this manufacture. Between twenty and thirty years ago, it is said, there were only three manufactories in London, but in 185— they had increased to such a degree that over-competition seriously injured the profits of the "hands," as well as in some respects those of the masters.

At the first-named period, a first-class manufacturer employed, directly and indirectly, at least 500 men, women, boys, and girls, and an establishment of this kind was looked upon as a great boon to the inhabitants of the densely populated districts of the metropolis in which they abounded, absorbing their surplus labour.

Under the head of "fancy trimmings" are classed an immense variety of goods, principally ornamental: fringes of all descriptions, plain, fancy, and beaded gimps and braids; crochet fastenings for mantles, do. headings for tassels, fringes; do. collarets for mantles, fancy tassels, girdles; fancy buttons of every conceivable variety; plain crape trimmings for ladies' dresses; do. bugled; do. machine; crape collars, cuffs, &c.; bugled lace, finger gimp, ornaments for dresses, cloaks, &c. The following articles, though not strictly denominated "trimmings," are made at many houses:—Gold, silver, steel, pearl, glass-beaded, and spangled nets; do. plain silk and chenille; head-dresses; do. ribbon bracelets; crochet, netted, and knitted neck-ties; cuffs, collars, and children's shoes; fancy garters; embroidered smoking caps; falls and fancy ties; together with every description of needlework for ladies' dresses that the fashion of the day prescribes.

No firm carries on all these branches, but each confines itself to three or four. Thus, there are the fringe, the silk, the gimp, and the crape houses; but buttons are a staple commodity of all but the last; for, so long as women and children wear dresses, so long will fancy buttons be in request, unless the old-fashioned strings again come into

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vogue, when adieu to buttons.* Almost entirely depending on fashion and prosperous times, this trade is peculiarly susceptible of depression, hundreds of hands being often, without a week's warning, thrown out of employment by some caprice of the fickle goddess, or many-tongued rumour of war. For instance, the introduction of the plain strap, worn on ladies' mantles some few seasons back, threw nearly all the crocheters in London out of work; while, at the same time, the Crimean war, which was raging in all its fury, combined with the uneasy aspect of the political horizon, depressed the trade to such an extent that it has never fairly recovered from the shock.

Having given this necessary explanation we will enter, this clear bright autumn day, in the year 185—, the establishment of Messrs. Pettitoes, situated in one of the densely-crowded neighbourhoods of the City. There is a whir and buzz as we pass the doorway, which tells of King Steam, whose voice, powerful as it is, cannot drown the voices of the assembled outdoor hands, who, standing in the narrow passage, and sitting on the confined stairs, are waiting their turns to be served. A door lies at our right hand, on opening which we find ourselves in the public and finished stock-room.

A gentleman is standing by the counter, on which are littered pattern cards of different kinds. The one he is at present examining is of first-class gimp crochet. Here is a vine leaf, there an oak, together with hexagons, circles, squares, diamonds, &c., combined in various ways into graceful designs, or else standing simply by themselves: the stiff material of which they are composed rendering it impossible for the designer, however skilful, to create the flowing and beautiful imitations of nature, in which the silk crochet particularly excels. And here a word about crochet patterns. At Pettitoes', as well as at most firms, the designs are made by the workers, who are allowed the preference of working up the orders, if their patterns succeed. If they cannot obtain them in this way, they buy them of persons possessing the gift of designing, who are not actually working for daily bread, and therefore refuse to part with them without payment. Sometimes orders are sent to Paris for the latest novelty, which is copied, and soon in the market. On the right hand of the gentleman is a packet of button-cards, and here may be seen fancy trimming buttons of almost every description—melons, acorns, apples, pears, show their tiny counterparts in silk and twist, and the simple flat buttons are embroidered so delicately and tastefully that we almost doubt the truth of the assertion, that these beautiful little ornaments are the invention as well as the handiwork of poor, uneducated women, whose hands are hardened by daily toil, and their minds disturbed by anxious cares. And whilst admiring the exquisite taste displayed in the design, we cannot but think that the present superiority of French fancy designers over our own is owing not to greater natural ability, but to the higher knowledge of art in respect to manufactures which for years they have undoubtedly possessed. But see, Mr. Smith has marked several cards, and disappears with them through a dark opening on our right; following, we find ourselves in a long room on the first floor, where everything speaks of "work, work, work." Rows of dyed and undyed wooden-button and tassel moulds are hanging like many-jointed, headless snakes upon the walls; large bobbins (that is, reels) of silk, gimp, and twist stand upon the counter, all ready for giving out; whilst packet after packet of these same moulds, but covered with silk, ready for the embroiderers, or twist coverers, are ranged in rows by the bobbins, only waiting the nimble fingers of Mrs. Ellis to toss them into the scales, and from thence through the narrow aperture, with a sliding trap-door, behind which the workers stand. With undisputed sway does Mrs. Ellis (the head forewoman) rule over this department, and now she is busily serving her button hands.

"There, now, there's four gross, as soon as you can make them—Mr. Smith says your pattern's good, but the price is high."

"Lor, marm, only see what a time these leaves take!" cries the worker.

"Well, well, do your best, and don't scamp. Now, the next," calls Mrs. Ellis, as a new face appears at the trap, and so on, in rapid succession, till all the button hands are served.

It is still early, and the crocheters and crape-trimmers have not arrived; so the manageress composes herself to sorting out fresh supplies of buttons, or making entries in her books. Outside, the hands are comparing notes, congratulating or condoling with one another according to circumstances. Almost invariably this class of workers consists of the wives and daughters of mechanics of the humbler kind; and, rough as some of them undoubtedly are, there is far more kindly feeling and consideration shown one towards the other than we often see in more polished circles. They truly "do as they would be done by." To use their own words, their "Bills and Jims are perhaps raging and swearing for their dinners," but never for one moment do they think of depriving one another of their turns. On the contrary, they will often resign their own, saying, "I got my Tom's dinner before I came out, so he's only got to eat it, and I know your Jack blazes if his ain't ready:" and the kindhearted speaker loses perhaps twenty minutes of her valuable time to serve her friend, who to-morrow would risk even "her Jack's fury" to requite the service. The language of the buttoners is not very classical, husbands being generally denominated as "my old un," "your Bill," &c., whilst children as often receive the expressive name of "limbs." We are bound to believe that the "old uns" are very ill-tempered and the "limbs" proportionally troublesome, not only from hearsay, but from the worn and jaded looks of too many of the married women. The spinsters appear upon good terms with themselves and all around them, joking each other unmercifully respecting their "young man," who, at the first convenient opportunity, is to become their "old un," and till that blissful day arrives is bound to escort his lady-love to the "Wells," at least once a week. There seems to be some

* Gilt buttons, not strings, have fairly driven fancy buttons out of the market.

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special attraction about Sadler's Wells Theatre to buttoners; for they will save and save to treat themselves to its allurements three or four times, at least in the winter season: though hard, indeed, they have to work for their pleasure, for button work is very fatiguing to the hands, and not so well paid as some other branches of the manufacture.

The wooden moulds are carefully covered with silk by machinery, guided by boys, and on this fine slight tissue the patterns are worked with a needle and silk, or twist, the hard under ground rendering strong hands indispensable to a first-rate buttoner. After they are completed they are neatly carded on smart, gilt-edged pasteboards, in grosses, half grosses, or dozens, according to their size, and are then ready to be packed for sale.

But see, the last worker has disappeared, and the crocheters come dropping in with their work, neatly tied up in dozens. Mrs. Ellis carefully examines each packet of medallions, leaves, &c., cutting the string of any suspicious-looking one, to see if the leaves correspond in size; and after weighing them (for all material is weighed out to the hands, and when it is returned), sends them up to the carders, for most firms prefer carding crochet in the house. A laconic dialogue takes place between Mrs. Ellis and a worker.

"Don't let the rings show so next time!" cries the first.

"It's the gimp's fault!" replies the second.

"It's too fine—put more stitches."

"I shall have to miss some then, and spoil the pattern. Give me good gimp, and I'll give you good work."

"Stand on one side, and I'll see if we have any," and the poor crocheter composes herself, it may be, for an hour's waiting.

With every order a pattern is given, from which, without any other aid, the copy is produced, the worker reading her pattern just as easily as a musician does a score of music: "crotchets," "quavers," "semiquavers," and "demisemiquavers," are not more distinct to his sight than "singles," "plains," "trebles," "long stitches," and "double Russian," are to her. This last, generally termed "back-stitch," is the torment of all the first-class crocheters. To work from right to left is sometimes troublesome enough, but from left to right is more than the patience of the best constituted worker can bear. These round medallions are for the headings of tassels; silk will be "knotted" through the loops, and the mantle tassel is complete.

What makes these headings so firm is, they have a metal ring for foundation, which ring must not be permitted to show through the silk, or gimp. Buttons and elastic will be sewn on those large leaves before "carding," and the cloak-fastening is ready prepared for sale.

The crocheters are quite a distinct class from the buttoners. They are principally the daughters of small traders, retired or otherwise, dotted here and there with those of whom the best description is given by saying "they have seen better days." As a rule, they are a far more comfortable-looking class of workers than the buttoners, and their work pays better for the time it lasts.

A crape hand now thrusts her bag of trimmings through the trap. This is the best paid work of all, but it is necessary to serve an apprenticeship to it.

The bugled crape is inferior to the crochet and buttons. The bugled lace-work is, again, inferior to this, although the labour is lighter. With a smile of satisfaction, Mrs. Ellis welcomes the last arrival, and "have you brought all in—for we can't finish a shipping order without them, and to-morrow would be too late?" "All," is the quick reply: and Mrs. Ellis sends a message to Mr. Smith, that her part of the order will be ready in two hours.

An immense quantity of crochet is exported. The almond-eyed beauties of Malta are extensive purchasers; so are the proud dames of Corunna. Crochet, it would appear, is of Grecian origin; and we have a shrewd suspicion that Penelope's wide-world-famed piece of work was nothing more nor less than a crochet-fastening for Ulysses' mantle, or whatever description of out-door garment that gentleman delighted in. Why, are not our best crochet-hooks called Penelopes to this day? All hail, then, to the Queen of Crochet!

But hark! the buzz of the steam-engine ceases; and for half a minute there is a deep silence. Then, from every part of the rumbling building is heard the rush of feet and clang of voices; and down the break-neck narrow staircases, laughing, joking, chattering, chasing each other at full speed, we see the in-door hands rushing to their dinners.

In five minutes all is so still that you wonder if the busy tide of happy humanity has really hurried past; happy, at least, in the prospect of an hour's repose and refreshment.

At two o'clock precisely, the loud "whirring" of the engine signals all hands to work; and, as the last worker clatters past us, two minutes after time, we leave the great firm to its afternoon toil, and turn into the public streets.

In-door hands are employed principally on fringes, braids, &c., and as finishers of out-door work, and are more certain of constant employment than the out-door ones—having the preference given them in the slack season. They are paid by the piece, so merit has its due reward; and at Pettitoes', as well as several firms we could name, are well looked after and kindly treated.

At one on Saturdays, work ceases at Pettitoes' for the day; and at two, the in-door hands assemble to be paid; the out-door having received their wages before noon. This not very short transaction at length completed, everything is cleared up, and Pettitoes and their satellites leave the "house" to the care of watchmen and police till Monday morning.

Gowers, of Paul's Chain, are more particularly noted for silk work of various kinds: they also do a good deal of "finger gimp," a species of work very trying to the eyes and hands. The gimp is laid down on some light fabric, in winding patterns, and sewn with a needle and thread to the groundwork. "Table gimp" also is very hard work, and consists of a thread of that material for foundation, on which patterns are worked with bugles and beads, by means of stout thread and

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eedles. "Tommy gimp," as the hands designate ıis, from the stick called a "Tommy" to which ıe gimp is fastened, is much disliked by all 'orkers.

Owing to the necessity of immediately comleting orders, as well as for economical reasons, s much material as possible is made on the preıises of all firms. The manufacture of gimp mploys a large number of boys; and here, if we lease, we may see them walking up and down, t their monotonous tasks. Gimp consists of rands of cotton, covered with a thin coating of lk. The moulds for buttons, tassels, &c., are cut ı the house, or by men who live close by; and a ood stock of all kinds of material is kept on and, ready for any emergency. The necessity or a good supply is shown by the fact, that for everal weeks the crocheters at Pettitoes' were out f work through the non-arrival of rings from irmingham; and when at length they did make heir appearance, the orders were too late. So, lso, if delay occur in the sailing of ships from 'enice and Germany; for, still faithful to her ncient far-famed industry, the Pride of the Sea upplies the Island Queen with flashing bugles; 'hilst from the Fatherland she receives her eads. And woe be to the hands of those firms 'ho are out of stock when ships are due, for then ll the refuse bugles are given out to be worked p; and the workers growl, and rage, and grumble 'ithout ceasing, as it is impossible to make good 'ork with bad materials, and the smallness and ggedness of the refuse bugles causes them a erious loss of time, besides severe lectures from he master and forewoman on account of rough 'ork. Indeed, it is a difficult question to deterıine who exhibits the most temper on "taking-in ays,"—the employer, or employed.

Bugles and beads remind us of bugled and eaded head-dresses, and so on, through the net ategory, from the humble cotton one, price twoence three-farthings (into which the little slave f all-work, who waits on small genteel families or eighteen-pence a-week, thrusts her unkempt ocks), up to the gorgeous gold-thread and shining earl net which adorns, it may be, the fair head f some noble maid of honour; the cost, according o the terms the conscience of her ladyship's ıilliner allows her to take.

The net warehouses employ quite a distinct class f hands to those of which we have written. Here here is no abject poverty, except in a very few ases. Young ladies, who wish to increase their tore of pocket-money; others whose parents have ather straitened incomes, and who prefer helping little at home to going out into the "cold vorld."

All ladies whom time or sickness has deprived f their own natural head-dresses, may obtain rtificial ones of every description at these wareıouses; and all knitted, netted, and crochet voollen goods are to be found here in endless ariety. The net manufacture has been very risk the last season or two. So, also, the braiding ranch has been peculiarly active; rifles doing or the one, what hats did for the other. But rochet and other trimmings are worse than dull; 'rench goods completely flooding the market, to the exclusion of, it must be admitted, our less tasteful manufacturers.

But fashion assists to depress the trade. Gilt, glass, and mother-of-pearl buttons have taken the place of "fancy" silk-embroidered ones; and tassels have bowed their heads to ribbons.

In 185—, the following prices were, on the average, paid to the out-door hands:—Plain crape hands, from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a-week; crocheters, 8*s.* to 13*s.*; buttoners, 5*s.* to 8*s.* or 9*s.*; crape buglers, from 4*s.* to 6*s.*; ditto lace, 3*s.* to 5*s.*; and nets, 4*s.* to 6*s.* a-week, according to ability and good orders.

Of the in-door, the boys who attend to the machinery earn about 4*s.* a-week. Of the others we cannot speak with precise accuracy: but, judging from their appearance, and the preference they show to an in-door life, we infer that they either earn more than the above rates, or that the longer continuance of their work is the attraction to which they cling.

And now farewell—a long farewell—to fancy trimmings. But never do we see a crochet-hook or fancy button without a saddening thought of the good old times of trimming glory.

ISABELLA KENTISH.

"THE MAGNOLIA, FOR LONDON, WITH COTTON."

"MY dear Charley, you can, and must—there's only you and your mother left; so spin your yarn at once, and set her a good example."

"Silence, for Charles Fuller, Esq."

"Well, as you asked me to tell you a story, I may as well tell you one about last voyage.

"You must know, then, that I was in New Orleans, about the end of September, with a shipmate I'd sailed two or three voyages with. I dare say you wonder that sailors don't stick to each other more than they do—go more voyages in company; but the fact is that, when you've a long voyage, you quarrel, for the sake of excitement; and then it must be a good fellow indeed who sticks to you. However, this Ned Saunders and I were fast friends enough, and we agreed not to sail one without the other: it's a sort of protection in a gang of such chaps as one sometimes meets with in a fo'castle, to be two together, standing up for each other, giving an eye to each other's chests, and so on—to say nothing of the comfort of having a chap to talk to about things you can't talk about to the common run of people.

"We'd been in the city about three weeks. Trade was rather slack, as it was a bit too early for the fall trade just then; so we hadn't got a ship, and were staying up at a boarding-house, on the Levee, just below Canal Street.

"One evening, about eight, a man who kept a shipping office came in and asked if we'd 'liquor.' Ned and I were playing dominoes at one of the tables in front of the bar. So we had something. Ned had a brandy smash, I had a gin sling; and he came and sat down at the table.

"'I'll tell you what I want, boys,' said he, when we'd emptied the glasses. 'You know the Magnolia?'

"'Went down night before last—Cotton—London.'

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"'That's her. Now, the tow-boat's brought back word that she's lying at the Balize short-handed; one of the chaps has died, and they want his berth filled.'

"'Only want one?' says Ned. 'Won't do for us, Charley.'

"'No,' says I, 'we go together or not at all.'

"'Oh yes,' says he, 'I know. Which is jackal, tho'? Eh?'

"'Neither,' says Ned, 'both lions—regular true British breed too—eh, Charley?'

"Ned had taken a drop or two, and was a little jolly.

"'Well, lions or not, will you go down to-night and go aboard her, both of you?'

"'For the voyage?' says Ned.

"'Certainly—London and back.'

"'What do you say, Charley?'

"I didn't mind, I said.

"'What wages?' says Ned. 'Twenty-five a month?'

"'More like twenty,' says the shipper.

"'No, we'll go for twenty-five, not a cent less—eh, Charley?'

"They talked a bit more, and we agreed to go; got our things together, and started with him about an hour afterwards. Ned, he was a bit fresh then, and lay down on the deck of the tow-boat.

"We got down to her in the morning, went aboard with our traps, and signed articles before the shipper left. I was standing on the larboard side, just by the gangway, when the shipping-agent was going over into the tug alongside, and I heard the captain say:

"'Do they know?'

"'Not a word,' says the shipper, and away he went.

"We set to work, got the anchor up, made sail, and soon dropped the land astern of us, for it lies very low.

"I went into the fo'castle to dinner, and thought I never saw such a set in my life: there were sixteen of us altogether. I never saw, as I said before, such a set in my life—a regular bad lot. Half of them had the horrors, and one or two were drunk. Ned and I looked at each other, as

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much as to say, 'It would be a poor look out for *one* with that lot.'

"They didn't talk much, any of them; so, after dinner, Ned and I went on the to'gall'n' fo'castle to have our smoke. Ned hardly got his alight before he said:

"'I say, Charley, this is a queer go, ain't it? Did you ever see such a lot of rowdies in a fo'castle before? So quiet, too. The old man's a nice article, I'm sure; tho' how the deuce he manages to get an observation with that squint of his, I can't tell. I hope I shan't be in his watch; he's a tartar, I know.'

"'We must try and get together,' says I. 'I don't half like the looks of these fellows.'

"After supper we went mid-ships for the mate to pick the watches.

"'Mr. Coates,' says the captain, 'take those two new men into your watch.' So Ned and I were in the first mate's watch: I didn't see their game in this till afterwards.

"We soon got into train, and got on with our mates pretty well. One thing that puzzled us both was that we kept away to the south'ard so much: mostly you take south-east course—this chap steered nearly due south.

"This went on a day or two, and one night I was on the look-out, and Ned came up to have a chat a bit and smoke his pipe.

"'What did the shipper tell us about the chap that died?'

"'Nothing—only that he died.'

"'Didn't say what of?'

"'Not a word; you'd better ask one of the chaps.'

"He got down and went to one of the men, an Irishman, who was sitting down on the deck to wind'ard.

"'What did that chap die of?'

"'Cold water.'

"'What do you mean? Cold water!'

"'What I say. Cold water and the headache, perhaps.'

"'Why the devil don't you speak out?' said Ned, offering the Irishman his bacca box.

"'It's a rich man that you are, Ned, with honeydew in your box, like a mate or captain. What did he die of, then?—he was drowned.'

"'How?'

"'Why, you see, the captain called us aft when the steamboat left, and said a word or two; and this chap was a Yankee—a regular Northerner—knew all about politics—so he spoke up against the captain, and said he wasn't talking according to the articles, and he'd hail the first ship we spoke, and make him put him and his traps aboard of her. Well, as you may be sure, we all laughed at him, and he came forward like the rest of us, and in the night he tumbled overboard.'

"'Tumbled!'

"'Well, you see, he was keeping anchor watch, and the mate came forward and sent him out to make fast the gasket of the flying jib that had come loose, and as he was coming up over the rail he met the captain, and a capstan bar fell on his head, and he dropped into the water.'

"'That is, the captain knocked him on the [illegible]d?'

"'Well, if you like to say so, for I don't think one end of the bar would have hit him so hard if the captain hadn't had hold of t'other.'

"'Captain murdered him, then?'

"'That's as you call things.'

"You can fancy this wasn't very pleasant to hear.

"'Now, there's another thing, O'Connel: where are we going? We've been driving south'ard ever since we came on board.'

"'True for you it is; and you signed for London, didn't you?'

"'Well,' says Ned, 'London isn't to be got at by keeping her south.'

"'Perhaps the old man means to make a call somewhere.'

"'Nonsense! With a shipful of cotton?'

"'Full of praties more likely; there's not a score of bales in her.'

"'Why, she cleared out with cotton?'

"'Dare say she did, but she hasn't got any.'

"'Why the devil don't you tell all you know?'

"'Because it mightn't be good for you to know it,' said O'Connel; and he went away aft to take his trick at the wheel.

"'Did ye hear him?' said Ned. 'It's a go—'

"'I wish I was well out of it,' says I.

"Next day the captain called us all aft.

"'Now, I'll tell you what I'm about, lads: I'm going to the Coast for a cargo of niggers; some of you know it, some don't—I don't ask you whether you'll like to go, because you must now. You'll have a nigger a man, besides your wages, for the voyage—so go forward and do your duty.'

"Ned was going to speak, but I stopped him; and, when we got forward again, he turned round in a rage, and says to me:

"'Why didn't you let me speak?'

"'Because,' says I, 'it's a dangerous thing to speak out aft, in a ship where capstan bars tumble down on chaps' heads.'

"'What do you mean to do?' says he.

"'I don't know yet.'

"'Take your nigger?' says he.

"'No, Ned; you ought to have known me better than that.'

"'What do you mean to do, then?'

"'Why, wait—see what turns up.'

"'Your toes in a shotted hammock next, I expect.'

"'Not as bad as that, Ned, I hope. He don't know but what we're like the rest; they're all ready to do anything for that nigger, and they'll go with him to a man.'

"'I'm d—d if I have any hand in it; it's an infernal shame to prig those niggers.'

"'I won't have any hand in it either,' says I. 'Still, it's no use telling them that—keep quiet, perhaps we shall see our way out of it in a bit.'

"Nothing happened for a day or two after this; work went on regular; we didn't talk much, but we could see they kept their eyes on us. Queer thing too—the old man never let either of us work in the poop; the others worked there, rattling down, or what not; but as soon as ever the yard was up, or the braces taut, it was 'Go forward there—another hand lay up these ropes.'

"Of course it roused our suspicions, and showed

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us why we'd been put in the mate's watch; but there was the fact, and nothing more, till one evening I heard them sing out, 'Man overboard!' I ran to the wind'ard and saw Ned in the water. We weren't going fast, so I ran aft to heave a rope over, but as luck would have it, they'd just rove new peak halyards, and they'd made fast and hove the end overboard to take the turns out.

"He'd caught hold of this, and climbed up the side into the mizen-chains. Mate was there:

"'You d—d clumsy lubber, don't come in here,—pass along outside forward—don't swamp the deck here.'

"'Clumsy yourself,' says Ned. 'Why the devil don't you see your foot-ropes fast before you send a man on 'em?'

"'Good job if you'd been drowned, they wouldn't have troubled you then, you clumsy whelp,' and he tried to hit at him with a rope's-end as he crawled along outside, holding on to the top of the rails.

"'No, no,' says I, 'fair's fair,—don't hit him there,' and I put myself in his way.

"'Hit me!' says I, and I looked at him, but he daren't touch me, for he knew that I'd have half killed him.

"Ned jumps on the poop, the water all running off him:

"'Hit me now, you murdering cut-throat!—hit me now!'

"'Go forward there, go forward,' says the captain, coming up just then. 'Send the boy aft with the swab.'

"Ned and I went forward, and says Ned:

"'I'll go up to that rope and see if it's not been cut; I believe it's been cut on purpose.'

"'Go in and get those things off, I'll see to that presently; they won't put a new one in this watch.'

"Ned went in, and when it got a little darker I went up and lay along the yard, and found the rope had been cut all but a few yarns close to the eye, on the yard-arm, and of course when his weight came on it, it gave way with a run, and down he came.

"I told him of it; and, after that, it wasn't much work aloft that wanted more than one of our hands at a time that we did. We never knew when we were safe, and held on like grim Death wherever we went.

"Best part of his ducking though is to come. When he'd changed his clothes he came out, and, says he:

"'Charley, there's two women aboard.'

"'Nonsense!' says I, 'the water's got in your head.'

"'No,—true as I am here; as I came up the side, I saw them through the side-light in the cabin under the mizen-chains,—one fair and the other dark. The dark one's a clipper, she is.'

"I told him it couldn't be, or they'd have come on deck before this; however, he was positive about it.

"'Now you notice,' says he, 'as you go to your wheel, whether there's not a light in that cabin; you'll see it shine through the deck-light.'

"I went to my trick, and went that side, and, sure enough, there was a light: I knew it wasn't the mate's, and the second mate's was in the deck-house.

"It seemed to us a strange thing that there should be two women aboard and none of the fellows forward speak about them; generally, if there's a woman aboard she's talked about pretty freely, but they didn't say a word about it.

"I told Ned to ask the Irishman, so we bribed the steward for a drop of brandy, and gave it O'Connel, and he told us all about it. It seems that there were two women aboard.

"'What for?' says Ned, in a hurry. 'Why don't they come on deck?'

"'What for? They're niggers, going to be sold!'

"'Niggers be d—d!' says Ned, 'they're as white as I am.'

"Ned had got a way of swearing, still I needn't do it here," said Charley, seeing his mother's grave looks.

"The Irishman said they were niggers and slaves; the captain had bought them.

"'Niggers!' says Ned, as red as fire, it's an infernal lie; they're as white as any woman I ever saw.'

"''Tain't the colour that makes the nigger out here,' says O'Connel, 'it's blood; they've got black blood in 'em, and that's enough to make slaves of 'em here!'

"'And what did old Cock-eye give for 'em?' says Ned.

"'Regular fancy price, I can tell you. I was at the sale at the St. Louis Hotel. They're the children of a white man who married his slave, a mulatto, regularly married her, and when he died some relations took the gals as part of the property due to them; I don't think they sold the mother, but they brought the gals down to New Orleans to sell 'em. I never see such a crowd as there was in the sale-room. All the young fellows in the town there. They stood inside a bit of a railed place along with the plantation hands, and when they'd sold all the "Sambos" and "Cloes" they made 'em get up on the platform.

"'How the gals cried was a caution, and, to make it more pleasant, the chaps were cracking their jokes about 'em all the time. He put 'em up at 1500 dollars—next bid was 2000—then 2500 each. "Sell 'em together, if possible," says the auctioneer, "2500 each." They stood at that a little; then ran up to 2700; the auctioneer talked till you'd have believed there wasn't such women in the States. I saw "old Cock-eye," as you call him, pushing into the front rank, and I knew his game. I'd sailed with him before, and I knew he'd got an offer for two white women on the coast: an old slave agent, a Portugee, there, wanted to get 'em for his snuggery, and had offered 150 full grown niggers a-piece for 'em, only they must be white. I saw him pushing up to the front, and knew he meant to have 'em. They'd got up to 3000 dollars each when he reached the ropes.

"'"Three thousand and one hundred," says he, and the gals stared at him, and the auctioneer looked to see who it was, for though he was look-

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ing hard at the auctioneer, it seemed as if he was looking a mile away to his left.

"'"What do *you* want 'em for? An old man like you!"' says one to him.

"'"That's my business," says the captain. "Three thousand one hundred."

"'A young chap offered 3200, another 3500, and then the chap with the hammer waited. Cock-eye offered 3700, and at last they were knocked down to him for 4000 each! I told you he gave a fancy price.'

"'What's that, English?'

"'About 800*l.* each, and that's a biggish price to pay for a woman who may die to-morrow, or bolt any time.'

"'They all crowded round him, and wished him joy; some, in joke, offered him 500 dollars for his bargain on one of 'em, the dark one: no, not he—he'd bought 'em, and he meant to keep 'em; and he paid half in notes on the State Bank, and half in a cheque. "O'Connel," says he, "get a carriage for these ladies."

"'I went and got a carriage for 'em, and he handed 'em in—quite the gentleman—got in, and told me to mount the box. So I got up, and we went to his boarding-house, and he had rooms for 'em there; locked 'em up every day, and all day; and when he wasn't there, I was; so that they couldn't get away anyhow.'

"'And you like that kind of job?' says Ned.

"'No, not much.'

"'What do you do it for, then?'

"'How much money could you lend Charley, if he wanted any?'

"'Not a cent,' and Ned laughed at the notion of his having any money to lend.

"'Well, then, I could if I liked—though I ain't going to, mind—lend him a couple of thousand dollars, and not mind it much.'

"'It'll be a precious long time before you're asked,' says I. What did I want with his money?

"'Well, then, after you'd got 'em to his lodgings?'

"'Oh, ship got ready, and we threw some gold-dust in the custom-house officer's eyes, and stowed just the hatchways with cotton, and cleared out with the gals on board, and there's an end of it.'

"'So he means to sell these women for 150 niggers each?'

"'That's just it; and it'll pay him well, too. He'll get near 1000 dollars a-piece for 'em—that is, for all he lands.'

"'And what are you going to have for the voyage? Same as us?'

"'That's best known to myself, my boy.'

"I got Ned away—he was wild.

"'I'll beat that old Cock-eye yet,' says he. 'I'll manage somehow to cheat the squinting, murdering beggar. I've done nothing but dream of that dark-eyed one ever since I saw her.'

"I didn't see what good we could do, and waited for something to turn up.

"One night he came to me.

"'Look here,' says he, 'I'm going to see those girls.'

"'Why, he'll shoot you like a dog,' says I, 'if he catches you.'

"'But he won't catch me, though. I'm not going through the cabin; I'm going along the covering-board with these.'

"He showed me his cotton-hooks—that's a kind of hook with two claws; you see the men in the carts at Liverpool with 'em, to handle the bales of cotton with. He'd lashed nails to them about half-way down the shank, and made fast a stirrup of rope to each of them.

"'D'ye see?' says he, 'I mean to drop over forward here after my wheel to-night; I shall see if they've a light, and then knock at the port light and talk to 'em.'

"'Talk? You're a fool, Ned,' says I, 'you can't speak a word without being heard on the poop, and then another bar may tumble on your head.'

"'What's to be done, then? Help 'em I must; I can't get that girl's great eyes out of my head.'

"I was inclined to help him, he seemed so determined; so I told him to write a note and slip it in, so that they must see it.

"I was on the look-out, and, when he came forward, he went below and put on his jumper to hide his hooks under, and then waited till the chaps were all quiet. We were in the south-east trades, and there was no chance of his being wanted to shift sails or anything, and it was pretty dark, too; so he stood a good chance of doing it. He went into the head and let himself down in the stirrups, and as I turned I just glanced over the side and saw him getting along the covering board, with his hooks. He couldn't have gone any other way, for it's only a sort of ledge about three inches wide, and you must hold on to the top of the bulwarks, if you want to walk along it; if he'd tried this he'd have been seen, so he was obliged to go this way. I watched him a bit, pretending to look over the quarter, and saw him take his note and lay it in the port, for the side light was open, and then come back.

"He came up over the head on to the fo'castle.

"'I've done it,' says he.

"'What did you say in the letter?'

"'Asked 'em if it was all true that O'Connel said—told 'em that I was English, and that I'd try and help 'em. I cautioned 'em not to make a noise if they saw me, nor appear any different to the captain.'

"'Anything else?'

"'Yes; to leave a letter in the port to-morrow, and I'd come for it: I've seen her, Charley,' says he, 'and she's a clipper, and no mistake—I'd die for her, I would—any time.'

"'That's lucky, Ned.'

"'Why, Charley?'

"'Why it's most likely you'll do it, and it'll be pleasant to think you meant it.'

"'If I go, there shall be somebody else go first,' says he, and he touched his sheath knife. I saw he meant it—his eyes got small, and showed the white all round.

"Next night he brought away the letter, and he'd kissed their hands—both of them—and was nearly mad with joy.

"'Let's see the letter.'

"I read it as I walked up and down, and it said that it was all true, and that they'd feel grateful to him if he'd let them have a knife to

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kill themselves with, rather than go on shore on the Coast.

"'Kill themselves! They're plucky ones—eh, Charley? But they shan't do that yet.'

"'Now, what do you mean to do?'

"'I'm hanged if I know.'

"I told him that I thought our best chance was to hoist a blue shirt if we fell in with a cruiser. We could do that before they could interfere with us, and so make the cruiser believe we were in distress, when, of course, they'd send a boat to make inquiry, and we could tell them she was a slaver, and they'd take the ship and the women too.

"This seemed to suit him, and things went on as usual, till we were within a week's sail of the coast.

"Ned had been a good many times to see the girls. They'd never spoken a word to him, nor he to them, but they called him their 'deliverer' in their letters. Beautiful writing it was, too, and quite ladies they were, evidently—to write such beautiful letters. He read them, and read them again, but there seemed no chance of escape yet to tell them of in answer. He began to look pale, and grew as cross as a bear. One night he says to me—

"'Charley, were you ever in love, as they call it?'

"'I don't know,' says I, 'for I never remember feeling as bad as people I've read of in books.'

"'I think I am,' says he, 'I see that dark girl's eyes before me all day and all night—I feel a sort of sickness come over me when I see her—and I had a near squeak of it the other night, for I nearly fell off the stirrups when she gave me her hand to kiss. I feel, too, that it's as much as I can do to pass that captain of ours.

"'It was my dog-watch wheel last night, and he was sitting with his back to me, and the top maul lay right on the deck before me. It was as much as I could do to keep my hands on the spokes, I did so long to have a good grip of the handle of that hammer, and serve him as he served that Abolition man.'

"I did what I could to keep him quiet, but he was in a bad way; his eyes were bloodshot, and his face thin; he scarcely ate anything, and the fellows told him he was going on the sick-list.

"'Worst of it is,' says he, 'she can never be anything to me: she's a born lady. Look at that,' and he pulled out her note; 'there's writing for a Jack's wife. I wish to God I hadn't thrown my chance away, and by this time I might have had my hands out of the tar bucket.'

"I told him he wasn't too old, there was time yet; and if he didn't borrow my 'Norrie's Epitome' that same day to begin learning navigation with.

"We were now within three days of the coast, and the wind fell dead. There we were lying without so much as a cat's-paw of wind, all the sea like a great sheet of glass, and the sun so hot that the tar in the rigging melted and dropped about on the deck. The chaps were below all day getting up the boilers and things, and sending the cotton down into the hold so as to leave a clear deck for the slaves.

"Ned was getting fidgetty. There didn't seem a chance of our getting away; not a sail in sight; and we two could do nothing against the whole crew. They had a stake, you see. It was 800 or 1000 dollars a man if it turned out well, and they'd have shot us like a couple of mad dogs at the least attempt at violence; besides, it could do no good, so we were compelled to wait for something to turn up.

"'Suppose I try and get a boat, and get the girls into it, and make a start,' said Ned, 'will you go with us?'

"'Ned, you don't know me yet, I see. We agreed to sail together, didn't we?'

"'We did so, Charley.'

"'Well, then, the agreement stands at all times; we sail together.'

"'God bless you, Charley,' says he. 'I know she'll never be anything to me, but I can't help it, and I should go mad if it wasn't for the hope of saving her.'

"Next day we had a little wind, and the look-out sung out 'Sail, ho!'

"'Where away?' says the mate.

"'About two points on the starboard bow, sir.'

"He got his glass and looked at her, and then called the captain, and they both went into the top. After breakfast the old man came on deck.

"'Slack up all those topsail sheets. Mr. Coates, slacken the braces; make things slovenly, and send up a signal of distress.'

"The sail proved to be a British cruiser, and she soon came up within about a mile of us, and then it fell dead calm again. While she'd been coming up, the captain had ordered the carpenter to rig the grating over the side for a burial, and had a bit of old canvas sewn up and placed on the grating, just like a body.

"'Send O'Connel aft,' said the captain. O'Connel went aft, and was talking to him a bit. I saw the mate look at Ned.

"'Keep quiet, now,' says I. 'If they smell a rat now your game's up. Look as if you cared nothing about the cruiser.'

"She sent off a boat to us, and when it was about a cable's length off, O'Connel ran up a large yellow flag.

"The chaps stopped pulling, without orders, directly they saw it, and we could see they hesitated.

"'Give way there,' says the officer in the boat; 'put her in for their quarter, cox'un.'

"They came within hail, and then the men stopped again without orders. The officer stood up, and hailed—'What ship?'

"'Magnolia—from New Orleans—for the Cape—in ballast,' says the captain.

"Our fellows had been ordered not to show more than two or three heads above the bulwarks.

"'What do you do here, then? What's your distress signal?'

"'Got the fever—short handed—lost nine out of twenty-three, and another on the grating now. Short of water, too—leaky tank—making for the coast for supply. Send a doctor on board if you can, and some medicine.'

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"When he said we'd got the fever, the chaps in the boat backed it two or three times its length, without the officer saying a word.

"'Send your papers into the boat on a line as we pass your stern.'

"He went below to get them, and they were made fast to a light line to heave on to the boat. The mate stood right aft on the taffrail, and as the men in the boat shot by, he flung it in. They cast off the line, laid the papers on the boat's bottom, with a pin on 'em to keep 'em from blowing away, and touched 'em as if they'd been red-hot. Just as she was passing round the head again to go back to the ship, Ned jumps on to the fo'castle and sings out—

"'It's all a d—d lie. There's no fever. She's a ——'

"He'd no time to say more, for the second mate had come behind him and knocked him down with an iron belaying pin. I went to him, and he was stunned. The boat's people took no notice, and went to make their report.

"In about an hour they came again; said the doctor had sent some medicine, but was ill and could not come. The papers were all right and in the small cask they'd send on board by a line.

"'Stand by for that line, O'Connel,' says the captain.

"'Aye, aye, sir!' says he, and as they shot by the stern again one of the fellows hove a line aboard, and we got a small cask aboard with medicine.

"'Where's that barking cur, Saunders?' says the captain; 'I'll teach him to hail ships' boats again.'

"'He's a'most past that kind of teaching,' says I; 'he's down below with his skull cracked.'

"'Serve him well right,' says the captain, 'stop his jaw for some time!'

"I had made Ned out worse than he was, for when he came to a bit I told him to sham very bad, or they'd treat him worse; so he shammed as near dead as he could.

"We had some wind that night, too, and as soon as it was dark, all lights were dowsed, and away we went for the coast. In two days we sighted it, and about ten o'clock in the morning came to anchor near the river Volta, just off Cape St. Paul's.

"All this time Ned was shamming stunned and stupid, eating on the sly when all hands were on deck.

"We were about three miles off the shore, for the beach is very flat there, and the further you lie out, the easier it is to get off, if you're sighted by anything. The captain went off with one of the quarter-boats and eight of the chaps, taking some cases of beads for presents.

"We could see the huts on the shore, and some of the niggers moving about.

"I told Ned they were gone, and that it was no use, as there were the first and second mates and six of the hands left; we'd better wait—it wasn't likely he'd take the women on shore till he was sure of his niggers. And so it proved. He brought back with him three niggers with beads and shells round their necks and arms, and showed them into the cabin. I suppose it was to prove that he'd brought the girls. In about half-an-hour they left with some brandy and a gun; they had their canoe alongside, and went away in that.

"Next morning we made everything snug, in case it should be squally, and he left in the long-boat, and the second mate in one of the quarter-boats. Eight went in the long-boat, and four in the quarter-boat: they took some cottons and some cases of beads, and, I think, a case of guns.

"I went down and told Ned there were only two of the hands left and the first mate, for we didn't count the black cook and steward as anybody, and the boy had gone with the captain.

"'Now's the time, or never!' says Ned. 'I'd die for her any time, Charley.'

"'All right,' says I, and we shook hands.

"'Where's the mate?'

"'In his cabin.'

"'Let's get my barkers,' says Ned, 'there's a couple of 'em with six teeth each—there's one of 'em for you.'

"I took one of his revolvers, and stuck it in my belt under my shirt, and he did the same.

"'Let's fresh cap 'em,' says he, 'it'd be a bad job to miss fire now—twelve shots and two knives, and then our fists—we shall do it, Charley.'

"'Hope on,' says I, for you can't talk much in such a case.

"'What's it to be, Ned? Quiet or quick?'

"'I don't know—let's go on deck and see where they are.'

"We went on deck: the mate was in his cabin, the two hands on the fo'castle, the cook and steward were having a chat in the pantry.

"'Quiet,' whispers Ned to me.

"'Got any 'bacca, Ned?' says one of the hands; 'you ain't used much lately.'

"'I've got a little below,' says Ned, 'in my chest; if you like to go for it, here's the key.'

"They stared a bit, and went down, both of 'em—to see fair play in dividing it, I suppose.

"'On with the hatch,' says Ned.

"We put it on, and had a pin in the staple before you could say 'Jack Robinson.'

"'Run up aloft, and see if you can see anything.'

"I went up to the main-top, and saw a sail away to wind'ard of us. I could just make her out. I came down and told him.

"'Hurrah!' says he, 'it's the cruiser, she's been watching us. Now for those blacks,' and he walked aft and made fast the handle of the door with a bit of yarn. 'Steward,' says he, 'we're going to cut, and if you make a row Charley will put a bullet through you, and you, too, cook.'

"I stood there at the door, with my finger on the trigger, while he went forward and put a chair against the mate's door, and then made fast the handle to that and the leg of the table.

"After that he went over to the girls' cabin, and found, as luck would have it, the key in, and on the outside.

"'It's Saunders,' he whispered. 'Hush! not a word.'

"They came out, and I saw Ned was right; they were as white as Englishwomen,—a bit of crinkle in the hair, a sort of wave, was the

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only sign of their blood. The dark one was the finest.

"They came out on tiptoe, and one of them—the dark one—seized a knife out of the box in the cabin sideboard, and looked as glad as if she'd found something worth having. The fair one looked at her, and clung to her, as if frightened.

"'All right, Charley! He's asleep, I expect, or he'd hear those fellows forward. Now, then, on deck.'

"I looked through the blind, and there were cook and steward crouched down on the floor, and almost afraid to breathe.

"We got on the poop, put the girls into the stern-boat, and lowered her into the water, flung our jackets in, and then lowered ourselves by the tackle. Just before I slid down, I looked towards the shore, and saw that they'd seen the women getting over the stern into the boat, and had started after us.

"They couldn't see the sail, nor we neither now.

"I told Ned, and lowered myself into the boat.

"'You'll have to pull for it now,' says I; and we did pull. I thought I'd done some hard work in my life, but I never did such work as that in a broiling sun—we two pulling a boat that would take four.

"Ned's oar bent like a whip—he was pulling stroke, and we went over the water in style. We'd got our shirts and waistcoats on, and it was frightful work.

"The dark one sat in the stern sheets, with the fair one's head in her lap, and looking at us with a kind of encouraging smile. I thought Ned would burst a bloodvessel every minute, the veins in his neck swelled like bits of cord.

"She saw the pistols lying on the seats by us, and came and took one—Ned's.

"'I can use it!' says she; 'you pull!'

"'A ship! a ship!' cries the fair one, getting up. I looked round, and there she was, coming right on to us—another half-hour, and we should be alongside.

"Behind us was the captain in the quarter-boat, pulling now six hands—she came along like a racehorse. We had had a good three miles' start, and might beat them yet.

"There wasn't a mile between us when Ned's after-tholepin broke off short in the hole. I looked round; there wasn't another in the boat except the two I was using. His pulling got very unsteady.

"'Can't I make a new one?' said Clara—that's the dark one.

"'Yes, yes! and quick, for God's sake! Take up the board your feet are on, split a bit off, and round it.'

"She took up the board, split a bit off, and sat, looking up in Ned's face, as she cut chip after chip off to round it, and then pointed the end, drew out the old piece, and stuck in the new pin. I never saw such a cool thing in my life before as that.

"They gained on us—our pulling was getting feeble and weak—she looked at Ned, and said to him:—

"'Tell me how to fire this.'

"So Ned told her, between his pulls, to pull up the hammer, put her finger on the trigger, and look along the barrel till it hid some of their heads.

"'Don't fire yet, though,' says he, 'it would only be waste; wait till I tell you.'

"The fair one, Alice, looked on quite stupefied; Clara looked back now and then, and took a sort of aim with her teeth set together and her eyes like fire. We were near the ship now, and I could see them lowering a boat to meet us; the captain was about a quarter of a mile astern of us, and the ship's boat three quarters of a mile a-head. Their boat was pulled by eight men,—regular man-of-war stroke.

"'Pull, Charley!—pull now, for God's sake!' says Ned, and pull we did, straining our backs and arms at every stroke till they ached again.

"'Shall I fire?' said Clara, turning to Ned, for the captain was within a hundred and fifty yards.

"'No, no, not yet,' says Ned. 'How near, Charley?'

"'Another cable's length and it's done.'

"'Pull, you two!' cried the man-of-war's men, 'pull—you'll win!'

"'Pull between us, and take them out over the stern!' called Ned.

"The ship's boat shot between us.

"'Way enough!' sung out the officer.

"Half the chaps tumbled into our boat and handed the two girls into their own in less time than I can tell you of it. The captain's boat came up with the way full on, and smashed in one or two of their planks.

"'What's all this?' said the officer to me, 'what's it mean?'

"I was so done I could not speak; I pointed to the cruiser and nodded as much as to say, 'Take us there;' but for the life of me I couldn't speak.

"'These d—d thieves have bolted with my niggers,' says the captain.

"'Where are they?' says the officer. 'There were none in the boat!'

"'Those two women in the stern are my slaves, bought with my money in New Orleans, and here's a witness. Where's O'Connel?'

"'Didn't I buy those women in New Orleans?"

"'You did, sir?'

"'Absurd!' said the officer, 'these ladies are not negroes to be bought and sold, you have kidnapped them. I am right, madam?'

"'No, sir. This man brought us from New Orleans, where we were sold to him as slaves, for the purpose of selling us on the coast. We are his slaves, but thought, if we could escape, the English flag was a protection.'

"'You will find it so, ladies. We shall return to the vessel at once. Make that boat fast for towing,—pass these men forward. You can follow if you like, sir.'

"Ned and I put on our jackets, went forward, and sat down. When we came alongside they sent a swing-chair down for the ladies. The captain climbed up and left his crew in the boat, while the officer took the two ladies aft.

"The captain of the Barker came out, and

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seeing the girls were looking pale and faint, sent them into the cabin under the steward's charge.

"'Now, sir, what is this?'

"'Those two women are my slaves, and these fellows belong to my crew, and have run away with them. I want the slaves—you can keep the men.'

"'Quarter-master—here!'

"'Aye, aye, sir.'

"'Quarter-master, pick out the biggest jack and run it up to the mast-head.'

"In a few seconds it was up. 'Now, sir,' said the captain, 'you see that flag? Let me inform you that, I believe, no slaves are ever found under it. I don't know the law in this matter, but this I know, that I recognise no slave on board my ship.'

"Here the man-of-war's men, who were crowded in the waist to see the fun, gave a cheer.

"'Then you don't choose to give up my property—eh, captain?'

"'I do not recognise your claim to any property in this vessel, and therefore shall give up nothing.'

"Here the sailors cheered again.

"'Silence, there! Bo'sun, send the men forward if that occurs again.'

"This cheering seemed to drive our captain mad; so he looked about him like a wild beast, and caught sight of Ned.

"'That's for you, you thieving rascal! and that's for you, you—'

"I didn't hear what he said, for he fired at Ned and then at me. I heard the captain say: 'Put that man in irons!' and when the smoke cleared off, I saw Ned was down and bleeding, ran to him, and held his head up. The doctor said his wound was mortal, and it would only kill him sooner to move him, so they let him lie there. The two girls came rushing out, and Clara, seeing him lie there, came and took his hand in hers. He looked at her, and said:

"'I thought I could save you, and I have.'

"'I would to God that I had never seen you, Mr. Saunders. That you should perish thus for my sake—oh! it is dreadful misery; I wish that you had given me the means of liberating myself, and then you could have lived.'

"'Send the men away forward! Gentlemen, we can do no good here.' And the captain and all of them left us.

"There was I supporting his head, the doctor standing by, and Clara holding his hand and looking so kindly at him, that I felt choked. Alice, she had fainted, and was taken away.

"'What can I do for you for what you have done for me? I have relations in England who will help me. Say—what can I do?'

"'Give me some water, and kiss my forehead if you will.'

"She held the glass to his lips, and then, with a face like crimson, stooped and kissed him. I was crying like a baby, so was the doctor.

"'May I call you Clara?'

"'Call me what you will, Edward, and believe me, I would endure all the miseries from which you have saved me to restore you to life. Alas! that it cannot. What can I do to make you happy? I will do anything.'

"He was going fast. I could feel him getting cool in my arms.

"'Wear a piece of my hair next your heart, and promise me to think of me sometimes—cut it now.'

"The doctor took out his case and gave her a pair of scissors, and she cut off a lock and showed it to him.

"'Next your heart—next your heart, Clara. God bless you—kiss me once more—I don't regret it.'

"He felt for my hand, and shook it, and said, 'Good-bye, Charley! Good-bye, Clara!'

"Her tears fell on his face as she stooped, and when she lifted her lips they were quite pale from being pressed so hard against his cold forehead. She looked at him, and sighed as if her heart would break.

"'I fear he is dead, madam,' said the doctor, feeling his pulse. 'Yes, quite dead.'

"She stooped and kissed him once more, and then went into the cabin. They took Ned away from me and laid him in a hammock; I cut off a lock of his hair before they sewed him up, and then was taken below and put to sleep with doctor's stuff. I didn't wake for nearly twenty-four hours, and then was so bad I couldn't get about.

"I found when I got to Sierra Leone that I was to be witness against the captain for murder, and against the crew and ship as a slaver.

"He was hung, and most of them sent to prison.

"I came home in a ship with the ladies, and went with them to their father's relations in London. They were very kind to me, paid my fees at a navigation school, and have promised me a second mate's berth when I go back, so that you see I'm better off than poor Ned, though he did most for 'em.

"There now—there's my story, and I'm much obliged to you for being so kind as to listen to it." A. STEWART HARRISON.

TIME TABLES.

I WANT to persuade the world to adopt another and a more simple notation of time than the one now used in railway and other time tables; a new notation which will do away with the use of A.M. and P.M., morning and afternoon, noon and night, and all such expressions now required to put the public quite up to the time of arrivals and departures. An expression like 1·10 P.M. is objectionable, because it is a mixture of English numerals and Latin abbreviations. 12 afternoon, and 12 morning are no better. There are many persons to whom such expressions as morning and afternoon, though literally correct, carry the idea of the hours during which they are out of bed, and to whom 12 o'clock in the afternoon is neither English nor sense.

From the simple circumstance of understanding Bradshaw, I have the credit of being not a little intelligent. To me is given the power of deciphering any page, or combination of pages, of that confusing book, and of being able to point out

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with unerring certainty, and with the first joint of the forefinger, the best, the shortest, the quickest, the cheapest line a traveller can take in any direction, cross cut or otherwise, in any part of the United Kingdom. I know the meaning of dark lines, wave lines, and shunts. Try me. Imagine a poor traveller trying to make out his line by Government train, say from Goole to Wigan. Being a penny-a-miler, guards and porters pay him no respect whatever; he is a hundred miles from his destination, but he dare not sleep for fear of not changing carriages at the right place, and of going off at a tangent to Worcester; so with umbrella in his hand, box between his knees, and Bradshaw on them, dogseared at twenty pages, he sits ready to jump out at "change here" for anywhere. He asks at one place: "Porter, where do I change for Wigan?" "Don't know; you mun axe when you get on to the Flour Valley." He axes again: "Had I better go by the North Western or the Midland?" "Don't know; they'll tell you at Shepperton."

I know all about it, but my information is of no manner of comfort to him. He ought to have changed at the Fix junction, and gone by the train at 9·25 A.M. in the morning to Nix, where, if he was not too late, he would have found the up-train at 12·5 P.M. at noon (or rather afternoon) ready to take him on to Wix, so as to reach Wigan that night; but not having changed at the Fix junction, he must either travel from Wix to Wigan first class by the express, which, from his look, will about beggar him, or he must stay all night at the Station Hotel at Pix, so as to be beggared under any circumstances, and proceed next day by the Parliamentary train at 5·5 A.M. in the morning. He takes a deal of convincing, but when he is made to understand that A.M., morning, and forenoon are terms identical and convertible, and that P.M. does not mean penny a mile, he at last awakes, and groans at the sad reality of his position. Such is my capacity; but the capacity breaks down occasionally.

In the genteel village of Ingle, in Lancashire, there lived very lately an old lady with one servant, many savings, and with no known relations. She was not so very old, for she could get about by rail, and even by steamer; but some *parties*, the writer of this being one of them, talked of her as being old, thereby practising a sort of self-deception on themselves that she was old enough to drop off at any moment. She and my mother, whom she never saw, were distantly connected by marriage; that was all; but the connection was sufficient, in want of a better, to give me a greater interest in her will than any other of the *parties*. She had occasion to make a journey from Ingle to Jingle, a village not far from Glasgow, for the purpose of being present at the wedding of a lady who was nearly as distantly connected with her as my mother was. The journey was a long one, for so old a woman—there I am again, calling her old—and the compliment of the invitation was to her savings; but she had not seen very well for several years, and in the invitation there was a reference to something common in the two pedigrees.

She could hardly be said to have had a pedigree. She could manage to jump from a young oak to an old Scotch fir, and run up the branches like a squirrel in a wood; and her pedigree, such as it was, gave her great comfort; so, making up her mind to go to the wedding, she borrowed a Bradshaw. She looked for Ingle and Jingle in the index, and found them; but never having been properly grounded in Bradshaw, she knew no more of the line of rail between those two places than she did of the line of submarine telegraph between Galway and Nova Scotia. She turned to the page, and put her finger on the right column; but she was in difficulties at the first black line, and came to a standstill at the shunt which followed. She then sent for me. The line was rather out of my line, never having been to Scotland; but to a person professing Bradshaw, it would not do to confess ignorance. The particular difficulty arose from the wedding being on Monday, and there being something to prevent her starting till the Saturday previous. Did the 9·35 A.M. in the morning train by the Flour Valley—a market Saturday train—hit off the Parliamentary train of the South Diddlesex (going north), so as to arrive at the Fortywinks junction in time for the Combined Caledonian at 8·50 P.M. in the afternoon, which would take her to the journey's end without having to stay all night at an hotel? She did not like hotels; they licked up a deal of money. Of course it did. The South Diddlesex, going north, arrived at Fortywinks junction at 6·55 P.M. in the afternoon, and the Combined Caledonian started at 8·35. There was 8·35, as plain as it could be printed, and Aft. at the top of the column.

Her second pride was in being a *fendy* woman; so she packed up, and got into the omnibus. I saw her to the station with her baggage, which consisted of a travelling box, and a smaller one containing the wedding present, a very handsome smelling-bottle for the drawing-room table, of cut glass, embossed with mock cameos, and engraved with a scroll of the bride's new initials.

The train arrived at the Fortywinks junction five minutes behind time, but there was still a clear hour and a half for refreshment, and to look about her. She had tea, with a muffin and two rusks, which occupied thirty-five minutes. She then took out her work, but it was too much for her eyes, and she put it down at the end of ten minutes. The next thing which she took out of her bag was the last weekly number of ONCE A WEEK. This (naturally enough) amused her for a short time; but not having read any of the previous numbers, she could not (naturally enough, again) make anything out of the "Silver Cord." And she did not like novels, as she set up for a superior woman. So she put down ONCE A WEEK, took out a volume of Guizot's "Own Times," and fell asleep, naturally enough, for the third time.

She was awoke by the station-master, who also seemed to be porter and signal-man, telling her that the train was due; but at the booking-office she was informed by the station-master, who was also the booking-clerk, that there was no train that night in the direction of the place she named; that the train now due was going the other way;

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that the 8·35 train by the Combined Caledonian was A.M. in the morning, and not P.M.; that the next day, being the Sabbath, there were no trains either way; and that the first train for her would be on Monday morning.

Let me describe the station at the Fortywinks junction. It is curiously situated, there being no town or village of the name, and no road to it. The station is required as being the point of junction of three originally different, but now amalgamated lines, and literally speaking there are no roads whatever to the station, except the three with rails on them. There was a mistake in not taking powers in the Act at first; and afterwards there had been a good deal of opposition from a resident proprietor to the formation of a road, which in real truth was not required at all. There is no hotel, only a small refreshment room for all classes, kept by the wife of the factotum of the station. A small boy arrived every morning with a bookstall, and departed by one of the evening trains to his head-quarters; and at this wretched place my mother's connection had to remain, from Saturday night until Monday morning, on her own mental and physical resources. The first were her thoughts, for she was too religious to read even Guizot on a Sunday; and the same reason prevented her taking up her knitting, which was her only physical resource. She was without anyone upon whom she could vent herself, except the station-master and his wife, and she was too proud to do that. Figure to yourself this fendy, proud, superior woman, sitting on Sunday afternoon, after a meal of two burnt chops, some baked apples, and a pint of Scotch ale, the picture of resentment and bottled indigestion.

If she had gone on by the earliest train on Monday she would have been too late for the wedding, so she made up her mind to go back that day to Ingle, and to send the present by rail. When she reached home about 9 P.M. on Monday evening, she received a shock; Mary her servant, whom she used to say was such a pattern that she never wanted to go out even to church on Sunday evenings, was absent. When she opened the small box, there was a crack in the cut-glass bottle with the imitation cameos, and Mary said that for a superior woman her face was actually pitiable. She never would see me again. "Them happles," as Mary called them, were never fairly digested, and she died shortly afterwards, at the wrong moment, leaving everything she had to the building of new churches in three villages, in none of which she had the slightest interest, and of one of which the perpetual curate immediately started a very neat pony-chaise indeed, for his wife, who liked carriage exercise; and all on account of a difference in A.M. and P.M.

I would much rather the money had gone to somebody else, even to one of my own relations.

The present method of noting time is to divide the twenty-four hours of the day into two equal parts, called A.M. and P.M. Some call these parts morning and afternoon; others talk of noon and night; and there are very few men (and never a woman) who can make a statement that an event will take place at a named hour of A.M. or P.M., without wriggling into the sentence the expression morning or forenoon, or evening or afternoon, or noon or night.

Even railway officials are obliged to use an expletive before they can make themselves understood by all classes. In the time tables of Bradshaw's Guide we see trains arriving at 12 noon, showing want of confidence in 12 A.M. It is not every person who can say at once whether five minutes past twelve at night is A.M. or P.M.; and no wonder, for first of all these expressions are Latin abbreviations, and are not only not sufficiently correct or precise to give a clear idea of time to anyone, but they contain the following anomaly. In using 12·5 A.M. to express the moment of time at the end of the fifth minute of this the first day of January, 1861, the 5 is A.M. of to-day, but the 12 is P.M. of yesterday, the thirty-first of December, 1860; and having used an hour of yesterday and a minute of to-day, and having placed a Latin abbreviation after them, is it any wonder that many of us are not quite up to the time of day, without adding the word night to the expression?

It takes a deal of hammering and circumlocution to make a witness in court, even of the farmer or tradesman class, give a direct answer as to time in terms of the meridies. He knows noon and night, morning and afternoon, but what can he be expected to know of the meridies without a special teaching?

To avoid these complications the following notation of time is recommended, more especially for time tables. Let the days be divided as at present into hours, but counted from one to twenty-four, the short hand, as it were, making but one revolution, as in an Italian clock. Thus instead of the anomaly of 12·5 A.M., to which some have to add night, and others morning, before knowing that it means five minutes past twelve at night, or rather morning (for of course A.M. means morning, before noon, but to tell you the truth, I am not quite clear myself what it does and ought to mean). But, to begin the sentence again, 12·5 A.M. in the new notation is written 0·5; noon, or 12 A.M., is written 12·0; the expression for 1·10 P.M., or 1·10 aft., is 13·10; eight o'clock in the evening is 20·0; and 12 P.M., or 12 aft., or midnight, or all three, is expressed by 24·0.

This system of notation is no great strain on the intellect. Those who can read and write, who attempt to make out a time table, and who know that fifteen pence is one shilling and threepence, will understand that a train arriving at 15·45 by the table, arrives at 3·45 P.M. by the clock; 15·45 carries P.M. and afternoon in the very look of it; and 23·59 does not require P.M. or night to tell us that something is to be done as near as need be to the uncomfortable hour of the middle of the night.

This system of notation would have the following effect in a time table; more figures would be required, and A.M. and P.M., and their English representatives, morning and afternoon, would be done away with. All arrivals and departures of trains between 1 P.M. and 10 P.M., a period of nine hours, would require four figures instead of

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three. Supposing that there is not a greater average proportion of arrivals and departures in the above nine hours than in any other nine consecutive hours, it may be argued that where a thousand figures are now used, thirteen hundred and seventy-five would be required. But no greater space would be occupied by the larger number, for the column which holds 1·1 and 12·43, would also hold 23·59.

In a page of Bradshaw there is an average of four transverse lines taken up by A.M. and P.M., or by morning and afternoon. In one page, taken at hazard, "morn." occurs thirty-three times, "aft." twenty-eight times, and "noon" once; and the table cannot be said to be correct, because when a train starts say at 11 A.M., and runs on into the afternoon, P.M. is not given, but the traveller is supposed to see that A.M. runs into P.M., which he does not always do, as I know, to my cost.

By using this notation, there would be a great gain in clearness and precision, without requiring any more space in a time table, or the change of the face of even a railway clock. C.

THE ANNUAL FAIR AT OSTROVNA.

(FROM THE RUSSIAN.)

THE north-eastern corner of Siberia, a desolate and gloomy region, is inhabited by the Tchooktchy, a people, to the present day, but little known. They are not numerous, not exceeding three thousand or four thousand adults of the male sex. They are of two classes, the sedentary and the nomadic Tchooktchy. The latter wander over the hills and valleys of the country, pasturing immense herds of tame reindeer on the moss which everywhere abounds; and, as opportunities favour them, they bring down with their bows and arrows the wild reindeer, and other animals that they meet with, for the sake of their furs. The sedentary Tchooktchy live in small hamlets on the banks of rivers and on the seashore, feeding principally on fish and other marine animals.

With this people the Russians carry on a trade of barter, by means of an annual meeting, or fair, which takes place at Ostrovna, on the river Anyu, which falls into the Kolyma from its right bank. Ostrovna is situated on the sixtieth degree of north latitude, and as the fair takes place in February, the cold is so severe, that a frost of 30° Reaumur is considered almost a thaw.

At first, about a score of merchants from Yakoutsk arrive with their pack-horses at Nijny Kolymsk, and open their stores for the sale of tobacco, tea, sugar, brandy, linen, handkerchiefs, &c. They receive in exchange skins of the red, black, and stone fox, sables' and mammoths' teeth. When this preliminary trading is concluded, a kosak arrives, announcing the approach of the Tchooktchy to Ostrovna. At this intelligence the merchants, with their superintendent, set out in their nartas, or sledges, to which dogs are harnessed, to attend the meeting. They find at Ostrovna about thirty small houses and yourts scattered about, without any attempt at regularity. Among these may be distinguished the fort, or ostrog; a spot of no great extent, fenced in by a strong paling, with a tower over the gateway. The tower is provided with a flagstaff, but the place is destitute of either guns or ammunition. During the fair two huts are raised within the inclosure for the use of the superintendent and his kosaks. The existing buildings being insufficient to accommodate the fresh arrivals, they dispose of themselves near their loads in bivouacs, and solace themselves as well as they can by the aid of immense wood fires.

The Tchooktchy fix their ourasses, or yourts, which are tents covered with reindeer skins, upon a small island not far from the market-place. The yourts are disposed in separate groups of ten or twenty together. In the centre of each group is placed, leaning against a tree, the lofty ourass of the elder, or chieftain of the group. Scattered around are their sledges and the best of their reindeer, which are carefully tethered; the rest are allowed to pasture at large upon the wide morass, overgrown with moss. Upon the branches of trees are hung promiscuously bows, quivers of arrows, articles of clothing, various skins, and domestic utensils. Here and there Tchooktchy themselves, wrapped in furs, are sleeping among the ourasses, utterly regardless of the excessive cold.

From each yourt rises a tall column of ruddy smoke, throwing off occasional sparks, and slowly climbing to the dark blue sky above, besown with glittering stars. Far in the north the pale rays of the northern lights are playing, and the deep silence is only broken at times by the long howl of the dogs. A frost of 35° Reaumur gives sensible evidence to the European that he is not far from the Icy Ocean.

The goods brought by the Tchooktchy consist of furs of the black and dark brown fox, the stone fox, the marten, the otter, the beaver, and the bear; the tusks of the walrus, and straps cut from the hide of that animal, together with sledge shafts made of whale ribs, bags of seal skin, and parky, or blouses, of young reindeer skin.

The Russians bring tobacco, kettles, hatchets, knives, steel for kindling fire, needles, vessels of sheet-tin and wood, and a quantity of variegated glass beads. Brandy is permitted only when made from fruit. The savages are passionately fond of strong waters, and when drunk are ready—for a glass of brandy—to part with all they have. Tea and sugar, with some other articles, are brought for the use of the Russian inhabitants of Ostrovna.

Besides Tchooktchy, the fair is attended by Yukaghirs, Toungooze, and Koriaks, some of whom come from distances of 1000 or 1500 versts, by the aid partly of horses and partly of dogs. Previous to the opening of the fair, the Russian merchants and the elders of the Tchooktchy appear before the commissioner, to learn the regulations to be observed in conducting the traffic; and, with the general consent, they determine the prices to be given on both sides, which business is not accomplished without considerable argumentation. The prices agreed upon are to be strictly adhered to, and any one, during the fair, disposing of goods at an under price renders himself liable to a penalty, and exclusion from the market for that year.

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A clergyman, brought expressly from Kolymsk, performs service in the decayed chapel, and the flag is hoisted on the tower. The Tchooktchy, armed with spears and arrows, draw near to the fort, and arrange their sledges on the hillside in the form of a crescent. The Russians place themselves opposite, and impatiently await the first sound of the bell. Hardly has it struck, when men and women, old and young, rush tumultuously towards the Tchooktchy, striving to forestall each other, to obtain the best goods, and the best price for his own.

As eager and impatient as the Russians may be, so are the Tchooktchy cool and indifferent. They stand beside their sledges, leaning on their spears, perfectly regardless of the turmoil. In silence they receive the goods from the merchant, and in silence they return the value in their own. The Tchooktchy use neither weight nor measure; with them the eye and the touch supersede both. Raising two poods of tobacco [1 pood = 36 lbs. English] with their hands, they will, without error, detect a deficiency of one pound.

The fair commonly lasts three days: after which the Tchooktchy depart for their country, and the rest disperse to their several destinations. The spot becomes again a solitude. The fox and the glutton make their appearance to pick up the bones, and what fragments of edible matters may be left, till the first snow-storm covers over Ostrovna, and leaves but the flagstaff on the tower to be seen as a solitary vestige.

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM OF THE METROPOLIS.—No. I.

A GREAT gap has just been filled up in our system of telegraphic communication. Cities can converse with cities, countries with countries, and even continents with continents; but house cannot communicate with house. We have the district telegraph, it is true, and by walking half a mile in town you may find a station which will send a message to within half a mile of its destination: but what is wanted is a system of telegraphy which shall dip its wires down into the library or warehouse—an elongation, if we may so term it, of our own nervous system, so simple in its construction that any one can work it, so speedy that we may telegraph as quickly as we could write. We want, in short, in all large towns to abolish the messenger and district post, and Professor Wheatstone has provided us with the means of doing so.

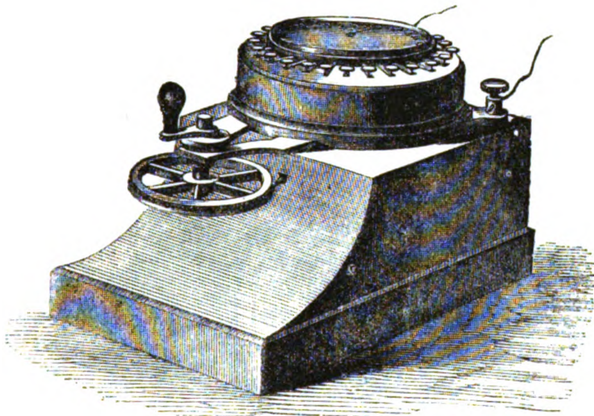

Fig. 1.

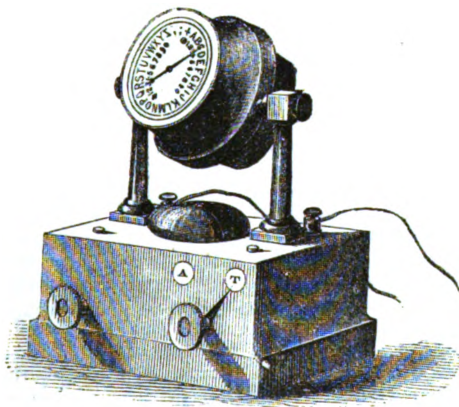

Fig. 2.

All existing telegraphs require a staff of trained clerks to work them. The language of the common needle instrument employed throughout the country is as difficult of acquirement as short-hand; consequently, it presents an insuperable bar to its private use by untrained persons. The invention by Professor Wheatstone of what he terms the Universal Private Telegraph has obviated this difficulty, and the company formed to work his patents are now prepared to lay on telegraphic communication between factory and warehouse, public office and public office, police station and police station, or between private dwellings, with as much ease and more speed than we now lay on the gas.

The method of working the new telegraph can be understood by the child that knows its letters. If we enter Messrs. Spottiswoode's establishment for the sale of state papers at the House of Commons, we may see these elegant looking instruments. The Communicator (Fig. 1) or machine which sends the message is very similar in size to a ship's chronometer. Round the outer edge of its face, running from right to left, are printed the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, three stops and a cross. Inside the letters are numerals, from one to ten. Outside the edge of the disc, the reader will perceive by the drawing, are ranged a series

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of keys, similar to those of an accordion, opposite to the different letters. By touching a key a pulse of electricity is passed through the Indicator, (Fig. 2), and as the operator spells the word upon its face, he knows that his correspondent at the end of his wire is reading off his message on an exactly similar watch face, it may be twenty miles away. At each terminus of the wire of course there is both a Communicator and an Indicator. But, asks the reader, how are the wires conveyed which complete the electric circuit? The earth circuit-line is simply attached to any water-pipe which may be under the house, whilst the other is carried high over head, out of the way of the busy hive of men whose slave it is. In all probability the aërial traveller of ten years hence passing over London, or any other large town, in a balloon, will view all the treasures of the earth guarded, like a jeweller's window, with a wire-guard.

The telegraphic cables will be carried over the tops of the houses in nearly equilateral triangles, each angle having a base of a mile in length. The term telegraphic cable, however, may possibly puzzle the reader without some further explanation. The electric wires will not run as those we see beside the railways, stretched for the sake of isolation like bars of music, but will be contained in numbers from thirty to a hundred in a single cable (or more, if necessary), thoroughly isolated from one another by an Indian-rubber process patented by the Messrs. Silver of Silvertown. Gutta-percha, the ordinary isolator, would not be able to bear the exposure to the heat of a summer sun, but Indian-rubber will not melt at any heat under the boiling point. The bundle of copper wires thus isolated in the Indian-rubber cable are No. 22 gauge, or not thicker than ordinary pack-thread; Professor Wheatstone has discovered that he is enabled with conductors of this thickness to convey a message twenty miles with perfect ease. This is a great discovery, inasmuch as it greatly reduces the expense, and allows of the combination of a large number of wires in a cable not thicker than the little finger. As it is desirable that no strain should be put upon the cable, it is not allowed to bear its own weight for any distance. Thus suspending posts will be erected on the tops of the houses at every two hundred yards; from them a stout iron wire will stretch, for from this wire the cable will be at moderate intervals lightly slung. At the intersection of every angle a mile apart, stout straining posts will be erected in order to taughten the wire when required. At these posts, what is termed a connecting-box will be placed, for the purpose of combining the various lines and wires together in any required order, and also for bringing off the return wires to such renters as may reside in the vicinity.

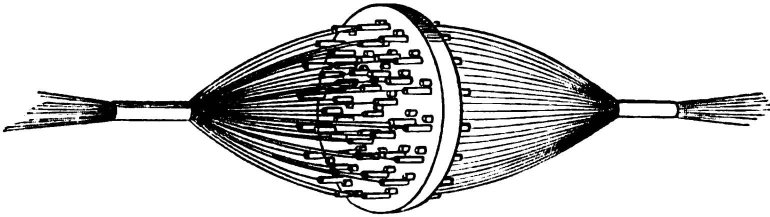

Fig. 3.

The wires all being bound together in one rope, it will naturally be asked, What provision is there for discovering a fault in any particular wire, at any particular point? So necessary a provision as this has not been overlooked. At every suspending post, two hundred yards apart, the wires of the cable are separated, and are passed through what is termed a connecting disc (Fig. 3). This disc is fitted with a series of small tubes, those which contain wires running in one direction being coloured red, and those which proceed in an opposite direction being coloured black. Each of these pipes, as well as each wire, is numbered. It will only be necessary, therefore, to test from post to post, in order to find where the interruption to the passage of the electric current has taken place. The fault, thus narrowed to a distance of two hundred yards, can instantly be rectified. If our nerves could only be numbered, and isolated, and repaired in this manner, what a blessing it would be! It is anticipated that for a considerable time the new telegraph will be principally confined to the use of public offices and places of business. Thus the principal public offices are already connected by its wires, and, if we might be permitted the ugly comparison, the Chief Commissioner of Police at Scotland Yard, spider like, sits in the centre of a web co-extensive with the metropolis, and is made instantly sensible of any disturbance that may take place at any point.

The Queen's Printer, again, has for years sent his messages by one of these telegraphs between the House of Commons and his printing office near Fleet Street. The different docks are put *en rapport* with each other, and it will be especially applicable to all large manufacturing establishments requiring central offices in the City. Thus, the Isle of Dogs and Bow Common, the grand centres of manufacturing energy, are practically brought next door to offices in the centre of the City. The merchant residing at his country residence through his private wire may know all that is going on at the docks without leaving his library—when his ships have arrived, when they have sailed, and, possibly, when they have been wrecked. It must not be supposed that any of these wires are used in common by several persons. Each person will possess his own particular wire, as he possesses his gas or water-pipes, for the use and maintenance of which he will pay an annual rent. Thus the wire will be let to him at the

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rate of 4*l.* per mile, and he may either purchase the communicator and indicator, the working instruments of the telegraph, or he may hire them at the rate of 12*l.* per annum. Thus a man may talk over the distance of a mile for the sum of 16*l.* annually, and for any distance farther for an additional 4*l.* per mile. The use of this singular instrument has even penetrated into the country, and Lord Kinnaird has already laid it down between his mansion of Rossie Castle and the neighbouring county town, eight miles distance, and if anything is wanted from his tradesmen there, the order is given in his own library.

The great peculiarity of the Universal Telegraph Company is that it puts the means of communication in the hands of the public without making any public appearance itself. It has no clerks, no offices, no stations; it simply provides the machinery, and puts the clue into the hands of its customers, and leaves them to do their own work.

As long as these renters employ the wire simply for commercial purposes, and confine themselves to using a given portion of the public electric way, the business of the company can be carried on in this inexpensive manner; but it cannot, we think, be doubted that, in time to come, the telegraph will become a necessary of domestic life, and that it will, year by year, encroach upon the province of the Post-Office. When this day arrives, which it has already done in America, a necessity will immediately arise for district stations, in which the wire of one friend may be placed in communication with that of another, or in fact with any person who rents a wire. It may be that the friend may dwell in another part of the kingdom, in which case, before sending a message, it would be necessary to have his wire placed in connection with a public railway telegraph, and this again at its terminus with the friend's wire.

By combining beforehand different lines in this manner, two different persons may converse together across the island, sitting in their own drawing-rooms; nay, by only extending the connection of these lines with the submarine cables across the sea, a person may converse with his friend travelling day by day at the other end of the globe, provided only that he keeps on some telegraphic line that is continuous with the main electric trunk-lines of the world. This may appear to be an idle dream, but that it will certainly come to pass we have no manner of doubt whatever.

Fig. 4.

Mr. Holmes, the able engineer to the company, has already planned a telegraphic system of communication for the city of Manchester, by which all the principal warehouses and factories will be placed *en rapport* with each other. All the great cities of the empire are awaiting this construction of the new system, and, ere long, the mechanical commissionnaire will be doing the errand work of all the great centres of industry in the community.

The telegraphic plan of London, in 1861, given above (Fig. 4), will readily explain itself to the reader.

We may view the vast net-work of wire about to be erected over our heads as a plexus of nerves answering to the ramification of nerves which makes the skin so sensitive. The air will hold in suspension, as it were, the intricate highways of thought. Between us and the bright blue sky, unseen messengers of good and evil will be perpetually flowing to and fro.

Who shall say that this old earth is near its decadence? Why, it has only just been endowed with its nervous system; its muscles, if we may so term the steam-engine, have only been just set in motion; and its locomotive powers, the railway and steam-ship, have only just found out the full use of their legs. In brain, nerve, and limb, it is but just emerging from its helpless infancy. At what pace we shall go in the next generation we scarcely dare to anticipate.

A. W.

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LAST WEEK.

A BUSY week in the British Parliament, and a still more eventful one both on the Continent of Europe, and in the United States. We have seen our own Government thrown into a passing minority upon the question of the Income Tax: we have seen a renewed—and for the present an abortive attempt to revive the old Reform Agitation. On the other side of the Channel the discussion of Pope, or No Pope, in the character of a Temporal Prince, is proceeding in a very lively manner. The French Army is being organised into divisions fit for active service, under the command of generals of the highest reputation. The Estimates for our own land-service, on the other hand, are set at a mere trifle short of 15,000,000*l.* The resistance of Hungary to the authority of Francis-Joseph is gaining strength every day, whilst the forces of the Austrian Empire are collected on the banks of the Mincio, and in the fortresses of the Quadrilateral, ready for a last rush if the war-party should gain the upper-hand but for one dangerous moment. Italian air, at the same time, is becoming purer and purer every day, and more fit for freemen. From the United States we are informed that this crumbling to pieces of the old Confederation, of which Europe is now hearing for the first time, is not any fortuitous circumstance, but the result of a long and painful conspiracy of the Southern against the Northern States. The world is startled in the same way as when men heard, for the first time, that the British Empire in India was in peril, on account of a greased cartridge. Thus also the cause of the Crimean War was said to be a temporary squabble about the keys of a church. Now we hear that the election of a First Magistrate, whose views upon the subject of Slavery are not extreme, and who, in any case, can retain possession of office but for four years, is the pretext for a dissolution of that Great Confederation to which—with all its faults—the friends of liberty and human progress were accustomed to point triumphantly in proof of the capacity of men for self-government.

Abraham Lincoln has been to the Southerners what the greased cartridge was to the Sepoy, or the keys of the Holy Sepulchre to the Czar Nicholas, in his last violent endeavour to carry into effect the most memorable of the clauses in the famous political will and testament which, truly or not, has been attributed to Peter the Great. It has now been proved to conviction, that the anxiety of the Russian to get possession of Constantinople, and the desire of the Sepoy to expel the British from India were not mere momentary outbreaks of feeling, but that, when they bore fruit in action, plans had been steadily matured for many a long year beforehand, and that it was only in the fulness of time that positive operations were begun. In the same way—so at least it is now asserted—the Gulf States have, during the last five presidentships at least, continuously intrigued and conspired for a separation from the Northern States. They have only so long deferred the execution of their designs, because, during that period, political power was in their hands—the presidents were more or less the representatives of their views, and certainly in no case opposed to them. Who would pluck down the ripening pear which must, ere long, be his own? It cannot be said that LAST WEEK has been deficient either in events or in discoveries of the highest interest to Englishmen and to mankind.

The points which have been discussed in our own House of Commons may be dismissed with very brief remark, inasmuch as they have been abundantly considered through a long series of years, and upon them men's minds have been made up either one way or the other. When Sir Robert Peel came back to power for his last term of administration, he claimed his fee for the nostrum which was to set all our political ailments to rights. The fee was the office of First Minister—the nostrum was the Income Tax. If the British nation would but swallow the specific, a cure would soon follow, and the medicine might be then discontinued. An apparent cure was effected, but the medicine was not discontinued. What with the necessity of driving the morbific ingredient of Protection out of the national blood—what with the hot fever fit of the Russian war—what with the present alarming condition of the Frenchman who lives next door, and from whom the infection has to a certain degree passed upon us, we have been driven to renew and to increase the dose from four years to four years. The British nation—which was no doubt gouty at its extremities when Dr. Peel was called in twenty years ago—is now living upon the financial colchicum of that great physician; nor is there much prospect that we shall be able to leave it off. It has become to us a diet rather than a remedy; it is our food, not our medicine. Under these circumstances, it becomes more and more necessary that the dose to each of us should be graduated according to the strength of his constitution. The drastic potion—which might be serviceable enough to the robust patients whom we will include under a fanciful Schedule A—would be most distressing to another category of invalids whom we will cast into say Schedule D, and absolutely destructive to a set of sickly valetudinarians whom we will throw into a Schedule E. Let each man have his dose according to his vital powers—but not beyond. If the potion were to be administered to us but for a passing occasion, it might have been superfluous to hold out about distinctions of ability to withstand its operations. It is, however, a very different case when we are called upon to make use of it—not once and again—but daily, for the term of our natural lives.

To drop all metaphor—who hopes that any British subject, liable to the Income-Tax, will see the end of it before he is included in other, and more permanent schedules? It follows that although we might have borne an unequal distribution of this impost when it was to endure but for a short and fixed period, we look at this question from another point of view when we feel sure that it is to form a large and permanent ingredient in our financial system. Now, it would require something more than Mr. Gladstone's nimble intelligence and oratorical power to con-

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vince the British nation that a man who owns 1000*l.* per annum issuing out of land, or from the public stocks, has not a broader back for the purposes of direct taxation than the merchant or manufacturer,—than the lawyer or literary man, who for three years last past has earned an equal sum as the produce of his commercial risks, or the premium on his overwrought brain. Income, taking the word in its naked sense, is a most insufficient and fallacious test of property. To tax his income in place of his property is to tax a man's transitory and apparent, not his permanent and real means. How little do those who hold this opinion know of the risks, the vicissitudes, the anxieties of commerce, or the feverish and destructive conditions under which the physician, the lawyer, the writer, the artist, the actor, earns his painful bread and the means of maintaining his family in respectability and comfort. The usual answer is, that his income is only taxed whilst it lasts—whilst property endures, and is always obnoxious to the inspection of the collector. But when the income ceases, what remains? Tax property as you will, so this be not done in a tyrannical and ridiculous manner, at the end of each year the holder of property is just where he was at the beginning of it—he and his children after him. Mr. Hubbard's effort of the other night was to obtain some remedy for this great anomaly. If the Income-Tax is to endure until the year 1900, and even longer, let it not be levied in a manner so repugnant, as at present, to the most ordinary notions of justice and fair play. Mr. Gladstone resisted the proposition for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the subject with the usual stock arguments about the difficulty of apportionment, and so forth. As the late Duke of Wellington said of the French at Waterloo, he just came on in the old style, and was driven back in the old style. The motion for a Select Committee was carried in a very full House, despite of the most strenuous efforts of the Government. Without being very sanguine as to the results which may follow from the decision of the House of Commons, thus much of advantage seems reasonably certain. Until the deliberations of the Committee are concluded, the Chancellor of the Exchequer can scarcely venture to screw up the Income-Tax to a higher point than that at which it at present stands fixed. The ten-pence of 1860 can scarcely be converted into the shilling of 1861. Considering the rapid ratio of increase, according to which the Income-Tax has developed itself, and, moreover that Mr. Gladstone at the present moment is not without his embarrassments as a finance minister, there is some consolation in this thought.

With regard to a further reform of our system of Parliamentary Representation, and the propositions of Mr. Locke King and Mr. Baines for further enfranchisements, little need be said but this. When the nation desires Reform, and demands it—but not till then—it will have it. There is no use in reckoning upon Parliamentary agitation as of much account with reference to immediate action. It is well that there should be members there who should keep the torch alight, and pass it from hand to hand, even though they be few in number, and not amongst the most considerable amongst our public men. Time was when the advocates of Religious, Political, and Commercial Freedom stood in small minorities, and were exposed to the gibes and jeers of our public writers, and our club-house politicians. The time arrived, however, when the sun shone on their side of the hedge, and they who had come to curse remained to bless. The Liberals of England should not join in the cry which is raised against the advocates of Reform, just because Reform happens to be out of fashion at the present moment. Just now our minds are far more intent upon continental politics than upon any other subject. Until we feel a certain assurance that no great movement in which we ourselves may be involved is likely to occur in Europe, we certainly shall not give serious attention to a question of domestic politics which cannot be discussed in any decisive way until party feeling again runs high, and men are in earnest upon the matter. Meanwhile, do not let us discredit our Reformers, simply because they are discharging garrison duty, and not actually engaged in the turmoils and dangers of a campaign.

Are we at last to see an end of the temporal power of the Pope? The Romans believe it. The French troops at Rome believe it. The vast majority of the Italian nation desire it most anxiously—to what extent they believe in the proximate deposition of the priests from power, it would be difficult to say. Here in London we are sceptical in this matter. In Paris the subject is freely discussed by the Pamphleteers, and the Pamphleteers of Paris do not usually discuss a subject save with the full assent of the Government. M. de la Guerronière, the Emperor's chief scribe, seems all for the speedy release of the Pope from the harassing anxieties of worldly affairs. The *Ami de la Rêligion* takes one side of the question—*La Presse*, the other. The contention has now assumed a more sincere form. Is it for the benefit of France upon the whole that the Pope—however infallible in spiritual things—should in matters temporal be reduced to the condition of First Subject of the King of Italy? Is Italy, which seems destined to fill a large space in the eyes of men as a great naval power in the Mediterranean, to have the further advantage of housing the Pope? Such are the points which the French Emperor is just now leaving to the consideration of his faithful. As far as we know of the pamphlets, no writer of note has just now revived the notion which was thrown out some months back, that the secession of the Gallican Church from a strict allegiance to the See of Rome was amongst the political propositions of the time. It is difficult to suppose that this would not follow as a natural consequence of the Pope's dethronement; for a French ruler could scarcely tolerate that the subject of another country should be the leader and inspirer of discontent and disorder within the limits of his dominion. So far, the Pope's French friends are in the right; but they are in the wrong, when they do not see that a remedy for this evil would very speedily be forthcoming. The

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discussion at Paris seems indicative of a change of policy with regard to Rome and Papal affairs.

Meanwhile there was high jubilee at Rome when the intelligence was received there that Gaëta had fallen. According to the time-honoured traditions of Italian demonstrations, crowds of Romans—there were thousands upon thousands—paraded the Corso arm-in-arm, their eyes gleaming with triumph for what had been done further to the South, and with the hope of a speedy liberation from all the evils which they had endured. A Bengal light—the first was a white one—was fired near the Piazza del Popolo; and instantly from that vast crowd there arose shouts for a United Italy—for Victor Emmanuel—for Louis Napoleon. Then a red light was displayed—and then a green one. The next moment the national colours were displayed in the most prominent situations in the city—aye, before the very Palace of the Austrian ambassador. The soldiers and gendarmes in the service of the Pope, wherever they showed themselves, were driven back with curses and execrations down the side streets—and attempted no interference, where interference would have been in vain. The French soldiers chatted and laughed for a considerable time with the people; and it was not until the demonstration had fairly exhausted itself, that any serious effort was made by the French authorities to check it in any way. Can such a state of things last? If matters remain quiet in Upper Italy, the system at Rome seems perishing of itself. Should the Austrians, on the other hand, make any insane attempt upon the new-born kingdom of Italy, one of the most obvious means of annoyance at the disposal of the French Emperor, would be to withdraw his troops from Rome, and leave the Pope to his fate. The *Parti Prêtre* in Austria would struggle to the death against any policy which might lead to such a conclusion. Meanwhile time passes, and the situation of the Pope is becoming more desperate from day to day.

But what about these French armaments? Why should Louis Napoleon collect under arms so numerous a body of Frenchmen, when France is not threatened from any side? A short time back it was believed that just in the same way as he had defeated Russia to revenge the memorable campaign of 1812, and—as he had driven the Austrians out of Lombardy as an answer to the double occupation of Paris towards, and at the conclusion of the great European war, so he was about to find employment for his troops in Prussia—notably at Berlin. The vote of the Prussian Chamber, however, seems to have dissipated this dream. The new King of Prussia may be sufficiently well disposed to carry out the policy of his two immediate predecessors; but the nation—in this instance—wiser than their Sovereign, instinctively recoil from the pit which has been dug as a snare to their feet. Had the Prussians mixed themselves up with the fortunes of Austria in Venetia, they would very soon have found that the contest was to be decided rather on the banks of the Spree than of the Mincio. There is an end of that. The Rhenish provinces of Prussia are so tempting and so easy a bait, that it is no wonder if a French ruler should seek to incorporate them with his dominions. The Prussians have seen this, and have drawn back in time. Meanwhile, what is Louis Napoleon to do with these great armies which he is collecting at Chalons and elsewhere? Towards the latter end of LAST WEEK an idea prevailed in London that there is a secret understanding between Sardinia—may we not say Italy?—and France, in pursuance of which an attack is to be made upon Venetia, even if Francis Joseph should not provoke it by any overt act of hostility. The realisation of such a project, if it be seriously entertained, will entirely depend upon the turn which affairs may take in Hungary; and the prospect in that portion of the Austrian Empire is just now gloomy enough as far as the interests of Francis Joseph are concerned.

It is scarcely credible that Great Britain should be seriously involved in these complications of policy and intrigue upon the continent of Europe. The unhappy differences in the United States of North America are to us of far more immediate interest. The prosperity of about one-third of the inhabitants of these islands is for the next few years inextricably bound up with the fortunes of the cotton planters in the Southern States. Will the breach in the Union be healed? If not, the manufacturing districts of our own country will feel the results of the dissension with terrible intensity. The general opinion in town for the last six weeks or two months has been that the disturbances in the States were merely transitory, and that the North and South were so indissolubly bound together by the ties of mutual interest, that Separation was merely a popular outcry—the political hallucination of the moment. But if credit is to be attached to the recent advices from the other side of the Atlantic, the election of Abraham Lincoln is merely the match which has caused an explosion which had been carefully prepared for years beforehand. The Northerners now declare that the ulterior object of the Southern States for many years past has been the formation of a grand Slave Empire which should embrace the islands in the Gulf of Mexico, and the territories facing it. They say that this was the idea of General Walker, which failed simply because the man was not equal to the occasion. They say that the leading notion of the Southern Statesman, for many years past, has been to weaken the resources of the Northern, and to arm the Southern States.

In the days of President Pierce, when Mr. Jefferson Davis was Secretary of War, the conspiracy against the North was matured; and, during Mr. Buchanan's tenure of power, the policy has been fully carried out. The Army has been tampered with. Secessionists have been placed in all important posts. No effort has been spared to destroy the credit of the Government. The election of Abraham Lincoln only brought matters to a crisis, whilst Mr. Jefferson Davis is the head and leader of the conspiracy against the integrity of the Union. In the words of the American journalist, "At the South a movement towards the tropics is felt to be a necessity. More room for the Slave or a black Republic bordering the Gulf, instead of a white one is felt to be inevitable." The movement has come sooner than was expected.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The account that Henderson had given to Mrs. Lygon of the apparent restoration of amicable relations between Urquhart and Bertha was perfectly true. Mrs. Urquhart, relieved by the departure of Laura, and by the manner of Robert, from the immediate pressure and terror, had rallied, as such natures are mercifully permitted to do, and in another hour had smiles on her face, and even playfulness in her tongue. She *had* attained to the point of laughing at her husband's rough hair. Some among us consider those natures happy which can so rapidly undergo a transition from depression to levity, but some among us have their own standard of happiness. Yet Robert Urquhart was not dissatisfied with this facile nature. Himself a man of deep feeling, he was content with its absence in his wife, and though his admiration for the charming woman whom he had wedded never clouded his clear intellect with any haze of impression that she was far cleverer than she seemed—a delusion which many estimable husbands are proud to proclaim as a belief—he had contrived to find in the shallowness of her nature a reason for believing in its transparency. He fully recognised the intellect of Mrs. Lygon, and without hesitation pronounced Bertha to have been her dupe. Having delivered his wife from the snares of her superior sister, Urquhart was quite ready to turn to Bertha as to a child whom he had rescued from a scrape, and to whom, after the mildest scolding for her being led astray, he opened his great arms, and petted as before. Are we to blame a wife who tries to fulfil her satisfied husband's ideal of her character? Bertha became as cheerful, lively, *riante*, that afternoon, as if the little back chamber, the wrenched door, and two women in terror had been a morning dream, instead of a morning reality.

"I don't much care to talk about her any more, at present, my woman," said Robert Urquhart, in the course of the day, "but I would like to know whether she has plenty of means for travelling. I might have thought of that when I was sending her off."

"Laura? Oh yes, plenty," said Bertha. "She is a woman of business, and not like poor me.

She would never travel without all that she wanted. Don't let us talk about her any more, you great cross old thing."

"Nay, I am not cross," said Urquhart, taking one of her blond tresses in his large fingers. "I make a distinction, as my old schoolmaster used to say, between the child that has gone wrong and the child that has been led wrong, though when the old fellow came down on us with the taws I incline to believe that the delicate distinction vanished from his mind, or else his mind was not on terms with his old hand."

"Were you beaten much at school, Robert?"

"Not half enough," said her husband, in the tone of one who records a grievance. "I'd be a better man, if old Macfarlane had done his duty by me, but his conscience got seared in later life, and he only licked the small boys whom it was no trouble to fustigate; not that they didn't deserve all they got, though."

"You could not be a better man than you are, Robert dear."

"Eh, my woman, but that's a heathenish doctrine," said her husband, laughing. "I'm afraid your religious education was what might be expected from that prelatical church of yours. You hav'n't got much soundness of views out of what Sir Walter calls the 'lethargy' of the Church of England. However, I'll not say that I'm much worse than other people. I'll leave it to my wife to say that, behind my back."

"As if she would," said Bertha.

"Eh? He'll be a bold man that would like to hear all his wife says of him to other folks, Bertha. I've no such false courage, my dear woman."

"I am sure you might hear all I say of you, dear, though I know that I do not say half enough of your goodness. Don't, Robert dear—you'll pull my hair out. Let me go. I must talk to Angelique about your dinner, for I am afraid she has made no preparation for you."

"Well, go along, and then come back and soothe my savage breast with some music, for I'm not in the mood to work."

"Ah, you will keep thinking about Laura, and it is not right in you after we have made it all up," pouted Bertha.

"No, I'm thinking about her husband."

"Oh, it will be all right. He is very fond of her, and he will soon forgive her foolishness. He is not a stern hard man like somebody else's husband, who makes his poor little wife afraid to speak to him."

And the poor little wife left the room, to hurry off the note to her sister. And then she returned, and made herself perfectly agreeable to Robert, and sung him Scottish songs, into which she infused that pathos which has deceived so many a wise man into believing that a throat has some connection with the heart, and which, doubtless, suggested to the wisest of Englishmen the hint given by *Kent*, "not so young, sir, as to love a woman for her singing." Bertha not only sang tears into the eyes of her husband, but even into her own, as she warbled the songs of his country—and while she was doing this, far other tears stood in the eyes of the sister to whom she had transmitted the note received in the garden.

It was not until the exigencies of the toilette sent her to her own room, that Bertha thought it necessary to summon her lady's-maid, and Henderson had, to her indignation, been permitted to make some progress in her duties before her mistress inquired whether she had delivered that letter. Then, of course, the answer was monosyllabic.

"Did Mrs. Lygon send any message?"

"None, Madame."

"Gently, Henderson, you are tearing my hair, I am certain."

The lady's-maid brushed, and divided, and intersected, and plaited, and folded, and pinned, and performed all the rest of the capillary operations in a dogged silence. Such a manifestation of displeasure would have been utterly lost upon Mrs. Lygon, but was one of the things which it was in Bertha's nature to notice.

"You have lost your tongue to-day, Henderson, I think."

Henderson, delighted at having gained her little victory, did not abuse it by petulance, but said,

"Mrs. Lygon said that you had a headache, Madame, so I did not care to speak."

"Headache! had I a headache?" said Bertha, in her vacant way, and fixing her eyes on the window, yet not looking through it. "Oh! I dare say I had, but it has gone off."

"Mrs. Lygon was looking very pale and ill, Madame."

"Was she? I did not observe it, Henderson. Bring the braids lower down."

"I'll make you answer more feelingly than that, Madame," thought Henderson, as she disarranged her work, and flattened out a braid into a new shape. "But it was not to be wondered at, Madame," she said, aloud.

"No, perhaps not."

"I mean, Madame, that when I got into the garden, I saw a certain person part from Mrs. Lygon?"

"What!" said Bertha, suddenly turning. The gesture snatched her hair from the hands of Henderson, to the detriment of the pending operation, but without causing the least impatient expression upon the face of the lady's-maid—on the contrary, she looked pleased.

"He had been speaking to her."

"And how did they seem—I mean were they quarrelling—at high words?"

Perhaps it was only into the mind of a person like Henderson that such a thought could have passed, as then darted across that curious repertory.

"Oh, dear, no, Madame."

"They seemed on good terms?"

"The best, Madame."

"What do you mean by the best?"

"He was smiling, Madame, as he spoke—of course I could not hear what he said, but he seemed very much pleased at something Mrs. Lygon was saying, and he kissed his hand."

"*His* hand!" repeated Bertha, hastily.

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"Madame?" replied Henderson, who had heard perfectly what her mistress said.

"You say that he kissed his hand as he went away."

"No, Madame, he did not go away then."

"Not until they saw you coming?"

"Yes, Madame. Then I suppose Mrs. Lygon desired him to go, but I was too far off to hear her."

There came a flush over Bertha's fair face. The lady's-maid of course observed it—interpreted it, no doubt, in her own way, and no doubt wrongly, but she was not one of those who are content to allow any riddle to remain without a reading.

"Henderson," said Bertha, after a pause, "Mrs. Lygon has had a good deal of conversation with you upon certain matters—she has told me so."

Mary Henderson could see here no cue for reply.

"Don't you hear what I say to you?" said her mistress, impatiently.

"Certainly, Madame."

"Well, I preferred that she should speak direct to you, because my sister is a woman of business, and two are better than three in business matters. But everything that concerns her concerns me equally; you quite understand that?"

"Quite, Madame."

"You say that she sent me no message."

"If she had, Madame, I should have delivered it at once," said Henderson, rather pertly. "Madame has not found that I neglect to deliver messages, I hope."

The rebuke that should have followed such a speech to one's mistress was not given. Both mistress and servant well knew why. The latter, however, if not the first to feel ashamed of the situation, was the first to express herself so.

"I beg your pardon, Madame, I am sure. I did not mean to say that, and I ought not to have said it, but knowing that it was very important for you to hear anything Mrs. Lygon had to send, I felt hurt that you should think me capable of neglecting. But Mrs. Lygon had no message to send, only I think—but perhaps I have no business to think, leastways not to talk."

"We both trust you, as you know," said Bertha, covering her retreat with a piece of unreal dignity, which, of course, did not for a second deceive her attendant.

"And I hope I am trustworthy, Madame. Mrs. Lygon is good enough to think so, Madame."

"And you know what I think, Henderson. What were you going to say?"

"Madame was saying that Mrs. Lygon had talked to me a good deal. I hope that it was quite right in me to listen to her. Being your sister, Madame, I supposed that it must be quite right, but if I have made a mistake, I hope you will overlook it, as I had no intention to offend, quite the contrary."

Perfectly well as Mrs. Urquhart knew this to be said only for the purpose of provocation, or, at the best, as a means of discharging the speaker's ill-humour, she made the gentlest reply:—

"I wished you to obey my sister as you would obey myself."

"And I was too happy to do it, Madame; not in regard of being turned over from one mistress to another, which is not what I understood was in my place and my duty, but quite the contrary, but because Mrs. Lygon is a lady every inch of her, and if she is proud, which I am not saying she is not, a lady without pride is not the lady for me, and she knows her place and station, and I know mine. But if I might speak, Madame——"

The permission did not seem exactly needful, but Bertha gave it.

"Well, then, Madame, I think it is right for me to say that it would be a pity if any bad feelings, if you will excuse the word, should grow up between two ladies who are sisters."

"Bad feelings, Henderson!"

"Yes, Madame, that is my word, and it might be out of my place to look in a lady's face when she is reading another lady's letter, but as I could not help looking in Mrs. Lygon's face, my eyes told me that something was going wrong."

"My note appeared to displease my sister?"

"Quite that, Madame."

"But she had no right to be displeased at it," said Bertha, in a reproachful tone. "How could I help what happened?"

"No, Madame, only I thought it right to let you know."

"She *shall* go and see her, now then," was the girl's muttered speech, as she was rectifying the orbit of a wreath which had been favourably noticed by Mr. Urquhart, and which his affectionate wife had therefore desired her servant to select from her well-stocked wreathery.

"Of course it was right to let me know, but I can do nothing. Mrs. Lygon is going back to England, and I will write to her when she gets there. In the meantime she must get over her displeasure."

"Yes, Madame, and though Mr. Adair is a very bad man, he is no fool, and I dare say that he will give her the best advice."

"What has Mrs. Lygon to do with taking advice from him?"

"I am only a servant, Madame, and it is not for me to know more than I am told."

"After what has happened in this house, Henderson," said Bertha, angrily, and surprised out of her ordinary tone of almost deference towards one who knew so much, "it is ridiculous in you to speak in that manner. There, I did not mean to speak unkindly, but you ought not to provoke me—you would not speak in that way to Mrs. Lygon."

"I don't think Mrs. Lygon would fly out at me, Madame, when I was only trying to speak for her good in my humble way."

"Well, well, speak for my good. I know you mean it. What made you say that about Mr. Adair giving advice to my sister?"

"I suppose, Madame, that they had made friends, they seemed to be upon such good terms in the garden, and when I left Mrs. Lygon she walked off

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in the path which he had taken, so I thought that she might be going to show him your letter."

"Absurd!"

"Very likely, Madame, and you must know best. It was only my guess."

"Why, she hates him."

"I do, Madame, with all my heart and soul and mind and strength, and hope to be forgiven for saying my Catechism backwards like a witch; but what a lady may do is not for me to say. Only they seemed very good friends, and I think that Mrs. Lygon went after him, when she had read your letter, which, as I said, made her angry. When we are angry, Madame, it stands to reason that we like to make a confidence to somebody."

"But not to people we hate," urged Bertha.

"But I have heard, Madame, that the easiest time to make up a quarrel with one person is when we are just beginning a quarrel with another."

"You don't know what you are talking about," said Mrs. Urquhart, impatiently. "Mrs. Lygon can have no friendship with that person, and she goes back to England directly."

"No, Madame, I think not."

"But I tell you that it is so. Mr. Urquhart advised her to do so, and I wrote her the same."

"Everybody does not always take advice, Madame, more's the pity! Mrs. Lygon is not going back to England, quite the contrary."

"How do you know?"

"I have no right to know anybody's secrets except my own, Madame, but if things are told me I can't help hearing them, and it has come to my knowledge that Mrs. Lygon has taken a lodging in Versailles, Madame."

"It cannot be."

"Well, Madame, perhaps not," said Henderson, wilfully miscomprehending, "and perhaps Mr. Adair has taken it for her, which would be more becoming than a lady's having to search about in a foreign town for a place for herself."

"How did you hear this, Henderson? through Silvain, I suppose?"

"If it was through him, Madame, it is not the less true. He is not in the habit of speaking the thing which is not the truth, Madame."

"And did he tell you where Mrs. Lygon had taken a lodging?"

"No, he did not, Madame," said Henderson, who was quite above the ambition of deserving the kind of praise she had just assigned to her lover.

"Find out for me, then, Henderson, as quickly as you possibly can," said Bertha. "I shall not wear that dress again," she added, in order to prevent any further petulance from her domineering menial.

"Oh, Madame!" said Henderson, with a curtsey of real gratitude. And, indeed, it was a dress which her mistress had no business to give away, but, when one pays black mail, the best way is to pay it as handsomely and cheerfully as if it were a subscription to a charity, and going to be advertised.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ABOUT the appointed hour, Ernest Adair presented himself at the house of his friend, M. Silvain. The latter was superintending the closing of the neat little shop, and he expressed much pleasure at the punctuality of Adair, and conducted him into a small room, well known to the latter, and in the rear of the establishment. This apartment was Silvain's pride and joy, and in the hope that it would one day be honoured by becoming the home of Madame Silvain, *née* Henderson, the affectionate perfumer had done his best to adorn it, and render it worthy such a distinction. The alcove, in which was M. Silvain's bed, was shut off with pretty rose-coloured curtains, festooned with divers carefully chosen flowers which, in the mind of the enamoured owner, symbolised love, truth, and beauty, though it must be revealed that he had hopelessly failed in an attempt to make Mademoiselle's matter-of-fact nature recognise the poetical value of the device. An elegant clock, of curious contrivance, showed the figure of Pleasure, who was trying to conceal the Hours with her scanty drapery, whence one hour, that of the time then passing, always peeped forth, and M. Silvain's whispered hope that his exertions to make *all* Mademoiselle's hours those of pleasure, had been more fortunate than his floral poetry; and had elicited a small slap on the cheek, and a request from his mistress that he would not talk such ridiculous nonsense. A variety of highly-coloured prints, selected with due regard to the extreme propriety of the British character, hung upon the walls, and there were two or three charming little mirrors, with china Cupids and nymphs inviting the beholder to look into the glass they surrounded. Need it be said that the eternal artificial flowers, in vases, were there under their crystal covers, or that a lamp, with a shade covered with the most unobjectionable *diablerie*, stood upon a gilded bracket? The apartment would not hold much furniture, but what there was had been chosen with taste. The small carpet was of English manufacture, and rather vulgar and flaring, but the homage was in its parentage, not its beauty, as M. Silvain had also explained to Matilde. Altogether the room was as dainty as the lover could make it, and its contiguity to the perfumery in the shop filled it with a composite and delectable aroma, and completed its bower-like character.

The appearance of the only occupant of the pretty room was scarcely in keeping with its attractions. This was a coarsely built man, with a face reddened, it might be, by constant exposure to sun and wind, and whose ear-rings were not seen to much advantage amid the mass of long, black hair that tangled around his head. The expression of his features was not exactly ferocious, but it was stern and forbidding, and a smile which disclosed an array of formidably strong white teeth did not extend itself to his keen dark eyes. His hands were red and muscular, and a coloured shirt, secured at the throat by a ribbon and ring, was surmounted by no collar, and showed a powerful bull neck, one that might have belonged to a gladiator of the old days. The guest's figure was broad, and, as far as could be seen, for he did not rise from his

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lounging position on a low chair, he appeared to be under the middle height, a disadvantage apparently more than compensated for in his large and powerful limbs. Coarsely, rather than carelessly dressed, it would have been hard to assign him a profession, though perhaps his general bearing, and some mystic signs that had been traced with gunpowder on the back of his hands, might suggest the impression that he had some connection with sea-service.

"This is my friend, Cesar Haureau," said Silvain, as they entered. "This, my friend Cesar, is Monsieur Adair, an Englishman, and now you have only to become friends for life."

The process by which the two visitors to M. Silvain initiated the amiable effort suggested by their host was perhaps but slightly in accordance with the affectionate sentiment. Their keen eyes instantly met, and each attempted a searching estimate of his new acquaintance. M. Cesar Haureau uttered a salutation, of which the most that can be said is that it was as cordial as the brief nod that accompanied it, and Adair, taking little pains to repress a curl of his lip, muttered something about the excess of his happiness, deposited himself in a couch on the opposite corner of the room from that in which his new friend for life was seated, and kindled his cigarette without further speech. The action seemed to a similar course to M. Haureau, who drew of a tin case a short black pipe, and in a few nents there was little reason to complain of effeminate presence of perfumery in that deseated bower.

M. Silvain made no complaint, but produced a ottle of cognac, and the usual adjuncts, shouted an order or two to his servant, and closing the door, sat down at the table, between his guests.

It is difficult to be silent, whether you are sulky or not, when a lively Frenchman resolves that you shall speak, and is not content with being the sole orator of a party; and although at first neither Adair nor the stranger seemed to evince the least inclination to sociability, M. Silvain's determined exertions gradually acted as a solvent, and he dexterously entangled first the one and then the other in conversation with himself, finally managing to link them together in a discussion which they approached reluctantly, but in which they at length engaged with some spirit. A few exchanges of the courtesies of the table aided to thaw the guests of M. Silvain, and in half an hour the three were as good friends as tobacco, brandy, and unrighteous talk can make three men, of whom no two would care one farthing if the third were taken out of the group and incontinently hanged. Indeed, such *réunions* are held by some folks to be pleasanter and healthier than society in which the interlocutors stoop to the weakness of feeling friendly interest in one another, and bore themselves to convince, to advise, or to sympathise.

It might not be exactly profitable to relate the matter of their talk, but those who have had the advantage of joining in such debates—it is false to say that they are sometimes held nearer Pall Mall than is Versailles—will not have much difficulty in comprehending the staple of the discussion. There is one topic which never fails to supply ample theme on such occasions. There are men, of the class that loves such meetings, who have had the good fortune to meet with women in every way worthy of such biographers, and to have obtained, in the course of life, a large amount of anecdotal information bearing upon the general habits, or individual peculiarities, of that portion of the gentler creation. In France, that department of natural history is extensively cultivated, and upon this occasion the two Frenchmen, each in his way, vindicated the honour of his country by parading the results of much observation, and much original and acquired knowledge in regard to the other sex, but it would be doing Ernest Adair an injustice, and making a conventional sacrifice to popular prejudice, were it inferred that for every sly jest from M. Silvain, and every coarse story from M. Haureau, Mr. Adair was not quite prepared with repayment, or that his higher education did not enable him charmingly to vary his immoralities with the additional flavour of a profanity which was Voltairean in everything except wit. Could Matilde have had a reporter in that room but for ten minutes, she would never have again spoken to its owner, and yet he was far the least communicative of the party. How happy ought Englishwomen to be in the thought that those to whom they have given their pure hearts, never, when the wine goes round, or the club smoking-room is merry at midnight, approach discussions, or introduce anecdotes, which only befit profligate Frenchmen, or Englishmen like Mr. Ernest Adair!

But conversation, be it never so curiously flavoured, palls after a time; and unless, as in the Scandinavian theory of the destiny of the world, the end of all things is to be Silence, some new excitement must be found. M. Silvain was not a Scandinavian, and he produced cards. Not caring to take part in the game himself, he found in his duty as a host a graceful excuse for abstaining; and having set his friends at the table, and provided them with ample store of stimulant, he promised them supper, and departed to prepare it.

M. Haureau and Mr. Adair had cemented the new friendship that was to last for life by a lavish interchange of the frankest communications on subjects of the nature that has been indicated; but the confidence which is implied by revelations of one's affairs of the heart, and one's views of theology, does not invariably extend itself into similar trustfulness in regard to mundane matters. The keen glance that marked the introduction of the two friends had been exchanged, with increased earnestness, as they drew near to the table, and while they were performing the prefatory operations with the cards. These have been unkindly called the Devil's picture-books; but had a sketching imp been seated between the curtains of that alcove, he would have probably enriched his patron's portrait-gallery with the aid of some recollections of the faces of those who were handling the picture-books, and were striving by sidelong and stealthy looks to ascertain the principle on which the play was to be conducted.

Before cutting, Adair filled himself a glass of

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cognac, and tossed it off to the health of his antagonist. The latter, who had been partaking somewhat more freely of the liquor than Adair, acknowledged the compliment, but did not imitate his friend for life.

"You are quite right to be timid and sober," said Adair. "I am a terrible player. Keep your eye on me."

"I shall do that," replied M. Haureau, almost rudely, looking his man straight in the face, and bringing down his cards on the table with a noise never heard where gentlemen cheat one another.

"Spare our friend's furniture," said Ernest, with a sneer, "unless you intend to present him with your winnings."

"They will not be much," replied the other, "according to what I hear."

"Of my play?" asked Adair, gaily.

"Of your means, on the contrary," said M. Haureau, with a coarse laugh. "But we won't ruin you, if we can help it."

"How good you are!" said Ernest Adair, blandly. And with these amiable preludes they got to work.

They played slowly at first, afterwards more rapidly, for each had perceived, from indications well known to the professors of the art, that any vulgar cheating would be instantly detected by his friend. And they played in a vicious silence.

"Well, I have not hurt you much, M. the Englishman," said Haureau, after about an hour had passed. Ernest, in fact, was a slight winner.

"Not in my pocket," replied Adair. "But your nervousness and vigilance are not complimentary. I thought that you sailors had more dash."

"Who told you I was a sailor?" demanded Haureau, fiercely.

"I can smell the tar on your hands from where I sit," replied Adair. "But, as you would say, that proves nothing—at least it would prove nothing in England."

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing. Only that in England the same odour is often found in hands that never handled a rope—except to pick it to pieces."

He, in his turn, looked steadily at his friend for life, but whether the full insolence of the speech was not comprehended by the latter, or whether his self-command was considerable, he only replied,

"Are you afraid to go on?"

"No, but it is hardly worth while, for such stakes. I wish Silvain would bring us some supper."

"Play away, and perhaps you'll be rich enough to dine to-morrow better than I suppose you did to-day."

Adair smiled, and proposed to treble the stakes.

"Oh, if that will suit your finances, it will suit mine," said Haureau, rattling money in his pocket.

"If I am unfortunate, my dear friend Silvain will be delighted to help me," said Adair.

"I make no doubt of it," said Haureau, drily.

And they played again, and the sketching imp might have noticed, with admiration, Adair's distended nostril and the rapid manipulations of his cards. His antagonist, on the contrary, seemed to take the work more easily, and once or twice refreshed himself at the cognac bottle.

When they next stopped, Adair was a considerable winner. He counted and pouched the gold, looking pleasantly at Haureau.

"I *shall* dine well to-morrow," said Ernest.

"I hope so," said his companion. "But I must have my revenge."

"The sentiment is unworthy of a Christian," said Adair, yawning, and rising. "Where the devil is that Silvain and his supper?" And he was going to open the door, when M. Haureau laid a hand of iron on his arm.

"Sit down," he said, pressing Adair back towards his seat. "I'll have my revenge, I tell you."

And strong as was Adair, he found that he was no match for the Frenchman. He yielded to the ungentle suasion, and resumed his seat.

"Luck is against you," he said. "Don't blame me, if I double my winnings."

"That depends," said Haureau, significantly. "Do not play too fast."

Ernest Adair's eyes shone savagely, but he did not answer. He took another glass of brandy, and then, seizing the cards, shuffled them slowly.

Then they got to work for the third time, but not for long. Some ten minutes might have elapsed, and the luck was still with Adair, when, as he was putting a card on the table, Haureau brought his mighty hand down upon the delicate hand of Adair, which the blow seemed actually to flatten on the board.

"Hold it there, and give me the card from your lap," shouted Haureau, keeping Adair's hand down, as in a vice.

Ernest uttered a fierce oath, and had there been a candlestick beside him, would have dashed it on the head of the other; but the table was lighted by a small swinging lamp, and the bottle at which he next glanced was just beyond his reach.

"Let go, scoundrel!" he cried.

"You are the scoundrel. That card," demanded Haureau, in a voice of thunder.

The sketching imp will not, until he returns home, see such a fire as sprang up in the eyes of the infuriated gambler. Maddened with shame, pain, and rage, he started to his feet, and suddenly thrust the disengaged hand into his bosom. The next instant steel glittered, and a small poniard was driven deep into the ponderous arm that fastened him down to the table.

Haureau's angry roar was answered by the door being thrown open, and by the appearance of a couple of gendarmes. They were accompanied by M. Silvain, and appeared completely to understand the situation.

"I assured them that you were not quarrelling," said Silvain, with much earnestness, "and that you were the best friends in the world—friends for life, in fact; but there is no making an official understand anything but what he sees."

What they saw was an exasperated man holding a poniard, and another with a grin of rage and pain trying to staunch the blood that was flowing from

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his wounded arm. In the presence of these facts it was not remarkable that the officers were deaf to argument, or that in five minutes Ernest Adair was on his way to prison.

"You did not tell me he would stab," said Haureau, reproachfully. "This business is in excess of our bargain."

"It shall be counted, my best friend," said Silvain, radiantly. "It shall be counted. But lose no time—hasten to a surgeon."

And it was with a smiling lip, and with occasional bursts of song, that M. Silvain addressed himself to the work of restoring order in the desecrated bower.

(To be continued.)

LIFE ON AN ALABAMA PLANTATION.

It is my eldest sister,—some years older than myself,—who lives on the Alabama plantation I have referred to. She married when I was a schoolboy, so that I have paid more visits to her than to my Charleston sister, who married ten years later. I have been the guest of my elder brother-in-law, D——, on three different plantations. He went the way of planters' sons when he was young,—leaving home to buy land further west, and settle down with negroes, to grow cotton. Twice more he has moved westwards; but, as he has lived nine years on his present estate, I hope he may be satisfied to remain there. My sister Anna, his wife, hopes so too, but is far from confident. In a year or two it will be time for their son Madison to be beginning life for himself: and Anna says that when Madison is fairly off, to shift for himself, she shall feel more secure than she does now of not having to go into a new scene of life, and among strange neighbours. It would look more like remaining, if D—— would build the house he has been planning for years. We talked it over on my first visit; and it was mentioned on my second: but nothing is done yet; and I have my doubts whether there will be. D—— gave me an odd sort of a hint, the last time we spoke on the subject,—that a loghouse is safer than a farmhouse for some people, as it does not kindle so well, nor burn so fast; and that as long as the Abolitionists are allowed to talk, a man cannot be too careful. I could not seriously suppose, at the time, that such a master could dread incendiarism at the hands of his own negroes; but I am inclined now to think that he does. It seems an insane apprehension for a man to suffer under, during the mature and vigorous period of his life (he is five-and-forty): but there is no use in contending with it. No opinion from the North has any value in this case; for a citizen from thence is either taken for an abolitionist, or informed that none but Southern men have any knowledge of the designs of "that infernal race." So Anna must make up her mind to live in a loghouse for three parts of the year, till the great question of slavery is settled. During the three unhealthy months the family go down to Mobile, where they have a pleasant circle of friends, and, as Anna says, can refresh their memories as to how to behave in society. I do not at all agree as to their savagery. They are so hospitable that they really see a great many people in the course of their nine months' abode on the plantation; and they see them in the domestic way, which is more favourable to intercourse than any amount of mere dinner or evening visiting.

The last time I went, I did hope to find some improvement in the approaches to the house, and in the surrounding features, if not in the dwelling itself. D—— had made a great deal of money by several good cotton-crops, and had bought more negroes; and it was natural to suppose that some of his gains would be applied to the removal of discomfort and ugliness. But I was cured of all such expectations before I came in sight of the house. My driver took his way among the trees, or over a knoll, crashing and plunging through the underwood, to avoid the road, which would have had to be mended before we could pass some parts of it.

I saw something of the way of mending, a little further on, where some mules had broken the fence. A white man, who looked muddy from head to foot, complexion and all, was chipping lazily at a rail; a negro was slowly turning a dibble in a hole which was to hold a stake; and two more negroes were warming their hands over the fire which was blazing on the ground. My driver pointed with his whip up the glade of the wood, and observed that the master was coming. In a moment a gentleman on a white horse came ambling down the glade, and I saw it was D——. We agreed that the fence would hardly be closed before night, at the rate the fellows were proceeding; but D—— said that would be better than having it fall to pieces next day, as it would if he hurried them. If this was really the alternative, I had nothing to say. But who was the white man actually handling tools?

Why, he was from a distance,—a hungry wretch who must get bread somehow; and hungry enough he must be to work,—or pretend to work,—with negroes. The gentlemen round did not like his coming;—D—— himself was vexed at it; but they had ascertained that the fellow was no abolitionist; and therefore they could not send him away. Some mischief would come of it, however. It always did turn out so. If nothing worse happened, it was a bad thing for the negroes to despise a white; and they were sure to grow cockahoop when they had a white among them whom they could look down upon. What a state of society it must be in the North, D—— observed, where white men were daily at work before the eyes of the negroes! For the fiftieth time I tried to make my brother-in-law comprehend that work was no degradation in my part of the country, where it was not associated with the idea of slavery, and that therefore there was nothing for anybody to despise in the act of earning one's bread; but D—— cannot understand it at all.

He turned homewards with me, and he enjoyed, as more than once before, my exclamations at the view from the bluff half-a-mile from the house. The broad, brimming Alabama river ran far below, between densely-wooded banks, but redeemed from a certain look of desolation by the puff of

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steam from a river-boat which was at a landing-place, taking in cotton and firewood. Down to the river, and away on the other side to near the horizon, was an expanse of forest so compact that it seemed as if an army might march on the tree-tops for miles. Far in the distance between the forest and the sky, appeared a wavy line of blue uplands; and here and there in the nearer regions there were clearances of some hundreds of acres, with rude paths down to the river. On our side were bluffs—two or three right and left—lifting up their limestone ledges and precipitous crests from the woods below, and affording a stretch of table-land, like that we were standing on, for cultivation. D——'s plantation stretched back from the ridge above the left bank of the river, gently sloping to the south-east.

Nothing was left of the wood that could be got rid of. The house stood exposed, bare and scorched, without any shade except such as could be had by making the verandahs exceedingly wide. It looks all very pretty, it is admitted, to see a background of evergreen forest: and it sounds very tempting to go, in the hot noon, into the thickets where the ground is gay with violets, may-apple, buckeye, blue lupin, iris, and crowpoison—the fleur-de-lis of these parts: but the mosquitoes spoil everything. When one chooses one's hour for a drive among the clustering honeysuckles and the blossoming sourwood, all alive with butterflies, and the yellow jasmine, and all the combined shrubs of the garden and trees of the forest, all is charming; but it does not do to set down one's house among them. The negroes can live in thickets, and nestle under rows of Pride-of-India trees; but the whites would go mad with the bites and stings of insects.

So there stands the loghouse, as formerly, only with its shingled roof looking more parched and warped than ever, and the fences and gates grayer and shabbier. Anna and her young daughter Minnie are in the piazza, somewhat differently occupied. My sister has her hands dyed blue. She has been standing at a long board on trestles, cutting out woollen dresses for a score of negro women and children. D—— shows me her right hand, deeply marked with the rings of the large scissors, and tells me that is the way ladies have to work in the South, to which Anna appends the well-worn remark that the mistresses are more slaves than the negroes. Some old women are summoned to carry away the whole apparatus for to-day, and bring water and towel for the mistress's hands.

I ask whether those old women could not do that sort of work. There is no such precise fit in the garments of field-hands as to require skill in dressmaking, I should think; for the clothes of all the women I see in the cotton-field might fit any one person as well as another. Why cannot the house-servants, some of whom seem to be always sewing, spare the lady all this cutting out?

It cannot be done, I am told. It is not the fit that is the question, but the economy of the material. There is no negro woman who can learn not to cut cloth to waste. Such is plantation doctrine; but it does not hold good everywhere; for negro girls dress very well, without extravagance, in some places where they have to cut out and make their own dresses.

Minnie, meantime, has been collecting her wits, carried off skyhigh by the book she has in her hand. Reclining in a corner of the wide sofa on the other side of the piazza, she has been lost in the witchery of some native magazine poetry, or the turns of a romantic story. The child has grown much, and is almost a woman,—and a very pretty one. We rarely see in the North so healthy and blooming a form and complexion as among these Southern girls who live almost constantly in the open air. This seems to do them more good than the summer heat and want of exercise do them harm. When Minnie was once so far recalled to the realities of life as to see who we were, she was so affectionate and delighted as to enable me to recognize in her the old playfellow I had been longing to greet.

"How old we are growing!" said I, when she went in to dress for dinner. "That child looks almost as old as her mother was when she married."

"Oh! don't talk of marrying!" exclaimed Anna. "I can't bear to think of it."

"Well, well! there is plenty of time yet," said I. "She is hardly sixteen, I think."

"Yet we have to be thinking about it, whether we will or no," said D——. "We have had some little unpleasantness with two or three of our friends lately, because we cannot give her away in a hurry, and so early."

"My little Minnie going to marry!" I exclaimed, in amusement and wonder.

"I fear it must be before long," her mother said. "But there is nothing in view at the moment. We have persuaded her to wait awhile, and we hope it may be some time before any youth appears who can at all correspond with her requirements; and she must have a perfect Bayard, with a good deal of the Apollo or Byron, and a likeness to the Admirable Crichton."

"Yes. I hope she is safe, in that way," observed D——. "She is so romantic that the man does not exist—"

"I am afraid that is a false security," said I. "What delights romantic people is not what they find, but what they make; not what they actually see, but what they believe. Minnie will probably see a Bayard and all the rest in some neighbouring youth, because the image occupies her eye."

"That is my fear," Anna replied. "I wish I were sure of her till her twentieth birthday. But the girls have such trains of suitors here."

This I knew to be true, from the number of young men who leave the cities and come down from the North, to seek their fortunes on the virgin soil of the newer cotton states.

The governesses who are obtained from New England, and scattered among the planters' houses, are usually too old to marry in a region where marriage takes place much too early. Thus, while the maidens of New England are maintaining themselves in great numbers and in various ways, the planters' daughters are married almost before they have ceased to be children. Each mother hopes and purposes to extend the period

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of youthful freedom and improvement in the case of her own girls; and every mother is disappointed when the time comes.

"And what of Madison?" I asked. "What sort of a fellow shall I find him, I wonder."

Anna looked proud. D—— laughed.

"Madison will soon show you his quality," said he.

"Yes," said Anna, "you will see at once the turn that *he* takes."

"So he is to be a character, is he?" I inquired.

"Why, yes," replied D——. "Our young men are ambitious, and almost every one has some particular notion of distinguishing himself. It may not be amiss. It may give them a purpose. It makes them show character early."

"So much character! So much character!" exclaimed my sister, complacently.

"Plenty of peculiarity," I thought, when Madison came in to dinner, with his glass in his eye, a solemn demeanour, and a condescending notice of me, his uncle. I soon gathered from his oracular words, that the boy had discovered the Perpetual Motion, and considered himself already separated from the common herd of mankind. He had travelled to the north—even to Harvard University—to communicate his discovery to the Professor of Natural Philosophy there; and he had returned, more than ever satisfied with his achievement. The Professor being ill, he had seen the Professor's lady. Sounding her about the probability of a candid hearing from the great man, he had obtained the reply, kind but jocose, that the Professor would no doubt be happy to attend to what he had to propose, on any subject, she might say, except perhaps Perpetual Motion, on which he had so many applications, and had suffered so much waste of time.

Madison here rose, and made a flourishing bow, and turned homewards to provide for communicating his discovery to the world, without hindrance from old dons, ignorant, envious, and obstructive.

When we rose from table, Madison kept his seat, preaching about perpetual motion. To my surprise, D—— shut the door behind Anna and the children, and sat down again. When the lad had finished his lecture, he withdrew to his studies, and D—— said to me,

"What would you do with such a lad as that?"

"That depends on what his notions are worth."

"I don't put any confidence in them, myself; but, if he really has a turn for study—"

"Just so. Only let it *be* study. Don't keep him here, puffing himself up with the fancy of being a philosopher. Send him to college. Why not send him to Harvard, where he would be near us? He would find his level there, and discover that our Professors may possibly know more than he does."

"Ah! that is exactly what can't be done," replied D——. "It is a disadvantage for life to a man here to have been to a northern college. He never gets over the suspicion of being tainted with bad opinions on the negro question."

"Send him to a southern college, then. They do not stand so high as Harvard and New York; but probably they can teach Madison something."

"No doubt; and it would be a great blessing, I'm sure, to us all. But the students of our southern colleges are apt to be so intemperate in politics that more and more parents are unwilling to send their sons there. A few weeks ago, these 'sons of the Chivalry' learned that a sister of Mrs. Beecher Stowe was staying in one of the Professors' houses; and they serenaded her with marrow-bones and cleavers, and insulting songs."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes; that is their notion of patriotism; and I should not exactly like Madison to take that turn, though I hope he will do his duty by his State the first time the North goes too far."

The end of the matter was that no decision seemed feasible, and I saw plainly that Madison would go on with "his studies," as his mother said, but as I should have put it with "his dreams," till some strong reality should bring out something more natural than was to be seen at present. He must be a planter, D—— said. His parents would not hear of the Church for him. They owned that, while entirely convinced that Slavery was a scriptural institution, they did not like to see clergymen turning slave-owners, setting an overseer over their negroes, and themselves watching the overseer. It was better that their clergy should come from the North, fresh to the institution. They could be more free than a southern man to board out, or hire negroes for house-service, as an alternative to having a plantation of their own. They usually fell into this last way of life by marriage or otherwise; but it did not quite suit D——'s notions of a clergyman's position. He could see no way for Madison but beginning life on cotton-land, in the usual way: and whatever fancies the lads might have while in their teens, they always did come round to this at last, unless they early entered the army or navy.

It seemed to me that one part of education might have been better attended to, both in my nieces' and nephews' case; that of assisting their parents in their every-day business, and preventing some of the discomforts which are always occurring where slaves are left to themselves for an hour. On the first morning, for instance, we were all roused unconscionably early. While dressing, I supposed my watch must have stopped for an hour and a half in the night; and when we met at the breakfast-table it appeared that others had supposed the same. It was then half-past six; but the hot waffles, buck-wheat cakes, eggs and beefsteak, hominy and broiled ham, were on the table, as if it was the proper eight o'clock. The cook had been too lazy to ask the "body-servants" to inquire the time, and had served breakfast by guess. The family laughed; but it seemed to me that Minnie might undertake to announce the hour to the servants, if it was really impossible to trust them with the care of a kitchen clock. I found, however, that no confidence was felt in the watches; for I was appealed to, nearly every half-hour in the day, within doors or in the field, by the negroes, to know what o'clock it was.

After breakfast, again, when I went with Anna

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on her round of morning duties, it seemed to me that there were various things that son and daughter might have seen to. In the negro quarter there was a sick man cowering over the fire, with nobody to attend to him. His wife was amusing herself in the sun, and had given him no breakfast. We had to stay till we saw him properly fed by his sulky wife. In another cabin there was a wretched baby, all skin and bone, moaning on a mat; and the mother was absent in that case, too. My sister observed that Diana would be the death of her baby, by such neglect. There was no making her attend to her own child.

"Diana!" said I. "Was not that the name of the woman who nursed you so admirably through your fever? But it is not the same woman, of course."

"The same," my sister replied. "You will constantly find among these people that they nurse any white person with great ostentation, while they will not trouble themselves to wait on husband or child. I don't mean that it is so with all. The number of runaways shows that women will dare everything to meet a husband or free a child; but those that we call contented negroes behave like Diana, or like that exemplary wife that we stood over till she fed her husband."

It struck me that here was something for Minnie to do; and so I thought when the old woman who collected and took care of the infants while the mothers were in the field had a score of complaints and petitions to make about all manner of unreasonable things; and when Flora and Bet, Juliet and Sal, waylaid us with handfuls of eggs or a fowl which the mistress was expected to buy. I supposed she had supplied the cocks and hens and the food, and would hardly, therefore, pay for the eggs and the chickens; but she said it was expected. Her only doubt was as to whether these really came from the proper poultry-yard. She was always afraid they might be stolen from a neighbour. Her husband did all he could to keep the people at home at night; but he was aware that they could and did get out and visit other plantations; and when there were any Mean-whites in the neighbourhood there was seldom a night in which some robbery did not take place.

Just at the moment we met D—— coming from the stables. He never looks otherwise than good-humoured; but his wife divined that something was wrong. As she looked in his face, he said aloud that he had found the ice-house door standing wide, and the ice melting as fast as it could this warm morning; and if Tippoo did not mind his duty better, it would be necessary to punish him. Still my sister led the way to a spot where we could speak in private; and there, leaning over the fence, as if admiring the prospect, we heard what had happened. D——'s saddle and bridle had disappeared in the night—a handsome saddle; but that was not the worst of it. He was to be compelled to ride under difficulties, or not at all. Moreover, the best part of the blacksmith's tools were gone. For some weeks there had been petty thefts of eggs, vegetables, bacon, fodder, and articles of dress; now a hat, now a pair of boots, or a razor and strop. D—— or Anna looked over the knives every night, and locked them up. I observed that both assumed at once that the white labourer I had seen, or some other neighbour of the same class, must be at the bottom of these thefts. The inconvenience was becoming so serious that something must be done. Anna asked her husband which of the people he would have flogged, to obtain a confession. D—— replied that he wished he could get to the bottom of it in some other way. There was so little satisfaction in what was confessed by the people. Any one of them would say it was A who set him on to steal, or B, or C, or the mistress, or the Devil, or the President, according to the supposed suspicion of the master. This was true, Anna said; but something must be done—some example must be made. We must consult the overseer.

To the overseer's house we went, followed by many eyes. But it was natural that I should wish to see the place; and, besides, the man was not at home. The cottage was like what it used to be, but more bare, ugly, and comfortless. A few fowls were strutting about within the zigzag pole-fence; the piazza was dirty, and had two broken chairs in it. There was fishing tackle against the wall, and a worn-out rifle over the mantelpiece. This was for show, the serviceable arms being out of sight. There was a shelf of books and a medicine-chest, and a chair and bare table, and that was all. We had hardly looked round us when the overseer came in from the field. He was as full of wrath against the thieves as could be desired, I remember; but that is nearly all I can recal, for his talk was as full of oaths as Minnie's was of sighs and raptures, or Madison's of technical terms. I always thought that D——'s habit of swearing was something out of all ordinary measure; but it was moderate and gentlemanly in comparison with his overseer's. Of course I omit this characteristic in citing their conversation. The overseer's information amounted to little. He told of another theft or two, was certain that three or four of the negroes whom he mentioned had been on foot all night, by their laziness and their appearance this morning, and intended to flog them if they did not confess before the day was out. Anna walked away out of earshot at this moment. She "makes it a principle not to know what negroes are to be whipped, or when, or where. It could do no good; and if her feelings were excited, it might change her manner towards those particular negroes, or perhaps towards them all."

We followed her when all was said; and as we overtook her, the overseer was telling D—— that the driver of the nearest stage-coach had been "hit" that morning; not very seriously, but a great quarrel would come of it.

"Shot," my sister exclaimed, in answer to my look of inquiry.

"A man shot!" I exclaimed.

"You look as if you had never heard of such a thing before," said D——. And the overseer eyed me with evident contempt.

"There never was anything like this country for quarrels," exclaimed my sister, in a tone of

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annoyance. "Nay, my dear," said she to her husband, who would have checked her, "you know we were looking back the other day through the nine years we have lived here, and we found" —and here she turned to me—"that the attempts to kill somebody or other have been, on an average, four a week for the whole nine years."

"Is it possible?" I exclaimed. "And do the whites kill the most blacks, or the reverse?"

"Oh! it has nothing to do with the negroes at all," Anna replied. "That is, I mean that I am speaking of white gentlemen attacking one another."

"Gentlemen!" I involuntarily exclaimed.

"You should be aware, sir," said the overseer, in a singularly disagreeable way, "that we are all gentlemen here. We have no white labourers, except when you send us a scamp here and there from the North."

As I took no notice, feeling no call to teach the overseer that brawling and manslaughter are not signs of good-breeding, Anna went on to tell me that a neighbouring clergyman had lately excited a strong sensation by preaching from the Sixth Commandment, and in the course of his sermon giving the statistics of manslaughter in Alabama for the last ten years in comparison with that of New and Old England. The facts were so extraordinary that the preacher had been requested to publish his sermon; but when it was half through the press he had been so threatened that he was obliged to stop. The overseer growled out that this was all right; and even D—— observed that it was injudicious to bring accusations against a state of society which the pastor did not, in fact, understand. Anna shook her head, and said no more.

The fields were worth visiting that fine spring day. The field-hands were hideous, especially the women, with their scanty, dingy, coarse dresses, their floundering gait, and their vacant countenances streaming with perspiration. The ridges left by the plough were being converted into little mounds by hand, and the seed was already dropped into some of the holes. Elsewhere there were young cotton-plants to be kept clean from weeds; and we also saw some corn growing within another fence. D—— differs from his neighbours in choosing to grow more food than they do, saying that he may make less money by that part of his land, but that he gains in security. Recent events have reminded me of this, and I am hoping that he may have food enough within his own boundary to save him and his people from the alarm of famine in case of Mobile being blockaded. The young cotton-plants, of the most vivid green, were flourishing when I last saw them—each one with a handful of cotton-seed about its stem as manure.

The sun was getting high, and we turned homewards, while the overseer resumed his watch.

Minnie was absorbed in writing, though the younger children seemed to me to need some other supervision than that of their negro nurse. She roused herself when the cake and wine appeared, and was willing to take a drive in the afternoon—the drive promising charms both of nature and friendship. In plain words, we were to go and see a pretty little prairie, five miles off, and to make two or three calls on our way home.

Two gentlemen dropped in, and stayed to dinner at two. I could have fancied this a continuation of my last visit, but for the growth of the young people. There was the old story of indifferent soup, roast turkey (rather skinny), and ham (excellent); and of course a salad to be dressed with the gravy of the ham—a real hit in the eating way, in my opinion. There was a boiled fowl set down in one odd place, and a tongue in another: a lump of pork, stewed or somehow disguised; a vast variety of pickles, and the usual rice, hominy, high-spiced mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, radishes, and hot corn bread. Then pumpkin pies, apple pies, and custard, and half a dozen West India preserves; almonds and raisins, nuts of various kinds, and vast blocks of ice-cream, of two or three sorts. Wine, cider, and a bottle of ale, for my special indulgence, were provided; but the main consumption was of claret.

After dinner, a retreat to the piazza was a matter of course; and there Minnie's admirers were wont to make the best of their time by drawing her apart, getting her to sing, or walking to and fro in the shade, whispering poetry or jokes. The lawyer was thus occupied this afternoon while we were enjoying our cigars, and Anna amusing the children, when a messenger came on a heated and panting horse. The lawyer was wanted to take a deposition and make a will, Mr. Tr—— having been shot in the back as he was entering his own gate. Nobody was surprised. This was one of the remote consequences of a duel fought in the preceding year, which was presided over by the Governor of the State. When I expressed my surprise, I was told that there was scarcely an official person in the State, from the Governor to the humblest postman or customhouse servant, who had not fought, or been shot or stabbed without opportunity to fight. The lawyer himself had been stabbed in the back while looking over his newspaper in the reading-room. Lawyer as he was, he had not followed up the perpetrator. "It was considered best to let the matter drop." On hearing this, I settled in my own mind that he would not succeed with the romantic Minnie. She who wanted a Bayard would not accept a man who lived in a society where he could be stabbed in the back in a defenceless moment, and then be induced to let the thing pass. They certainly are an odd sort of "chivalry" in that region. In other States than South Carolina the citizens of whole towns and districts extolled Preston Brooks as a brave man for nearly killing another unarmed and unsuspecting man in the Senate Chamber. They presented him with testimonials, instead of sending him to Coventry (as you English say) as a traitor and a coward.

The carriage appeared, and the saddle-horses. Minnie and her brother rode with their father, and my sister and I took charge of all the other children in the carriage. She never ventures to leave them at home without her for so long as an afternoon drive or visit. Every one of her children has been born on the plantation, because she can,

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in that airy place, have them with her all day long. Bad as this is for her at such a time, as depriving her of all quiet and rest in the daytime, it is better, she says, than being in a perpetual fever lest some little one should be dropped into the fire, or out of the window, by the negro nurse. During this drive, I ventured to suggest that Minnie might spare her mother much fatigue and some cares; but I was not allowed to dwell upon it. It was a thing that no mother could think of. The poor child would have little enough time for her own pursuits and pleasures. She would be steeped to the lips in family cares before she was twenty, and never again be free; and not one day of her period of liberty and ease should be cut off. I saw there was no use in arguing the matter, even as a champion of Minnie herself.

We traversed the pretty little prairie, and I could fill pages with mere notices of the beautiful things we passed in the woods and by the river side; but a spectacle which we encountered on our return put everything else out of my head at the time.

Among the calls we made was one for which I ought to have been prepared. The gentleman of the house showed the usual courtesy and good-humour, but not the ordinary gaiety of manner which most strikes a stranger in that part of the country. His lady was well and even gaily dressed, and was surrounded by evidences of good pursuits;—books in abundance, music, and some botanical collections of real value. She was composed in manner, kind and courteous; but there was an expression in her eyes which I could not meet a second time. I avoided her eyes in conversation as if I were conscious of some shame or perplexity. As soon as we were in the carriage, I inquired if any particular story belonged to that house.

"Yes, indeed," my sister whispered. The twin children,—the only children,—had been poisoned by their black nurse, six years ago. Nothing more was known than that they had died within a week of each other, unquestionably from poison, which must have been given by the nurse: and, indeed, she did not deny it. She bore some grudge against her master, it was thought; but she herself said she wanted to die, but thought she would do something particular first.

"She was hanged, of course?" said I.

"Why, no," replied Anna. "There were reasons—or feelings, perhaps,—in the way of that. But it was also feared that the execution would make a great deal of talk among the negroes in the neighbourhood; and parents of young children were against it. It was thought safest to sell her to a distance, into Texas."

"Sell her!" I exclaimed. "Sell her, to go and poison somebody else!"

"I should hope not," said Anna, reflectively. "It *is* said, I know, that poisoners cannot stop: but this was so peculiar a case. . . . Besides they would make a field hand of her."

"And has that gentleman pocketed the value of the woman who murdered his children? Are his wife's luxuries bought with that money?"

"He had twelve hundred dollars for her," replied Anna. "It was a good deal for a field hand; but she was a valuable servant, and——"

"Exceedingly so," I observed.

"You know what I mean," said Anna. "But it is a sad story—a very sad story; and you must not suppose such things happen often."

"Only wherever I happen to go in the South," I replied. "In every family there is some capital negro to boast of; and in every neighbourhood there is some tragedy to be whispered which harrows up the souls of people who do not live among horrors."

"Don't you suppose our souls are harrowed too?" asked Anna, with quivering lips.

More than once during that visit I had reason to know why the negroes were sent to their quarter for the night so early and so regularly. Two or three of them, who preferred sleeping in the passages or offices, were routed out, and sent to their own cabins; but we never felt sure that some one had not taken his own way and remained. Certain visitors, therefore, who came when all the lights were out in the negro quarter, tapped at the window, instead of applying at the door. D—— instantly let them in. They were members of the permanent Vigilance Committee, and they came to tell whatever they had learned of the suspicious Mean-whites in the neighbourhood, and of the behaviour of the negroes on the various plantations. D—— was informed that his people were too much in the habit of being out in the woods all night. D—— was aware of this. He had gone himself to the prayer-meeting in the swamp to judge for himself of its effects: he had at length forbidden his negroes to go, and had used all means, even to very severe punishment, to keep them at home. He knew he had been baffled, and was thinking of changing his overseer; but the doubt was whether he would ever get a better. He would be really obliged to the Committee if they would advise him how to proceed. They were rather stiff about this, and peremptory about the requirements of the public safety; but they softened after a course of brandy-and-water, and when the conversation turned on a bookseller at Mobile who had been detected in harbouring in his store, not only an unmutilated copy of Cowper's Poems, but a copy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which he absurdly pleaded had been ordered by a customer, and was to have been forwarded to the purchaser the next morning. All present (except myself, and I said nothing), agreed as to the necessity of getting rid of so dangerous a resident; and, indeed, he was already shipped off for the North—("the d—d North," whence he came). His family were with him; and his property—why, he was obliged to leave his stock and furniture behind, and everything in confusion. Perhaps they would sell pretty well; and if not, it served him right, for criminal carelessness or worse.

There have been graver alarms since those days, though the time I have spoken of was not very remote. Whether the announced conspiracy in 1856 was real or imaginary, the effects were much the same. No one knew whom to trust; and every citizen and every slave was at the mercy of any malignant informer. D——'s property suf-

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fered much. Several of his negroes—of whom to this hour he thinks well—were hanged, or flogged to death. They confessed nothing, or manifest nonsense; and he believes they knew nothing of any conspiracy, and were guilty of nothing more than the ordinary aspirations of their class. He sacrificed much in payments to save others—in bribes, in fact. I wish the present crisis may not ruin him utterly. He will not himself fly from the scene, nor will Madison; and Anna will not leave them, if she can send the younger children to us, by ship or rail. The oddest change is in Madison, by all accounts. On the first rousing alarm about the South being driven into opposition at Washington, and about the credit and duration of "the peculiar institution," the Southern spirit came out full and strong, extinguishing the pedant in the planter. Instead of preaching about perpetual motion, Madison now exemplifies it, "pacing" (on the planter's ambling steed) all over the country by day, and patrolling by night, and being the most vigilant member of the local Vigilance Committee. He swears like—like a Southern man, for no "trooper" ever exceeded our Southern senators in Washington—to say nothing of meaner men further South—in the strength and frequency of oaths. D—— fears the lad may have caught the trick from him; but he has the disease much more virulently than his father. Madison's ambition now is to lead the Alabama planters on to conflict and victory.

Minnie has turned out a heroine, after so many dreams of being one. As wife, daughter, and mother she is brave as Bayard, and tender as any one of her dearly-loved poets. She did not marry the lawyer (I knew she would not), but a young planter, whose establishment she rules as if she were a born queen. I wish I could foresee what the destiny of these dear relatives of mine is to be. It is a dark scene, and a darker prospect. All that we really know is, that if we are to meet again, they must come to me and mine. We cannot go to them without plunging them into suspicion, as well as ourselves into extreme danger. Indeed, the way of ingress is barred. I daily dread to hear that egress is no longer permitted. It is no light fate to await in Alabama the issue of a revolution, begun in passion, and sure to end in humiliation or worse.

A Son of the Pilgrims.

FAIR ROSAMOND.

A FRAGMENT.

Lord Clifford's daughter loved a stranger knight.
How met they? Deem some gosshawk chanced to light
Over the river freshets, whence the breeze
Blew the faint bugle-notes thro' slumbrous trees
Across that sleepy wood that lay about
The limits of Lord Clifford's land; nor doubt
How the knight, following with jess and hood
Thorough the green realm of the rippling wood,
To call back and recapture his estray,
Met with the maiden. Sure the bold blue jay,
Sitting against the sun on some great bough,
Was over garrulous, and blabb'd, I trow,
The wood's best secret: or the sweet stock-dove
Moan'd from her warm green hiding-place above
Peculiar pathos to enchant his way.
I, who believe in what old poets say,
Deem the dim-footed Dryads of the place
Flitted before him, each with wistful face
And woodland eyes, from many a sunken hollow,
Athwart the sun-sweet mosses, murmuring "Follow!"
While the leaves wink'd, and clapp'd their hands together,
Too mad with May-dew and the merry weather
To keep the tender secret to themselves,
Breaking their moonlight oaths to the mild elves.
Enough, that—whether by fair fate or chance,
Or led by Powers that ruled in old romance—
He 'lighted on the maid in happy hour,
And found her fairer than the bramble flower
That unbeholden bears the wilding rose,
Fresh as a first spring dawn that, ere it close,
Leaves the world wealthier for the violet;
For ere they parted (howsoe'er they met),
A sweetness, like the scent from some unseen
And new-born flower that makes the mild month green,
Lingering along the thoughts of each, made known
That the first violet of the heart was blown—
Love, the beginning and the end of youth!
Sweet Rosamunda, maid o' the rosy mouth,
Did the deep skies assume more blissful blue,
Saw ye faint fairy footsteps in the dew,
That eve, when Love's pale planet made aware
Of Love's faint advent all the holy air
About the ivy-twine and eglatere
Bowering the balmy casement, where shy fear
Of thine own young heart leaping into life
Against its fragrant girdle, wrought sweet strife
Among thy maiden musings? None shall tell
The secret of that hour, and this is well.
No old worm-eaten page with flowery marge,
And faded letters, once made fair and large
To suit the sight of some lascivious king,
Remaineth now to babble anything
To prying pedants of thine inmost heart;
But, in unfading Fable-land, thou art
(Among green England's greenest memories)
A flower kept fresh by tears from poets' eyes.

Albeit, fond fancies sue me to conceive
How many a gleaming morn and glimmering eve
Beheld the stranger, that sweet trespass made
A welcome guest, in Clifford's hall. I said
"The Stranger:" but not nameless, sure, he came.
The Count Plantagenet had such a name
Might win him welcome when the love of sport
Lured him that way; the manners of the Court,
Moreover, mingling with a debonaire
Frank nature, made his comely presence there
A secret pleasure in the pride of all
The homely inmates of Lord Clifford's hall.
His stout voice cheer'd the fifty squires that bowl'd
The daylight down in alleys green and cold:
His brave lips blew so shrill a blast among
The echoing glades that, when the high wood rung
To his blithe bugle, every huntsman knew
That note, and merrily his response blew.
Nor less, when oft to snare the sliding fish,
Among the low-bridged moats, with silken mesh,
Fair Rosamunda and her maids would lean,
The courtly guest soft songs could breathe between
The rippled silver of most sweet lute-strings,
Musical with great loves of mighty kings
For queens of old, and every fair romance
By well-skill'd minstrels sung through sunny France;
Till, as a Naïad being slowly born,
That rises up a forest fount forlorn,
The maiden's misty sense of her own love,
Borne on the mounting music, seem'd to move

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Up every virgin pulse to palpable
And passionate consciousness. He touched so well
The tingling source of tender thoughts!

Half child,
Half giant, there was in him, undefil'd,
The fresh fount of an overflowing heart,
And that strong sense that grasps the sovranest part
Of life, and makes it pregnant. See him stand,
His grey gosshawk upon his ungloved hand!
Singulfus shows ye how he yet appears
Athwart the ravage of those ruthless years

That make men names, or nothing. I, meanwhile,
Follow these fancies, meaning to beguile
Dull days, unlike the days whereof I sing,
Blown blossoms from the May of the world's spring.
Yet were there goings, comings, mysteries,
Wild intervals of absence, vague surmise.
Oft, in the midst of tenderest talk, he sat
Suddenly silent, gazing sternly at
The faint blue upland objects leagues away;
As tho', for him, beyond the hills there lay
A fiercer world than that 'mid those soft bowers
Visited only by the silver showers,
And then the woman-instinct in her heart
Dimly divined her presence claim'd no part
Among those fitful moods: and if her glance
Stole up the silence to his countenance
Timidly, she beheld upon his brow
Deep furrows folding, and a shadow grow
Into his face, as when in open lands
The shadow of a hawk sweeps o'er still sands.
So that her love was like a summer cloud
Breathless above some brooding garden bow'd,
Where all the watchful roses seem aware
Of the uncertain spirit in the air,
And even the brightest minutes of that love
Were but as rays of light that rest above
Such clouds as, girt with thunder at the base,
Have yet sweet sunlight sleeping on their face.
At last doubt broke to passionate appeal
That drew such response as did less reveal
Than hint deep cause for these disturbèd moods:
Court complots growing from domestic feuds:
A spleenful parent, powerful friends to be
Humour'd, and some persistent enemy.
An easy tale Lord Clifford's faith beguil'd,
Who loved the comely guest that loved his child.
They wed, by night, in secret. A strange friar
Join'd them. And when, too late, the stricken sire
Learn'd all: the falsehood consummate that night—
The mockery of the midnight marriage rite—

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The maid a mother whom the blessèd name
Of wife might shield not from a leman's shame—
The true name of his over-trusted guest:
He lock'd so close the secret in his breast,
That his heart broke beneath it. With grey head
Bow'd henceforth by the weight of nothing said,
He to a near grave crept unmurmuring,
Loyal in death to the disloyal king.

Meanwhile, in Woodstock town, wild rumour told
Of a strange castle from enchantments old,
Raised up by Merlin in the days gone by,
And buried deep in woods from every eye
Save of the sun and silent stars: and there
('Twas said) a lady magically fair
Dwelt folded fast by many a fortress wall,
So held by some wild baron for his thrall.
For oft, at eve, the unwhispering woods among,
Some wandering woodman heard a plaintive song
That fell more soft than softest twilight falls
From battlements of blossom-bosom'd walls,
O'er woodland, water, glade, and hollow glen,
Breaking the heart of silence: often, when
Night gather'd up the ghostly solitudes
And gave them voices, from the groaning wood's
Black bowels, stray'd wayfarers had been known
To see a furious horseman, toward the town,
Bounding o'er bosky places in the moon;
And once a tir'd nut-gathering village loon,
Lost in the wood, came suddenly upon
The castle, glaring in the sinking sun;
Where, from beneath the southern wall he spied
A fair green garden-lawn, enfolded wide
With flowery alleys, cloister'd arbours, close
Roof'd with the ripe and multitudinous rose,
And, by a creaming fountain, standing there
Alone, a lady marvellously fair
And melancholy pale. To scan her face
(Since the spent moat in that unnoticed place
Ran dry, and chok'd among thick weeds) he crept
Under the parapet, but scarce had stept
Up to his perch when straight an armèd hand
Stretch'd o'er the toothèd wall, and graspt him, and
Dropt him among the dank moat flowers. The tale
In Woodstock hostel, pusht with pots of ale,
Circled the board, and made a certain stir
Among the gossips there; each wassailer,
Pledging the enchanted lady, took it up,
Play'd on, and pass'd it with a flowing cup
To his swill'd neighbour, till, from man to man,
It grew more wonderful, as round it ran.
But we, by Dan Apollo visited
With visionary power, boldly tread
The haunted woodland. Fancy finds the clue—
The forest trees are spell'd to let us thro'.
Leave Woodstock sleeping in the dawn. We stand
In the wood's heart. Autumn, with unseen hand,
Hath been before to brand the shrivell'd fern
With biting gold; already you discern
Her doings in the abandon'd glens. Then pass
A few leagues further. Comes a wild morass,
Steam'd o'er by shining vapour, where the foot
Pashes marsh-mallows and blue lily-root
'Twixt streaks of flashing water: everything
Is dumb save some great heron making wing
Heavily o'er the waste, and that intense
Sharp insect sound that swarms about the immense

And simmering surface of the solitude
Thro' which the way lies. Then again the wood
Unclasps and takes us. Day is falling down,
And the last sunbeams under elm-trees brown
Lie dreaming, and the hazel-thickets close
About us, and more labyrinthine blows
The hundred-handed bramble, tho' despoil'd
Of her Briarean blossoms: heap'd and coil'd,
The wood hangs round us, heavy; till dismay
Takes it, and suddenly it voids its prey,
And we stand, breathless, in the open chase—
Across a league of sunset, face to face
With a grey clump of turrets. Thro' thick grass,
Gilt with the golden gallingale, we pass,
Blow the slug-horn, down clangs the sharp drawbridge
Over a melancholy moat the midge

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O'ercircles, and the sullen pompion,
With pallid blossoms sleeping in the sun,
On the black water. Thence, with fold on fold,
The forkèd fortress' outworks grimly hold
At bay the in-comer. Suddenly we are
(Alone with Hesperus the happy star)
In the dim garden: fades the world beyond,
And in her bower behold Fair Rosamond!
The dying sun on each ambrosial curl,
Fall'n round her white neck from the braided pearl,
Stays all his softest light, and will not set;
Whilst at her feet the great Plantagenet
Lies, looking up into those lustrous eyes,
And from his forehead slowly, slowly dies
The furrow and the frown, and from his face
(Bath'd in that blissful beauty) the vext trace
Of Eleanor's last look—the sharp French shrew—
And all his rebel sons, and false Anjou.

Owen Meredith.

THE TURKISH BATH.

When my maiden aunt, the other morning, insisted upon my wrapping my neck up in a comforter, and putting on double coats, fleecy hosiery, thick woollen gloves and mits; and, moreover, warned me in the most solemn manner not to expose myself to sudden cold; I believed as firmly in her injunctions as I used to believe in the sacred sentences used as copy slips. Scuffling down towards my club, too stiffly wrapped to turn my body with ease, an animated mound of woollen, I happened to meet Tom Glasters, Merry Tom, they call him. "Why, old fellow," he said, giving me a dull pound through my woollen armour, "is that the way you try to keep out the cold. Come with me and have a Turkish bath at W——'s, and then sit in a draught for half-an-hour with only a thin sheet on,—that's the way to harden you to cold, my boy."

"Stand in a sheet this weather!" I stuttered, with chattering teeth, and goose-skin running down the centre of my back. "No, I thank you."

"Oh! but you must," he replied, in his quiet, determined way, coupling my arm in his, and marching me off in triumph. I knew I was about to deliberately commit an outrage on my aunt's feelings, and fly in the teeth of her fleecy hosiery and comforters; but somehow I was under a fascination, and go with Tom I must.

"Stand in a sheet this weather!" I once more imploringly exclaimed.

"Stand in a sheet! Yes, and very jolly too."

In another minute we had reached W—'s mansion, and having dropped my mound of wrappers, Tom introduced me to five or six gentlemen about to undergo the penitential sheet in our company. I was somewhat consoled by the cheerful manner in which they seemed to contemplate the coming trial, and moved on with the company into a back apartment, the footman informing us, at the same time, that his master was already awaiting us in the Frigidarium. The sound certainly was not pleasant, with the thermometer below freezing point. But I had little time for reflection, as we were all ushered into an apartment which looked out upon the back leads, one of those third back rooms on the ground floor which seem an institution in London. The locality was too familiar for any horrid torture, and following the example of the company, I speedily found myself habited in a light terpsychorean costume, or kilt (cummerbund is, I believe, the correct designation). Thus habited, we followed our leader through a double door, and found ourselves in the Calidarium, or sweating chamber. Imagine a small hot-house surrounded with hot-air flues, and in place of exotics, placed above them on the wooden stages, see the company seated. The thermometer marked 135 degrees, yet I did not feel particularly warm; strange to say, my face, which is always exposed, felt the heat most. My companions, who were habitués of more or less standing, watched me apparently with some interest, and on my remarking that my face felt hot, one of them passed his hand down my arm.

"Do you call that skin?" he exclaimed, in a tone so deprecating, that I mentally felt the deepest shame at its possession.

"No," I said. "What is it?"

"It's horn, sir, it's horn. You are only a shade less horny-hided than an armadillo." This was a rather startling proposition. Had my careful aunt only trained me, with all her care to arrive at this condition? "We must have this off, sir," he went on, in a tone as indifferent as though he were some wretched old woman about to skin a live cat.

"Have it off, sir," I said, getting half-angry, "I should like to see the man that will lay a hand upon my skin."

"We will see about that," he replied, in a most provokingly cool manner.

"Goodness gracious!" I inwardly exclaimed, "to be frozen, dried up to a mummy, and then skinned,—and for Tom to call it so very jolly!"

I must own, however, that after all I began to feel particularly light and happy. Had I a hundred pound acceptance coming due that very day, and nothing to meet it at the bankers, I should not have cared a snap of the fingers. "Is it only necessary to get hot to get happy?" I inwardly inquired.

Happening to rise for a moment, however, from the bench, and to take a fresh seat, I gave a sudden jump up again, as though I had been shot. Had I inadvertently seated myself on the bars of the furnace?

"Not at all; the seat is hotter than you calculated," replied one of the habitués; "you must keep your seat."

Some one has quaintly said that if an ordinary-sized man were placed in a press, between a sufficient number of sheets of blotting-paper, before the screw had reduced his anatomy to the flattened condition of a dried botanical specimen, that blotting-paper would have extracted from him no less than eight gallons of water.

I never could credit this mendacious assertion as I believed, until I had been in the Calidarium about half-an-hour; then it became clearly apparent that there may be some truth in the statement. The skin did not perspire so much as it streamed with water.

"Before you have done," said my tormentors, "you will have lost three pounds."

A remarkably fine man, seated aloft in a still hotter atmosphere, every now and then took a

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copious draught of water, as a kind of compensatory process, and the effect was indeed remarkable,—it was like pouring a bucket of water into a watering-pot and then witnessing it stream out of the rose. His whole body became in a few minutes one rose, from which the water previously imbibed transuded. The animated watering-pot, whilst in full activity, stepped down from his reclining couch and went out into the Frigidarium (Oh! shade of my aunt!). I followed: the windows were open, and there we stood in a thorough draught, two columns of steam rising straight up to the ceiling testifying to the activity with which the cooling process was going on. This alternation of temperature, I was informed, was only another method of accelerating the perspiratory process, for on returning into the Calidarium we were river gods once more, every pore an urn to supply a rivulet.

"Now, sir," said my friend in the bath, "your skin is nearly ready to come off," and with one sweep of the palm of his hand he denuded me of a long pipe of macaroni.

I shall not inflict a long description upon the reader of the art of shampooing, but I own I was astonished to see the amount of debris among which I stood after the completion of the process.

"There goes your armadillo hide," remarked one of my companions. "Now your skin is a living structure, instead of a half-paralysed surface, with little more life in it than your nail."

The measure of the frequency with which the different bathers present had taken the bath was at once evident to the observer by the condition of his skin: my own on first entering was rough and sallow, whilst the systematic bathers' epidermis was as soft and glossy as satin. I carried with me the accumulated coats of a year's epidermis, which no mere washing could ever get off. The process of shampooing was somewhat like the cleaning of an old master. The flesh tints came out bright and lustrous where all before was brown and lead coloured. And this refuse, it must be remembered, was not upon the surface. No ordinary washing would have removed that; it represented the accumulated refuse of the body. The hot-air bath, it must be explained, acts in the very opposite direction of the vapour or warm-water bath, which checks instead of aids the unloading of the different ducts which have their outlets through the skin. The hot-air bath flushes the external sewers of the body, and the waters of exudation carry with them all effete particles lodged within them. We never seem to remember that we can no more exclude the skin from the action of the light and air than we can exclude a living vegetable, or allow its pores to be blocked up. The very neglect of our attention to the skin is the cause of more than half the ailments to which humanity is subjected. When we remember that the skin is one of the great scavengers of the body, and that it is also a vast external lung, we see the necessity of keeping it in an active condition. We may liken the epidermis to a double night-cap thrust in upon itself; the skin, from the lips inwards and downwards, is a mucous surface, lining the lungs and the alimentary canal, and the functions of both of these internal organs are more or less supplemented by the outward skin or external fold of the night-cap. As long as the epidermis of the body is in lively action, there can be no congestion of the internal eliminative organs, such as the liver, intestines, and kidneys. We therefore see of what immense importance it is as a medical region.

A clergyman who was present with us in the bath stated that, since he had habitually taken the Turkish bath, he had entirely got rid of the professional sore throat with which he had before been afflicted. The number of diseases for which the Turkish bath is recommended, even by medical men, is so large, that it would seem to be a general specific. There can be no doubt that its virtues are very great in all cases where there is a vitiated condition of the blood, arising from a languid condition of the skin and circulation, or any specific poison lurking within it. We have heard such miraculous tales told respecting its powers in curing rheumatism, that we cannot doubt its value. Mr. Erasmus Wilson also states that it is wonderfully efficacious in many skin diseases. It has been objected that in all cases of disease of the heart, the Turkish bath would prove injurious; but Mr. Wilson, in a lecture lately delivered upon the use of the bath, energetically denies this statement. "I believe," he says, "just the contrary, that many diseases of the heart may be cured by a judicious use of the Thermæ; and in the very worst cases, it would prove to be the very best remedy that could be employed." In some cases, indeed, the heart's action is accelerated by the use of the bath, but a moment's sojourn in the Frigidarium, with its plentiful supply of pure oxygen, instantly calms any perturbation. Those who have not accustomed themselves to the bath, sometimes complain of feeling a fulness in the head, but this objection can be met by simply wrapping a towel round the head. That the Turkish bath will before long be esteemed a necessary part of every gentleman's house, is exceedingly probable. Indeed, its curative effects can scarcely be realised without it. When we are overcome with influenza, sore throat, or rheumatism, we are generally too ill to visit a public bath; in these cases the Calidarium will prove the true medicine chest.

Our sporting friends, also, are beginning to perceive the value of the bath for training purposes. At present a fighting man, or running man, is obliged to conform to weight. He must reduce himself to a certain point before he can even enter the lists, to say nothing of the disqualification superfluous flesh and fat entail upon him. Of old, the sweating process was brought about, by encasing the pet of the fancy in half a dozen top-coats, and, thus clothed, placing him under violent exercise, with peculiar diet, and a very moderate amount of drink. This barbarous method of getting a man into condition, will, if our sporting contemporary, the "Field," speaks truly, be superseded, and we may expect to meet our athletes and public gladiators in the public sweating baths, as they did in the antique times. Even our race-horses are now given a hot-air bath in place of a gallop-sweating in the training ground, and cattle suffering under pleuro-pneumonia are said to feel great benefit from its medical virtues.

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But whilst I have thus been descanting upon the physiological action of the hot-air bath, I have forgotten that the final process of cooling is not yet completed. Leaving the Calidarium for good, we now returned to the Frigidarium. Here, clothed in long sheets, like a party of ghosts, we gradually cooled before the open window, with the biting air marking below freezing point. How was it that I, who shivered beneath my mound of wrappers, felt the frozen air quite exhilarating, and the draught quite delicious? It often used to be a puzzle to me to understand how it was that the stoker of the penny steamer could one moment stand before his furnace door, exposed to a temperature of 200 degrees, whilst the next moment he would be seen airing himself at the top of his stoke-hole ladder, apparently in comfort. Again, how could it be consistent with my respected aunt's theory of the necessity of avoiding sudden changes of temperature to see the glass-blowers and iron-puddlers one moment roasting before the white heat of a furnace, and the next cooling their reeking bodies in the open air. Here was the true secret—the body once exalted into energetic action by the combined effect of a high temperature and a thorough action of its pores, is able to withstand with impunity any change of temperature however sudden. It is a matter of common observation that a thorough warm at the fire is the best preparation for a long walk in the cold. Nevertheless, there are some persons who condemn this proceeding as a pampering of the body; people who will actually sit at the other end of the room lest they should get any adventitious heat from the fire. Do not believe, good reader, in such ascetic nonsense any longer—in this instance, the pleasant is the true thing to do.

We have given our experience above of a private bath, improvised in the third room back of a private mansion. In the public establishments which are now spreading throughout the three kingdoms, but especially in Ireland, the plan of the old Roman bath is more strictly followed. There is the Tepidarium, the Suditarium (heated to a temperature of 120), and the Calidarium, in which the heat is exalted to 160 degrees. Next to this is the Lavitarium, in which the washing and shampooing process is carried on. There are such institutions already established in the Edgware Road; in Charlotte Street, Pimlico; in Golden Square, and other parts of town; and such is the growing rage for these baths, that a company has been started, with a capital of 100,000*l.*, for the erection of a series of public Roman baths worthy of this great metropolis. There is nothing new under the sun. The Turkish bath, which Mr. Urquhart has introduced to the West, is a reminiscence of the old Roman bath of the lower empire.

The barbarian Turk has been the medium of keeping alive one of the most healthful practices of the ancients. There is scarcely a spot throughout the United Kingdom in which the remains of these very baths have not been disinterred and gazed at by the curious during the last half-century. We turn up the flues, still blackened with the soot of fourteen centuries ago; we find, as at Uriconium, the very furnaces, with the coal fuel close at hand; and we know that the hot bath was not only used by the legionaries who held Britain, but by the civilised Britons themselves; yet we must go all the way to the barbarian Turk for instruction upon one of the simplest and most effective methods of maintaining the public health. What medicine we might have extracted from these old classic ruins, if we had chosen to view them in their right light! What feeble sudorifics are Dover's powders, or antimony, or ipecacuanha, compared with the action of the hot-air bath!

Thus moralising I reached home. My first impulse was to pitch my comforter to the end of the room; my next to astonish my respected aunt.

"Well, my dear boy, what have you been about to-day?"

"Standing before the open window with only a sheet on me!"

"Now, James, don't make fun of an old woman."

"True, upon my honour; and intend to do so twice a week, and to leave off all this toggery," kicking my wrappers.

"Why, what's come to the poor boy?" (I am fifty-five next month!)

"First I was baked for an hour in an oven, and when at the hottest, I cooled myself in a thorough draught," I malignantly remarked.

"You've been drinking, James," was the only response I could get to this monstrous statement. That I was either drunk or mad my venerable relative did not doubt. Indeed, how often do we find that the madness of to-day is the prime wisdom of to-morrow, that our presumed afflictions are our most serviceable friends!

WOMEN'S WORK.

DESIGNING PATTERNS.—III.

If we want what is beautiful both in form, colour, and idea, what can surpass the rose? Yes, what can surpass the rose? But before descanting upon its especial merits as a study, let us begin by simplifying the work of delineating from nature altogether; for I believe it is almost entirely from the want of simplifying that so little has been done by ladies in this way.

As learners, ladies generally find placed before them some elaborate and highly finished flower, or group of flowers, which it is their business, and might be their happiness, to imitate. But how? they ask; for their attention is distracted by so many points of interest, comprehending form and colour, light and shadow, tints and half tints, with an endless variety of things to be considered, that where to begin, and what to do, become questions of most difficult solution. Or they are presented with a landscape to copy, and told that nothing can be accomplished until they have learned to make a straight line. A straight line no doubt s a very good thing, and very desirable to accomplish; but so far from being the first thing in nature, it is only the first thing in art, and chiefly in architectural art. Nature has no straight lines, unless it be the surface of water—nothing but curves. To copy nature, therefore, requires almost every kind of line rather than the straight.

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But to confine our attention to flowers, as being most suggestive of patterns for design. Suppose, then, that instead of attacking at once a complicated group, or even a single highly-finished flower, we consider that almost all common flowers may be classed, as regards form, under three types—cups, bells, and stars—and that the last of these three is the most universally prevailing form or type in the vegetable world, so far at least as all plants present more or less the aspect of rays diverging from a centre. The study of trees, when divested of their leaves in the winter season, affords a beautiful illustration of this, and it is a study highly suggestive and improving to the learner.

The rose belongs to the cup class of flowers, and it is perfect folly and waste of time to attempt to draw a rose until the hand has become expert in drawing a cup. Cups of all sorts and sizes, with the light falling upon them in every conceivable manner, will be the best early practice for the learner in rose painting; and until the pencil can clearly delineate a round solid mass, with a deep hole in the middle, it is of no use dreaming about a rose.

Ah! that hole in the middle, what a secret lies there—a secret which the butterfly has never been wise enough to discover, nor the bee earnest enough to penetrate! Yet when once this secret is fully mastered, it is astonishing how simple and poor a thing, as regards colour and execution, will make a rose. And how beautiful, too, a wreath may be made of these little cups, slightly varied in position, with each its little dot of a hole in the centre.

The secret of the cup form of the rose, when once learned, is so easy and familiar, that the commonest artizan can dash it off in a moment upon our walls, or tea-trays, or wherever a rose may be wanted. And yet many a lady, whose fair hand has gone through years of teaching in putting on the petals the most delicate tints of carmine, would be entirely at a loss if attempting to draw a rose without a pattern, because of having never been taught the first principles of nature, by which a rose obtains its roundness, and also its deep hollow in the centre.

We may increase our difficulties, or we may lessen them, to a great extent, by the adjustment of light and shadow. Over the form of our object we have little power, and it is dangerous for a learner to attempt any alteration in the actual thing; for, if a rose, the alteration in the shape of the flower will throw each petal into some different condition of light or shade, and this will involve a vast complication of relative considerations. But the light in which we place our entire object, so as to keep it undisturbed, is a matter entirely our own; and it is always best to choose a side light, or one that is more than half a side light. No one would choose to draw a round object with the light full upon it, that is, entirely fronting the delineator. When the light upon a solid ball, which we must first imagine the rose to be, is a little on one side, and as it always must be from above, the extreme light on the object—a point to be carefully noticed—will be a little above the widest part, and the extreme shadow exactly opposite, beyond which will come the reflected light, or half shadow. A little above the extreme light, and on one side of it, so as to cut a sort of half moon into it, will come the circular hollow, the secret of which is chiefly that, when seen in this position, the darkest side of the hollow cuts sharply against the extreme light, while against the dark side of the cup the hollow is lightest. By this simple process, the rose will become really a partially hollow cup, made thick or thin according to taste; and the surrounding petals folded back with the same reference to taste, or not folded back at all, as in the case of a bud but slightly opened. It is true that, in the high finishing of a rose, much care has to be given to the lights and shadows of these petals; but until the hollow cup of the body of the rose is obtained, nothing can be done—when it is, everything may be expected.

Having once learned the secret of the rose, and attained some facility in representing its structural foundation, the practised artist may play around or upon it at his pleasure, but it is always best for the learner to keep closely to the actual object under consideration in every respect. Hence a flower should be done quickly by the learner, for in another day, nay, sometimes in the course of a single hour, the petals of a flower may become shrivelled and altered in position. Few flowers alter sooner than a rose. For this reason, as indeed for many reasons, it is essential that the learner should observe as well as practise. A single thoughtful and observant walk in a garden of roses may do more for the learner than years of mere painting, without understanding the principles of light and shade, or knowing how to delineate general forms with accuracy.

In the garden of roses, however, the learner will see that many of the choicest roses now cultivated are far from exhibiting anything like the cup form here described; and just in proportion as this is the case, they are unfit for patterns; because in drawing and painting them, unless very skilfully done, they will be liable to run into poppies, and many other kinds of flowers, having nothing of the distinctive rose character about them. They may be as beautiful in themselves as the old-fashioned cabbage rose, or even more so, but, wanting in form the familiarly recognised rose type, they cannot become fit subjects for that kind of delineation which must be at once slight in execution, yet marked in character.

In learning to draw from nature, and especially with a view to designing patterns, it is necessary to bear in mind that the characteristics of different objects are wanted first,—are wanted long before details. The usual method with learners is to dwell minutely upon details, and with too many the distinctive characteristics never come at all. Both eye and hand are so occupied with detail, and these, without the true structural foundation, are so difficult to manage, that learning to paint and draw in the ordinary style has no relation whatever to portraying natural objects with truth and facility, so that each may be known at once for what it is intended to be, by the slightest possible indications of form and colour.

Readiness of hand, and correctness of eye in

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delineating the characteristics of objects, are the two chief qualifications required in designing patterns. When these are attained, that supreme and often innate sense of beauty which belongs so pre-eminently to women may be called into exercise, as affording at times the highest enjoyment to the worker, and the surest promise of success.

S. S.

INSECT APPETITE.

The man who wished he had a throat a mile long, and a palate all the way, might envy the feats performed in the world of insignificance. Some insects are endowed with an appetite so keen, and a digestion so rapid, that they eat incessantly throughout the whole of their lives. They begin as soon as they are born, and go steadily on till they die. Their existence is a feast, without a change of plates, or a pause between the courses. Morning, noon, and night, their mouths are full, and an endless procession of favourite food gratifies the unwearied palate. They know not the names of meals. Breakfast commences with infancy, and their only after-dinner nap is a passage to another state of existence.

This is generally the case with grubs, where the eggs from which they are produced are laid in the food on which they live. Thus they lose no time when they come into the world. Everything is prepared for them. Their work is to eat. They have no other calling, amusement, or pursuit. Talk of a pig! In a natural state he has to think and bestir himself to get victuals. His intellect is exercised in searching for the whereabouts of acorns, snails, and what not. Besides, society expects him, occasionally, to lie in the sun and grunt. Many hours of his youth are spent in spasmodic gambols with his little brothers and sisters. Unless shut up, and supplied by man, he never grows fat. A cow, certainly, contrives to fill up a good deal of her time in gratifying the sense of taste. What with *bonâ fide* eating, and then a material review of that process, with her eyes shut, she makes the most of a mouthful.

But for steady consistent application commend me to a grub. While in that state, the quantity of food consumed by insects is vastly greater, in proportion to their bulk, than that required by larger animals. Some caterpillars eat twice their weight of leaves daily—which is, as if a man of twelve stone were to get through something over two hundred legs of mutton in the course of a week. There are larvæ, however, who distance the caterpillars. The maggots of flesh flies have been known actually to treble their weight in half an hour.

As might possibly be expected, these animals in the next stage of their existence, which is as sublimated as before it was gross, eat very little. The greedy caterpillar, when become a butterfly, dips the tip of its tongue in honey; and the maggot itself, when transformed into a fly, is content with an occasional whet of its proboscis.

But there are many insects in a state higher than that of vulgar larvæ who distinguish themselves at table. The ant-lion will devour daily an animal of its own size. Fancy the Fusileer Guards eating up the "London Scottish" at a meal. But though these little Heliogabali are so greedy, their powers of abstinence are equal to their appetite.

Instances are given in that charming book, "Entomology," by Kirby and Spence, of a spider being made to fast, without injury, for ten months, and of a beetle kept alive for three years without food. Another writer, a foreigner, tells us of a mite, which he gummed alive to the point of a needle, and placed before his microscope, and adds that it took eleven weeks to die.

The quality of animal food is also as remarkable as the quantity they consume. There is hardly anything which some one or other of this extensive family of living creatures will not eat. Man, indeed, is almost omnivorous; by artificial means he is enabled to prepare food from a vast variety of animal and vegetable matter; but the other large animals are generally confined to the leaves, fruit, and seeds of plants. Not so insects. Some live upon the leaf, some eat their way into the heart of the solid wood, others prefer the pith, while a few will touch nothing but bark. The bee selects honey, but there are little creatures who get their living head over ears in vinegar.

It is questioned whether the power of "eating dirt" be not a prerogative of man; but some insects have tastes more gross even than such a diet suggests.

There is a race of them, much persecuted, but very useful. I mean cockroaches, who are kitchen scavengers. They come out of their holes when the frowsy cook has gone to bed, and clear up every little scrap of grease and fat she has dropped upon the floor around the grate. When shut out of the places where food is kept they do positive good, though it must be confessed they are rather unprepossessing scullery-maids, and their fear of the light makes one naturally suspect their motives.

Other insects, however, which attach themselves to our household are unequivocal nuisances. Still it is curious to see animals finding a relish in such dry victuals as cloth, hair, and the like. There is one kind, too, which not only manages to fill its belly with horn, but thinks it quite a prime dish.

Of those which feed upon flesh, some wait until it has begun to decay, while others feast upon it before it is dead. The gadfly gets beneath the skin of an ox, where it sets up an action like a seton, and feeds upon the result. The ichneumon, too, is lodged and boarded in the living body of a caterpillar, and eats up his apartments at last so thoroughly, that on the cocoon which the caterpillar spins being opened, an ichneumon steps out, instead of a butterfly or a moth.

Others, like the rover or wandering beetle, [illegible]ill and eat their prey outright, while the flea, e[illegible] id *genus omne*, cut and come again.

But about these beetles, the following an[illegible]dote rests upon the authority of a reverend doct[illegible], who gave it in perfect faith. A friend of his [illegible] after a beetle hunt, brought home twelve, one co[illegible]derably larger than the others. Having, as h[illegible] believed, killed, he pinned them to the bottom [illegible] tray in his cabinet, turned the key, and pres[illegible] went to

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bed. Next morning, on looking at his specimens, he was surprised to find eleven of the pins standing empty. It turned out that the big beetle, recovering himself, and feeling very hungry, had struggled up, and, though still transfixed, had gone round and eaten his fellow-captives clean off their pins. There he was, sitting in the corner, looking very guilty, and tight about the waist.

The times at which insects feed are different. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the sun calls the whole world into life. A very large number of small animals, as well as great, go forth only by night; lie a-bed all day, and, as soon as it begins to grow dark, set about foraging for food. Our friend the grub, indeed, knows no repose, but munches away perseveringly, let the world make what arrangements it likes about the division of time. He knows no failure of appetite, and fears no nemesis of dyspepsia. With the best larder, the most cunning cook, the strongest digestion, or the most successful antibilious pills, the greatest, richest gourmand among men is no match whatever for a merry maggot. H. J.

THE GRASSY SEA.

CHAPTER I.

In one of those vast oceans miles away is a wonderful submarine island—or, rather continent, for it extends some hundreds of miles. It is not altogether submerged beneath the waves; the thick vegetation of which it seems entirely composed rises continually above the surface of the water, hence called by mariners "The Grassy Sea."

In a sequestered nook of this aquatic territory, shaded from the meridian heat of the tropical sun by a clustering screen of the sea-vine, a young and lovely being lay reclining at the feet of her mate. She looked youthful, almost childish, yet the expression of her face was not quite that of childish innocence. There was an occasional furtive glance in the liquid dark eyes, and a discontented pout about the rosy under-lip, that told a want of truth and singleness of heart. Her gaze just then was fixed on her husband, who was fondly playing with her silken brown hair. He had dark eyes like Zephita's, but filled with noble fire and soul, which seemed now all centred in the beautiful creature beside him.

"And will you not take me to the Coral wood, Alardos?" murmured she.

"I cannot, my own darling, as I told you before. Our king commands my attendance. I am indeed very sorry, dear one—do not give me the pain of refusing you again."

Zephita pouted, and raised her head as if repelling her husband's caresses.

"A month ago, when first we were wed, you would have dived to the crystal-green rock for my sake, and now—"

"And now my darling is self-willed, for I know she loves me really too well to wish me to sacrifice honour to her caprice."

Zephita pouted a little while longer, spite of the tender melancholy looks of her husband—then, suddenly turning, she threw her arms round his neck.

"I was wilful," said she. "Never mind, I will be very good for a whole week, to make amends."

Alardos strained her to his heart with a fondness that showed how anxious he was for reconciliation, and soon after left her. As soon as he was out of sight, Zephita gathered up her long tresses, which she fastened with a spray of bright green sea-weed, and walked impatiently up and down the arbour. She then amused herself for some time plucking grapes: weary of this, and finding a brilliant anemone growing near, she began tormenting the unhappy little creature, until it drew in all its slender arms, and remained so firmly closed that there was no further amusement to be extracted from it. With a sigh of impatience she threw herself on her couch, and remained quiet for a few minutes; then, starting up, she cried:

"I am *resolved* to see the Coral Grove! Alardos will not return for some time, and I am sure I can easily find my way. He will not be angry if I tell him of it afterwards, and if he is, I can soon kiss love back again into his eyes."

For some distance her path lay along a tolerably smooth road shaded by vines laden with sea-grapes, while at their base, covering the bank from which they sprung, were bright masses of pink and rose-coloured weed, which in this submarine region displayed their minute foliage fully expanded.

These bushes soon grew thicker and larger. The smooth path became encumbered with sharp-edged murexes and strombuses that pained Zephita's delicate feet so much that she nearly gave up her journey, and more than once she trod on the porcupine-like spikes of the sea-urchin, which drew the blood. Just then, however, she caught through the rose-coloured bushes a vision of something bright and glittering, and curiosity overcoming the pain of her wounded feet, she again hastened onward. When she reached the object that had attracted her, she started back with an exclamation of delight.

On a pyramidal rock of chrysolite lay piled in irregular heaps masses of the beautiful Venus's-ear shell, whose polished centres, reflecting the rays of the setting sun, had caught her gaze.

She sate down to rest here, while hundreds of tropical birds seeking their fishy prey darted in and out of the water around her; fishes of all kinds leaped about, equally intent on chasing their smaller brethren; while, in the distance, soft sounds of music added to the wonderful beauty of the scene. The shadows grew longer, and reminded Zephita that she must not delay.

More and more rugged grew the road. Her rose-coloured trees had given place to pendant green filmy masses, similar in texture to that which formed the apparent soil of all this region. Hitherto the water had often not reached higher than her waist, but now it closed over her head. She was evidently nearing the roots of ocean. The light grew dimmer and dimmer; the path became slimy and slippery; strange and unknown sea-plants grew and floated around her; reptiles of every shape and form started from beneath her feet; the toadfish and sea-devil startled her with their frightful forms; and the great sea-worm

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looked evilly at her with his fiery eyes as he glided away among the rose-lipped shells that formed high banks on either side.

Tired, and frightened at the increasing darkness, Zephita at length reached the end of her journey. Suddenly she found herself surrounded on all sides by immense trees, whose stems, branches, and leaves were formed of red coral, except here and there where a few white boughs shone all the more brightly in contrast. The summits of the trees were hid from her gaze—they seemed towering to the sky; while below, the

massive roots, spreading on every side, cushioned here and there by sea-moss, formed pleasant resting-places.

The charming colour and form of the coral branches entranced Zephita: she tried to break off a branch from some of the long pendent boughs that reached the ground; but this was no easy matter, so she contented herself with collecting some of the twigs that lay scattered about.

As soon as her eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, she saw that it was principally caused by the closely intersecting branches above, and that if she could in any way ascend, she should once more enjoy the sunshine. She was an excellent climber, and, having recovered her fatigue, she thought that by scaling one of the coral trees her object would be effected. She paused when about half-way up, and as she did so her hand

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rested on something cold and glutinous. She looked closer, and perceived to her astonishment innumerable small gelatinous creatures swarming in and out of every interstice in the coral.

Hastily she recommenced climbing, which grew more and more difficult as she approached the surface of the water, for the branches here were so closely intertwined that the ascent became more like that of a rock than of a tree—however, to her great joy, the coral-worms had disappeared, and the scarlet hue of the coral was infinitely more vivid.

The sun was still shining brightly when she emerged from the water. She was now above the level of the ocean, so that she had a clear view of the distant horizon. As she turned she perceived what, at first sight, seemed an immense rock near her; but, on examining it more attentively, she saw it was one of the wonderful creatures Alardos had told her of, and which, he said, occasionally moved across that region, full of living beings similar to themselves.

"O that I could see some of them!" thought Zephita. "I wonder if they can speak."

As she continued gazing at the noble vessel, which appeared to be stationary except for the gentle undulation caused by the waves (where she stood the water was smooth as glass), a small dark object was lowered from its side, and presently she saw it was moving towards her. Zephita watched its progress with breathless interest; nearer it came, and presently paused within a few feet of her; and she then perceived, with delight not unmingled with fear, a living being seated within it, who guided its motions. Zephita was fascinated and unable to move.

"Is she a reality, or an illusion?" murmured the creature, as he gazed at Zephita with such intense and fervent admiration that she felt her eyes droop, and a warm blush rise on her cheek. But she soon looked up again, for anything so beautiful she had never beheld. His eyes were bluer than the summer sky, and his hair waved in golden locks over his shoulders. She was roused from her gaze by his voice:

"Are you a mermaid, fair creature, sent to turn our brains, and lure our vessel to destruction? or are you a human being like myself?"

"I know not," said Zephita, "what a mermaid may be, but I would not harm you even if I had the power."

"I believe you," said the beautiful stranger; "be you mermaid, nymph, or kelpie, you look more made for love than for hate," and he moved his boat nearer as he spoke.

Zephita's heart beat with a new delicious sensation at the music of his voice—a feeling of burning, almost delirious, happiness thrilled through every fibre. She had never experienced anything of this kind in listening to Alardos; and as his image flitted across her thoughts, a dim consciousness of wrong for a moment tempted her at once to descend the Coral bank, and commence her homeward journey: but even while it trembled into life, the soft sweet voice of the stranger silenced its counsels.

"You are fairer," he continued, "than any daughter of Earth, and your eyes speak loving tenderness: if I could find some favour in them," added he entreatingly.

Zephita did not speak, but her large lustrous eyes showed no sign of displeasure at the warmth of his words and looks.

"Do you dwell alone here? When from the ship I descried a moving object on the Coral bank, I did not deem so fair a creature inhabited it."

Zephita's eyes beamed still more brightly as she listened to his flattering words and glances.

"This is a deserted place," said she, "only inhabited by coral worms; my home is at some distance."

"Then it is only by chance that I have encountered you," said he. "Oh! say," he continued passionately, "that this shall not be our first and last meeting. I shall see you again: let me find you here to-morrow."

Poor vain little Zephita! her heart throbbed and bounded with a delicious tumult of fear and delight, so that for some moments she could not speak. Now she longed to be beside the stranger, and the next instant to fly from him.

The young sailor perceived her agitation. "Why should you fear me; I will not harm you, lovely being—come sit beside me." He tried gently to draw her into the boat, but Zephita shook her head. "Well, then, sweetest, I must come to you," he cried, apparently so intoxicated with her wondrous beauty, as to forget all restraint or prudence; and rising, he tried to throw his arms round her, but Zephita started back.

"No, no! Do not come," she cried in terror, "you would perish miserably: such is the law of this region. I will be here again to-morrow—I dare stay no longer now."

She waved both arms towards him with exquisite grace, then disappeared beneath the water.

CHAPTER II.

As Zephita descended the coral trees, and commenced her homeward journey, her heart seemed filled with wonderful inexplicable feelings, more delightful than any she had hitherto experienced. The increasing darkness at length roused her from her reverie, and she became fearful of losing the track. Presently she saw at some distance a faint glimmering light; it gradually became more distinct, and she perceived Alardos, bearing on a staff one of those minute creatures—the phosphorescent marvels of the ocean.

"My darling, I am so rejoiced to have found you," he cried, throwing his arm round her.

Zephita turned from him with a mixture of aversion and shame. She could have endured his reproaches just then far better than his tenderness. Alardos, attributing her downcast looks to her sorrow for her disobedience, forbore to question her; he only said, playfully:

"I ought to have known that feminine curiosity must be gratified at any risks. Only, dearest, if you had waited one hour, we could have gone together. You might have been frightened, you little adventurous darling, in that wild solitude. You are very tired, are you not?" and as he spoke he put his arm round her supportingly.

Why did Zephita turn her head shudderingly from her husband as he fondly stooped to embrace

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her? Alardos looked surprised and pained; but, thinking she was fatigued and exhausted, he walked silently beside her till they reached the arbour glittering with pale green light. He placed Zephita on the softest couch he could find, and seated himself beside her, pitying and caressing her at intervals. At last she spoke:

"Alardos, I am sure you are sleepy and tired, had you not better retire to rest? I shall stay here and watch the stars; they are wondrously bright to-night methinks."

"You too must need repose, dearest, after so long and fatiguing a walk," said her husband; "but we will look at them together."

Zephita turned from him so impatiently, that Alardos could no longer attribute her strange silence to fatigue.

"Zephita!" he said, gravely and sadly, "you are grieving me very much by your unloving, cold looks; if I have in anything offended you, tell me at once what it is, and let us be friends. Husbands and wives should not make each other unhappy."

"I am not angry with you," said Zephita. "Dear me, how easily offended you are. Ah! I see you have not really forgiven me my journey to the Coral Grove, although you made such a magnanimous pretence of it at first," she added, with a scornful laugh.

Alardos looked at her in blank astonishment. He had often longed for an adequate return of love from his wife, but he had ascribed the coldness with which she often received his most ardent caresses to timidity and the short time of their wedded life; wayward he had also seen her; but the cool deliberate scorn with which she now spoke, filled him with grief and alarm.

"You have seen an evil water-sprite, Zephita," (she trembled), "and he has turned your heart from your husband."

Zephita burst into tears. "You are very unkind, Alardos, to say such wicked things of me."

But as she spoke she reflected, that by persisting in offending him she might possibly arouse his suspicions that something really had occurred to her in her visit, so she continued to weep bitterly.

Alardos, though inwardly more incensed than he had allowed her to perceive, was not proof against her sorrow. He paced the arbour a few minutes longer, then approached, and took both her hands in his.

"Zephita!" he said, earnestly, "*how* I love you, you can never know; nor do I believe it possible you can dream the agony one cold word or look of yours gives to my heart. You see I do not hesitate to show you the extent of your power over me. Be merciful, then. Do not wound again by unkindness a love that, I repeat, is as yet beyond your comprehension."

He looked tenderly at her, but did not offer to caress her. Zephita, for the moment, was touched in spite of herself. She must indeed have been made of stone, if she had resisted those deep-loving eyes. She bent her head penitently on the hands that still held hers. Alardos clasped her passionately to him, and was once more happy.

But next morning Zephita seemed restless, absent, and almost unconscious of her husband's presence, save once, when she let her soft brown hair fall in rich waving undulations to her feet. Alardos was musing rather sadly upon her changed mood, his eyes bent on the ground. She looked at him contemptuously.

"How foolish one is sometimes," she said. "I thought when I listened to your love-tales, Alardos, that at least you would always care for the charms you once said I possessed, and you do not waste a word of admiration on me now. I may adorn myself with every grace my fancy can devise, but you never remark a change." And as she spoke she rolled her tresses rapidly and angrily together, and fastened them with the little coral sprays she had gathered the preceding evening.

Alardos smiled. "I suppose I shall best make my peace by saying you are always so charming that I can discover no possible improvement."

But she turned away with sudden coldness.

"Zephita!" he said, more seriously, "I thought we had ended this; only one new charm do I desire in your eyes—that they may truly reflect my love for you."

She made no answer, and he continued:

"I think you are a little tired of me, dearest! To-day I am sent on a long journey, and may possibly not return till night-fall: come, let us part lovingly."

Zephita felt so relieved at the idea of being left free to visit the Coral Grove, that she with difficulty concealed the satisfaction that lighted up her eyes; guilty joy filled her heart, and she was able with a deceiving smile to bid her husband farewell, if not warmly, at least more cheerfully than he had expected.

When he was gone she was unhappy. His forbearing deep love seemed to rise in judgment, and she trembled as she felt how much more warmly she regarded this stranger than her husband. She would not go: but then the irresistible blue eyes and sunny face rose before her, and she again longed passionately for the hour of meeting.

CHAPTER III.

The evening sky looked dark and threatening as Zephita left the arbour. How the absence of warm sunlight changed the face of the valley; it was gloomy and dismal enough to have frightened away a stouter heart than hers. The foliage of the bright rose-coloured bushes hung in dingy matted curtains; the path was so slippery, that she scarcely saved herself from falling more than once. Often she felt tempted to turn back, but self-will and the thought of the stranger urged her on.

She gladly hailed the huge stems of the coral-trees, although she was so exhausted that she paused for breath before she ascended the loftiest of them. She found the stranger anxiously awaiting her, and again she greedily listened to his winning flatteries and words of love. He questioned her of her strange life and place of abode, and he laughed scornfully when she told him the tradition that this wonderful submerged

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region was as yet untrodden by the foot of man, and that no purely human being could safely dwell on it, even on those parts uncovered by the waves.

"Such idle forebodings have chased the smiles from your pretty lips, redder than the coral around us, fair creature," said he, playfully stroking her silken ringlets, for he had at last succeeded in persuading Zephita to seat herself beside him in the boat, and she feared him no longer now. "I am an excellent diver, and I fear nothing, and am resolved to see the wonders of this Coral Grove, for to us it appears a mere shoal or bank of branches, and if you can exist beneath the surface of the water, I can, too. You do not wish me to leave you, my Coral nymph?" said he, as he clasped her yet more closely to him, and pressed kisses on her pouting lips. "Ah, you are indeed no water-fairy, your blood flows as warmly as mine."

"Leave me?" said Zephita. "Oh, no, no! I could not live without you now. I feel I did not know what life was till I saw you," and she threw her beautiful arms around him.

The stranger, although he caressed and soothed her, and would willingly, had he dared, have carried off his beautiful prize to the ship, smiled inwardly at the thought that, on the morrow he should perhaps be leagues distant; but what harm could there possibly be in deceiving a sea nymph, and making the best of what chance had thrown in his way.

Zephita grew more and more infatuated, and at last yielding to his caresses and importunties, she consented to guide him to the Coral Grove, and thence to the chrysolite rock, whose wonders she had described to him.

Strange that all this time no thought of her wronged and trusting husband flashed through her vain selfish heart.

They soon gained the foot of the coral tree. Zephita, who had descended first, started back with a cry of terror when she perceived her husband approaching. She turned to her companion.

He had just reached the ground; but as his foot touched the soil it yielded to the unusual pressure,—down, down he sank rapidly as an arrow cleaves the air. The treacherous filmy mass, which no mortal foot might safely tread, closed over him for ever, leaving no trace behind.

Zephita stood paralysed with grief and terror, unconscious for some moments that Alardos was standing close beside her.

He, too, looked horror-struck, but it did not seem to be at the event just recorded, for his eyes were fixed on his wife.

All their soft expression had vanished,—a stern majesty reigned in his whole demeanour, and when at length the wretched Zephita raised her eyes; she shrank back trembling as from some avenging spirit.

Long he gazed upon her as she sank lower and lower, and finally crouched on the ground in a paroxysm of grief and shame.

Still Alardos spoke not, he seemed to try to utter sounds, but to fail in the attempt.

At length he looked down at Zephita, and pity softened the freezing horror that had petrified his senses.

"Unhappy one; have I indeed then caused you such grief that you are forced to seek consolation from a stranger,—and oh what woe your love has wrought him."

But Zephita started up—fury gleaming in her wild eyes and distorted countenance.

"A stranger!" and she laughed frantically, "to me no stranger. He is my dearest love—my beautiful—my own mate, and I am his bride, and he is waiting for me!"

Then, as her eye rested for an instant on the sudden grave of her lover, she uttered a wild piercing cry, and struck Alardos fiercely on the breast.

"You have murdered him—you dug this pit to ensure his destruction—mean, effeminate, and foolish I ever thought you—now I see you are treacherous and cruel—dare not to blame me—my heart was free, it never felt one real throb of love for you. My only hope is that you yet care enough for me to suffer by losing me."

She turned and fled away like the wind.

Alardos for an instant stood spell-bound by her last words; then he hastened after her, wildly calling on her to stop and hear him.

For some moments, which to him seemed hours, he saw no trace of her. At last, at the extremity of the valley, he caught a glimpse of her white robe.

He looked around, they were amid fearful precipices, the path was broken and perilous. Still, he dared not slacken his pace, for he trembled lest again he should lose sight of Zephita.

To his relief the white robe appeared stationary. At length he approached near enough to see her standing on the almost conical summit of a small rock, surrounded on every side but that on which he advanced by precipices of frightful depth.

She seemed to be only awaiting her husband's near approach, for the instant she perceived him, she waved her arms exultingly, and with a wild cry plunged into the fathomless abyss.

GILBERT PERCY.

VOLTAIRE AND M. CHAPEAU.—In No. lxxxi. of ONCE A WEEK,* in an article entitled, "The Heart of Voltaire living and dead," there occurs the following passage: "The malady continuing to make alarming progress, the priests arrive, and on being denied admittance, threaten to break open the door. The Abbé Gautier, sent by the curé of St. Sulpice, is allowed to enter, and is well received, but on attempting to press the matter of confession, is requested to 'call again.'" Reading this brought to remembrance an anecdote once told me by an old French teacher. When Voltaire was on his death-bed, many visitors called—all of whom were denied entrance to his chamber. Amongst them was a Reverend Monsieur Chapeau, who came to offer the consolations of the Church. When his name was announced by the servant, Voltaire said, "I came into the world *bareheaded*, and I shall leave it without a *chapeau!*" J. WILSON.

* See above, p. 67.

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LAST WEEK.

ANY one who has haunted the London Clubs during LAST WEEK must have been struck by the manner in which Lord Derby's friends and supporters are now discussing the chances of their return to power. They seem to entertain a very confident expectation that ere long they will be called upon to undertake once more the government of the country. If you ask for positive facts, you are told that the electoral organisation of the Liberals is so defective that power is slipping away from their grasp. Within the last few weeks they have lost some seats, and if the same apathy continues they will in all probability be still heavier losers. The truth seems to be, that parties—if indeed such a term as "party" can now be applied to any particular body of politicians—are pretty equally balanced, both within and without the walls of Parliament. There is a great indifference as to political discussions, for the simple reason that there is no question of domestic interest which just now attracts the sympathies or provokes the opposition of multitudes. The natural consequence is, that the gains at the elections belong to that party which takes most pains with the details of the electoral machinery. Now, the Conservatives—let us still retain the term—have, beyond all doubt, directed a far more strenuous attention to the registration books than their opponents; and, in consequence, have been slowly creeping on until, at length, they have succeeded in reducing the not very considerable majority of the Liberals in the Lower House to very narrow proportions indeed. It is very true that henceforth the government of this country must be carried on by exceedingly small majorities in the House of Commons; but still there must be a majority upon which reliance can be placed, or else a Parliamentary Session is wasted in idle and inconclusive debate. Practically the government of the country must be carried on, and the Premier who fails to secure the numerical superiority on a division in the House of Commons must yield to the statesman who, by the ingenuity and industry of his adherents, has succeeded in fulfilling the requisite conditions.

As a mere party move, it begins to be apparent that Lord Palmerston and his friends should have brought in some kind of Reform Bill this year—not but that the country is sufficiently apathetic upon the matter. As long, however, as the Liberals had hoisted the flag of Parliamentary Reform, and until some measure of Parliamentary Reform was carried, the return to power of the Conservatives was well-nigh impossible. Lord John Russell with his own lips has made the admission which has freed Lord Derby's position from its chief difficulties.

If the country just now cares nothing for further changes in our electoral system, why should not Lord Derby and his friends have their turn of power, just as well as those who go down to Chesham Place, or who do business at Cambridge House? There are no considerations, as far as internal politics are concerned, beyond those of private sympathy, which should induce us to give or to withhold support from the chief of either party.

This then, as far as the internal policy of the country is concerned, may be taken to be the leading feature in the history of LAST WEEK—namely, a growing distrust in the stability of Lord Palmerston's administration. The chief consideration which seems to modify this conclusion is, that continental politics may take, and probably will take, such a turn as will exclude from power any administration in which the Earl of Malmesbury would be the representative of the foreign policy of this country. If the inhabitants of these islands are in earnest upon any matter of public interest just now, they are so about the settlement of the Italian question. As far as we can assist in bringing about such a conclusion, we are resolved that Italian affairs shall be so resettled as that Italy may take her place amongst the great powers of Europe, even although such a termination of the struggle may not be entirely free from danger to ourselves. Such danger we are willing to confront, as believing on the whole, as far as our personal interests are concerned, that we have far more to gain than to lose from an independent Italy! and, far more than this, as men who are desirous that right should be done, and that beautiful country should at all hazards be freed from the tyranny under which it has so long groaned, whatever the consequences may be. As a practical corollary to this proposition we desire that this country should, as far as our military and naval preparations are concerned, be placed in a thorough state of defence, and that mainly with the view of keeping ourselves aloof from any complications which may arise.

Now, it is the general belief throughout the country that our desires upon these points will be far more efficiently represented by Lord Palmerston and his friends than by those who would support Lord Derby, should he again be called to power. On the whole, it seems the better opinion, that if the peace of Europe is maintained, the Liberals had best look to it sharply, or the government of the country may soon pass out of their hands. If, on the other hand, the thunder-clouds which are gathering here and there over the Continent of Europe—notably on its Eastern extremity—should burst, then, in all probability, Englishmen of all classes would unite in the support of the present administration.

The division of LAST WEEK upon the *vexata quæstio* of Church Rates, after all, took place on the proposition of an independent member. For many and many a year past Sir John Trelawny has made this question his own, and has at length brought it to a point at which his proposals are annually approved by the Commons, and annually rejected by the Lords. There can be but one conclusion to such a state of facts. Here is the Jew Bill again in another form. The Peers were beaten upon that in the long run—not without loss of prestige, which in their case is *pro tanto* loss of power. An affirmative decision was at length literally torn from them, and so it will be with regard to this matter of Church Rates. What a trifle it is, after all, that has given rise to this disturbance! Upon a very accurate calculation it

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appears that a sum of £250,000 is annually collected in the form of Church Rates. Now, upon the very humblest supposition, if the enforced collection of the Rate were done away with to-morrow at the very least, £150,000 of this sum would still be paid by the persons who pay it at present, being hearty well-wishers to the Church. Thus, then, the country is divided into two parties—the whole constitution of the Church is annually challenged; the holes and flaws in the cuirasses of Churchmen are pointed out and discussed every year, and all for the sake of a sum which—regard being had to the interests concerned—is insignificant indeed!

Happily the question of Tithes was settled some twenty years and upwards ago—the endowments in land, which were the next great source from which the Church derived its revenues, have been placed under a satisfactory system of administration. At present, really nothing remains but to ascertain whether on the whole, for the sake of peace—and justice—it is not better to give up the questionable prerogative of wringing £100,000 per annum from reluctant hands for the support of the Church. There is not a penny of that money which is not given grudgingly, and in bitterness of spirit—ought this to be? Surely the Church is rich enough by her actual endowments, and by the devotion and liberality of her adherents—she can well dispense with such unfree-will offerings as these! What a coil is constantly made about the Maynooth Grant. Sound Churchmen tell us that it is a violation of their conscientious scruples when they are called upon, even indirectly in their quality of tax-payers, to contribute towards a fund for the education of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, but they will turn round and with their next breath attack the Dissenters for refusing to contribute towards the support of Ecclesiastical edifices, which neither they, nor the members of their families, ever enter for the purposes of worship and devotion. On the other hand, if the paltry revenue be not worth a struggle for its own sake, neither is the principle at issue of much value. The supporters of the Church Rates maintain that this is a question of whether or no we choose to make abnegation of our character as a God-fearing nation—of whether by a solemn act of the Legislature we will cut off the connection between Church and State. But how stand the facts? Was there ever in history a nation which did so consistently, so continuously, so conscientiously devote a large portion of its wealth to the purpose of Divine worship? This is true of all denominations of Christians in this country. Whether we speak of Churchmen, of Dissenters, of Roman Catholics, it matters not; on every side we have material evidence of their zeal in the matter of religious worship. Churches and chapels are built, and endowed. The old Ecclesiastical edifices of this country are maintained and repaired with little or no help from this miserable Church-rate fund. If more money was wanted to-morrow, more would be forthcoming. What, then, is the object amongst such a people of endeavouring to maintain the connection between Church and State in a forcible way, when they are ready enough to admit, and do practically carry out, the principle that every man should devote a portion of his earnings, and of his wealth, to the service of God? It is much to be apprehended that this last stand is made by zealous Churchmen rather to maintain a badge of superiority, or mark of especial distinction, than from any belief that by their obstinate and continued resistance they are at all helping to maintain the efficiency of the Church. Unless it be speedily settled, this question may still prove a serious embarrassment to Lord Derby and his supporters.

Whatever may be the interest felt in these internal matters, it is clear enough that they fade into insignificance by the side of those great events which are now passing on the Continent of Europe. These lend a colour to all domestic discussion—they affect the stability of the British Ministry—they are uppermost in the thoughts of all men. Upon the Continent of Europe we notice during LAST WEEK the occurrence of two events of superior importance—namely, the promulgation of a Constitution by the Emperor of Austria, and the discussion upon the address at Paris, mainly with reference to the degree of protection which is to be henceforward afforded by the French Government to the temporal power of the Pope. Is the first a confession of weakness? Is it a symptom of returning strength? The promises made, and the engagements entered into by Francis Joseph seem fair enough as far as all Provinces of the Empire—save Hungary—are concerned. To the Chambers is conceded the control over the national purse. They are to determine the amount of the supplies—to apportion the manner of their collection, and to appropriate them to their several uses. If the two Chambers were only elected with a moderate degree of regard to the representative elements, this would be fair enough—for in our time, that man, or that body of men, which holds control over the purse, soon becomes the master. The Austrian Camarilla, and the Emperor himself, must have been painfully aware that the sceptre had departed from them before they agreed to sanction a measure which reverses the policy of the House of Hapsburg ever since the days when Joseph II. for a brief space endeavoured to inspire some notion of liberal government into the administration of the Empire. Old Francis—the father of Maria-Louisa—was as thorough-paced an old Tory as George III., or the late Sir Edward Knatchbull, or Colonel Sibthorpe. During the later years of his reign,—indeed it may be said from the Congress of Vienna onwards,—Prince Metternich was the real Vice-gerent of the Austrian dominions. The principles of his policy were re-actionary, and excusably so. Is there a man amongst us who could say that he would have thought and acted otherwise than the great Austrian Statesman, had he been a personal witness of the excesses of popular liberty such as were known in Paris at the conclusion of the last century—had he seen London twice in possession of a foreign foe—and every tradition of our national pride blown to the four winds? The misfortune was not that Prince Metternich was what he was, but that he lived longer than he should have done for his

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country's welfare. Then came the revolution of 1848, and Felix Schwartzenburg, who was the incarnation of Metternich's principles without his subtlety and discrimination. He obtained, though but for a moment, a false and dangerous triumph. He endeavoured, with the help of foreign bayonets, not only to restore the central despotism of Viennese bureaucracy, but to complete the work which had been begun even in the days of that ungrateful Queen, who owed the salvation of her crown to the Hungarians, and repaid them by an endeavour to sap and destroy their independence, and national existence. Schwartzenburg triumphed for the moment, and his triumph bore fruit in the ascendancy of the mother of the Emperor, and the fanatical Camarilla—ultimately in the Concordat. That Concordat has already cost Lombardy to Francis Joseph, and unless it be speedily rescinded, Lombardy is but an instalment of the purchase-money which he will be called upon to pay as the price of his subserviency to the *Parti Prêtre*. And the result of his bargain is that he has been driven to govern by the army. If you will violate the consciences of human beings, you must have a sufficiency of dragoons to back you up in the attempt. But dragoons cost money—many dragoons cost much money—and very many dragoons imply a national bankruptcy. Now Austria, in consequence of this attempt to govern by military authority, stands upon the verge of national bankruptcy; and it is under such conditions that Francis Joseph has summoned his first Parliament, and has announced for the first time his intention of endeavouring to become a Constitutional Sovereign. The situation is full of traps and pitfalls, and the spectator may well be pardoned if he is sceptical as to the result.

It should be remarked that this question of constitutional government for the other provinces of the Austrian Empire—save Hungary—stands quite apart, and must be considered apart from the complications which have arisen with regard to Hungarian affairs. Hungary declines absorption into the general body of the Empire. Hungary is a kingdom by itself, and refuses to be cast into the melting-pot. She consents to be united to Austria by the golden link of the Crown, but will not budge one inch further. Hungary has been Austria's Ireland—but in her instance the Ireland of the Magyars will prove in all probability the superior both in military power and political influence.

The resolutions of the French Emperor will take their colour and bias from the events which may occur in Hungary during the next few weeks, and therefore we would for the moment direct attention to what is passing at the eastern extremity of Europe, as to the real point of sight. Just now Louis Napoleon stands between the Ultramontanes and the Latitudinarians of his Empire, like Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy—

> He lets "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
> Like the poor cat i' the adage.

He blames the Pope, but he protects him;—he has fought against the Austrian in Lombardy, but maintains the French garrison at Rome;—he keeps his fleet before Gaëta, and just withdraws it in time to ensure the destruction of the young Bourbon;—he delivers an address which is as displeasing to the Ultramontanes as to the Liberals of France. No doubt, but for his troops the Pope would commence his travels to-morrow, and yet the Bishop of Poictiers compares him to Judas Iscariot, and calls him by every ugly name which sacerdotal zeal can devise—and priests know how to rail when they take the matter in hand.

In our own House of Commons, whilst all this pother is on foot, we find that during Last Week the representatives of the British people have been engaged in an animated discussion as to the best means of reorganising the administration of the navy. That shows pretty well the tendency of public policy and public opinion in our own country. The continent of Europe is growing bayonets instead of corn—and England is building iron ships of war. Can the end of these things be peace?

In addition to this discussion we have had a dreary debate in the House of Lords, provoked by Lord Normanby, who (forgetful of the glories of his former days, when as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he rode about magnificently upon a white horse, and exercised the royal prerogative of mercy in a very summary way), now acts the part of the lean and slippered Pantaloon of Diplomacy. Lord Normanby, in his old age, had been appointed Chief of the Mission to the Court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and no doubt this was as easy and delightful a post as any man could desire for his declining years. When at Florence, Lord Normanby found it far more agreeable to maintain friendly relations with the reactionary party than to mix himself up with the leaders of the national movement. No doubt, being the accredited Minister of his Sovereign to the court of an independent Prince, he was quite right in avoiding the society and fellowship of those by whom the authority of that Prince was threatened. His position was one of the most strict and absolute neutrality, as far as Italian factions were concerned: his duty was, in these matters, simply to furnish correct reports to his own government. In place of this, Lord Normanby became a violent partizan on the other side, and committed, in fact, the reverse of the mistake which some years ago led to the summary and humiliating dismissal of Sir Henry Bulwer from Madrid by General Narvaez. Having done what he could do to bring discredit upon the British name by his actions in Tuscany, Last Week—it was on Friday last—he came forward in the House of Lords as the defender and palliator of the misdeeds of the various Italian Kinglets who have been recently displaced by the Italian people. He could say nothing to the purpose, for there was nothing to be said—but he wound up a very tedious speech by informing the House that the Italians cared very little for English sympathy. Let us hope that they will be as indifferent to the denunciations poured upon them by Lord Normanby in the presence of the English Peers as were the English Peers on Friday night.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It was rarely that Mr. Hawkesley, after he had entered his *sanctum* and sealed it against the world, for whose improvement he declared himself to be labouring, was intruded upon by visitors during the hours he set apart for the discharge of that elevated duty, and his wife was much too sensible a woman to exercise her own right of *entrée*, except upon emergency. So, when Beatrice Hawkesley hurried into the room without the faintest extenuating pretext, and suddenly recalled the author from fiction to reality, he dropped his pen with becoming marital submission.

"Charles, that woman will be here presently."

"That woman?"

"From Lipthwaite, with whom Clara was left."

"Mrs. Berry—what makes you say that?"

"Poor Price is here—she has hurried over as fast as she could come to warn us."

"But why did she think we wanted warning?—Is the woman coming to claim the child?"

"I should like to hear her ask for Clara."

"You do not purpose to give her up then, apparently?"

"What!—give her up to a creature that maligns her mother, and frightens the child with evil spirits? I will send for a policeman if she dares even to hint at such a thing."

"You will send for me, my dear, which will answer your purpose far better. However, it is natural that she should make every search for a girl who was confided to her, and who departed without her leave or knowledge.

"Yes, and I suppose that she is in a state of terror lest Clara should tell how abominably she has been treated?"

"Possibly. But you don't tell me why Price thought it needful to warn us."

"It was quite right in her. The woman went to Gurdon Terrace, and spoke in a way which seems to have enraged Price beyond all measure. She said that there was no probability of Laura's returning, and—"

"Who said, dear? Don't stop to call names, as they confuse a story."

"This Mrs. Berry, then," said Beatrice. "Price, of course, was thunderstruck ——"

"Was astonished—well."

"The woman," persisted Mrs. Hawkesley, regardless of her moderator, "did not at first explain that Clara had been in her charge, but made a variety of inquiries about Laura, which Price baffled as well as she could; and it was only at last, and when she had irritated Price by all sorts of hints and insolent questionings, that she mentioned that Clara had been left at Lipthwaite."

"Mrs. Berry supposing that the child had gone home?"

"Yes, and ordering Price to bring her down. Then, I think, though Price knows her duty better than to say so, she gave the creature some very plain speaking, something like what she will get here, I can tell her."

"I trust not in the least like it," said Hawkesley, laying his hand on his wife's. "Mrs. Hawkesley's plain speaking will be as unlike Mrs. Price's as possible. Quite plain enough, though, I have no doubt. Then Price hurried off to see whether the child were here?"

"Yes; and to say that Mrs. Berry was coming."

"Did Mrs. Berry say so?"

"She asked for our address."

"I wonder she was not here as soon as Price."

"Well, to tell you the truth, I think that Price, wishing to gain time ——"

"Did not tell the truth?"

"I don't think she made the address very plain to her, and Maida Hill is rather a wide place."

But, wide as it might be, less than half an hour had elapsed before Mr. Hawkesley was summoned to the parlour. There he found his wife in company with a lady whom the former introduced to him with as much frigidity as the warm-natured Beatrice could manage to superimpose upon her ordinarily demonstrative manner.

"This is Mrs. Berry, from Lipthwaite, Charles. She has called to inquire about Clara."

"Who is here, I am glad to find—a naughty little runagate," said Mrs. Berry, smiling kindly.

"You have informed this lady that Clara is here, and well?" said the author, addressing his wife.

"I have said nothing of the kind," replied Mrs. Hawkesley, "as Mrs. Berry did not wait to ask the question of me, but thought proper to let the servant know that Clara had run away."

"My dear lady," said Mrs. Berry, "my natural impatience to know that the darling child was safe made me forget ceremony. Such a weight has been taken off my heart, that I can hardly express my sensations, but you, Mrs. Hawkesley, as a mother, will be able to appreciate them."

Mrs. Hawkesley did not look as if she were inclined to make any particular effort to sympathise with her visitor, and Hawkesley said—

"We are happy, of course, to relieve you, Mrs. Berry, of a charge which may have been irksome. Clara will remain with us until her parents return to town."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Berry, tenderly, "perhaps that is the best way to put it."

"To put what?" said Mrs. Hawkesley, almost angrily.

"To arrange for Clara," said Hawkesley, with a movement of his hand, signifying his wish to understand the speech his own way, and avoid encounter. "Mrs. Berry, of course, thinks with us, that the child will be best with her uncle and aunt."

He would speedily have ended the interview, but neither lady was minded that it should have so inglorious an issue.

"I did not understand Mrs. Berry to mean that," said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"Nor did I, exactly," said Mrs. Berry, "but I perfectly comprehend Mr. Hawkesley's reluctance to allude to any circumstances of a painful character, and I am quite prepared to let that interpretation be placed on my words."

Her words were delivered with the utmost precision, but in the gentlest tone, and they produced in Mrs. Hawkesley certain slight indications, almost imperceptible except by her husband, that if anything more were said, it would be a good deal more. And for this he saw no reason.

"Some little portmanteau, or something of the kind, I think Clara mentioned that she had left behind her," he said. "If you would kindly cause it to be forwarded here, that will be the last trouble she shall give you." And he was evidently bent on bowing Mrs. Berry out of her chair. He might as well have tried to bow a limpet off a rock.

"It shall be sent up," she said, "and I trust that you will be rewarded for your kindness to the poor motherless child."

Over the Rubicon.

"Pray, Mrs. Berry," said Hawkesley, sternly, "what do you mean by that expression?"

His wife's face flushed with pleasure at his taking up the case which she had been impatiently believing that he would refuse to fight.

"What expression?" asked Mrs. Berry, so naturally.

"You called Clara motherless. Have you heard of Mrs. Lygon's death?"

"Her death!" responded Mrs. Berry, sadly. "To her sister, and to her brother-in-law, I may be forgiven for saying—alas! no. For you will understand me." And she put her handkerchief to her eyes.

Mrs. Hawkesley, her husband felt (though he was not looking at her), was on the point of replying that she quite understood Mrs. Berry, and of explaining, in the least agreeable manner, the view she took of that lady's nature, but he again interposed.

"A mysterious speech of that kind, addressed to a lady's nearest and dearest friends, must, of course, be explained," he answered. "Mrs Berry will be good enough to understand that we have no idea of its meaning."

"You *could* not say such a thing insincerely," said Mrs. Berry, with so much energy, and looking so exceedingly pained, that Hawkesley, who knew that he had not spoken sincerely, hesitated over his reply.

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"We have not the least idea of its meaning," said Mrs. Hawkesley, with vehemence.

"Then," said Mrs. Berry, making good play with her handkerchief, "I am indeed most unfortunate. I must throw myself upon your mercy. I have said what I ought never to have said,—I have violated a trust I ought never to have broken. But I have erred in total ignorance that I was going astray. I could not have imagined that what had been confided to a stranger, a stranger at least in blood, would have been concealed from those who, as you say, are the nearest and dearest. And now what *am* I to do or say? Forget that I have said anything, and let me go." And she wept.

"After what you have said, Mrs. Berry," said Hawkesley, in the coldest tone, "it is, of course, clear that you are here for the purpose of saying more. We wait your explanation."

"Do not mistrust me—do not misjudge me," she replied, earnestly. "I would not have entered this room, after being once assured of the safety of that dear child, if I could have foreseen this. Oh, I have been most foolish—most wicked. Spare me. I spoke heedlessly, and much too strongly,—forget all I have said, and let me leave you."

"My avocations compel me to be a watchful observer of acting, Mrs. Berry," said Hawkesley. "If I were in a mood for compliment, I would compliment you on yours."

The light eyes were behind the handkerchief, so the evil glance that would have followed this speech was saved.

"Mr. Hawkesley," said Mrs. Berry, with some dignity, "I have begged your forgiveness, and humiliated myself so earnestly, that I think I might have been spared insult. But I accept it as part of the penalty of my thoughtlessness, and I do not forgive myself in the least degree. There is no necessity for my saying anything else; indeed, now that I am calmer, I feel that I have no right to say anything else, and our interview must end. God bless poor dear little Clara."

Hawkesley thought that she was going to rise, but his wife's eye more truthfully interpreted Mrs. Berry's fidget with her drapery.

"Mrs. Berry does not mean to go," said Beatrice, in the most straightforward manner, "until she has tried to do more mischief than she can manage by lady-like conversations with servants and anonymous letters to tradespeople.

"Dear Mrs. Hawkesley," replied Mrs. Berry, "do you think that I can be displeased with you for doing and saying everything in your power in favour of your poor sister, or for being hurt to the very soul at hearing anything on the subject. I should be a worse woman than I hope I am if I could cherish a spark of anger against one who is being so bitterly tried. I forgive as much as I understand of your unkind language, and I will forget the rest. I wish that poor Mrs. Lygon were worthier of your devoted affection."

"How dare—" began Mrs. Hawkesley, with a kindling eye—but her husband laid his hand on her shoulder, and she restrained herself.

"Your husband is, I think, a solicitor, Mrs. Berry?" said Hawkesley.

"He was a solicitor," replied the lady, quietly, "as Mrs. Hawkesley is very well able to inform you."

"I never heard of him," was Mrs. Hawkesley's prompt reply.

"Yet your father has owed many a debt of kindness—pray do not think for a moment that I am bringing it up ungenerously—but Mr. Vernon has often been indebted to my husband for legal aid, and perhaps for aid of another kind."

"I repeat that I never heard Mr. Berry's name."

"Oh, had he not added the name of Berry to that of Allingham?"

"Allingham—Berry," repeated Mrs. Hawkesley, eagerly, "Then—then, you were Marion Wagstaffe," she exclaimed.

"I thought that you recognised me at once," said Mrs. Berry. "But as you did not say so, I forbore to make allusions to the past, which was not always pleasant."

"No, I did not recognise you," said Mrs. Hawkesley, in a low voice.

"I believe it, dear Mrs. Hawkesley, and that had you done so, many words of unkindness would have been spared. Now, do not let an old acquaintance be remembered only by bitter hours, but let me leave you, and pray that time may heal all sorrows."

"I asked whether your husband were a solicitor," said Hawkesley, in no way moved by this little episode. "You imply that he was, but is not now in practice. It will be necessary for me to communicate with him, in order to ascertain whether he takes upon himself the liability of answering for the slanders which his wife has been spreading, or whether he intends to repudiate them."

"I fear," said Mrs. Berry, preserving her temper with marvellous firmness, "that you do not quite understand the position of matters, Mr. Hawkesley, and that your zeal for your wife's sister may lead you astray. I will not notice strong words at a time like this, but if there is anything to complain of, the person to complain is Mr. Lygon, and he is my husband's most intimate friend. It was to Mr. Berry, and not to Mr. Hawkesley, that poor Arthur flew, when he heard of his dreadful sorrow; it was to Mrs. Berry, and not to Mrs. Hawkesley, that the distressed father confided his dearest child; and though doubtless two quiet country people are far less estimable in the eye of society than two London persons, of gay and worldly habits, it was to the country people that Mr. Lygon went for advice and consolation. To threaten *us*, therefore, is scarcely more wise than it is kind."

"I cannot bear this," said Mrs. Hawkesley, with energy. "If Mrs. Berry intends to equivocate and palter, instead of answering outright what it is that she dares to charge Laura with, she may. But now that I know who her husband is, I know too that he is incapable of being a party to any slander or meanness, and it will be for you, Charles, to go down to Lipthwaite to-night, and ask Mr. Berry for an explanation. Six words from him will be enough."

"Fewer than that will be enough," replied Mrs. Berry, "and if I do not speak them, it is

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only because I fear that my natural anger at your harshness might be gratified by my giving you pain—and I hope I have learned to mortify such feelings."

"Spare your apologies, Madam," said Hawkesley, now losing his temper at her pertinacity, "and do not spare me. I will hear either from you or your husband, before I sleep, what it is that you charge against my wife's sister."

"We charge her!" said Mrs. Berry. "Heaven forbid! We would do anything to screen her—ask her child how her mother was spoken of under our roof."

Mrs. Hawkesley was far too indignant to meet this unequalled effrontery as she desired, and Mrs. Berry went on.

"But since you are bent upon a course of wilfulness, which I would in all sincerity beg you to avoid, it is for me to remember that I have other duties beside those of friendship. My husband is old—much older than myself, and it is not well that at his time of life he should be disturbed by such a scene as you, Mrs. Hawkesley, would urge your compliant husband to make under our roof. I will reply for him; and, with tears in my eyes and sorrow at my heart, will tell you, if you still insist on my doing so, what we learned from Mr. Arthur Lygon."

"Speak your worst," said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"I pity you—I pity you, indeed, most deeply," replied Mrs. Berry, "and you will bear me witness hereafter that I have spoken only upon such provocation—no, in answer to such an appeal as has seldom been made to a woman."

"I will take the responsibility of having asked for plain words instead of hints and allusions," returned Hawkesley.

"Then—and chiefly to spare my aged husband a painful scene—I answer you. Mr Lygon is pursuing an unfaithful wife."

"Utterly, wickedly false!" exclaimed Hawkesley.

His wife turned deadly pale, moved restlessly on her chair, but made no reply.

"Unhappily it is true," said Mrs. Berry; "and Mr. Lygon knows that it is so."

"We must say no more while she remains, Charles, dear," said Mrs. Hawkesley, in a faint voice. "Let her go."

"Poor thing," said Mrs. Berry, compassionately. "This was to be looked for. Why did you not let me go earlier, instead of wringing this disclosure from me? There is much—very much—that I would have endured rather than have caused this sorrow."

"How dare you speak such words?" cried Beatrice, with an effort. "You have said that which you know to be false, and you exult in the torture you have caused. Charles, do you believe a word of this cruel slander?"

"I believe your sister to be as innocent as yourself. But what strange story may have been laid hold of, and twisted into a story of guilt, I cannot say, but Mr. Berry shall. I will not take Mrs. Berry's word for his being associated in a plot against one of the best women in the world."

"Surely you will not persist in your intention of persecuting an old man who can ill bear excitement," pleaded Mrs. Berry.

"Excitement—who talks of excitement, when a foul and hideous charge is made against those we love?" cried Hawkesley "I have heard of Mr. Berry from Lygon, and if he is the friend Lygon has believed him, I shall hear the truth from his lips. Something tells me that I have not heard it from his wife's."

"You will go to Lipthwaite?"

"To-night. Meantime I have no more questions to put to Mrs. Berry."

"She has one to put to you. I wish to speak a word to you, Mr. Hawkesley, but not in the presence of your wife."

"I have no secrets from her."

"Go with her, Charles, if she wishes it," said Mrs. Hawkesley, "or I will go."

Beatrice walked slowly, and as one who had been half stunned, towards the door, and supporting herself by it she said—

"Marion Berry, for some purpose of your own, you are acting a wickedness for which God will judge you. I shall see that judgment." And she left the room.

"Even excited as she is, tell her, Mr. Hawkesley, that she should avoid such sinful language, such unholy appeals."

"Do not speak of my wife, but let me hear what you wished to say."

"Once more, I ask you whether you are bent on going to Lipthwaite?"

"Must I once more tell you that I *will* see Mr. Berry?"

"Then come. But be prepared to bring back with you a story twice as terrible as that which you struggle to disbelieve."

"Do you think to deter me by such language?"

"I do not wish to deter you now. I have striven to spare you, and have met nothing but insolence and insult. I now invite you to come, for perhaps the humiliation you will undergo may be a wholesome chastisement of your pride and arrogance. Come to Lipthwaite, and hear from Mr. Berry into what kind of a family you have married."

"I will come."

"Mrs. Hawkesley will not accompany you. I trust that you will find her awaiting your return. She did not try to prevent my speaking to you alone. Most wives would have done so. She dared not."

"Mrs. Berry," said Hawkesley, struggling to suppress his rage, and using the most contemptuous manner he could adopt, "by what conceivable falsehood do you think to make me believe that the wife of Charles Hawkesley cares whether her husband spends five minutes—more or less—with any other woman in this world, young or old?"

"I have prayed to be strengthened to bear anything that may be said to me while I am doing my duty," said Mrs. Berry, calmly, "but believe me, Mr. Hawkesley, such words as you employ in the hope of wounding me, go by me like the idle wind. They are meant to hurt, but are powerless. You, who have not the privilege of being a Christian, cannot comprehend the pity with

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which you are regarded by those who know better things. If you come to Lipthwaite to-night, and can bow yourself at our family altar, you shall hear how little anger and how much love we bear for those who wrong and insult us. Farewell, Mr. Hawkesley."

And Mrs. Berry withdrew as composedly as she had entered. As the servant was opening the street door for her she paused, and drew from her pocket a tract.

"Read this, my good girl, when you have time. I fear that little teaching of this kind comes in your way; but read it, and may it be blessed to you."

It was called "*Who is your Master?*" When the girl, in some wonderment, showed it to her fellow-servant, and to Price, who had remained in the house, the latter personage looked at the title with considerable disfavour.

"I could tell her who *her* master is," said Price, "only I don't want to put my tongue to an ugly word."

"I would rather the old girl had given me a shilling," said Mrs. Hawkesley's servant, simply and honestly.

Meantime, Hawkesley went in search of his wife, and as he expected, found her in tears.

Beatrice looked up, with mute inquiry as to the secret which he had been told in her absence.

"She tells me that if I come to Lipthwaite, I shall hear something much worse than that we have heard from her."

"Charles, dearest, I am very ill. While that woman was speaking, and especially when I found out who she really was, a cold chill came across me, and I could scarcely speak."

"My dear one, such a tale, told of one whom you love, is surely enough to shock you to the heart."

"But now I want to speak, and to say much to you, dear, and I am utterly unequal to the task."

"How can it be necessary for you to say much to me, Beatrice. Have we come to a point in our lives when a dozen words are not enough between us."

"I thought we never should come to it, dearest; but this woman seems to have brought it about. You trust me, Charles," she said, taking both his hands and looking up at him earnestly; "you trust me, do you not, fully and implicitly?"

"I did not think I should ever feel so grieved with you," he replied, "as I do at hearing such a question."

"No, no, I have not grieved you—you shall not say that I have ever grieved you, my own one. But I told you that I could not speak as I ought. Sit down by me here, close to me, and let me try to say what is in my mind."

CHAPTER XL.

It was very bad in the prisoner to have used a weapon, but then, on the other hand, he spoke French so admirably, that when he reached the place of captivity, instead of being thrust, as would have happened in the case of any other offender, and especially an English offender, into a gloomy cell, of very dungeon-like character, the officials placed him in a not very uncomfortable room, the uncleanliness whereof was simply an incident of the administration of justice, and not intended as any addition to the prisoner's own punishment. It was late, and of course nothing could be done until the morning, but many an Englishman, taken into custody, in his own country, for a far lighter crime than that imputed to Adair, has been compelled to pass a much more miserable night than was spent by the latter. He was not locked up with ruffians, he was not put upon a stone floor, nor were his boots taken away; and if he had required food, or medical assistance, he would not have been told that nobody there was allowed to be hungry or ill until to-morrow morning.

Very early on the following day, and hours before Adair's case could come before the authorities, he had summoned to his presence his host of the preceding night.

M. Silvain was not very long in obeying the summons, but when he entered the room, the windows of which were strongly barred, and he heard the door fastened heavily behind him, he rather felt as one who is introduced into the den of a wild animal. He was a brave man, too, but it was satisfactory to him to recollect that the weapon Ernest had used upon M. Haureau had been seized by one of the gendarmes who had interposed with such felicitous punctuality.

Adair rose from the bed on which he had been lying, half dressed, and glared viciously at his friend.

"So you have come," said Ernest. "That was wise in you. I thought that you would have been too great a coward to come. But certainly it would have been braver in you to stay away, all things considered."

"Am I sent for at this extremely inconvenient hour, to have injurious remarks addressed to me?" said Silvain, quietly.

"Remarks to you?" repeated Adair, savagely, and without a touch of the bantering manner he had been in the habit of manifesting in his interviews with Silvain. "No, do not alarm yourself."

"I am not alarmed, M. Adair, and I should like to speak."

"I forbid you to speak. Hold your tongue. You have not had time to learn any lesson of lies which could serve your turn with me; or, if you think you have, you may keep them until further notice."

"With a prisoner," said M. Silvain, with dignity, "it is impossible to quarrel."

"Hold your tongue, I repeat," said Adair, "or you may find that it is very possible for a prisoner to get you by the throat before you can make the fellows outside open the door for you. And if I do, it will not be worth their while to open the door for you."

He looked so vindictive, and his eyes glared so, that Silvain instinctively placed himself in an attitude to resist a sudden attack. But Adair did not rise, and laughed scoffingly.

"I want you," he said, "and you have nothing to fear while you can be of use to me. Now listen, and if you do not obey my orders, woe unto you."

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"Orders, M. Adair?"

"Orders, sir! and once more be silent. It is now seven o'clock. You will go from here to the lodging which you have taken for the English lady, Mrs. Lygon,—now do not begin to lie, because I know the house, and could tell you at what time she took possession of her room, and what rent she is to pay."

Silvain deemed it wisest to remain silent.

"I know all. You will go, I repeat, to that house, and, with as much or as little regard to the *convenances* as you like, you will obtain speech of Mrs. Lygon, and inform that lady, first that I am here, and secondly that I wish to see her here before nine o'clock. That is your message, and now call to the gendarmes to let you out."

"Do I hear you aright?" said Silvain. "I am to intrude upon Madame Lygon, and ask her to come and visit you in a police cell?"

"That is what you are to do, and instantly," replied Adair. "You are not mad enough to hesitate."

"Why should I obey?"

"Ask Matilde? Are you not gone?"

"Before making the least approach to Madame Lygon, I will assuredly consult with Mademoiselle Matilde, and if her opinion be my own, your brutal errand will remain undone, M. Adair."

"Go and ask Matilde, fool, I tell you, and don't waste time, or you may be doing more mischief than you dream of. Mischief to Matilde, and the lady, and more people besides. Now, be off."

"You will have to account to me for all this, Monsieur," said Silvain, as he went to the door.

"Stop," said Ernest Adair, in a furious voice. "Stop a second. I have humoured your folly and swagger long enough. Take warning now. If ever you provoke me again into inflicting personal chastisement on you, it is the last you will want, M. Silvain."

"The tiger has tasted blood, and is ferocious," said Silvain, contemptuously, as the door opened for him. He pointed to his arm, in illustration of his meaning, and departed.

How he sped on his mission need not be said, but considerably before the appointed time it was announced to Adair that a lady desired to see him.

Ernest Adair again seated himself on his bed, and cast a cynical glance around the disordered cell, intending to receive his guest without any effort to render the chamber more fit for a visitor. But the gendarme, without a word, took the matter into his own hands,—opened the windows, and with military rapidity, brought the room into something like a decorous condition. He could not, however, prevent Adair from taking a lounging attitude on the bed, though the look of the honest soldier expressed the displeasure he felt at such a demonstration.

A few moments later, and Ernest's visitor was introduced.

He retained the position he had insolently taken up, until the lady (who was in the simplest morning costume, and veiled) advanced a step or two, and raised her veil.

"You!" said Ernest, springing to his feet. "I sent for your sister."

"I—I wished to come," said Bertha Urquhart.

"But your coming is useless," he replied, without a word of courtesy, or the offer of the single chair which stood near him. "It is strange that I cannot be obeyed, when persons have such good reasons for obeying me."

"Do not be angry with me," said Bertha, "for I am very miserable."

"And why does a lady who is miserable come to a place like this at such an hour, especially when no one has asked for her presence?"

"I thought it best to come," pleaded Bertha.

"It is for me to think in the matter," he replied. "Do I understand from your being here that the idiot Silvain has not delivered my message to Mrs. Lygon?"

"He will do as you ask, of course," said Bertha, deprecatingly. "But I thought I would come and ask what you wish, and what can be done for you—Silvain has told me of the unfortunate affair last night."

"Silvain has told you!" he began, in a high and angry voice, which dropped as he observed her terror. "No, no, I am wrong to speak so to you. I do not accuse you of trying to involve me in a quarrel with a ruffian who would probably have strangled me, but for my being armed. That stroke was not yours, my poor Bertha. Do not look so white. I would say take a chair, but time is precious. Will you leave me, find Mrs. Lygon, and deliver the message which Silvain has presumed to neglect?"

"He did not neglect it. I delayed him, in order to come and see whether we could serve you in any way. Pray let us do so, if we can."

"Go, and send Mrs. Lygon to me."

"But what will you say to her that you cannot say to me?"

Ernest Adair advanced, took the chair, and sat down before Bertha, so that his face was lower than hers, and his up-turned eyes met hers, with an expression which made her shudder.

"Are you afraid of my eyes?" he said, gently and slowly. "It was not always so."

"Ernest!"

"The old voice too. He is in prison, and she comes unto him," he added, mockingly. "But I have no time for recollections now. Bertha, go, and send your sister here."

"Tell me, for mercy's sake, what you are going to do."

"She shall tell you when she leaves me."

"I assure you, Ernest, on my life, that it is not our fault that we have not yet got the money for you, but we are doing our best, and you shall soon have it. Do not do anything hasty and cruel—think of the misery you will cause."

"To whom? and why should I care?"

"Ernest, you ought not to speak thus."

"To whom should I cause misery?"

"Oh, Ernest!" said Bertha, bursting into tears, and sinking on her knees before him. "Do not, do not be so cruel—we will do anything to satisfy you, but have some mercy."

His back was towards the door as he sat, and

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as she looked up he beheld her face suddenly become of ashy whiteness. It was not, he felt on the instant, anything in his words that had worked this change—some terror was before her. He continued to gaze wonderingly at the change, and he said almost involuntarily—

"Bertha!"

"Who speaks so to a married woman?" said a stern voice, and as Ernest sprang to his feet he was suddenly pushed, hurled, flung,—what you will,—against the side of the cell, by a hand that seemed only bent on removing him from out of the way.

And the kneeling Bertha looked up piteously in the face of her husband.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTHS.

WHEN March comes in, as it ought to do, "like a lion," it is almost too much for timid people. In the night, the blasts rave round the house, shake the doors and shutters, puff the smoke down the chimney, bring any loose tile clattering down, and make us think over all the old trees that we should be sorry to see uprooted. Little Harry has stood all the evening near the door, to see the carpet alive, as he says, jumping and flapping as the wind gets under it; and now he sleeps through all the din which keeps his parents awake. His parents have known what it is to live by the seaside in the month of winds: and they are thankful to be out of hearing of ocean storms now. It is impossible to rest, or even to settle to any employment, when looking out for wrecks. It is a sorer fidget than I ever went through at any tragedy to see the handling of ships approaching the bar in stormy weather, or driven from their moorings. The escapes are so narrow! and the failures are so fatal! To see a schooner capsize, so that her sails lie flat on the water, and she is washed up towards the sands, going to pieces all the while; to see a barque

settle and founder, while the best climber on board clings alone to the top of the mast above the water; to watch the lifeboat making its way to a brig, where the sailors are clustered in the rigging, and to be more and more doubtful whether it can ever reach them, and even afraid of its crew of well-known men being washed away; to see the country people come thronging in all directions to the cliffs or the beach, and carrying away whatever they can lay hold of—the fellows even going into the water to meet and seize some tempting plank, or yard, or bit of sail; all this going on while the winds are roaring, and the sea seething, and rushing, and splashing, is about as melancholy a scene as I know. Yet one would rather witness the worst than be unable to give any help to the wrecked sufferers. It is worse not to know of the case till, in the depth of the night, the boom of a gun at sea—the alarm signal from some distressed ship—thumps upon one's heart. The impossibility of staying at home, and the impossibility of doing anything by going out; the entreaties of wife and child not to go to the edge of the cliff in wind and darkness; the gleam of the light in the rigging, a yellow spark, tossing about, and hidden every minute by an intervening wave; the startling apparition of the rocket, sent up as a petition for aid; the listening, in the pauses of the gale, for cries of distress; the thought of men drowning at the very moment; these things are real sufferings to dwellers on the coast. Worse still is the failure to save the victims of the tempest. After battling with the wind and spray on the cliff through the night, and getting the lifeboat brought to the spot, and using the first break of daylight to try for a communication with the wreck, it is heart-breaking to have no effectual response from the ship, and to see, as the light advances, corpses drifting about in the surf below, or lying face downwards on the sands. It is agonising to see the boat return with one or two of the crew, as the only survivors, or with none, and to have to go home and tell wife and children that their warm blankets and hot coffee are in vain. We have certainly never found that the much-vaunted pleasure of saving human life was any compensation for witnessing the destruction of it. When our neighbours and we saved as many as we could, we still saw in them sufferers under a great misfortune and an awful shock—men more occupied with the destruction around them than with their own rescue; and in this we certainly sympathised with them. On windy nights in March my wife and I feel strongly that, while hoping that we should have discharged the common duties of humanity to shipwrecked people as long as we lived, if it had been our lot to spend our lives on the coast, we cannot but feel the relief of dwelling inland, where the appeals of the needy come in so much more deliberate and so much less horrifying a form than that of a midnight wreck.

We were under another liability at this season which we extremely disliked, though it did not wear us out so much. There was still a good deal of smuggling going on on that part of the coast, and dark and windy nights were chosen for such adventures. A dark night was good, as far as it went; but a windy one, when also dark, was better. On a still starless night the coast-guard might be hidden close at hand, overhearing everything; and it was certain that they were all ear, whether on the cliff or the beach. Not a dip of an oar, nor a clink of the boat-chain, nor a step on the shingle, nor the roll of a barrel on the sand would escape observation. On a windy night all was safe enough, on the right side of an unmanageable storm. The guard would not go to the edge of the cliff for fear of being blown over, nor upon the sands to get drenched for nothing. When the gust rose the noisy hauls were made, and when it paused no man spoke till the whistle and roar began again. It was after such nights that my horses were found in a rough and dirty and tired condition in their stables, and the roads and turf showing marks of much recent trampling. No means that I could devise saved my horses. Every sort of lock, bolt, and bar was defied by the process of taking the doors off their hinges, or absolutely breaking them in, and we could not possibly know beforehand what nights would be chosen by the smugglers for landing their goods, so that it would have been random work sending the horses away, or obtaining a guard from the county town. The fellows tried to recompense us by paying for the use of the horses after their notions of fitness. More than once a parcel was left at the door, in our absence or after dark, containing silk stockings for me, or lace and gloves for my wife; but when we put these things into the hands of the police, and gave out that we had done so, the gifts ceased, and our horses were used without acknowledgment. It was not agreeable to be kept restless on windy nights, nor to go to the stables once or twice between bedtime and daylight; nor to be waked up by one or another, who was sure there were people about in the yard; nor to see the condition of our pet horses in the morning; but it was far worse to see the effect of smuggling habits on our neighbours. The spirit-drinking spread from the men to the women, and the lying from the women to the children; and there was no training the children to industry while they saw their parents as rich as the squire (as they thought) one week, and in the next, pressed for large debts. No preaching in church or by death-beds did any good; nor any teaching in school; nor any setting of dogs, or plans of patrolling, or erection of defences. The dogs disappeared; all barriers were levelled; and the patrol were simply laughed at. The cure came at last, though later than in most places, by the natural operation of improved principles of finance. Reduced import duties rendered smuggling unprofitable, and it died out. The last time we were in that neighbourhood, we heard from some of the cottagers significant hints that they were better pleased with their present ways than the old ones: that, though they had more money formerly, and a good deal of fun and frolic, there was more comfort in being steady, and having regular earnings; and, above all, it was better for the children. Those days are long past; but the impression is as fresh as ever on windy nights. When the blast comes surging towards us from the park woods, in these March

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evenings, and the brown-owl hoots from the ivy, and some belated cottager whistles as he passes the gate, the sounds bring up the scene and the time when we used to open the window, or stand by our fence in the dark, to listen to the dash of the tide, and watch for the mock cry of the sea-bird, or the whistle with which in cases of extremity the smugglers summoned their accomplices from far and near.

We prefer the March winds in the daytime. They are cold, certainly; but they clear away such an amount of mud that we heartily welcome them. After a week of February rain, when we have said that there is scarcely a place we can turn to for a walk, on account of the mire, it is encouraging to see the rooks battling with difficulties in getting abroad for their morning meal. As the sky brightens towards sunrise, a flock of them becomes visible below the clouds —not all winging one way, as usual, but tossed about like autumn leaves, and the strongest obliged to wheel round, from time to time, and all to tack, in order to get on at all. By noon the high road is dry; by the afternoon the lanes are practicable: and in the evening the postman trudges in with dust on his shoes. This is a sign of many things.

The teams, plough, and harrow, and crusher, and drill, will be out in the fallows immediately; and the bush-harrow and roller in the pasture. Everything must be set growing, from the very hour the soil is dry enough. So we shall see the men turn up the soil, well broken by the frosts and ripened by the rain, so as to feast one's nostrils and exhilarate one's spirits. We shall see the women sowing beans and peas, and the children picking stones in the pastures, and trying to get a ride on the bush-harrow, and to drive the roller. The ewes and lambs can get out, as soon as the herbage is dry, and crop the earliest grass before the heavy tread of cattle, or even of horses, can be permitted on the still soft ground. The horses must be well fed; and so must the cattle; for they must yield us—the one labour and the other milk—to their utmost capacity, in the coming months; but we cannot indulge them with the first tender grass. We may let out the calves, perhaps; but nothing heavier or heartier.

The wind makes business in both mansion and cottage, as it does on the squire's farms, and in the labourers' gardens. The men say the land and the animals must be cared for first; so the women defer their enterprises in the cleaning way till the extreme pressure is past. They find a minute, however, to open all doors and windows, and hang out blankets, and thrust beds and pillows forth on the window-sills. Then they turn out with spade and rake, and trench the beds, and sow their carrots, and parsnips, and onions, and radishes, and lettuces; and they make fresh herb beds, and prepare for the potato-setting now, while the earth is fit. The children, with the barrow which their united strength can just move, gather up everything that will burn—cuttings from the porch, dead stalks from the beds, and all the weeds they can lay their hands on—and carry all to the heap which is to be burned when big enough. This cottage-gardening is one of the best spectacles of the season. Freshness and order take the place of dank and dreary untidiness: mother and little ones enjoy it; and the neighbour who looks over the hedge at the sound of the spade and the cheerful voices, sees provision making for the future luxuries of prime vegetables all summer and autumn, and a winter stock of potatoes. While the lazy wife of a selfish husband doles out the piece of dry bread, at every meal, all the year round, till the children loathe the sight of it, the heartier and better housewife makes a family festival of these fine March mornings, when a wealth of food may be created by moderate energy and industry. No doubt, watchfulness and diligence will be necessary, to keep the little garden always in crop from this time till the end of the year; but good managers always can be ready to fill a bed the same day that they empty it—weather permitting: and there is plenty of inducement in the prospect of the family sitting down properly to dinner every day—to greens with their bacon, to savoury pottage, to turnips and carrots, to beans and bacon, to salad with their cheese, to spinach with eggs, and to the bowl of reeking potatoes in winter, with salt-fish, or the Sunday joint. Our interest in our own kitchen-garden is strong, at this season; but it must be a mere trifle to us, in comparison with the importance to the cottager's wife of her rood of ground. So when the good man comes home to dinner, he cuts potatoes for sets, for planting in the afternoon. He has to work now from six to six (with intervals for meals); and, therefore, he has not much daylight for gardening; but a man who truly loves his home will trench and trim till he can see no longer.

The children have business abroad, too. My neighbours have a high opinion of young nettles as spring food; and there are always people about at this time, gathering the sprouts for stews and puddings, or to eat as spinach. On farms and in poultry-yards where the turkeys are wild, and the ducks and hens are not duly trained, there is a demand for little searchers for eggs; and the children like nothing better. So much a dozen is paid them for hidden eggs; and the discovery of an unsuspected nest is profitable as well as pleasant. So we see very small children switching away at a forest of nettles, and rummaging among old straw, and in odd corners, and peeping into recesses in hedge-banks. They "make large eyes," as the Germans say, when they come upon a nest, with six, or eight, or a dozen eggs in it; or upon a bright-eyed, bristling hen, much excited at their intrusion.

The boys aspire to something less easy than all this. We have such a surplus population of small birds that bird-nesting is allowed, and even encouraged. After all that the lads can do, there will be a pest of sparrows, and flocks of other pickers of seeds and sprouts and buds. At best, we have to cover our rows of peas, and other springing shoots in the kitchen garden, and all the seeds we sow; and the taking the eggs is no particular affliction to any creature; or nothing in comparison with taking the young or shooting the fullgrown. Farmers and gentry therefore freely pay for little eggs,—blue, greenish, pinkish, and

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brown; spotted, streaked, scrabbled or plain, and usually give them back to the finder, after paying for them. We see the little fellows, therefore, at this time, caught by the tomtit's spring note, and peeping into a hole in some pollard; or ferreting out the hedge sparrow's nest in some corner of the wood pile; or getting into the middle of a bush to look through it for a throstle's dame, sitting on her eggs. By the brook they search for the willow wren's abode, and on the moor for the peewit's and the stonechat's. They go with the keepers to see after the birds which injure the eggs or the young of the squire's game; and they are pleased to show the great man the magpie's nest, a dark ball at the top of a bare tree, or a hawk's, on the loftiest tree on the highest ridge of the woods. The wheatears' holes, in the turf of the uplands, are never to be touched; for the broods become profitable in July for food. They are caught by the glistening of glass in the sun, like the celebrated Dunstable larks of old; or by traps, by which sieves or nets are let down over them. They are not an established branch of traffic with us, as on the downs of the south coast: but we have enough demand to render the eggs secure.

When the east and north winds give place to the milder breezes, the regular spring loitering begins. The clouds cease to career over the deep blue sky, and sail slowly or merely float, in a paler heaven. We are not powdered with dust in the road, (which inevitably brings out the proverb about March dust and a king's ransom) and the gay energy which belongs to cold days melts in the sunshine; a south breeze into a soft and languid enjoyment. We cannot imagine that any more hail will come now, and cut off sprouts and buds. The nipping frosts seem to be gone; and no dire experience can persuade us that they may return. It is time to go violet hunting: so forth we go.

We have but to saunter on, at noon on a day of soft-moving airs. The scent will come to us, if we go into lanes, and alleys of the woods. All along the banks and among the trees the arums are appearing in the grass, and the points of the leaves of the wild hyacinths. Ground ivy and creeping crowfoot, and pilewort, and the vivid young shamrocks are there; and we see that before the end of the month broad patches of ground will be yellow with daffodils. The coltsfoot spreads broad on the margin of the stream. The hedges are changing character everywhere. Their winter wiriness and blackness is gone. They have a purplish tinge, and their buds are swelling. At short intervals we meet with honeysuckles in leaf, and wild roses and wild currant, and the elder bushes sprouting: and the bees are hovering about the catkins of the willows and hazels, and the red-nettle blossoms, and the flowers of the fir and pine tribe. The larch shows its green tufts and crimson tips; and the pines, firs, and alders are in flower. The insects come out to see after their food and pleasure. The flies are innumerable. The small sulphur and small tortoiseshell butterfly flit before our eyes. Though the snail shells lie in heaps on the hedge banks, and under great stones, left there when the inhabitants were devoured, there are plenty more already of snails, as well as slugs and earth-worms. One wonders where all the spiders come from here, as the housemaid does at home, after the windows, framed in climbing plants, have been open the whole day. In the wood paths we perceive a prodigious bustle among the black ants, as Harry has already found on the broad gravel walk at home. From the root of a fir on one side the path to a similar root on the other side a double stream of black ants is crossing, each one as busy as if bound in honour to be quick. If a March hail drift were to come down upon them at the moment, what dismay there would be! But ants are weatherwise, we are told, and not so likely to be overtaken in that way as the butterflies. Those little butterflies would be torn and nipped by the first blast from the north.

One of the tokens of the warmth of the noon sun is the appearance of the first snakes of the season. Among the furze on the moor we should probably see the vipers coming out; and in warm spots below, on some hedgebank, or a sunny recess of some gnarled root, we find little whipsnakes coiled up, or turning themselves about against the well sunned wood. The black beetles shine in the path, and there is no getting out of the way of the frogs in walking beside ditches. While noting these things, we do not forget the violets. If we did, "the sweet south," breathing on them and on us as it passes, would remind us. There they nestle, under the park pales, under the prostrate tree-trunks, under the old thorn fence,—always under something or other; and thence we bring them one by one,—white or blue, carefully leaving the buds while there are yet so few. A knot of them for a bedridden neighbour, and a few scattered ones for ourselves must satisfy us till there are more. A few more primroses appear; but we must wait till next month for their affluence. We bring home two or three daffodils, and a bud of a pansy, from the top of a sunny wall; and these are enough to justify us in glorying that Spring has come.

One token of this is that Jackdaw has repaired to church for the season. We have seen the yellow wagtail, and the yellowhammer, and the green woodpecker, and have heard the robin change his twitter and chirp for a bold song, and the goldfinch and thrush sing, and the willow wren chirp, and the ring-doves coo. The gamekeeper says he knows three nests, each of which has a cuckoo's egg in it; so we shall hear the cuckoo next month, no doubt; and we catch one another listening for it already.

When Bell and I went up to the crags the other morning to see the sun rise, we perceived that the lark was before us; for he was just coming down again from the dim grey clouds, as they were taking some colour from the hidden light. He had gone up while it was still dark below, and his mate sitting in the furrow among the dews.

The approach of the vernal equinox is a cheering event. Astronomers tell us that spring in fact begins on the 20th of March; and that the summer half of our year is eight days longer than the winter half; but we stick to our old ways of

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reckoning spring from the 1st of March, and saying, on the 21st, that we have six months of longest days before us. What a fact that is! and what sensations belong to it! As we walk the length of our own garden, on a mild March afternoon, and watch the peach-blossoms on the wall, and the apricots, and the almond tree, we see the very summer itself in embryo, and believe in the bliss which is to extend through hundreds of days of verdure, flowers and sunshine. March is going out like a lamb. The pyrus japonica has been in beauty for some days; the jonquils and narcissus are coming forward; and my girls' spring-bed is in full beauty—glowing with colour, from masses and rows of crocuses, hepaticas, polyanthus, daffodils, primroses of both colours, gorgeous hyacinths, and exquisite heaths. We look from them to the blossoming fruit trees on the wall, and see in the two the present and the future of our country pleasures. By desire of their brothers at school, Jane and Bell are preparing for a further future,—a very remote one indeed. The boys want to plant some woodland with their own hands, and after their own fancy; and for this purpose oaks are to be raised from seed, and beech and ash likewise. As Easter will be somewhat late for this, their sisters have been depositing choice acorns and mast, and seeds from ash keys, in the very best soil, in the very best situation; and the brothers mean to try the sensation, some day or other, of sitting under forest trees of their own planting;—which is their ideal of the privilege of a country gentleman. We are all eager to keep watch against mice and other marplots, till the seedlings can take care of themselves. My wife and I are curious to learn whether this is a passing fancy, or whether it is a deep-rooted scheme,—whether a mere weed of fancy or a forest tree of the imagination. We shall be gone before the wood is fully grown; but we may be able to judge before that whether the purpose is mature.

Harry, meantime, is full of impatience to go and see a snowdrop which he hears is now flourishing at his dear Nanny's home. He is to go with mamma, and admire this wonderful blossom. Is it large? he wants to know. It is a proper size. Is it as big as the great gooseberry Nanny gave him at the flower-show? Bigger than that. He can get no satisfaction. Nanny's snowdrop is not very white,—not very green,—not very pretty; yet everybody is delighted with it. He must go and see it, and tell us what he thinks of it. Mamma takes him; and he returns in high excitement. It is a baby! Nanny explained to him that it came when the snowdrops did; and that it is more precious in the house than any flower; so they call their little girl "Snowdrop," till they give her a real, useful name to be known in the world by. He can partly understand that life is before her as the year is before us all; and he calls her by her garden name fifty times a day, and promises her a sight of his brothers when they come home for Easter.

That is the next great event in our household year. The hot-cross buns are already thought of; and we are always counting the days till April, fond as we are of March.

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM OF THE METROPOLIS.—No. II.

As we pointed out in our last article on this subject, the Universal Private Electric Telegraph Company is limited to providing private electric ways to customers, who wish to possess an instantaneous communication between given points. For this purpose no public offices are necessary, as the individuals send and receive their own messages. This company therefore can be of no use to the community at large. In a metropolis like London—which is in itself a province, extending in some directions for ten miles—it must be clear that a speedy method of communication is of the last importance. This want is in course of being provided for by the London District Telegraph Company, whose chief office is in Cannon Street, with a central West End office at Charing Cross. This company is steadily and silently extending its operations so as to cover the whole area of London with its wires. Whilst the Universal Private Telegraph Company have chosen the air as the pathway for their lines, the District Company, as far as the West End traffic is concerned, have chosen the ground. Their wires, all separate, and coated with gutta percha, are enclosed in iron pipes and buried beneath the curb stone of the pavement. Many of our readers must have witnessed the laying of these bundles of chocolate-coloured pipes, and wondered what could have been their purpose. They are the main collection of nerves, the spinal chord, in fact, between commercial London and its sister city of Westminster. At stated distances iron posts are erected for the purposes of affording testing points for the wires. If any of these cease to work, the workmen have only to test from post to post, to find out where the break in the current has taken place. The value of this Company to the public must evidently be in proportion to the number of offices they can manage to dot over the face of the metropolis. As long as the stations for receiving messages were a mile apart, their operations were necessarily confined, as the time taken up by messengers in forwarding messages, and also the expense, greatly detracted from the practical application of electricity as a means of superseding the old methods of communication; but the multiplication of electric stations has lately brought the metropolitan electric way-wire prominently before the public. Within a radius of two miles of Charing Cross, which covers all the chief resorts of business in London, there are now offices for the reception and transmission of messages at every quarter of a mile: thus any one terminus within this radius is practically within five minutes of another, and of any part of its neighbourhood. The central business office of the Company is at Cannon Street: there also is the centre of the telegraphic system of the Company. From this point the different lines of wire radiate to every part of London. Upwards of eighty wires are here gathered up, and ascending a long shoot in the interior of the building, are then spread out and distributed to the different telegraphic machines in the telegraph room. This is the sensorium of the nervous system. Three large counters stretch along the whole length of the

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room, and rows of young ladies sit before their instruments, either watching or working them. The principal work of these machines is to transmit the messages sent to them from out-stations. Thus, supposing a message has to be transmitted from Kensington to Camberwell, the electric current is not switched right through the central office, but is received and transcribed there, and re-transmitted through the Camberwell line.

Of course, from the central position of this office, it has also a considerable amount of messages to send to the outskirts and suburbs; but this part of its business is secondary to the other. The telegraph-room is nothing more than a workshop, but the workmanship performed requires delicacy and intelligence,—it is brain-work rather than muscle-work, and the experiment has been successfully tried of employing upon it female labour. It is extraordinary the number of occupations that are gradually opening to respectable young females, now that attention has been publicly drawn to the vast supply of this power there is at present in this country unoccupied. Almost all the manipulators at the different telegraph companies are young ladies. There are upwards of two hundred at the old Electric Telegraph Company at Lothbury, and they are found to do their work excellently well. At the telegraphic room of this Company, the number of manipulators is comparatively small; but we could not help being struck with the intelligence of their appearance. They evidently belonged to the class whose only resource, a few years ago, was to supply the more affluent with nursery-governesses. The labour is light, and gives them the interesting privilege, to ladies, of being the repositories of other peoples' secrets. The instruments are not at all times at work, but their attendants must be always near them, in order that they may hear the click of the needle calling their attention to the coming of a message. Whilst waiting for the summons they are allowed to read or sew, and this mixture of work and amusement looks singular enough. The young ladies have to go through an examination before they are received into the service of the Company. They matriculate with writing and spelling; they are then taught the use of the needle instrument, a matter of some little trouble, as it necessitates a familiarity with certain signs, representing letters; and when they are sufficiently expert to be able to telegraph eight words per minute, they are placed upon the staff and paid 8*s.* per week, a sum which is augmented to 15*s.*, as they grow more expert, and are able to telegraph with greater speed.

It is worthy of notice that a certain amount of refinement and consideration is shown to these young ladies by their employers. As their hours are between nine in the morning and seven in the afternoon, between which periods they are not allowed to leave the establishment, some arrangement is necessitated for the supply of their meals. The Company provides an excellent cook, who prepares the food they bring for dinner and tea, which is partaken of in a very comfortable dining-room. There is also a lavatory, embellished by a fountain, and all the arrangements indicate a very gallant appreciation, on the part of the Company, of the class of people it employs. We cannot help thinking that other employers of female labour of the better class might follow the example of the telegraphic companies, in this particular, with advantage. The young ladies are found to be admirable manipulators of the instruments, and they are said to possess this advantage over the other sex, that they are more manageable, and have less inducement to change their employment. But it is not only in the telegraphic department that female labour is employed: the clerks rustle about in silks, and manage to place a pen behind their ears with the best commercial air. The clearing-room is wholly worked by young ladies. In this part of the establishment all papers belonging to each message are docketted together, and placed in pigeon-holes, numbered with the sign of the office from which the message has been received. These papers contain the whole history of the message, through its entire progress.

The porterage of the establishment is carried on by a staff of boys. Formerly they were paid weekly wages, but latterly the system has been changed to piece-work. The boys are given one penny per message—it is astonishing to see how admirably the plan of giving the boy an interest in his own exertions answers for both employer and employed. Formerly the boys endeavoured to obtain a minimum of work with a maximum of play: now, the rush is for work. Boys that were before only earning 4*s.* per week, now very often get between two and three shillings a-day.

At the out-stations, the distances to be gone over are greater, consequently the porterage is more expensive; but the Company are quite alive to the importance of reducing the cost of transmitting messages to the lowest possible point. In the suburban districts, the office of the Company is generally located in some shop, and in many cases the proprietor himself performs the work of telegraphic clerk. Generally the post-office is selected. An analysis of the messages sent prove that communications of a domestic character are steadily on the increase. When we remember that commercial London lives out of town, we can understand that the heads of the households would have many occasions to communicate with their homes. Thus, a very common message is for forgotten keys, or some "worse half," mindful of the black looks that await a husband who brings home a friend to "pot luck," sends word of the coming of company. It is very common to order places at the opera, or at theatres, by telegraph; and doctors, now and then, when taken suddenly ill, send round to their patients to know if they will be wanted, franking the return message.

It is now becoming very common for tradesmen in the suburbs dealing in perishable articles of food to telegraph to Leadenhall, or Billingsgate, for poultry or fish, and town travellers, also, forward their orders by the same agency. Sometimes notice of a cheque being dishonoured is thus sent, and it is common now to order coals by telegraph, the tradesman advertising to pay the cost. Into public life the District Telegraph also enters. Thus it

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connects the different courts of law, and Serjeant Hardup, engaged at the Old Bailey and at the Westminster Sessions at the same time, is enabled to learn the minute that his services will be required at either place. The saving of time and of labour which the District Telegraph will bring about when it is fully developed will be incalculable. The cost of transmitting a message, porterage included, within the two miles' radius of Charing Cross, is only sixpence, a sum that brings the new messenger within the means of most people; and we may now consider that we no longer labour under the reproach of putting the most distant parts of the country in connection with each other, whilst we leave the capital without any of the facilities which modern science has given to us.

A. W.

ANIMAL INSTINCT.

There are some brutes that seem to have as much knowledge and reason as some that are called men. LOCKE.

The whole chasm in nature, from a plant to a man, is filled up with divers kinds of creatures, rising one over another by a gentle and easy ascent. ADDISON.

WE have still much to learn respecting the peculiar, instincts, the reasoning faculties and the different tempers of animals. All these vary in a peculiar manner, well worthy of notice. Instinct shows itself more particularly in the self-preservation of themselves and their young, and in the latter case great love and tender solicitude are to be discovered. Both in quadrupeds and birds peculiar cries and notes are sufficient to cause alarm in the young, and to induce them to conceal themselves from apprehended danger; other notes, on the contrary, tell them that all is safe. Perhaps one of the most interesting and curious instances of instinct adopted for the preservation and well-being of its young is to be found in the case of the ostrich. She makes a large nest on the ground, in which she deposits her eggs, with the exception of one, which she drops at a short distance from her nest, and there leaves it. It is, perhaps, that solitary abandoned egg which has given rise to the oft-repeated opinion, that the ostrich abandons her eggs to Providence. The fact is, that the female sits on her eggs all night, and the male bird does the same during a part of the day, and only when the heat of the sun does not render incubation necessary. And now let us see what is the use of the egg which had been separated from the rest. The use of that egg is a beautiful instance of a bird's foresight. A few days before the young ones are hatched, the ostrich goes and splits the cast-out egg; it is immediately blown by flies, and by the time the young ostriches break their shell it is full of maggots, and on the birth of the birds the mother leads them to the egg for their first repast.

The following is another extraordinary instance of instinct and maternal affection.

It has been stated, on good authority, that in Siberia, where milk, especially in winter, is scarce and valuable, the cows are kept in a shed, and as soon as the calf is dropped it is immediately taken from the dam, and brought up chiefly with a mixture of flour and water. So aware is the poor cow, after being treated in this way once or twice, that she will be deprived of her young when it is born, that if she can possibly make her escape before this event takes place, she goes at full speed into the deepest recesses of the Siberian forests, and there collects a quantity of leaves, and covers up her calf in them as soon as it is born. She then feeds at a considerable distance from the spot, and only visits the calf at night, so that it is very difficult for the owner to find it.

Let me next refer to the reasoning faculties of animals, though I am aware that it is a difficult subject to treat of. However, two or three instances of what appears to me to be *reason* shall be given.

The son of a gentleman of my acquaintance, residing at Wyck, close to Brighton, brought with him from Spain a sort of Spanish terrier, possessed of some peculiar habits. A young lady, a teacher of music, ere going to give a lesson to one of her pupils near the house of the owner of the dog, had her attention attracted to the animal. He looked at her very significantly, pulled her by the gown the contrary way to that which she was going, and evidently wanted her to follow him. Partly instigated by curiosity, but chiefly because the dog held her gown tight in his mouth, she suffered herself to be led some distance, when he at last brought her into a field in which some houses were being built. She then became alarmed, and, seeing two or three labourers, she asked them to drive the dog away. Finding, however, that he would not quit his hold, they advised her to see where the dog would lead her, promising to accompany and protect her. Thus assured, she followed him to one of the houses then building. On their arrival, they found that an area had been dug out, and a strong plank placed across it, one end resting on a heap of earth. At this end the dog began scratching eagerly, and, on lifting it up, a large beef bone was discovered to have been hidden under it, which the dog seized in his mouth, and bolted away with, perfectly satisfied. There need not be any doubt of the accuracy of this anecdote, and it seems to me to afford a proof of reason and intelligence in an animal in getting others to do what he was unable to do himself.

The following anecdote is a further proof of what has just been remarked.

About eleven o'clock, on the night of the 20th of May, 1856, as Mr. Henry Carr, of Shaw Wood Gardens, in the county of Durham, accompanied by two or three friends, was coming through a field leading from his house to the North Road, their attention was attracted to a pony belonging to Mr. Carr, which came up to them, and, on their attempting to stroke it, as they had often done on previous occasions, it threw up its head, gave several loud snorts, and instantly scampered across the field in the direction of a viaduct, and, after proceeding some distance, returned and made a similar demonstration, evidently wishing to attract their attention, and then again immediately ran off. It occurred to the party that there might be something amiss, and they therefore followed the pony, which betrayed evident symptoms of delight, and in a short time it brought them to the edge of a large pool of water immediately adjoining

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the viaduct, when it again began snorting and jumping about. On looking into the water, they fancied they saw something on the surface, and also heard a gurgling sound, as of some one drowning. A man named Coxon instantly jumped into the water, and soon succeeded in bringing out the apparently lifeless body of a man, who turned out to be a person named Johnson, a shoemaker belonging to Sunderland, who had, while under the influence of liquor, lost his way and fallen into the pool. He was eventually recovered. This proceeding of the pony cannot be called the mere result of instinct—it appears the exclusive result of reason.

The instances of a reasoning faculty in quadrupeds, birds, and even in some insects, might be multiplied to a great extent, but only one more shall be given. A faithful dog, the property of a medical man (Dr. A—), was in the habit, every night at ten o'clock, of coming to his master to tell him it was time to retire to rest. Dr. A—'s brother suggested that the clock should be stopped in order to discover how the dog knew the hour. The animal appeared very restless when the clock should have struck, he ran to his master, tapped him on the knee, and would not be satisfied till he followed him to the clock to be convinced that all was not right. The dog was accustomed to go round the house in the evening to ascertain that every place was properly secured. A window shutter was purposely left unclosed in order to test the accuracy of his eye. The faithful animal passed the whole of the night in that room, evidently for the purpose of guarding it. When his master was confined to his bed for some days with a severe illness, the attached dog refused to eat, and at length the Doctor was obliged to get up and appear well, lest the dog should be starved to death.

Nothing varies more than the different tempers of animals. Much of this certainly is owing to ill-usage; but some show from their earliest youth a decided character, either of gentleness or ferocity. For instance, I have a most amiable cat, and two terriers who are great friends with the former. As soon as she had produced her first litter of kittens, nothing would satisfy her till she had brought the dogs to see them. There were only two kittens. When they could see, I had them brought to me. One of them showed the ferocity of a tiger on being touched, striking with her paws, opening her mouth, and spitting. The other, on the contrary, was meek and gentle, and suffered itself to be handled without showing the least fear. Dogs, also, of the same litter will show a great variety in their dispositions. And so among elephants some are docile and affectionate, others are fierce and sulky. Colts and fillies, by the same sire and dam, show early restiveness and violence of disposition, and others the contrary disposition. So it is sometimes with bees. I had a hive, the inhabitants of which always attacked me if I went near them, while those in a neighbouring hive would allow me to do almost anything I pleased with them, without once offering to resent my intrusion.

It is not easy to account for this diversity of disposition, which I have witnessed in very many instances. In the human race it is more perceptible, and any mother of a large family can vouch for the fact. EDWARD JESSE.

SWIFT AND THE MOHAWKS.

IN one of his letters to Stella, dated from Harley Street, Swift speaks with angry disgust of the nightly outrages then perpetrating in London by bands of dissolute revellers, who assumed the Indian name of Mohawks, to express their wildness and ferocity. From what we can gather about them, from stray passages in the "Spectator" and elsewhere, it would appear that the Mohawks were in the habit of slitting the noses of poor servant maids, and enclosing bewildered old citizens, on their way home from their tavern clubs, in prickly circles of sword points, besides breaking windows with showers of halfpence, ill-treating old watchmen, and pulling down shop signs, and doing other wanton and selfish mischief. In the following ballad I have confronted them with Swift.

A black sedan through Temple Bar
Comes at the midnight chime,
Just as above the silvering roofs
The moon begins to climb.
There is something stern about the place,
And sad about the time.

That black arch rises like Death's door,
For rebels' heads are there;
The moonshine, now a silver crown,
Rests upon each in the air,
So bright that you can see their eyes
Upon the clear stars stare.

A grim man sits in the sedan;
It skirts St. Clement's tower
As high aloft an angel's voice
Is meting out the hour;
And on the street the moonbeams broad
Meridian brightness shower.

Fast down the Strand the Mohawks come,
With clash of shivering glass;
With bristling swords and flaming links,
That let no watchman pass;
A yellow gown upon a pole
Leads on the drunken mass.

With hurrying cries of "Scour!" and "Scour!"
The revellers rush on;
Red smoky whirls of drifting flame
Light faces woe-begone—
Such faces only night can show,
Day never on them shone.

"Down with the country parson's chair!"
The drunken Mohawks shout;
"Unearth, old fox! no preaching now
Will save your bacon—out!
Or we'll slit your nose, and float your chair
Down stream—now, sir, come out!"

The jostled chairmen's trembling hands
Put down the black sedan;
Then out at once—wild beast from cage—
Strides forth a black-browed man,
Who pushes back the line of swords,
And faces all that clan.

Plain, homely, in a rusty gown—
  Some village priest, no more—
And yet a lion, and at bay,
  Had daunted them no more.
As, all unarmed, the stern man stood,
  Backward the foremost bore.

"Begone!" he cried, "you swaggering rogues,
  You fools and knaves by fits;
Who let bad wine creep up and steal
  Your poor besotted wits;
E'en now for you the hangman works,
  And chain to collar knits!

"Back to your garrets and your dens,
  Your greasy dice and cards;
Back, lazy prentices and thieves,
  Back to your Bridewell wards!
Go to the hospitals, and pine
  With Blood Bowl Alley's hordes.

"For ye the madhouse cries and gapes,
  For ye the gibbet creaks;
Go, join the highwayman, and kill
  The miser when he squeaks;
Or cower around the glass-house when
  The pent-house shelter leaks.

"You brood of apes, and dogs, and swine,
  Back to your kennels—go—"
(Each bitter word that grim man spoke
  Fell like a bruising blow)
"—Spawn of the serpent, to your holes,
  HE calls you from below!"

Those wine-flushed faces pale to see
  The sternness of that face;
The banners droop, the tankards sink,
  The cowering links give place;
The stuttering mouths, the vacant eyes
  Look sober for a space.

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The wildest shrinks before that gaze,
Nor dares to brave that eye;
Then, one by one, like snow in thaw,
Melts all that company;
The swords are sheathed, the lights go out,
Hushed is their tipsy glee.

"To Harley Street!" Swift cries, and pass'd,
Humming a biting rhyme;
The moon, just now eclipsed, had ceased
To soar, and soaring climb.
There was something stern about the man,
And sad about the time.

Walter Thornbury.

CANNIBALISM IN GALICIA.

The inhabitants of Austrian Galicia are quiet, inoffensive people, take them as a whole. The Jews, who number a twelfth of the population, are the most intelligent, energetic, and certainly the most money-making individuals in the province, though the Poles proper, or Mazurs, are not devoid of natural parts.

Perhaps as remarkable a phenomena as any other in that kingdom—for kingdom of Waldimir it was—is the enormous numerical preponderance of the nobility over the untitled. In 1837 the proportions stood thus: 32,190 nobles to 2,076 tradesmen.

The average of execution for crime is nine a year, out of a population of four and a half millions,—by no means a high figure, considering the peremptory way in which justice is dealt forth in that province. Yet, in the most quiet and well-disposed neighbourhoods, occasionally the most startling atrocities are committed, occurring when least expected, and sometimes perpetrated by the very person who is least suspected.

Just twelve years ago there happened in the circle of Tornow, in Western Galicia—the province is divided into nine circles—a circumstance which will probably furnish the grandames with a story for their firesides, during their bitter Galician winters, for many a year.

In the circle of Tornow, in the lordship of Parkost, is a little hamlet called Polomyja, consisting of eight hovels and a Jewish tavern. The inhabitants are mostly woodcutters, hewing down the firs of the dense forest in which their village is situated, and conveying them to the nearest water, down which they are floated to the Vistula. Each tenant pays no rent for his cottage and patch of field, but is bound to work a fixed number of days for his landlord: a practice universal in Galicia, and often productive of much discontent and injustice, as the proprietor exacts labour from his tenant on those days when the harvest has to be got in, or the land is in best condition for tillage, and just when the peasant would gladly be engaged upon his own small plot. Money is scarce in the province, and this is accordingly the only way in which the landlord can be sure of his dues.

Most of the villagers of Polomyja are miserably poor; but by cultivating a little maize, and keeping a few fowls or a pig, they scrape together sufficient to sustain life. During the summer the men collect resin from the pines, from each of which, once in twelve years, they strip a slip of bark, leaving the resin to exude and trickle into a small earthenware jar at its roots; and, during the winter, as already stated, they fell the trees and roll them down to the river.

Polomyja is not a cheerful spot—nested among dense masses of pine, which shed a gloom over the little hamlet; yet, on a fine day, it is pleasant enough for the old women to sit at their cottage doors, scenting that matchless pine fragrance, sweeter than the balm of the Spice Islands, for there is nothing cloying in that exquisite and exhilarating odour; listening to the harp-like thrill of the breeze in the old grey tree-tops, and knitting quietly at long stockings, whilst their little grandchildren romp in the heather and tufted fern.

Towards evening, too, there is something indescribably beautiful in the firwood. The sun dives among the trees, and paints their boles with patches of luminous saffron, or falling over a level clearing, glorifies it with its orange dye, so visibly contrasting with the blue-purple shadow on the western rim of unreclaimed forest, deep and luscious as the bloom on a plum. The birds then are hastening to their nests, a ger-falcon, high overhead, is kindled with sunlight; capering and gambolling among the branches, the merry squirrel skips home for the night.

The sun goes down, but the sky is still shining with twilight. The wild cat begins to hiss and squall in the forest, the heron to flap hastily by, the stork on the top of the tavern chimney to poise itself on one leg for sleep. To-whoo! an owl begins to wake up. Hark! the woodcutters are coming home with a song.

Such is Polomyja in summer time, and much resembling it are the hamlets scattered about the forest, at intervals of a few miles; in each, the public-house being the most commodious and best built edifice, the church, whenever there is one, not remarkable for anything but its bulbous steeple.

You would hardly believe that amidst all this poverty a beggar could have picked up any subsistence, and yet, a few years ago, Sunday after Sunday, there sat a white-bearded venerable man at the church door, asking alms.

Poor people are proverbially compassionate and liberal, so that the old man generally got a few coppers, and often some good woman bade him come into her cottage, and let him have some food.

Occasionally Swiatek—that was the beggar's name, went his rounds selling small pinchbeck ornaments and beads; generally, however, only appealing to charity.

One Sunday, after church, a Mazur and his wife invited the old man into their hut and gave him a crust of pie and some meat. There were several children about, but a little girl, of nine or ten, attracted the old man's attention by her artless tricks.

Swiatek felt in his pocket and produced a ring, enclosing a piece of coloured glass set over foil. This he presented to the child, who ran

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off delighted to show her acquisition to her companions.

"Is that little maid your daughter?" asked the beggar.

"No," answered the house-wife, "she is an orphan; there was a widow in this place who died, leaving the child, and I have taken charge of her; one mouth more will not matter much. and the good God will bless us."

"Ay, ay! to be sure He will; the orphans and fatherless are under His own peculiar care."

"She's a good little thing, and gives no trouble," observed the woman. "You go back to Polomyja to-night, I reckon!"

"I do—ah!" exclaimed Swiatek, as the little girl ran up to him. "You like the ring, is it not beautiful? I found it under a big fir to the left of the churchyard,—there may be dozens there. You must turn round three times, bow to the moon, and say 'Zaboï!' then look among the tree-roots till you find one."

"Come along!" screamed the child to its comrades; "we will go and look for rings."

"You must seek separately," said Swiatek.

The children scampered off into the wood.

"I have done one good thing for you," laughed the beggar, "in ridding you, for a time, of the noise of those children."

"I am glad of a little quiet now and then," said the woman; "the children will not let the baby sleep at times with their clatter. Are you going?"

"Yes; I must reach Polomyja to-night. I am old and very feeble, and poor"—he began to fall into his customary whine—"very poor, but I thank and pray to God for you."

Swiatek left the cottage.

That little orphan was never seen again.

The Austrian Government has, of late years, been vigorously advancing education among the lower orders, and establishing schools throughout the province.

The children were returning from class one day, and were scattered among the trees, some pursuing a field-mouse, others collecting juniper-berries, and some sauntering with their hands in their pockets, whistling.

"Where's Peter?" asked one little boy of another who was beside him. "We three go home the same way, let us go together."

"Peter!" shouted the lad.

"Here I am!" was the answer from among the trees; "I'll be with you directly."

"Oh, I see him!" said the elder boy. "There is some one talking to him."

"Where?"

"Yonder, among the pines. Ah! they have gone further into the shadow, and I cannot see them any more. I wonder who was with him; a man, I think."

The boys waited till they were tired, and then they sauntered home, determined to thrash Peter for having kept them waiting. *But Peter was never seen again.*

Some time after this a servant-girl, belonging to a small store kept by a Russian, disappeared from a village, five miles from Polomyja. She had been sent with a parcel of grocery to a cottage at no very great distance, but lying apart from the main cluster of hovels, and surrounded by trees.

The day closed in, and her master waited her return anxiously, but as several hours elapsed without any sign of her, he—assisted by the neighbours—went in search of her.

A slight powdering of snow covered the ground, and her footsteps could be traced at intervals where she had diverged from the beaten track. In that part of the road where the trees were thickest, there were marks of two pair of feet leaving the path; but owing to the density of the trees at that spot and to the slightness of the fall of snow, which did not reach the soil, where shaded by the pines, the footprints were immediately lost. By the following morning a heavy fall had obliterated any further traces which daylight might have disclosed.

The servant-girl also was never seen again.

During the winter of 1849 the wolves were supposed to have been particularly ravenous, for thus alone did people account for the mysterious disappearances of children.

A little boy had been sent to a fountain to fetch water; the pitcher was found standing by the well, but *the boy had vanished.* The villagers turned out, and those wolves which could be found were despatched.

We have already introduced our readers to Polomyja, although the occurrences above related did not take pace among those eight hovels, but in neighbouring villages. The reason for our having given a more detailed account of this cluster of houses—rude cabins they were—will now become apparent.

In May, 1849, the innkeeper of Polomyja missed a couple of ducks, and his suspicions fell upon the beggar who lived there, and whom he held in no esteem, as he himself was a hard-working industrious man, whilst Swiatek maintained himself, his wife and children by mendicity, although possessed of sufficient arableland to yield an excellent crop of maize, and produce vegetables, if tilled with ordinary care.

As the publican approached the cottage, a fragrant whiff of roast greeted his nostrils.

"I'll catch the fellow in the act," said the innkeeper to himself, stealing up to the door, and taking good care not to be observed.

As he threw open the door, he saw the mendicant hurriedly shuffle something under his feet, and conceal it beneath his long clothes. The publican was on him in an instant, had him by the throat, charged him with theft, and dragged him from his seat. Judge of his sickening horror when from beneath the pauper's clothes rolled forth the head of a girl about the age of fourteen or fifteen years, carefully separated from the trunk.

In a short while the neighbours came up. The venerable Swiatek was locked up, along with his wife, his daughter—a girl of sixteen—and a son, aged five.

The hut was thoroughly examined, and the mutilated remains of the poor girl discovered. In

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a vat were found the legs and thighs, partly fresh, partly stewed or roasted. In a chest were the heart, liver, and entrails, all prepared and cleaned, as neatly as though done by a skilful butcher; and, finally, under the oven was a bowl full of fresh blood. On his way to the magistrate of the district, the wretched man flung himself repeatedly on the ground, struggled with his guards, and endeavoured to suffocate himself by gulping down clods of earth and stones, but was prevented by his conductors.

When taken before the Protokoll at Dabkow, he stated that he had already killed and—assisted by his family—eaten six persons: his children, however, asserted most positively that the number was much greater than he had represented, and their testimony is borne out by the fact, that the remains of *fourteen* different caps and suits of clothes, male as well as female, were found in his house.

The origin of this horrible and depraved taste was as follows, according to Swiatek's own confession:

In 1846, three years previous, a Jewish tavern in the neighbourhood had been burned down, and the host had himself perished in the flames. Swiatek, whilst examining the ruins, had found the half-roasted corpse of the publican among the charred rafters of the house. At that time the old man was craving with hunger, having been destitute of food for some time. The scent and the sight of the roasted flesh inspired him with an uncontrollable desire to taste of it. He tore off a portion of the carcase and satiated his hunger upon it, and at the same time he conceived such a liking for it, that he could feel no rest till he had tasted again. His second victim was the orphan above alluded to; since then—that is during the period of no less than three years—he had frequently subsisted in the same manner, and had actually grown sleek and fat upon his frightful meals.

The excitement roused by the discovery of these atrocities was intense; several poor mothers who had bewailed the loss of their little ones, felt their wounds reopened agonisingly. Popular indignation rose to the highest pitch; there was some fear lest the criminal should be torn in pieces himself by the enraged people, as soon as he was brought to trial: but he saved the necessity of precautions being taken to ensure his safety, for, on the first night of his confinement, he hanged himself from the bars of his prison-window.

We gladly leave the matter here, thinking that perhaps it would have been hardly judicious to recall such an act of outrageous wickedness, were it not for the attention which has of late been directed to morbid diseases of the brain and senses. Such a case as that above recorded is by no means without a parallel: we could adduce some surpassing it in horror, but we discreetly refrain.

S. Baring-Gould, M.A.

Sir James Bland Burgess married two rich wives in succession, and left the law, adding that it was money made the *mare to go.* "Yes," replied a friend, "'and the Burgesses, too."

QUACKERY IN 1551.

The quack medicines which have brought large fortunes to the lucky inventors in our own day are often exposed and denounced; but there is little doubt that, even in empiricism, we have improved greatly since the days when the intestines of animals and a few herbs were considered to form a sovereign balm for every disorder. Most of the great electuaries now advertised are said to possess the negative virtue of doing no harm; the pills may be taken, and the other preparations freely used, without further mischief than may be caused to the patient by the absence of proper medical treatment. Our ill-fated ancestors were not always so well off when they resigned themselves to the care of quack doctors. The remedies prescribed for them were often cruel, and nearly always disagreeable. In a certain "Pore Man's Tresure," published in London, in the year 1551, many extraordinary specifics are given, some of which must have been more painful in their effects than the disorders they were designed to remove. Even after the lapse of more than 300 years one must pity the poor man who put his trust in this black-letter guide-book to health.

Suppose, for instance, that he had the misfortune to receive a severe wound, whereby much loss of blood ensued, this would be the course for him to pursue in order to check the hemorrhage: "Take salte befe, ye fat and the lene togyther, as ye thinkest will go in the wound, and lay it on the hot coles, and let it rost there tyll it be thorowe hote, and all hote put it in the wonde and binde faste, and it shall staunch anone." This approaches in barbarity the old plan of thrusting the stumps of amputated limbs in hot pitch in order to stop the blood. The heat would have the desired effect, and even in the present day lint "scorching hot" is sometimes applied to the wound; but conceive the agony that must have been caused by the exploded system.

Should the "poor man" survive this process he would probably be troubled at some period of his existence with pains in the head—happy man indeed, thrice happy, if he escaped them altogether. If the pains were grievous, it would only be necessary for him to take "the gall of a hare and temper it with honey evenly," and anoint therewith his temples. If this did not suffice, he was to use the sap of an ash and rhubarb, mixed with wine and "grece of a freshe ele." Or he might take grease of the hart blended with barley-meal, for "thys hathe bene proved a ryght good medecyne." If his pains were neuralgic, it is not unlikely that he would be afflicted with ear-ache also. A reference to his "Tresure" would afford him the means of casting out *this* fiend. He would find it requisite to take a few herbs, and the grease of an eel as before—the last having, no doubt, a potent influence. And if, following up these complaints, his old wound should reopen and bleed, there are several effectual modes of stopping the effusion. He may "take burnt worms and powder them," and drop the powder in the wound, or use "salt" in the same way, or "scrapings of a brass pot"! The last remedy might, at least, produce gangrene, even if the two

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first failed to dispose of the patient and all his woes.

For the toothache the poor man was recommended to "take the shavynge of the harte's horne, and sette it long in water, and leye it into the sore tothe." Or he was to lay some pepper in wine, hold the mixture in his mouth, "and thus," said his guide, "thou shalt be delyvered of all anguyshe." Here is another receipt "for the tootheache and the gomes do swell." Take the juice of the red nettle, the white of an egg, and some white meal—make into a paste and apply to the tooth.

In letting blood, it is necessary to be very careful in the choice of a day for the operation, for the last day of April, the first Monday in August, and the last Monday in December, are "perilous" days. "If a man or a womane be lette blode in these dayes they shall dye within 15 dayes—dye hastelye." A dreadful warning, surely. On the other hand, "who that letteth the bloude on the 18th daye of Marche in the ryght arme, and on the 11th daye of Apryll in the lyfte arme, they shall never be blinde, *for this hath bene proved!*" Pity that the guide did not give the *rationale* of this proof.

In the event of the poor man meeting with a severe fall, he need be under no apprehension for any length of time lest he should have fractured his skull. Here are directions for him to pursue: "If the flesh be hole above, take and shave the head where the sore is, and double a linnen cloth, spread on it the white of an egg, and bind it on the head all night." In the morning, "if the clothe be moiste the brayne-panne is broken." In this case the "place" is to be anointed with ointment, "and thus shalt thou save him, or els he is but dead." A receipt more primitive and quaint than this it would be well-nigh impossible to disinter from the records of bygone quackery.

The author of the "Tresure" was prepared for slight as well as great exigencies. For bleeding at the nose, "take shelles that chekins were hatched in," and make powder of them, and put the powder in the nose, "and it shall staunche hym." The poor man, to prevent himself falling asleep, must take decoction of garlic—an effectual plan, one would suppose, for banishing the slumbers of the partner of his bosom. Should he lose his speech, what can be more simple than to recover it by the following remedy? Take juice of sage or primrose, "and put it in the mouth of the pacyent, and he shall speake." For a cold "take the sede of the nettell and sethe it in oyle, and anoynte thy fete therewith and thy handes, and it wyll do awaye with the colde." Or what do young ladies think of this receipt for a cough? "Take sage, rue, and pepper, with honey, and ete thereof a spoonfull fyrst and last [*i.e.*, morning and night], till ye be delyvered of the sayd dysease." For a swelling under the chin, "the blood of a horse" is an excellent remedy. For a fever take a handful of parsley, a pound of cummin seed, five quarts of wine (a generous allowance), and boil them together. "Gyve hym to drynke that is sycke, at morne colde, and at evening hote, and it wyl hele him." For broken bones use a plaster of various herbs! Or, if this is not powerful enough, "take ye mylke of a kowe that is of one coloure" with herbs! This is an easy mode of setting broken limbs hitherto untried by the profession.

Lastly, the poor man would possibly grow old, and find his strength fail him. In that strait he is told to prepare a decoction of parsley, sage, mace, ginger, and other spices, and drink thereof. Its virtues were marvellous. "It is good for the palsie, for quakynge of a man's lymmes, and for serchynge of a man's senewes. Also it maketh an old manne to seme yonge. Also it destroyeth the canker." Truly an inestimable discovery this! Scarcely less so is the following for disordered eyes: "Gather red snails, boil them in water, and gather of the grese, and do it in a vyall, and anoynt therewith thine eyes erely in the morning and late in the evenynge." And, finally, we have one comprehensive receipt good "for all manner of aches." Take "sage, rewe, wormewoode, lorel leaves, horhunde, red nettelles, and stampe them all together, and myngle them with Maybutter, and let it stand for x days—and ofte frye them and strayne them clene, and then melte therewith encens, and this serveth for all maner of aches."

These are examples of the many prescriptions contained in the now very rare "Tresure of Medecynes." Probably the reader would not be willing to abandon his family doctor, and place his wife and children (for bachelor readers are of so little importance that it is of no sort of consequence what course *they* take) under the guidance of the author of our resuscitated *vade mecum*.

L. J. Jennings.

AN OLD MAN'S MUSINGS.

He dwelt in solitude; his brain grew rife
With thoughts of ancient years, which came to him
Old, old traditions, cobweb'd, faint and dim,
As from another life.

What is the past but a tradition,—far,
Far and half hidden in deep memory's cell?
What are the thoughts which used to rise and swell,
But banners stained in war?

Stained in the many conflicts from their birth,
Losing their lustre in the course of time;
We deemed in youth they'd rise to heights sublime,
We see them fall to earth.

Oh, racking thought, the highest genius lent
But makes the man to suffering more prone,
That which he deems his greatest good, alone
Brings its own punishment.

For knowledge yearns for knowledge, till desire
Becomes a passion, but the straining mind
Within its body prison all confined,
Finds it can rise no higher.

Is this what I have lived for, but to know
My past *a night filled full of idle dreams*,
Vague visions, fancy flittings, paltry schemes,
The sum of all below?

Thus mused an old man till the morning light
Banished the darkness:—with the rising sun
There came a voice, "Thy life is but begun
If thou wilt act aright.

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"Old as thou art, and though earth's shadows close
Around thee now, yet may a morn be nigh;
Another sun rise in a nobler sky,
E'en as but now *I* rose.

"Then each desire, each thought, however grand,
Shall find its full expansion, if whilst here
Thou strivest to the light which full and clear
Gleams from that other land."

H. R.

IN RE MR. BUBB.

Any one who has ever visited Cheke Mallow will agree with me that it is eminently genteel. Its gentility is, in fact, its chief characteristic,—the one point that serves to distinguish it from the half-dozen other ordinary watering-places that dot the same line of coast within a distance of thirty miles. For Cheke Mallow not only welcomes to its boarding-houses a migratory host of fashionable visitors during the summer and autumn months, but it can also boast of a number of "highly genteel" and even aristocratic families, who for sundry reasons—health of body and health of pocket, chiefly—make it their permanent residence. As a natural consequence, society in Cheke Mallow is somewhat exclusive, and must know a great deal about you, and that to your advantage, before making you free of its mysteries. "No common people admitted," is the unspoken, but perfectly understood rule, among the denizens of Cheke Mallow; proof of breeding or proof of wealth you must give, if you do not wish to be tabooed: show proof of both, and you may be worshipped.

But even in this marine paradise there is a small but necessary substratum of common people—tradesmen, shop-keepers, and such like—people who cannot be dispensed with; and, lower than these, what may be termed the primary stratum—fishermen and labourers with their wives and families, who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows and the strength of their arms; but both these classes, primary and secondary, are politely ignored by the "genteel" world of Cheke Mallow, and as this is a "highly genteel" narrative, we will adopt the same method.

I need hardly say that Cheke Mallow has not, as yet, been invaded by a railway. The nearest station is ten miles away, to which fact the exclusive character of the place may, perhaps, be in some measure attributed; for the facilities afforded by a railway would doubtless be more or less fatal to its gentility. But if rather behind the age in this respect, it is not wanting in most of the other blessings of civilisation. It contains several hotels, large in size and dear in charge; it has two terraces of boarding-houses facing the sea, all stuccoed in the most elegant style; it has numerous poney-chaises, tame hacks, and phaetons, and any quality of fashionable millinery on the backs of its young ladies.

Such being the place, and such the people, anyone but partially acquainted with Mr. Bubb might naturally have wondered why he, of all men in the world, should have chosen Cheke Mallow for his permanent residence. He came down from London, it was supposed; and after staying for a week at one of the hotels, took, for a term of seven years, that small but comfortable family-mansion, commonly called "The White House," together with the plot of garden-ground pertaining thereto. Ten days afterwards a quantity of second-hand furniture arrived from the nearest market-town, evidently the product of a broker's-shop; for such a diverse and incongruous assortment of articles could have been picked up nowhere else; and the White House soon put on a habitable appearance.

It had stood empty for a considerable time, for, though situate in the better part of the town, it was too small, and too ordinary-looking, for the needs of a genteel family. Mr. Bubb, having engaged a housekeeper—a woman, old, taciturn, and partially deaf—proceeded at once to occupy his new home. He was a complete stranger in Cheke Mallow; none of the inhabitants had ever seen him before. He was a thin, active wiry man, apparently about sixty years old, with a hard, dry face, and a quiet, self-composed manner. He was a man of few words, seldom speaking unless first addressed, and never seeming to trouble himself with anyone's affairs but his own. He dressed, summer and winter, in a suit of brown cloth that never seemed to require renewing, or to become worse for wear; he was not particular as to the quality of his hat, and his shoes were more roomy than elegant. His tastes quickly developed themselves in his new home. He was fond of flowers in general, and of hollyhocks in particular, as his garden testified every summer after his arrival at Cheke Mallow. He was addicted to fishing, and a favourable morning seldom passed without seeing him sally forth with rod and basket. He had a predilection for tobacco, and would sit for hours on summer evenings in his little arbour, blowing the fragrant weed, while calmly contemplating the growth of his flowers, or busy in the manufacture of artificial flies. His literary requirements were generally satisfied by a perusal of the "Times," purchased at half-price from the nearest hotel two days after date; though he had a small stock of books besides, as a resource for rainy weather. Mr. Bubb had evidently no fixed occupation, but might, with propriety, be termed a gentleman living on his means. It was noticed at the Post-office—but that was after he became famous—that he never received above three or four letters a year, and those evidently of a business character; it was further observed that twice every year, at Midsummer and Christmas, he received from London a hamper of wine.

Such was the individual who invaded Cheke Mallow, and there sat down to spend the evening of his days. He might have lived there for a century without being known beyond the narrow circle of tradespeople with whom he dealt, but for one little circumstance to which I shall presently allude.

As he seemed to be a man utterly without pretension, as he urged neither wealth nor breeding in his favour—and by breeding I, of course, mean proof of good family—he remained utterly unknown to, and unnoticed by, the polite and fashionable world that fluttered close before his eyes. Not that he was a man to worry himself

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about such a trifle: no; summer and winter he went on fishing, growing enormous hollyhocks, and smoking his meerschaum; and if the world quietly ignored the existence of such an individual as David Bubb, that gentleman could afford to, and did, as a matter of course, reciprocate the compliment.

In the third year of his residence at Cheke Mallow, Mr. Bubb was taken ill. He caught cold one day while fishing, and an attack of influenza was the result. Mr. Bubb had medical advice at once; the advice, indeed, of no less a person than Jabez Flotsam, Esq., M.D., the fashionable practitioner of Cheke Mallow. The attack was not a very severe one, and the great Flotsam, who had not been for some years back in the habit of entering houses so small and meanly appointed as that of Mr. Bubb, rather pooh-poohed the whole affair, and wondered internally why that lesser luminary, Brimley, had not been called in, instead of himself—the lofty Flotsam.

Mr. Bubb had turned the corner of his illness, and was rapidly progressing towards perfect health. Doctor Flotsam had just looked in to pay his final visit. Mr. Bubb sat in his armchair, rubbing his hands, and gazing in a weak, shivering way at the fire.

"Doctor, I think I ought to make my will?" said Mr. Bubb, interrogatively.

"Really, sir," replied the doctor, looking at his watch, "that is a private matter on which I am hardly competent to offer an opinion. (*Aside.*) I always thought the old fellow a bore."

"You see, doctor," resumed Mr. Bubb, "when a man has property to bequeath——"

"Eh?" said the doctor, pricking up his ears.

"I say, when a man has property to bequeath; when vast interests, landed and monetary, are at stake; it is only right and proper that one should look forward into the future; and, in order to prevent all subsequent mistakes and confusion, make such arrangements as may be considered necessary and advisable."

"Just so, just so," remarked the doctor blandly, as he settled down into a chair. "Exactly the sentiments I have always held myself. (*Aside.*) I must give him another call to-morrow. Who would have thought the sly old boy had money!"

"And life is so uncertain, doctor!"

"Ah, it is, indeed, as no one knows better than myself."

"I've lived, doctor, for three years in Cheke Mallow; and yet, though you may hardly believe it, I don't know above half-a-dozen people in it. So what I wanted to ask you was, whether you know any respectable lawyer in Cheke Mallow whom you can recommend to me for the drawing up of the sort of deed I require."

"To be sure I do, my dear sir! Jetsam, of Jetsam and Flurry, is the man for you. Highly respectable. Large experience in that sort of business. Suit you to a hair."

"Jetsam, of Jetsam and Flurry," said Mr. Bubb, taking a note of it.

"I will not fail to look in upon you to-morrow," said Mr. Flotsam, rising to take his leave, and extending a white hand for his patient to shake—a condescension, by-the-bye, which he had never dreamt of exercising towards him before. "Another bottle of the mixture will set you on your legs again, as hale and hearty as ever, and make your will so much waste paper for ever so many years to come."

Mr. Bubb was duly waited upon by Mr. Jetsam. The will was drawn up, signed, and witnessed; and then delivered into the custody of the lawyer. Mr. Bubb had asked Dr. Flotsam to act as one of his executors; and the doctor, after making a few half-and-half excuses, which Mr. Bubb easily overruled, allowed himself to be so appointed. A Mr. Pybus of Piccadilly, London, was named by Mr. Bubb as the other executor; and the will was duly witnessed by Mr. Jetsam's clerk, and Mr. Bubb's deaf old housekeeper.

The week following this transaction, Mr. Jetsam having a small dinner-party, sent an invitation to Mr. Bubb, which that gentleman accepted. A fortnight later, Mr. Flotsam also had a dinner-party, at which Mr. Bubb was a welcome guest.

The world of Cheke Mallow felt itself a little scandalised at finding a person so unknown to fame as Mr. Bubb invited to its bosom; and but that Messrs. Flotsam and Jetsam possessed its full and complete confidence, would have felt inclined to rebel, and to give, politely but decisively, the cold shoulder to a person of no pretensions, such as they considered Mr. Bubb to be. One or two gentlemen, in fact, did whisper to their neighbours: "Who is this Mr. Bubb? Never met the fellah before." His greatness had not at that time dawned upon them.

But, not long after this, there emanated, no one knew whence, nobody knew how—for Messrs. Flotsam and Jetsam were discreet gentlemen, both,—a report that Mr. Bubb was a man of property; a wealthy man; a man who owned a large estate in Yorkshire; who was a considerable holder of mining and railway shares; a man with a heavy balance at his bankers. That there was a certain nephew, at present in India, who was heir to the whole of this property; that the fact of Mr. Bubb keeping up such a small, not to say shabby, establishment was to be considered merely as the whim of an old man tired, probably, of the bustle and *éclat* always attendant on wealth; and desirous of passing the evening of his days in the peaceful pursuit of those simple hobbies to which he was addicted. Cheke Mallow was electrified; the breath, figuratively speaking, was knocked out of it; it stood aghast. What! to think that there had resided, under its very nose, as one may say, and for three whole years, unknown to everybody, unblest by the visitations of good society, uncharmed by the fascinations of fashion, a man who was now understood to be fabulously rich; a man, old and eccentric, it is true, but with a young and marriageable nephew for his successor, who in time might also settle in Cheke Mallow! Mammon and Cupid, what an oversight! It was terrible to think of. Something must be done, and that immediately, to repair such a fearful omission. Yes, from that day forth Mr. Bubb should be the pet and idol of all the ladies, young and old, in Cheke Mallow.

Such was the decision of the Honourable Mrs.

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Teddington, first cousin to Mrs. Flotsam. Now, Mrs. Teddington held bi-weekly meetings at Chintz Lodge, to which the most influential ladies in Cheke Mallow were always invited, for the purpose of making flannel garments for the negroes of South Africa; and at one of these meetings the Bubb question was ventilated. A few words from some of the leading ladies; Mrs. Teddington's summing up; the general verdict of the company—and the thing was settled. Mr. Bubb was henceforth to be free of the mysteries of Cheke Mallow; to hold the golden key of the Eleusinia of fashion; to be admitted within that charmed circle where, if anywhere, it must be happiness to dwell, since so many people waste their lives in vain strivings to break through its invisible barriers.

It was old Lady Castor, widow of General Castor, that put the question to the meeting: Who was it that first heard Mr. Bubb was a rich man? Nobody could answer the question, but every one was aware that Mr. Bubb was enormously wealthy; the intelligence had passed like a whisper through Cheke Mallow; but who was the first to utter it, nobody knew.

"It was quite providential," the Honourable

Mrs. Teddington remarked, "that they had learnt in time. There was an old proverb which said, 'Better late than never;' and they must all do their best, in the present instance, to make up for their past neglect."

Mr. Bubb, meanwhile, having recovered from his illness, resumed his old course of life; and, unconscious of his growing popularity, might be seen any day busily employed, either fishing or gardening. The old brown suit, and the dilapidated hat, still did duty as of yore; though on the two occasions when invited out to dine with Messrs. Flotsam and Jetsam, he so far yielded to the etiquette of society as to exhume from the depths of his wardrobe an ancient swallow-tailed blue coat with bright buttons, rather white at the seams; which, judging from the folds and creases it displayed, and the general mouldiness of its appearance, had lain untouched for several years. Mr. Bubb was quiet and rather reserved during dinner, but perfectly well bred; but after the bottle had passed round two or three times, he partially thawed, and came out with a few dry, satirical stories, which did not, however, meet with that enthusiastic reception from the company which might, perhaps, have greeted them six months afterwards.

Of course it was entirely by accident that, shortly afterwards, the Honourable Mrs. Teddington, her two fair daughters, and their friend Mrs.

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Parafine, found themselves in Mr. Bubb's little parlour, talking to the old gentleman as freely and as gaily as though they had known him for twenty years. The four ladies had been out for a walk, when a slight shower happening to come on, they had been driven to take shelter under a large tree that grew just outside Mr. Bubb's garden gate. Mr. Bubb, perceiving them from the window, had, as a matter of course, invited them in,—an invitation which they did not accept without numerous apologies. Once under the roof, however, Mrs. Teddington's tact, and gaiety of manner, quickly put them all at their ease. Thus by a clever *coup-de-main* the citadel itself was taken by storm. Mrs. T., to be sure, might have obtained an introduction to Mr. Bubb in the ordinary way of such things; but that would have been rather too hum-drum for her; she preferred something with a dash of the romantic in it. Mr. Bubb hastily slipped his pipe into a drawer, and brought out some wine and biscuits. But Miss Julia, dear girl, could not touch the wine. She had a bad headache. Perhaps a cup of tea would do her good, and she must have one as soon as she reached home.

"Tea!" burst out Mr. Bubb. "If a cup of tea will do you good, you shall have one in ten minutes. I flatter myself that I am somewhat of a connoisseur in tea; let me try my hand at brewing you a cup. Would they not all take a cup at the same time?"

After a polite show of resistance, they yielded to Mr. Bubb's entreaties on one condition, which was, that as their host's housekeeper was from home, they should get the meal ready themselves. No sooner said than done. Miss Georgina set about arranging the tea-tray, while Mrs. Teddington herself put on one of the housekeeper's clean aprons, and set to work to cut a plate of thin bread and butter. Mrs. Parafine was not behind the others, I assure you. She went into the garden, and cut a dish of cress and lettuce, which, after washing it with her own fair hands, she produced green, crisp, and dripping at the table. Mr. Bubb's face all this time was a study, such a half-puzzled, half-amused air rested on it.

How merry they were over that tea! and how they all enjoyed themselves! After it was over, Miss Julia having recovered from her headache, she and her sister sang a few simple ballads, Mr. Bubb having previously declared his fondness for old-fashioned music. After this, it was time to go; so they put on their bonnets, and bade their host farewell in such a flutter of gratification and thanks, that the old gentleman was almost overwhelmed. No sooner, however, was the garden gate closed behind his visitors than Mr. Bubb exhumed his pipe, and while charging it with tobacco, relieved his feelings by giving vent to a sly quiet chuckle of intense enjoyment.

Next day, Mrs. Teddington, accompanied by her husband, called on Mr. Bubb to thank him for his hospitality, and to request the honour of his company, at an early date, to dinner at Chintz Lodge. Mr. Bubb promised them the coveted honour.

"That was the best glass of wine I've tasted these ten years," remarked Mr. Teddington to his wife during their return. "I don't think Lord Rufus could produce one equal to it."

"A conclusive proof, my dear, if such were needed, that Mr. Bubb is a gentleman," remarked his sage lady.

After this, the tide of Mr. Bubb's popularity set in deep and strong. The Teddingtons took him by the hand, and passed him round to their friends; and Cheke Mallow, to do it justice, endeavoured to atone for its previous apathy by the warmth of its present enthusiasm and adulation. Who so popular in the little watering-place as Mr. Bubb soon became? Like a newly-discovered nugget, he was handed round from one to another, gazed at, commented upon (behind his back), admired, flattered, and estimated at far more than his actual value. He was persuaded to show some specimens of hollyhocks at the annual floral meeting, and of course carried away a prize. He was constituted perpetual chairman of the Bluebonnet Club, which met once a week at the Imperial Hotel,—the most exclusive club in Cheke Mallow,—where his dry, quaint stories were always listened to with the utmost respect and attention, though told for the twentieth time.

The Honourable Mrs. Teddington, writing to a friend in London, thus expressed herself on the subject of Mr. Bubb:

"That dear old Mr. Bubb is still with us, and is a frequent visitor at Chintz Lodge, where he is a good deal petted you may be sure. The girls and I sometimes call upon him at his place. It is well to be as friendly as possible with such a man. What an eccentric old creature it is! Fancy a person of his enormous wealth living in a little stuffy six-roomed house, the furniture in which is hardly worth fifty pounds! But, after all, his motive is a laudable one, for he is understood to be living in this poor way in order that his nephew, who is at present in India, may have as large a fortune as possible after his—Mr. Bubb's—decease. I have once or twice thrown out a few hints respecting this nephew; but the subject is a delicate one; and as the old gentleman is rather reserved on the point, I have not been able to gather much information. This much, however, I have learnt,—that Mr. Bubb, junior, is young and unmarried; both interesting facts to the mother of two girls, the younger of whom is old enough to play at *vingt-un* with her birthdays. Whether anything worth while will ever turn up out of this Bubb affair, it is impossible at present to judge. *Mais nous verrons, ma chère*. Meanwhile, I retain the card in my hand."

Mr. Bubb comported himself under his load of honours with the calmness and equanimity of a judge. He held his course unmoved and unchanged; and seemed, if anything, rather to look down on his fine friends; never seeking their company, but when in it, giving vent now and then to a few bitter truths, which from any other man would have been resented as impertinences; but coming from an individual of his weight and standing, were accepted as so many proofs of eccentricity and gentlemanly cynicism. He still maintained unaltered his simple, almost sordid mode of life,—sordid in one possessed of such vast wealth. His fishing-rod and rake were in his hands as much as ever; indeed, he found more use for the former now that he had the free range

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of so many trout streams, the property of some of his wealthy neighbours. He seldom refused invitations into society; and though he never gave return invitations, which would have been simply absurd in one who lived in so small a house, yet it was well understood that any one was at liberty to call upon him, and take a chop, or a grilled trout, and a glass of wine, in a quiet homely way. Such callers were always made welcome, and Mr. Bubb on such occasions could always produce a bottle of wine,—or a dozen bottles, if required, of a vintage so rare that the cellars of the great Lord Rufus could have produced but few dozens equal to it. Indeed, wine might be termed the sole expensive luxury in which Mr. Bubb indulged himself and his friends.

"When will Mr. Bubb's nephew make his appearance?" often asked Georgina Teddington of her mamma; but that sage lady could only reply:

"Wait a while, dear. He can't be long now."

There were other young ladies, too, in Cheke

Mallow, who echoed the same question, and longed for the advent of the wealthy young heir.

When, one wet November morning, it was whispered through Cheke Mallow—and it was a whisper that ran like wildfire—that Mr. Bubb was dead; that he had departed suddenly, and without warning, in the night; an unwonted flutter of interest and curiosity stirred the breast of every individual in the little watering-place. At such a stagnant period of the year it was really pleasant to have such a wide field opened out for speculation and gossip; and Mr. Bubb could not have pleased the community better than by dying at such a season. Mr. Jetsam was immediately summoned; and came, bearing with him a paper which Mr. Bubb had intrusted to his care some six months previously, and which was endorsed: "To be opened immediately after my death." In the presence of Mr. Flotsam, the paper was in due form opened, and was found to contain a simple deed of gift, conveying over the whole of Mr. Bubb's household furniture to his deaf old housekeeper, as a token of his good-will,

and of the estimation in which he held her services. There were also some directions with regard to his funeral, which he desired might be as plain and simple as possible; and the document wound up by requesting Mr. Jetsam to look in the book-case for a copy of "Cotton's translation of Montaigne's Essays," among the leaves of which would be found certain bank notes, sufficient in amount to pay all expenses.

"A striking proof," observed Mr. Jetsam solemnly, when they had finished reading the document, "of that eccentricity which was such a characteristic of our dear departed friend."

After the funeral, which was attended by representatives of some of the best families in Cheke Mallow, was over, Mr. Jetsam proceeded, in the presence of Mr. Flotsam, and of some three or four other gentlemen, particular friends of the deceased, to open and read the will, which Mr. Bubb had never looked at after the day on which it was drawn up. Mr. Jetsam remarked that he had written to Mr. Pybus of London, the other executor, but had that morning received his note back through the Dead Letter Office, with the remark upon it, "Cannot be found." That, under these circumstances, he thought it would be advisable to read the will at once, but to defer taking any action on it till he had succeeded in discovering the present residence of Mr. Pybus. Mr. Jetsam knew,—all present knew,—that Mr. Richard Bubb of the H.E.I. Company's service was appointed sole heir; but Mr. Jetsam had as yet taken no steps to find out in what part of India Mr. R. Bubb was then stationed, expecting to find among the papers of the deceased some letter or memorandum containing his full address. So Mr. Jetsam read the will to the company assembled; which—not to enter into legal phraseology—declared Richard Bubb, the well-beloved nephew of the testator, to be sole heir to his estate, real and personal; consisting, firstly, of a large farm, known as Chuckstone Farm, in the West Riding of Yorkshire; secondly, of a smaller farm in Suffolk, duly specified by name; thirdly, of twenty thousand pounds in railway shares; fourthly, of a terrace of houses in Bermondsey, London; and, lastly, of five thousand pounds in the Three per Cents., together with whatever balance there might be at his bankers, to the credit of deceased, at the time of his death. Two small legacies of a hundred guineas to each of his executors were the sole claims which the heir was called upon to pay out of this handsome property. The examination of Mr. Bubb's papers was next proceeded with, which papers Mr. Jetsam supposed to be all contained in a certain old-fashioned secretaire, as he had not been able to find any in any other place. This desk Mr. Jetsam had sealed up a few hours after Mr. Bubb's death, without examining its contents, and it was now publicly opened. Strange to say, however, it did not contain a single letter, memorandum, or account, with the exception of a few butchers' bills, and some receipts for rent. There was a blotting-pad well marked, which showed that Mr. Bubb had sometimes used his pen; and plenty of paper and envelopes; but positively nothing more.

Mr. Flotsam looked rather blankly at Mr. Jetsam, and that gentleman returned the gaze with interest. There was nothing for it but to dissolve the meeting, and to request Mr. Jetsam to lose no time in ascertaining the addresses of the heir, and of the other executor, and to put himself into immediate communication with those gentlemen.

At the end of a week Mr. Jetsam returned from London, and met the same party of gentlemen by appointment at the house of Mr. Flotsam. He came in, looking very blank and dismayed indeed. A few words told all. He had been up to London to make inquiries, but could not find any such name as that of Mr. Richard Bubb on the books of the East India Company; neither could he trace any such person as Mr. Pybus; and as a last resource he had been obliged to advertise for both individuals in the "Times." He reported further, that he had referred to a Yorkshire directory, but could not find any such estate as Chuckstone mentioned therein; that he could not discover that any estate in Suffolk had been owned by Mr. Bubb; that there was no such terrace in the parish of Bermondsey as the one named in the will; and, finally, that Glyn and Company never had an account opened with Mr. Bubb.

Mr. Jetsam concluded his fearful narrative by saying in a solemn tone: "Gentlemen, it is my humble opinion that we have been made the victims of a tremendous hoax."

But Mr. Flotsam and Mr. Teddington would not see anything of the kind; it was too terrible for belief; they would go up to London themselves, and inquire into the facts of the case. They went; made inquiries; and returned at the end of four days, sadder but wiser men.

Cheke Mallow had a mild fit of insanity when the news was whispered in its ear. After its recovery, which was a matter of some time, it fought shy of the subject altogether; disliked to hear even the faintest allusion to it; and made its circle more exclusive than ever. There are some, including poor Mr. Flotsam, who still profess to believe in the advent of Mr. Richard Bubb, and that everything will yet be made right. There may be a grain of reason in such a belief: more unlikely things have happened before now. It is not for us to judge the case; but if the reader has any thoughts of visiting Cheke Mallow during the next bathing season, we strongly advise him or her not to mention Mr. Bubb's name while there, but to ignore the subject altogether.

Some six months ago, a cousin of Mrs. Flotsam, who is secretary to an assurance society in London, was visiting at Cheke Mallow. Mrs. F. mentioned the subject in confidence to him.

"Mr. David Bubb?" said the secretary, musingly. "Surely I remember the name. If I recollect rightly, he was down in our books for an annuity of two hundred a year, expirable at death. The fellow had been a traveller, or agent, or something of that kind for a house in the wine and spirit trade. I am not aware that he had any income beyond his annuity. But your Mr. Bubb might be a different man, you know."

There the enigma rests.

Thomas Speight.

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LAST WEEK.

Thirty years of the sternest tyranny and oppression which the brains of Russian statesmen could conceive, and the arms of Russian soldiers carry out in practice, have been insufficient to destroy the national spirit of the Poles. We have been sympathising of late with the miseries of the Hungarians and Italians, but every one seemed to hold the opinion that the designs against the national life of Poland had succeeded only too well, and that she had become actually absorbed into the huge bulk of the Russian Empire. The nobles and leaders of the country had fallen on the battle-field, or had paid upon the scaffold the price of their patriotism: the middle classes had fared no better, though, as being more numerous, they had supplied a greater number of victims to the firing parties and to the executioner; all interest in the soil, where it was possible (and a good deal has been possible to the Russians in Poland for the last thirty years), had been transferred into the hands of Russian holders; the Polish language had been proscribed; the literature of the country condemned as dangerous—to sing a Polish song in Poland was an overt act of treason! Poland was gorged with Russian troops, and covered with police spies. The commonest intercourse of domestic life afforded matter for suspicion. To speak implied guilt, and silence was pregnant proof of a plotting mind. For thirty years this system has been continued. Another generation, and yet another, has grown up since "order was restored at Warsaw," and these had been brought up after the strictest fashion of the Moscovite. So it happened that we had all arrived at the conclusion that there had been a death in the great family of European nations—that the grass was growing thick and rank over the grave of what once was Poland. Men mentioned her name with a shudder, and a nameless feeling, that years ago a terrible crime had been worked out down by Warsaw, and they went about their business, thinking that all this sorrow and misery were of the past.

This is not so. Of Poland we may say, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." All the shedding of innocent blood, the banishments, the scourgings, the hangings, the proscription of the national language, the confiscation of the soil, have proved of no effect. The Russian soldiers and Russian spies—although they did their work thoroughly enough to all appearance—have made but a half job of it after all. A nation which still reaches the number of 15,000,000 of souls requires a great deal of killing before the land is disencumbered of the human lumber. Cholera could do more than a field-marshal, but even cholera would fail to accomplish such a task as this in six campaigns. It turns out that the pulse of Poland beats strong as ever. Now, when the military system of Russia has been shrewdly shaken by the results of the Crimean campaign; and the young Emperor is settling accounts with his serfs throughout the empire; and the Slavonic populations of the East of Europe, whatever may be the national name they bear, are beginning to arise against their oppressors; and the political conditions of the time are such that France is armed to the teeth, and ready to make her profit of the greatest or of the smallest blunder of Russia, of Austria, or of Prussia; and when the sympathies of England are warmly with the nations, which have been so long and so cruelly trampled under foot,—Poland in the fulness of time again stands forth to ask account of Russia for all the sufferings she has undergone, and for the blood of her murdered children. Where the great secret of "nationality" has been so long preserved, and in the teeth of such appalling dangers and difficulties, we may be sure that the sentiment of patriotism is no sickly shrub. No one has marked its growth, but it stands revealed at once a stately tree. Not the dew of Heaven, but the heart's blood of Poland's best and bravest sons has refreshed its leaves—the soil into which it has struck its roots so firmly has been fertilised with all that was mortal of the remains of three generations of unyielding men. It will not be withered up with the first chill blast from the north, nor yield readily to the blows of the Russian axe, no matter how strong may be the arms which poise the blow.

We must not, however, in such a case as this be carried away overmuch by feeling. Save in the case of foreign intervention—and this means French intervention—any attempt at a national insurrection would again be quenched in blood. The heart of Poland beats as firmly, and the arm of Poland is as strong as ever; but without arsenals, magazines, artillery, organised forces, and, above all, financial credit, what could the Poles hope to accomplish against the Russian regiments, even thinned as they have been by the events of the Crimean War? If, indeed, the serious complications, which many persons anticipate, were to take place in Hungary; if the Russians, by some consummate blunder, were to expose themselves to such a catastrophe as Europe has already witnessed some half century ago, there might come a moment when a great enterprise might be attempted which would, if successful, undo that work of the cruel Triumvirate, which is known as the Partition of Poland. Otherwise the favourable chances are small. As many of us as remember the fatal days of Warsaw, which followed upon the French Revolution of 1830, would be slow to indulge in expressions of sympathy which might raise hopes which we could not fulfil. We left Hungary to her fate, and Italy too, in 1849, notwithstanding that the great bulk of the British nation sympathised most heartily with the cause of the Italians and the Hungarians. Even more recently the moral support afforded by Great Britain to the Italian Revolution has been of most efficient aid; but we should not have gone to war for the sake of the Italian Peninsula, and Europe knows it! Were the Poles so ill advised as to rely upon British enthusiasm for more than a good subscription, they would find themselves grievously mistaken, and their last condition would be worse than their first. It was good news, as far as it went, which was published in London on Friday last, to the effect that the party in Poland which was for open insurrection, was but small. The Poles, generally, were convinced that any such

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movement which was not supported by foreign intervention, could not ultimately succeed. Prince Gortschakoff, who seems to have acted throughout with considerable moderation and forbearance, had appointed a delegation of twenty-four citizens of Warsaw, eight of whom were to sit at the Town Hall, alternately, for the purpose of maintaining the public tranquillity. True it is, that the telegram concluded with the following ominous words, "The garrison at Warsaw is being nightly increased by other troops." It is, however, better that it should be so, if nothing is to be expected from insurrection. Better is it that such a force should be concentrated on the spot, as should extinguish all hope, than that a movement should be taken in hand in which thousands would be compromised without any hope of a beneficial result.

In the Italian peninsula matters are in a far more promising condition than they were ten days ago. If we may trust at all to the signs of the times, the days of the Papacy—as a temporal power—are numbered. The Pope—or rather his advisers—will listen to no compromise, and there certainly does appear a probability that the French garrison may be withdrawn ere long. The French Chambers have declared their opinion strongly enough—and the efforts made in the other direction by the Ultramontane party have rather betrayed the weakness of the Pope's French adherents than aided his cause. The project for reviving and giving fresh force to the liberties of the Gallican Church is again freely discussed. The speech delivered the other day by the cousin of the French Emperor may not unreasonably be accepted in the main as the embodiment of Louis Napoleon's own views. We find the offer now made has dwindled down to the proportions of the city on the right bank of the Tiber. Even this proposal will soon be contracted to the dimensions of an offer of a house and garden, unless Cardinal Antonelli should make up his mind that the day for the rejection of compromise is past. Louis Napoleon is still obviously feeling his way. He has not yet quite made up his mind to set his Ultramontane Priesthood, and the ignorant peasants whom they lead, at defiance; but his progress is all in that direction. He might well take a leaf out of the book of the English Premier. To be sure, Lord Palmerston has not so large a stake upon the board as Louis Napoleon, but he is an old man—a very old man, and no doubt he wishes to die First Minister of England. Now, the stability of his ministry is most seriously compromised by the policy which he and his colleagues have pursued upon the Italian question. The Irish Roman Catholics have determined at all hazards to drive him from office on account of the support which he has afforded to the enemies of the Papacy. They are within an ace of success; for it was but a week ago that the present administration were beaten upon a division in a tolerably full House, and only escaped a second defeat upon the same night by giving up the point in dispute. Lord Palmerston does not suffer himself to be diverted one whit from his settled purpose by this formidable opposition. Whatever his personal ambition may be, he appears to see clearly enough that it is better for him to lose power as the great supporter of the cause of Italian independence, than to retain it as the partizan of the Papacy. The Italian question will ultimately cause the destruction of his administration; and yet by a strange anomaly it is the very reason why he is maintained in office for a time. Whilst the French garrison remains at Rome—whilst the future fortune of Italy still remains undecided—the country would not bear to see power transferred from his hands to those of any other statesman. As soon as it is settled, there is no reason why the ordinary laws of Parliamentary life in this country should not recover their force, and why a political party—so grievously divided against itself as is the Liberal party at the present moment—should not make way for its opponents. The Liberals can only recover strength in opposition. Lord John Russell has given up the question of Reform, and as soon as the affairs of Italy are settled, Lord Palmerston's administration will in all probability be dissolved. All depends, however, upon the turn events may take in Europe during the next few weeks. Should events pass off quietly, it seems probable enough that with the discussion upon the Budget we may see a change of administration. When they are once out of power, the Liberals in their turn will begin to look to the registration with greater assiduity. Grievances which seemed intolerable when the party was in power will be salved over in opposition. The Conservatives in their turn will make blunders, and in due course their rivals, refreshed by adversity, will return to power.

The Italian discussion of LAST WEEK in the English House of Commons was especially marked by the eloquent speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone has justly enough earned for himself the reputation of a brilliant orator, but he never speaks half as well as upon Italian affairs. Upon these his feelings are strangely interested,—he has travelled much in Italy,—he has long lived on terms of personal intimacy with the most eminent Italians of the age,—he has visited the dungeons in which the victims of the King of Naples suffered such long and such grievous torture—and when he is speaking of Italy he forgets all those tricks of oratory, and all those hair-splitting distinctions amidst which, upon other occasions, his mind seems to revel.

So many men were associated here—so many others were screwed up in miserable dungeons there, by the orders of the various Italian rulers, because they had expressed, or were suspected of liberal opinions. Mr. Gladstone seems to have the Newgate Calendar of Italy, for the last thirty years, in his mind, and when he once begins upon the subject his memory is inexhaustible. The discussion of Thursday night, in which the British Ultramontanes had taken so prominent a part was—as Mr. Samuel Pepys would have expressed—it, "mightily refreshed" by this plain and earnest speech of Mr. Gladstone. He swept away, with a few broad statements, all the assertions and quibbles of the speakers who had preceded him in the Debate, and rendered the position of those who were to follow him untenable.

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Mr. Gladstone very often brings embarrassment upon his colleagues, but by his Italian speech he has rendered them a service which may be reckoned as a set-off for many offences.

There is the demonstration at Warsaw—there is this matter of Italy, which may be taken as two of the chief events of LAST WEEK. If we cast about for a third, we have not far to seek. The turn which affairs are taking just now on the other side of the Atlantic is of as much importance, not only to the States—we must no longer speak of the United States—of North America, but to the inhabitants of these islands. Within the last few days we have received the manifesto of Mr. Jefferson Davis, who seems to be accepted as the President of the new Southern Confederation, and the counter declarations of Abraham Lincoln, the new President, as delivered at the various towns through which he passed on his way to Washington, to take his place in succession to Mr. Buchanan. Never did American Ruler have a thornier seat. In his declaration we do not find any suggestions of surrender. He will have nothing to do with invasion, or coercion; but he will only despatch forces to keep possession of the property of the Confederation—as forts, custom-houses, &c., situated in the Southern States. Like the quaker on board the frigate in action, he will not bear arms, but only take an enemy by the collar and hurl him into the sea, with the courteous remark, "Friend, what doest thou here?" Mr. Lincoln will only retain possession of the strong places in the seceding States, and cut them off from all the benefits of the united government until they come to terms—that is all. Of coercion he will not hear one word. Heaven forbid that anybody should ever make use of such a term in connection with Mr. President's policy towards the free and independent citizens of the confederated States. On the other hand, the manifesto of Mr. Jefferson Davis tells us not much directly; but from its terms we may infer that the Southern States are resolved to go on with the matter they have taken in hand. The manifesto has all the twang of those remarkable State Papers which were put forward by the leaders of the first French Revolution when they were bent upon doing an act of peculiar violence and atrocity. It is full of high-sounding phrases about political independence and pure morality. Ethics are freely discussed in it, but of slavery there is not a word. This is an omission of some importance. It must be confessed at the same time that the Northern States have chosen a most awkward moment for adding complications to their actual position by bringing forward a High Protection Tariff, which, if carried out according to its terms, would shut up the States against the European manufacturer and producer, as far as such a result can be accomplished by tariffs and fiscal regulations. No thought of the *per contra* appears to have entered into the minds of its framers. It would be superfluous here to discuss again the principles at issue in the two great questions of Negro Slavery and Commercial Protection—but it has been considered that the following figures may assist the reader's judgment in arriving at some conclusion with regard to the probable results of the present American difficulties. The tables have been very carefully collected, and revised by Mr. Wyld, of Charing Cross, in illustration of a little map of the United States which he has just published, and may be depended upon.

	Dollars.
Real and Personal Property in the Free States .	4,102,172,106
Ditto in the Slave States, including Slaves . .	2,936,061,731
Ditto in the Slave States, not including Slaves .	1,336,090,737

The Value of the Slaves is computed for the whole Slave Population at 500 dollars per head.

Persons holding	1 Slave	68,820
,,	2 to 9	105.683
,,	5 to 9	60,765
,,	10 to 19	54,595
,,	20 to 49	29,733
,,	50 to 99	6,196
,,	100 to 199	1,479
,,	200 to 299	187
,,	300 to 499	56
,,	500 to 999	9
,,	1000 and upwards. . .	2
The total number of Persons holding Slaves .		347,525

FREE STATES.

POPULATION.

States.	White.	Free Colored.	Total Populatn.	Militia.
California.	91,635	962	507,067	207.730
Connecticut.	363,099	7,693	370,792	51,605
Illinois............	846,034	5,436	1,806,576	257,4[illegible]0
Indiana.	977,154	11,262	983,416	53,913
Iowa...............	191,831	333	633,549	
Maine	581,813	1,356	583,169	73,552
Massachusetts	985,450	9,064	1,132,369	153,453
Michigan..........	395,071	2,583	511,672	97,094
Minnesota	150,000	42	150,04[illegible]	2.003
New Hampshire ..	317,456	520	317,976	33.538
New York	3,048,325	49,069	3,466,212	337. 35
New Jersey.	465,509	23,810	489.555	81,984
Ohio	1,955,050	25,279	2,368,0 0	176.455
Pennsylvania.	2,258,160	53,626	2,311,786	147,973
Rhode Island......	143,875	3,670	147,545	16,711
Vermont	313,402	718	314,120	23,915
Wisconsin	304,756	635	552,451	51,321

SLAVE STATES.

POPULATION.

States.	White.	Free Clord.	Slaves.	Total Poplatn.	Militia.
Alabama.	464,456	2,466	374,782	841,704	76,662
Arkansas	247,131	748	83,334	331,213	36,054
Delaware	71,169	18,073	2,290	91.532	9,229
Florida	60,493	804	49,526	110,823	12,122
Georgia	571,534	3,292	439,592	1,014,418	78,699
Kentucky	761,413	10,011	210,981	982,405	88,979
Louisiana	325,007	18,164	303,800	646,971	91,284
Maryland	417,943	74,723	90,368	583,034	46,864
Mississippi.	295,718	930	309,878	606,526	36,084
Missouri	592,004	2,618	87,422	682,044	118,047
North Carolina. ..	553,028	27,463	288,548	869,039	79,448
South Carolina. ..	274,563	8,960	384,984	668,507	36,072
Tennessee	756,836	6,4[illegible]2	239,459	1,005,717	71.252
Texas	154,034	397	58,161	212,592	19,766
Virginia..........	1,087,918	59,118	511,154	1,658,1[illegible]0	150,[illegible]00
Dist. of Columbia	51,687	10,059	3,687	65,433	8,201

The whole population of the 33 States, then, according to the above tables, is 27,112,000; the number of the slaves is 3,878,000; the population of the territories, including Kanzas, 384,856. Grand total, 31,374,856.

A careful consideration of the above figures will give a better idea of the relative strength of the parties to this great dispute than pages of comment. The Slave States are mainly for Free Trade—the Free States for Protection. It is difficult for an Englishman to have hearty sympathy with either side.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XLI.

ROBERT URQUHART raised his wife from the position whence her terror had left her powerless to arise, and he placed her in the single chair in the apartment. Adair, recovering from the rude shock he had received, came up to his assailant, and with much composure, said:

"There had better be no mistake between us, Mr. Urquhart."

"There will be none, sir, rely on that," replied the Scot, turning sternly upon him. "Who are you?"

"My name is Ernest Adair, I am an Englishman, and I am a prisoner at the moment, on the charge of having wounded a ruffian who assaulted me during a gambling quarrel."

"Creditable company for a lady."

"When you know the lady's errand here, you will be glad to have abstained from harsh language."

"The sooner I hear it the better, my man," said Urquhart, who spoke calmly enough, but whose lip and nostril gave sign which even a braver man than Adair might have noted with apprehension.

"What is going to be said?" sobbed Bertha, wringing her hands in the extremity of her dismay.

"Very little, Bertha," replied her husband. "But I believe it will be to the purpose."

"It will, indeed, Mr. Urquhart," said Adair. "But it is more fit that I should say it, than Mrs. Urquhart. You found this lady earnestly entreating a favour of me. Do you desire to hear what that favour was?"

"I desire it so much," said the husband, "that

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if I do not learn it in your next words I will shake the answer out of you, or the life out of your body. Is that plain speaking, my man?"

"Useless violence, because I am as ready to tell as you are to hear. But will you request Mrs. Urquhart to withdraw?"

"No, sir," replied Urquhart in a fierce voice. "I have to judge her conduct, and I choose to have her presence."

"Then the fault is not mine if her feelings are wounded by what I must say to you."

"Hold your d—d tongue about feelings, and speak the truth at once," thundered Urquhart, "or it will be the worse for you."

"Your violence is cowardly, Mr. Urquhart," said Adair, with spirit. "Your personal strength is double my own, and I am unarmed, and if you choose to be brutal, strike. Else, hear me."

And he folded his arms, and calmly confronted his gigantic companion.

"What hinders me to hear you," returned Urquhart, "but yourself." The display of courage in the undeniable presence of extreme peril produced its invariable effect upon a brave nature, and his tone, though stern, was somewhat less menacing. "Go on, sir."

"Mrs. Urquhart is here to entreat that I, who hold in my hands the means of exposing an unworthy person, will refrain from doing so."

"And who is the unworthy person who has the good fortune to enlist the sympathies of my wife? Silence, sir. I ask that question of *her*."

"When you hear," said Adair, promptly, "you will be glad not to have forced the name from her lips. The name is that of her sister."

Robert Urquhart looked at his wife, who was swaying herself, after her custom in distress, backwards and forwards in her chair, and he saw by her piteous tremor, that he was hearing the truth.

An oath escaped him, and he strode to the window, where he stood for a few moments in silence. If Bertha tried to steal a glance at the face of Adair, it was unnoticed, for he stood with folded arms, and with his look immoveably fixed on the wall.

"I guessed that there was some shameful story to tell," said Robert Urquhart, turning round to them, "but I did not guess that my own wife would dare to mix herself in sin and shame. But that she and I will speak of elsewhere. What is this secret, sir?"

"To reveal it to you, Mr. Urquhart, is to refuse the petition which you heard Mrs. Urquhart making to me."

"Petition," repeated Urquhart, furiously. "My wife stooping to petition anything from any man, and above all, petitioning that he will screen a worthless woman. It is my demand, sir, and it is hers," he added, in a tone of authority, "that I hear the truth on this instant. Are you the—the lover of the woman who is to be screened?"

"If I were, Mr. Urquhart, and my life or death were in your hands, you would hear no word from me."

"That swagger means that you are not. Who is?"

"It suits me to tell you in my own way, and in no other. It may occur to you on reflection that a man who has no fear may choose his own course. In my turn I demand that Mrs. Urquhart withdraw."

He seated himself on the bed, and was so clearly resolved to be silent unless his demand were complied with, that Urquhart—after giving one savage thought to the expediency of violence—was not sorry that Bertha spoke.

"Yes—let me go, Robert—and come home to me directly, or I shall die."

She looked so white, and so helpless, and so sad, that Urquhart could not but compassionate her.

"Wait for me in the walk below," he said. "I do not know that we shall meet at home again. If you are not waiting for me, we never shall."

Bertha trembled from the room, and then Urquhart, advancing to Adair, said,

"Now, sir, his name."

"His name is on a tombstone, Mr. Urquhart."

"Do you mean that he is dead, man?"

"He is dead."

"And is it his death that brought her over to France?"

"In part. But she had other objects which I cannot explain, but which those who are interested in the matter may discover for themselves. My share in it will be a small one, but I owe a duty to the dead, and I intend to discharge it, in spite of Mrs. Urquhart's tears, and notwithstanding your menaces."

"You know this dead scoundrel, then?"

"He was no scoundrel, and he was my friend. Use your own common sense as to the policy of such language when you wish for information."

"Well, sir, what more? I suppose you have proofs of what you say?"

"You would have asked for them long since, if you had not been prepared to believe what I have to say. We may speak freely, Mr. Urquhart. I am, unhappily, well acquainted with many circumstances which you suppose to be unknown out of your family, and I am aware that you have reason to wish that Mrs. Arthur Lygon were not one of you."

"How do you know this?" said Urquhart, darkly.

"Do not suppose for a moment that I have information from Mrs. Urquhart—if that thought is in your mind, dispel it. I have perfect knowledge, from other sources, of all that takes place under your roof, and many a roof beside. I tell you this frankly."

"You are a spy?"

"If not, I have the means of commanding the services of persons of that class. If you doubt me, I will tell you of something which you have never told to any one, and which certainly Mrs. Urquhart could neither learn, nor comprehend if told to her."

And he mentioned to Urquhart that the latter had, before returning from Paris, visited an obscure mechanic in a suburb, and gone though some experiments with him, for the purpose of testing the comparative power of resistance possessed by certain different kinds of manufactured iron.

"That shows how well the rascal work is done,"

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said Urquhart, contemptuously, "and I am quite ready to believe that you are what you say. Now, what are your proofs against this unhappy woman?"

"What use do you intend to make of them?"

"That is my affair."

"True; but it is mine to know what you will do."

"Suppose I say that there is but one use to which an honourable man can put the knowledge that his friend is wronged. Can you understand that?"

"Again I counsel you, Mr. Urquhart, to abstain from insult. Do I rightly interpret you to mean that you will apprise Mr. Lygon of what you may learn?"

"If the proofs hold, man, what else, in the devil's name, do you suppose I should do?"

"Suppress them, for the sake of Mrs. Urquhart, and bribe me to silence."

"Is that what you are going to propose to me?" said Urquhart, looking at him with an evil eye.

"No; that is not my plan. I will not be silenced on any terms that you can offer; but it is natural to suppose that you might wish to avoid a painful exposure."

"Whether it is natural or not, sir, I am not going to debate with you. But if you have any fears that make you keep back your evidence, you may take my word for this, that if I cannot resist the proof, it shall be before Mr. Lygon in twenty-four hours thereafter."

"That is as much as concerns me. I care for none of you all; but I have a duty to do, and I am in Versailles to do it. You have been wondering, I doubt not—nay, I know it—why Mrs. Lygon has been here. She has probably deceived you with an admirably-told story, for she is one of the cleverest women in the world; it is no news to you, and I need not apologise for saying that Mrs. Urquhart is a child in her hands. But you will discover the real reason for her presence when you have read some documents which are in my possession."

"Give them to me."

"Unfortunately they are not here. I was betrayed into a blunder last night, and in spite of my influence, whatever that may be, with certain quarters, I was brought here, and, until discharged, I can do nothing.

"That seems a shuffle. You can say where the documents are, if you please to do so."

"I do not please to do so. It is my pleasure to be discharged."

"What have I to do with that? What did you say you had done?"

"I told you that I was gambling, and my antagonist assaulted me, on which I struck him in the arm with a dagger. I had, it is true, taken too much brandy."

"I suppose your spy-friends can get you out by a word to the police?"

"I do not choose to employ them. But if I am not released through your agency, and have to release myself in my own way, I shall disappear without further troubling myself in your affairs, and leave you to extract the truth from my hints to Mrs. Urquhart, and the confessions of Mrs. Lygon."

"I will not have Mrs. Urquhart's name dragged into question," said Urquhart, "and I will see your proofs. Else you might lie here till doomsday, my man, for me."

"I am well aware of that," said Adair, "nor do I complain. I have no claim on you or Mrs. Urquhart."

"I will send a lawyer to you. I suppose he will know what to do."

"Send the lawyer who managed the affair for you when you were cheated in a horse, and threw the seller into the pond behind M. Daubiac's stables."

"Five years ago," said Urquhart.

"Nothing is overlooked—nothing forgotten," replied Adair, in answer to his tone rather than his words.

"You will come to my house, on being let out of this place," said Urquhart, "and bring these papers. I have only your word for that."

"Which you don't value."

"Not a jot, and that's truth."

"I will be more just to you, sir. I will take your word for something which, unless you promise, I will not produce a single line."

"What am I to promise?"

"That the papers I place in your hands you will read, and then immediately return them to me."

"I will not give the promise. I may desire to send them to Mr. Lygon."

"Mr. Lygon will not need them. Mr. Lygon will be in no state to read papers. Let him receive the assurance that his brother-in-law and counsellor has examined them, and he will ask no more. Be this as it may, I must have them returned."

"Why?"

"When they have done their work, I have sworn to burn them on the tomb of him who is gone."

"What accursed play-book folly is that?" said Urquhart, with contempt.

"What? The keeping an oath?"

"You are no doubt exactly the man to indulge in fits of sentimentality," said the Scot. "And you have never broken an oath?"

"I may have broken oaths, and induced others to break them," said Ernest Adair, calmly; "but I intend to keep this oath. Give me your word."

"I have no choice, I suppose?"

"None, as might have occurred to you before."

"You have my word," said Urquhart. "I will send the lawyer."

"Bertha," said her husband, when he joined her in the walk below, "listen to me, and do not make any answer. In yon room there lies one of the greatest scoundrels that God ever permitted to draw breath. I saw at the first glance that he was so, and that he was a man I am called on to hate, and some day, I hope, to punish. But he states that he holds proofs which I must see before I sleep. He is coming to my house with them as soon as he is set at liberty. At present my house is yours, and all that is in it. You know best

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whether there is anything which he can say to me, or show me, that should make us two. Do not tremble in that way, wife; I am making no charge, I am speaking in all kindness. I shall not return home for an hour. If I find you there, I shall know in one second—it will be a glad one, Bertha—that you were blameless of all knowledge of Laura's sin until you learned it from this man. If this were so, Bertha,—but say that it was so, wife, whom I have loved so well, so dearly,—say that you knew nothing of Laura's sin."

And the strong man's voice grew thick, and his stalwart form trembled beside that fragile woman.

"As I shall be judged at the last, Robert, and as I hope for mercy," said Bertha, in a low voice, but with unusual firmness, "I never knew that Laura had sinned, nor, Robert, do I know it now."

"God bless you, child!" said Urquhart, suppressing his emotion. "There, go to your home, and wait for me. I fear we have sad work to do. Go home, dear woman."

And his eyes rested lovingly on her figure, as, after touching his hand as if thanking him for his kind words, she went homewards.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE mode in which the lawyer, employed by Robert Urquhart, achieved the liberation of Ernest Adair, does not connect itself with our narrative, and it is only necessary to say that in the course of the day Adair was set at liberty.

The condition of mind in which Bertha returned to the house of her husband, and still, as he had said, her own, was indeed pitiable.

What had passed in her presence in the prison apartment had, of course, conveyed to her the conviction that Ernest intended to save her at the expense of her sister, and it was in Bertha's weak nature to derive comfort and re-assurance from the idea of her present safety. But independently of her agitation at the prospect of any inquiry into past histories, and without taking into consideration what her feeble and half-hearted affection for her sister might cause her to feel, when informed that the latter was to be formally accused, Bertha had an undefined dread of some act of new treachery or cruelty on the part of Adair, and a terror lest the stern eye of her husband might detect in any tale that Ernest might frame, the vitiating flaw that would ruin the whole. Then the knowledge, derived from Henderson, that Laura had not left Versailles, was a new element of fear, for if Laura should claim to be confronted with Adair, the scene would end very differently from that in which Mrs. Lygon submitted to the insult of Urquhart, and departed silently from the room where she had been wronged. And if any thoughts of a deeper and nobler kind came to the mind of the feeble Bertha in her hour of trial,—if womanly pride, or womanly love had voices that made themselves heard amid the vulgar strife of shallow hopes and fears, those voices were soon stilled in the presence of the immediate danger.

It was no ordinary consolation to her when, a couple of hours after parting from her husband, Bertha received from the hand of Angelique an envelope in which were written, in the well-known hand of Adair, the words—

"*Be quite calm, and fear nothing.*"

"If Laura had only gone home," thought Bertha, "it would not so much matter, for I am certain that Arthur will never forgive her for what she has done already, so that, let him think what he may, things would not be a great deal worse. And why did she come at all?"

It was in this state of feeling—if feeling it may be called—that Bertha Urquhart prepared herself for the dreaded interview.

M. Ernest Adair was announced to Robert Urquhart, who was in the drawing-room with his wife. Up to the time of Adair's arrival Urquhart had scarcely exchanged twenty words with her, but his manner, though sad, was kind. He also paid her several of those small attentions which are habitual with some husbands, and which others as habitually neglect. Urquhart himself was somewhat careless in such matters, and this, of course, made Bertha notice the circumstance, although she misconstrued it, and supposed that Robert desired to atone to her for having been harsh in the earlier part of the day. "There was no such stuff in his thoughts."

Adair entered, bowed gravely to Bertha, something less ceremoniously to her husband, and said:

"I have to thank you, Mr. Urquhart, for the assistance which you have been good enough to afford me. I have offered my thanks to your legal adviser, who has enabled me to keep my appointment with you."

"You have come prepared to substantiate what you stated this morning?" asked Urquhart.

"I stated nothing—I mean nothing for substantiation," replied Adair. "I spoke very guardedly, but your own inferences went in the right direction, and those it is my painful duty to support by proofs."

"Give them to me."

"I need not recal your engagement?"

"I will return them when I have satisfied myself."

"Then, before producing them, I will say a few words, and very few. The position in which I am placing myself would be under ordinary circumstances a humiliating one."

"Most humiliating," said Urquhart, bluntly. "A woman may be evil, but I do not envy the man who hunts her down."

"Pardon me if I reply that here we are upon even terms, Mr. Urquhart, as I understood from you that this was the very course you proposed to take."

"I am not inclined to bandy words with you, sir. In my case, however, the friend whom I value most in this world has either been deeply injured, or you are—what I need not say. It is my business to know which is the truth."

"The friend whom I did value most in this world *was* deeply injured, Mr. Urquhart, and there is no alternative in my case."

"Do not let us talk," said the Scot. "The proofs you promised."

"These proofs, Mr. Urquhart, consist of a series of letters addressed by a lady to her lover. They were placed in my charge for the purpose with

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which I am about to use them now, but the mode of my doing so and the time, were left to my own discretion. The time has now arrived, and the mode I now adopt is to lay the letters before the truest and best friend of that lady's husband. If that friend, in perusing them, finds evidence that the husband possesses an unworthy wife, he will take whatever course he pleases. My duty will have been discharged when I have afforded this opportunity."

Bertha sat to hear this speech, and maintained a dead silence, but some little action of her hand afforded Adair an excuse to add,

"It was not my wish that Mrs. Urquhart should undergo the pain of being present while Mr. Urquhart peruses these documents. I perceive that she was on the point of again appealing to me on the subject, but, I say it with all feeling for her, such an appeal would be in vain, even in the absence of the legitimate demand of her husband to know her justification for being found with me this morning."

"I think it very—very wicked," stammered Bertha.

"I have said that I will have these proofs," Urquhart replied. "It is right, however, that you should be free to retire, Bertha, if you please."

"It is also right," said Adair, "that Mrs. Urquhart should be within reach, should it be wished to ask her a question."

"I—I will go into the next room," said Bertha, hurrying away, as she might have done from the scene of some painful operation, or to be out of hearing of the cries of a child that was to undergo punishment.

Ernest Adair then produced a book, into which a series of letters had been fastened, the original printed pages having been cut away to make room for the manuscripts. He handed the book to Robert Urquhart, who received it with an instinctive disgust, that was not entirely latent in the eye he cast upon Adair.

Urquhart took the volume, and laying it on a table, applied himself steadily to a perusal of the contents.

Adair watched him intensely, and with feelings in which excitement mingled far more powerfully than the circumstances, as hitherto related, would seem to warrant. Once or twice the pale face of Adair became even paler, and there were convulsive movements of his hands.

And once, when Bertha, childishly impatient of the long delay, rose from her seat in the further room, and ventured to glance in at the two men who had been so long silent, Adair's look became perfectly fiendish. He ground his teeth, and the fierce expression that came over his face told that he utterly — actively hated Bertha Urquhart for presenting herself—that is, the recollection of herself—at that moment.

But when Urquhart looked up, Adair was engaged with a book.

Once—twice—in the course of the reading, a groan, that as nearly resembled an execration as an inarticulate sound could do, broke from Robert Urquhart.

Suddenly he sprang up, and called loudly—

"Bertha! Bertha!"

Mrs. Urquhart came in, and was beckoned to her husband's side.

"There can be no earthly doubt," he said, in a low voice, which sent an intense thrill through her.

She was safe.

"Look at that writing—and that—and that. Whose letters are they, Bertha?"

"There is no need to ask," said Bertha, as the lines burned into her very brain. Here and there a word of affection—of love—of passion branded itself more deeply than the rest that went past her eyes as he turned over the leaves.

"There *is* no need to ask," he repeated, placing his arm kindly around her shuddering and shivering form. "Be calm, dear, be calm. *You* have nothing to reproach yourself with. Be calm."

And Ernest Adair gazed upon that husband and wife.

"You have proved your words, sir," said Robert Urquhart, after a long pause.

"I see that I have done so. I read it in the face of an honest man, of an honourable woman. I have done my duty to him who is gone."

"Let me hear no more of that," said Urquhart, sternly. "If it be indeed true that the miscreant to whom these letters are addressed is dead, he is gone where no earthly curse can increase his punishment. If he is alive, I hope that he may live a curse to himself, and die by his own hands, for those of justice are too good for him. Silence on that subject! Take back your volume, and the best thing that I can say at parting is that I hope neither I nor mine will ever meet with you again."

"I forgive all wild language at such a moment, Mr. Urquhart. It is a terrible thing to find that one's family is stained."

"Who are you to talk of stains?" replied Urquhart, fiercely. "A spy who would crawl into the bosom of a household, and win the confidence of all in it, from the mother by the fire to the child playing on the carpet, and would sell the trust they placed in you—would sell the woman's kindly talk, the child's prattle, to the ruffians who hire you. A spy talk of stains! Begone, sir, I have done with you."

"You are violent," said Ernest Adair, with a sinister smile, "but we will not quarrel over words. I fear that the expression to Mrs. Urquhart of my profoundest regret at having been compelled to inflict such suffering would not be acceptable."

"I answer for my wife, sir, that she desires to hear no other word from you."

"I believe it, sir," said Adair, in a tone which struck upon the heart of Bertha. "At present, at all events, I will end an interview which is so fraught with sorrow."

He bowed respectfully, and was gone.

"Sad—sad—Bertha," said Urquhart, sorrowfully. "I clung to the hope that she might have been only foolish, weak, deluded; but the words are there, and the words are guilt."

Bertha sobbed, but spoke not.

"I gave my promise to return him the letters, and I have done so, and kept my word," said he.

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"But I doubt it would be wiser to follow him, and take them back; and if I wrung his neck in the process the work would be better done."

"No, no, no," said Bertha, clinging to his arm. "He might stab you, as he did the man yesterday, Robert, and what would become of me then?"

"Do not cry so bitterly, wife. The sorrow is great, but we must bear it. And if anything happened to me, she would be so lonely and sad, eh?"

"Why, whom have I in the world but you, dearest?"

"Aye. Well, we must try and be more to one another than we have been of late. If the sorrow draws us nearer together, it will not be so grievous. But that poor dear Arthur. I must write to him to-night, Bertha."

"Not to-night, Robert."

"Not at once?"

"No. I am sure that you are too much agitated to write the letter that should be written, and you always say that you wish to sleep over anything of importance."

"Aye, but this is not a thing to sleep over. She may have joined him, have told her own story, been taken back to his honest arms, have had his children on her knee."

"And if that were so, Robert, would it be for you to tear her from his arms again?"

"I would prevent her getting back to him."

"But if she should have got back?"

"Bertha, you do not mean that you would have me possess this secret and keep it from him. You cannot for one moment entertain such a thought, or presume to utter it."

"Do not be angry."

"Angry. If I could think you serious, I would never be angry with you again. I do not see that we could ever have another thought in common."

"Please do not make me cry any more. You know that I would sooner die than advise you to do anything against your honour. I only meant that if you thought, after considering everything over in your own wise, deep manner—you know I can never think in that way, and you ought never to be angry at my seeing only bits and pieces of things—"

"No, Bertha, I *know* you are incapable of unworthiness. Well, tell me what you thought."

"Those letters — now please bear with me—those letters must have been written a long time ago, and since then there may have been repentance, and sorrow—real earnest repentance; and we know that since then has come marriage, and perhaps a better sense of what is good and right."

"Grant all—and go on."

"Well, the knowledge of the—the man came to you by an accident, and you certainly forced the secret out. I only want you to consider whether you are bound to act on knowledge that came in such a way."

"I am still unable to understand you, Bertha. But while we are upon the subject, tell me how you learned that this Adair was in the prison-place."

"He sent to tell me," said Bertha, not knowing what other answer to make at the spur of the moment.

"He sent to tell you! Who was his messenger?"

"I do not know the man's name, but he is a perfumer."

"Do you mean the man who comes after Henderson?"

"Yes."

"But you did not see him at that time in the morning?"

"He sent the message through Henderson," said Bertha, uneasily.

Robert Urquhart rang violently, and Angelique entered.

"Send Henderson here directly."

"Oui, Monsieur."

"What are you going to say to the poor girl?" said Bertha, whose terrors were all aroused again, and who especially remembered Henderson's excitability on the subject of her lover.

The lady's-maid entered. It would be too much to say that she had not been prepared for a scene, for she had seen Ernest Adair enter the house, and knew that he had been for a long time with her employers, to whom such visit boded no good. But she was surprised, on coming in, to see Mr. and Mrs. Urquhart standing near together, and apparently on no hostile terms, and she was still more surprised at the greeting she received from her master.

"Henderson, I never judge anybody without giving him or her the chance of making answer. Did any Frenchman give you a message this morning, to be delivered to your mistress?"

"Yes, sir," said Henderson, perceiving at a glance that her mistress had spoken the truth, and therefore that it was useless for her attendant to tell a lie.

"Who was it?"

"M. Silvain, sir."

"That person wants to marry you, does he not? Don't look impertinent, but answer the question."

"I hope there is no harm in a poor girl listening to an honest man, sir."

"This Silvain wishes to marry you? I ask once more," said Urquhart, in a voice that made Henderson tremble.

"Yes, sir, he does," she said.

"Then you had better tell him that the sooner he takes you away and does it, the better; and that if he has not made up his mind to take you into his own house, he will find you a lodging somewhere else, for you don't sleep another night in mine."

"Sir?" said Henderson, doubtful of her ears.

"And you may tell him, at the same time, that if ever he brings a message from another gaol-bird to any member of my family, I will kick him up and down the avenue like a foot-ball, and then hand him to the police. Explain that to the fellow in your best French, and now go and pack your boxes."

"Might I speak to you, Madame?" Henderson contrived to say through her anger. "I think it would be best if I were to speak to you, Madame,

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as gentlemen do not understand everything. Perhaps by and by might be more convenient, Madame?"

And Henderson withdrew.

"She is not a good girl, Bertha," said Urquhart, "and I never understood your liking her. Pay her all she asks, however, as you have rather spoiled her, and we must not be over-hard upon faults that we have helped to create."

(To be continued.)

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

COURTIER-PHILOSOPHERS.

BACON: LEIBNITZ: VOLTAIRE: GÖTHE: HUMBOLDT.

Some new interest has of late years gathered about the old topic of the companionship between political and intellectual sovereignty—the friendship between princes and philosophers. Old as the topic is, it is always practically fresh, because there are always persons who are dissatisfied if recognition from the Fountain of Honour (the Sovereign), or from the Government, is not afforded to the great philosophical and literary personages of the day; while yet there is a prevalent impression in society that there is no real relation between the honour which can be bestowed by princes or parliaments and that which cannot be withheld by mankind at large. While there is any fluctuation in the mind of society about this matter, it must be useful to study a few examples of that complete success which is assumed to lie in the union of the two kinds of honour on the head of the wise man. Nothing is gained by showing forth the troubles of intellectual men from misfortunes which might not have happened if they had had access to the Court. It must remain wholly uncertain whether they would have been, on the whole, greater or happier if they had had a monarch for a friend and a court for a home: but we may get pretty near the truth if we take up the positive, instead of the negative case, and see how some of the princes of the intellectual world have fared in the presence of the other order of princes.

As we want to reach something like a practical result, we must not travel back for examples to times so wholly unlike our own as that princes were a sort of gods, and intellectual men a sort of prophets or magicians on the one hand, or of household dependents on the other. We must keep within the term of the present organisation of society, or our aim will be diverted from moral to antiquarian purposes. We are accustomed to regard modern society as dating from about three hundred years ago: and just at that time we light on an example of the first order. The Prince of the powers of the Intellect was then about to appear. It is just three hundred years since Francis Bacon was born. He was closely connected with two Sovereigns. What was the result?

While he was in his teens, his imagination was deeply engaged in both regions of greatness. He had sketched out the scheme of his *Novum Organon*, which he meant to call "The Noblest Birth of Time;" and he had won the favour of Queen Elizabeth by the discretion and grace with which he discharged a commission from the English ambassador at Paris to her Majesty. By family and official connection he was naturally trained to look to the Court and its favour for whatever he wanted; and this not only explains much of his despair when he was for a time, late in life, banished the Court, but accounts for the large share the Court occupied in his early plan of life. His most earnest desire in the world was to produce his great philosophical work, and lodge it securely in the human mind; and for the sake of this object he was ambitious of every advantage of character and position which he could obtain. It is probable that he let his aim be seen at that early time when the Queen took up her impression of him; for the ground on which his unfriendly cousins, the Cecils, prejudiced the Queen against him was that of his philosophy. He was a speculative man, they told her; and, as the Queen supposed a speculative man could not be fit for any practical business, she set him aside as an unprofitable servant for a Sovereign so occupied with serious affairs as she was. The reversion of a place which yielded him nothing for twenty years was all he obtained from her, though interest was made to the utmost extent which she would admit. Under these circumstances there is something offensive to our notions of manly dignity and English spirit in the tone of whatever Bacon wrote about the Queen—in the "Declaration of the true Causes of the great Troubles," &c., and yet more in the "Discourse in Praise of his Sovereign," a piece of adulation which cannot be read without disgust in our day: but it must be remembered that it was a part of a courtier's breeding in those days to exalt the monarch in that way; that such compositions were regarded as a sort of poems, works of imagination, set forth with the arts of fancy; that the reign and character of Elizabeth were worthy of an enthusiastic style of record, from their grave importance to the whole civilised world,—for which reason it was, probably, that Bacon desired that this eulogium should be published after his death, when the Queen had long been gone; and, above all, we must remember that Bacon risked the Queen's displeasure, repeatedly and unflinchingly, in the interest of his friend and benefactor, Lord Essex. Thus far we may be satisfied that Bacon had got no more harm morally than he had got good to his fortunes at Court. We should have had more pleasure in thinking of him as pursuing his studies in college or in a country home, or in the learned privacy which may be obtained in London; but the facts of the case were that Bacon was a lawyer, and so poor that he was at least twice arrested for debt. His great work was ever before his mind; but he had his bread to get, in the first place; and he had no hope of his book obtaining due attention, unless he could command that attention for it by his personal influence.

From the beginning of the next reign, we find him often in the royal presence as the spokesman of parliament. He had so skilful a way of placing the grievances and wants of the people before the King without offence that he was regularly deputed to the office; and it afforded a training in fine talk which it is rather disagreeable to think of in connection with such a man: but it was more as a member of parliament than as a

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courtier that the office was imposed upon him. His professional and parliamentary life at the same time showed how strong was in him the desire of men's good opinion. After all allowance is made, I think it is clear that Bacon's love of approbation was excessive; and if so, when once a courtier, he would be more at the mercy of the royal notions and moods than a wise man should be. As a general rule the praisers of other men are vain men: they unconsciously seek a *quid pro quo;* and even in an age when adulation of Sovereigns was a custom which no one dreamed of breaking through, and when the most laborious flatterer was considered the most accomplished man, a man, philosopher or other, who could stake so much as Bacon did on the favour of the King must have been weak in the quality of self-respect.

The real shock to the reader of our time is in the correspondence with the King about the new book; and in Bacon's despair under the royal displeasure. The patronising tone of the pedant to the philosopher, and the intimation that the one had as little spare time to read the book as the other to write it, and the promise to commend where commendation was deserved, and the grand condescension at the last of informing the author that the King had had some of the very same ideas as himself, would be comic if we did not remember who it was that felt, or pretended to feel, delighted at this kind and degree of royal favour. We ask ourselves what concern kings, as kings, could have with such a book, and how it could matter to anybody what they thought of it. Some men, more likely to be able to judge of a work on the principles of philosophy than any Sovereign (because Sovereigns have another track to pursue), called the book a very fair production for a Lord Chancellor—showy rather than deep; but a few, a very few, saw something of its import and its scope: and among those few was one who said, "My conceit of his person was never increased towards him by his place or honours; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper in himself, and in that he seemed to me ever by his work one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages." While the King patted the philosopher on the back, and told him he had been making good use of his time, and that their ideas jumped, Ben Jonson looked up to him with a reverence as manly as it was profound.

Late researches, and a thorough good use of the materials so turned up, have materially changed for the better the aspect of Bacon's character and conduct. The grossest charges of treachery and venality are questioned, and the perplexity of reconciling so much philosophy with so much vice may disappear: but there is quite enough left that is painful in the records of Bacon's abject self-abasement before the King, and the King's servants, and in his ecstacy of gratitude when his punishment was remitted. The passage in his Memorial, applying certain clauses in the Litany to his relations with the King, is too like profaneness to suit our time: but, towards the close, there is a little paragraph which betokens a more healthy state of feeling. He had been urging the King to employ him again; but he was now evidently aware that there was such a thing as life outside "the light of his countenance," as he called the King's favour. "I am like ground fresh," he says. "If I be left to myself, I will grow and bear natural philosophy: but if the King will plough me up again, and sow me on, I hope to give him some yield."

At last, he found how little the Court was necessary to him in any way. During his years of wealth and official power, he had been the slave of the great above him, and of the mean below him. His servants had preyed upon his substance and his good name. When they rose on his entrance, after his disgrace, he said, "Sit down, my masters; your rise has been my fall!" Once free, he lifted up his head, and found himself with the universe spread about him, and himself at liberty to study it. That study was so reviving, so consoling, so thoroughly congenial to his whole nature, that it is impossible to help regretting that he had not been born and reared far from courtly regions, and under no enticement to seek anything for himself but access to the foundations of philosophy. What might he not have been, and done, if he had never seen the face of Queen or King, except on occasions of royal visits to the University! He found peace at last, however, and learned in his last years how little the philosopher had to do with the favour of kings. There is, in his latest letters and papers, a tone of philosophical cheerfulness very consoling to posterity.

Twenty years after his death, Leibnitz was born. He, too, sought the favour of princes: and there was less excuse for him, from the circumstances of his birth and rearing. He also sacrificed philosophy to courtly objects, to an extent never chargeable against Bacon. Bacon had his profession to occupy him, and the statesmanship to which his profession led. Leibnitz was always the student; and philosophical pursuits should have constituted the business and the pleasure of his life. Unhappily his fancy, which was vivid and excitable, was early turned in the direction in which he found more fret and worry than ease and honour. We like to dwell on the image of the student lad of eighteen, passing the long summer day, from sunrise till dark, in a wood, trying to reconcile the systems of Aristotle and Plato; and we as thoroughly dislike the image of the same student, in the vigour of his years and faculties, spending his precious days in making out genealogies for royal patrons, and drawing out a claim for the crown of Poland in the form of a mathematical demonstration. If, as he says, he had seen the first six books of Euclid reduced into formal syllogisms, by two foolish logicians, he, in his turn, shows us the spectacle of a political question crushed into a mathematical form, and a historical inquiry drowned in a study of chaos, by a philosopher fitted into a wrong place. His singular activity and industry caused him to render great services to the interests of Thought; but his powers were for the most part wasted on work which any diligent man could have done as well.

Leibnitz was the son of a professor of jurisprudence at Leipsic; but his father died when the boy was only six years old. At school, and at college, his mind was intensely active; and he

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did the work of his comrades as well as his own. He says, that, at the age of fourteen, he wrote three hundred Latin verses in one day. Before he was twenty he had, as people said then, gone "through mathematics and metaphysics," and was trying, as we saw him in the wood, to make a system out of the systems of other men. It is evident to us now, looking at his life and works, that he was of an imaginative and impressionable cast of character, full of beautiful ideas and happy suggestions, but unable to distinguish between convictions of the understanding and perceptions of the imagination. He had the large credulity which attends the mathematical faculties, and the endless resources for evading the realities of life which are at the command of the metaphysician. What we learn of his person and ways confirms this view. He was extremely shortsighted, and his large head, made heavier by a great excrescence at the top, fell forward as he walked, so that he saw little of external objects. When absorbed in any study, he would scarcely leave his chair for weeks, even to go to bed; yet he was genial, frank, and sympathetic in intercourse, and highly impressionable. It really seems as if those with whom he associated could turn him into any path of pursuit, by engaging his imagination and sympathy in it, though his speculative tendencies sooner or later brought his subject round into his own original track. By some means or other he became early and deeply impressed with the notion that the most fortunate position for a philosopher was in the sunshine and shelter of court favour; and, if he had an immoveable prejudice throughout life, it was this. He suffered under the imputation of avarice; but it is not necessary to suppose him fond of money because his money accumulated when he had no way of spending it. His eagerness about appointments near princes seems to have arisen from his notion that such a mode of life afforded ease, honour, and leisure. This last benefit is precisely what the courtier-philosopher has to give up as hopeless. The ease and honour are questionable enough; the leisure is out of the question, as Leibnitz found.

When he was twenty-one, he became acquainted with the Chancellor of the Elector of Mayence, who recommended him to qualify himself for a post at the Elector's court. He was scarcely settled there when he was hard at work at his scientific and elaborate demonstration that the Prince of Neuburg ought to be elected to the crown of Poland. The Prince was not chosen; but this new method of electioneering caused much sensation, as it might well do; and it fixed the author in place and favour. Next, at the minister's solicitation, he wrote a treatise on behalf of orthodoxy, to show that rigid logic was not at variance with the doctrine of the Trinity.

Two or three years after, he obtained leave to travel, and spent a considerable time among the great men of the scientific world in Paris, and then in England, where he received news of the death of his patron, the Elector of Mayence. His friend, the minister, had died while he was at Paris. In pursuance of his constant view of what a philosopher should aim at, he wrote to the Duke of Brunswick about being adrift, and received the hoped-for invitation to be a councillor at the Duke's court, with a pension, and liberty to travel. Leibnitz was now full of unconcealable happiness; and the first use he made of his patron's liberality was to live in Paris for fifteen months. As soon as he repaired to his court, he was employed on political matters again; and he devoted his fine faculties to pleading for the Princes of Germany, on certain points of controversy, without losing the favour of Austria. The Duke of Brunswick died in 1679, by which time Leibnitz was three-and-thirty. The new ruler engaged him to write the History of the House of Brunswick! He spent three years in travelling to gather materials, and more in arranging them; and when the result appeared, it was found to be a valuable collection of well-arranged documents, which any industrious man of intelligence could have prepared; with a preface, which it required a speculative mind to write,—going back as it did to the first principles of natural law and the law of nations. As for the History of the House of Brunswick, it was to come in time. It involved, among other collateral tasks, that of a research into the connection of the House of Brunswick with that of Este; and this piece of genealogical handiwork obtained for the philosopher a sinecure post, which would enable him to devote himself exclusively to the history. He spent precious years in collecting all the notices of the Ducal House that had ever been printed, and issued some of them in separate volumes: but as to the History,—how did it repay the sacrifice of such a portion of such a man's life? It was never written;—and no wonder. It was to have set out from a somewhat remote point—the primitive state of the globe generally, and of Germany in particular. So much for setting speculative philosophers down in courts, to write memoirs of Ducal Houses!

We see him afterwards at the Prussian court, under the patronage of the inquisitive, acute, learned, and somewhat pedantic Queen of Prussia, whose summons the philosopher was obliged to obey, when she wished for metaphysical or scientific conversation, and whose puzzling questions he had to answer as he best could. Her comment, when he failed to satisfy her inquisitiveness about the origin of the universe and the nature of the human soul, was that there was nothing like the mathematicians for credulity: they would put faith in any chimera that was offered to them by their own fancy, or that of other people. Elsewhere than at court, she would perhaps have been asked what could be offered but chimeras, when inquirers insist on being informed of the unknowable?

Leibnitz was consulted by Peter the Great about his Russian reforms, and was made a privy-councillor, in return for his advice on the conduct of civilisation. He went to the Emperor of Austria, to entreat him to establish an Institute like that which he saw to be under doom at Berlin. He was made an Aulic Councillor, and Baron of the Empire, at Vienna; had a pension conferred on him, and was invited to reside there: but the Elector of Hanover was just then made

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King of England, and the philosopher preferred him for his patron. He lived four years longer at the court of Hanover, writing political works again, and some philosophical pieces, and died there at the age of sixty-eight.

His eulogists dwell on the great variety of topics that he treated, and styles which he attempted. They say that Natural History was the only study which he did not pursue. From another side, the fact of the case looks very mournful. The man's faculties and years were encroached upon and frittered away by persons who should have humbly waited upon his powers, and left him free to follow his natural bent; and hence he was always busy about unworthy tasks (worthy enough for lesser men), and the prodigious promise of his early years was never fulfilled. He and Newton were making the same mathematical discovery at the same time; and the man who was once Newton's peer let anybody set him tasks who would give him a place and pension at court. It was no fault of theirs that they took liberties if he laid himself open to them; and they might well patronise him, in all kindness, when he invited patronage; but the world has sustained immense loss by his mistake. What the loss is mankind can never know; and all we can do now is to draw a lesson from the illustration which the life of Leibnitz affords of the unfitness of courts to be the abode or the resort of men whose genius tends to science or philosophy.

We need not dwell long on the case of Voltaire. It was a lustrous example of the situation, certainly; but Voltaire was not the kind of philosopher who needed repose, privacy, and leisure for the accomplishment of his life's work. His topics were social; he was himself full of social tastes; and life in a court was a spectacle in his way, instead of a mere impediment to business. I am not saying that Voltaire was no philosopher. I am of a contrary opinion; and I feel confident that his deserts will yet be better appreciated than they have been: but he made a mistake, which such a man should have known better than to make, when he went to the court of Frederick the Great at Berlin. If he had been the dishonest and frivolous person he is supposed by some of us to be, the experiment might have answered. As he was honest, and capable of sound thought, it soon came to an end. There was something forced in the bringing together of clever and celebrated men at the King's supper-table; and, though Voltaire made the conversation as gay and amiable as he could, the constraint wearied him. It wearied him to read and praise the King's compositions, and to correct his French verses, which, of course, in the case of a homebred German prince, were very bad. The King, with all his desire for his own improvement, and for the welfare of the wise men he gathered about him, was not loveable; the savans were out of their element and jealous of each other. The praise of the Prince, which had begun in sincerity, and a sort of enthusiasm, at a distance, could not be kept up without effort, face to face with the imperious King, who expected more homage rather than less, as time went on. There was nothing in the pension, or the gold key as chamberlain, or the honour of having the King for his chief disciple, which could make up to Voltaire for the constraint, and the bore of correcting the King's effusions; and he broke away. The King desired and expected him to return; but he was resolved never to enter Prussia again. He was arrested at Frankfort, in order to prevent his carrying with him the volume of the King's poems, which the author was well aware might afford occasion for quizzing. The arrest caused much delay, expense, and vexation; but the philosopher, with all his ability for satire, was placable and good-natured in matters of personal concern; and he afterwards slid into a literary correspondence with Frederick, and afforded criticism of the King's productions, as if there had been no rupture.

Here the philosopher wanted nothing, and his resort to the Prussian court was a mere mistaken whim. Voltaire could live where and as he pleased, and needed no patronage from any quarter. He was weak, and perhaps vain, in yielding to an invitation about which he hesitated long, and which he accepted at last with evident doubt and reluctance. He was sufficiently punished by the mortifications which ensued. I bring in the case only because it is the most notorious in modern literary history, and because, while it is the most talked about, it is less important than perhaps any other that can be cited. It cannot be shown that the world has lost anything by the short residence of Voltaire at the court of Prussia.

This can hardly be said of the connection of another literary philosopher with another German court. It is conceivable that Göthe's work was not materially hindered by his connection with the court of Weimar; but no one probably will undertake to say that the impression of Göthe as courtier is not just so much drawback on the impression of Göthe as man, citizen, poet, and philosopher. It, in fact, blotted out the citizen function from the programme of his life altogether. Right and wrong, despotism and liberty, war and peace, went on between rulers and people in the most critical periods of modern history, without notice from the courtier-philosopher. While, on the one hand, he is represented as much too comprehensive in his view of life to look with any interest on those ebbs and flows, and ripples and surges of events and interests, he is shown, on the other hand, to be much engaged and solemnly interested in the solicitudes of a life of etiquette, which most people consider a smaller matter. While society thought the fate of German nationality and freedom, under the menaces of Napoleon, was a worthy subject for the anxiety and enthusiasm of every student of Man and History, while it mattered little how tea-parties and hunts and the theatre went on at Weimar, Göthe was of the opposite way of thinking; and this is our warrant for supposing his example to rank among the warnings we have that, in great thinkers, the course of thinking is grievously disturbed by a resort to interests which have no affinity with those of Thought.

If in any case the evil could have been escaped, it would have been in Göthe's; for not only was he independent in his possession of fame and a competence, but the Grand Duke had intel-

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lectual tastes, and was ten years younger than Göthe. When he was a boy, the two would ride like the wind over hill and plain, and build a hut in a defile to sleep in, and cook their game-supper in the open air; and the Grand Duke fell into his companion's habit of inquiring into the why and wherefore of everything he saw or heard of. This habit was strong in death; for, when he was dying at Potsdam, with Humboldt beside him,—when so feeble and suffering as to be drowsy and restless, he poured out incessant questions about the substance of comets, the effects of spots on the sun, the heating of mineral springs, &c. Through life he had thus asked questions; and both Göthe and Humboldt took this for science, in a way which they never would have done in any case but that of a prince. They were so far right, that it is a proof of great superiority for a prince to take habitual pleasure in such subjects. As Göthe himself said, "A prince must take notice of everything; he must know a bit of this, and a bit of that. Under such circumstances, nothing can take root; and it requires a strong natural foundation not to end in smoke, in the face of such constant demands." He fancied his particular prince to be an exception to this, even ranking him as his own coadjutor in philosophy and literature. "We worked together for fifty years," he said. Yet no one else dreams of assigning to the Grand Duke any portion of Göthe's achievements. It was a blessing that the ruler of a state, small or large, should be a man who had some sense of his own ignorance (the great reward of scientific study, after all), and a decided taste for intellectual pursuits: but, to set against this, we have the injury done to Göthe by the connection.

No one will undertake to say how far Göthe would have been different if he had lived as a citizen of Frankfort, instead of a courtier at Weimar: but it may be safely assumed that he would not have devoted so much precious faculty and time to the concerns of the theatre; that he would not, to the close of his life, have made Napoleon his idol; that he would have had some of the feelings of a German citizen; that he would have lost sight sometimes of his purpose of self-culture in emotions of a more generous origin, and have been less consciously a king in his own domain for not having to play the courtier in another. Amidst all the beauty of his manners,—his polished and simple courtesy of mind and speech,—everybody feels that a part of his great heart was withered within him; and reason and experience warrant the belief that court life was the chief reason of it. It is repugnant to our feelings of admiration, and keeps that admiration from rising into enthusiasm, to think of him as putting off his studies to put on his decorations, and as investing all the solemnity he was capable of in court-observances, and as spending hundreds upon hundreds of precious evenings in the dulness of the palace circle. In his estimates of men we see the harm done him. Every individual belonging to the family of his patron was, in his view, so exalted, that each one of them, man or woman, would have been great and distinguished in any rank of life: yet no one of them has left any proof of extraordinary qualifications: and, to say all in a word, Napoleon was his idol. "Napoleon was the man!" he said. Light and clearness being in his view the supreme gifts, he described Napoleon as "always enlightened, always clear and decided, and endowed with sufficient energy to carry into effect whatever he considered advantageous and necessary. His life was the stride of a demi-god. He was found in a state of continual enlightenment. On this account his destiny was more brilliant than any the world had seen before him, or perhaps will ever see after him."

Such a judgment, proceeding from a German of (what would be in our country) middle-class birth, after having witnessed the humiliation of his country under the heel of the aggressor, is evidence enough of that heartlessness in one important direction which we are accustomed to ascribe to the courtly, rather than the philosophical habit of mind and life. Possibly Göthe might not have written much more if he had lived elsewhere than at Weimar; but we cannot but believe that his life and works would have had a higher vitality. His adorers appeal to time and posterity for evidence of what he was. We, who strongly admire, but do not adore him, are quite willing to refer to the same test; and the more, because time and a new generation have shown what his estimate of Napoleon,—his favourite admiration,—was worth.

As Humboldt delighted Göthe with praises of his prince-friend, so Göthe delighted Humboldt in his turn. He was certain that the then Crown Prince of Prussia was "a very distinguished man." What Göthe was at Weimar, Humboldt was at Potsdam. The difference to us is that we think of Humboldt as the natural philosopher, and of Göthe as less of a natural philosopher than a poet, and therefore more able perhaps to spare time and attention to court intercourses than his Prussian friend. Another wide difference is that Göthe has left us only solemn and decorous homage of the Grand-Ducal family and household, whereas Humboldt committed to paper his natural feelings under the yoke which he submitted to wear.

His early travels were necessarily under the patronage of his own and other governments. They could not otherwise have been achieved. But one wishes that when he and Bonpland were ranging at will the wild tropical regions of the New World, some of Nature's voices there had warned him to beware of surrendering his life to the fetters of any conventional restraint which should cramp his powers, and hurt his temper, and destroy his sincere and reverential habit of mind. If he had taken such a warning in the wild woods, and under the tropical midnight sky, he would not have bowed his neck to the yoke the moment he settled at Berlin. He let himself be made a Councillor of State, and undertook tasks in diplomacy which another man could have done as well or better. The world had but one Humboldt; and Prussia could have supplied men enough for all her diplomatic work.

From that time forward, his connection with the Court was the snare, the vexation, and the humiliation of Humboldt's life. The wise always knew it must be so: the world now knows that it

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was so. The King and Court were not to blame for this. It was honourable to the King to honour intellectual achievement in Humboldt; and he paid his homage as well as he could. If the philosopher did not assert the value of his own leisure and quiet, how was anybody in a different position in life to understand it? Savans and philosophers understood it; but princes cannot. I know that when Humboldt came over in the King's train, to the baptism of the Prince of Wales, the scientific and literary men who met him were concerned and humbled at the spectacle. That grand and noble head was out of place in a courtier train: the philosopher's time was not his own, nor his freedom to go and come. He who was at the head of the realm of knowledge was discrowned in the presence of political royalty: his thoughts were subject to the beck and call of another; his will was not his own; and his ribbons and stars were but counterfeit decorations in his case. While the wise men of our nation pressed to see him, some of them wished he had not come, unless he could come alone, and to his own. What he himself was suffering from his bondage, these sympathising admirers were little aware. By the recent publication of his letters, we now know. "That dreary Potsdam!" he is incessantly complaining of, during and after his visits to the King. "My long and tedious visit to Potsdam," he speaks of: "the perplexities of my desolate life:" "I am living monotonously and gloomily at Potsdam:" "a wild man of the woods whom they fancy they have tamed at Court." Such are his groans. More expressly, he says to his friend, in a letter, "Under an appearance of outward splendour, and in the enjoyment of the somewhat fantastic preference of a high-minded prince, I live in a moral and mental isolation, such as can only be produced by the barren condition of the mind of this divided, erudite land;" and that friend notes in his diary, "Humboldt cheerful at Paris: at once melancholy on his return: overwhelmed with complaints and demands, and can do nothing." The same diary records the "bitter scorn" with which Humboldt spoke of the personages and proceedings of the Court: "and yet his Court position must be held to save him from exile." Once at least, at an earlier period, we find that "he thinks seriously of retiring," and we wonder, as his friend did, why he did not retire, while he could still do so with safety as well as honour; but here is discovered to us a yet worse bondage. "The accumulation of business pressed on him, he said; and yet he was not prepared to forego it. Court and company were to him as a club, in which he was in the habit of spending his evenings and taking his glass." Even this is not the worst. We have seen that the temper of the philosopher, naturally joyous and sanguine, and sure to be raised to a habit of more or less serenity by the congenial pursuit of a lofty kind of knowledge, had become capable of "bitter scorn." His description of a coterie of princes, heirs to crowns, to whom he had been making his obeisances, is brutally sarcastic. Thus his temper went to ruin. There was something worse still. He lost his simplicity and sincerity—the virtue and grace which, beyond all others, naturally distinguish the eminent man of science in proportion to his eminence. As Humboldt's scorn became more bitter, his flatteries became more gross. By consenting to a double life he ended with sacrificing the higher to the lower life, and bearing about a double mind. Here I may stop; for a more signal illustration of the liabilities of the courtier-philosopher is not on record.

The practical lesson seems to me short and clear.

It always gives me concern to hear literary and scientific men complaining of the absence of patronage and encouragement of science and letters in England; and, considering what we know, I am almost as much surprised as concerned. Few or none go so far as to desire any such attempts at intimacy between princes and philosophers, on the ground of royalty and philosophy; for such a thing could not at present happen in our Court: but we hear complaints that no royal hospitality is offered to literary men; and yet more frequently and strongly that office is not among the rewards of literary and scientific eminence. In France, we are told, savans and authors are, in virtue of their achievements, conspicuous in the legislature, in the peerage, and in office, whenever France is living under a representative system. Every country is glanced over, and all honours paid to authors and philosophers are cited in rebuke of the neglect with which such merits are treated at home.

I have no sympathy with all this; and not because I desire less honour for intellectual achievement, but more. To me it appears that the natural honours won from society are of a higher kind in all ways than any that can be arbitrarily bestowed. The great discoverer or author is so covered with honours, in the form of general homage, that no Sovereign can confer any that are not of an inferior kind. Title, office, Court intercourse are interruptions to a philosopher's habit of life. He can gain nothing by them, while he cannot but lose much. As to giving political office to literary or scientific men, it is simply spoiling two good things by attempting to mix them forcibly together. Humboldt's most adoring friends read his diplomatic despatches with a sort of dismay. "Who could have believed these were Humboldt's?" they exclaimed. "They have no mark of his hand on them. They are neither better nor worse than any other man would have written:" and then they mourned to think how his proper work was standing still. So it would be with every author or savan who should be sent to parliament, or put into office, on the ground only of his science or letters. If he has peculiar political ability, it would have shown itself before; and its coexistence with his actual genius is improbable to the last degree. The only question is whether such rewards are natural. If they were seen to be otherwise, nobody would desire them. All the evidence we have tends to show that they are not natural; and that such gifts are, in fact, anything but rewards.

Are we then to conclude that nothing should or can be done in recognition of intellectual eminence and service? I am not of that opinion, quite. My feeling certainly is that the less we talk of "rewards" for that which is "its own exceeding

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great reward," the better for our morals and manners. Men do not want reward for intelligence any more than for virtue, which is the fruit of intelligence: and it is an equal impertinence to offer reward in either case. In neither case is reward needed to impress the minds of observers; for intellect and goodness are more impressive in themselves than by any recommendation or adornment. The question, then, comes to this. Can anything be done to *serve* these intellectual princes? I should say "Yes;" but in our age and country not by princes, but by the nation.

Most eminent scientific and literary persons are, in a free country like ours, made wealthy as well as honoured by their own works: but where it is not so, I should like to see them set at ease by means of some permanent, regular resource which would afford them ease, unaccompanied by any pain. We ought to have a national fund, liberal and securely established, for releasing from pecuniary care and injurious restriction the scientific and literary benefactors whose works do not yield them returns in the form of money. Wollaston and Davy made fortunes (which they richly deserved) by their discoveries: but Dr. Priestley had to accept from friends the income necessary to enable him to pursue his chemical researches. Many branches of scientific pursuit are unremunerative, and require means to follow them up at all. The same is the case with some literary enterprises of the very highest value. While the popular novelist, traveller, divine, or poet makes a fortune by his writings, the author of a historical, philological, or honestly speculative work must give his time and labour without immediate return of money or fame, or the hope of it. It is instructive to observe how many of our most valuable works in these kinds were produced by men of private fortune. It will be a good day when we have a national fund, administered under responsibility to parliament, by which intellectual service shall be supported and recognised: and when that day comes, we shall hear no more of literary pensions from the Sovereign, by their very terms too mortifying to be offered or accepted, except as the lesser of two evils. Whatever is done, the main consideration must be, what the philosopher wants and desires. He wants and desires, above all things, liberty, with peace and quiet. As these are incompatible with Court life and its obligations, and with an artificial friendship between princes of two regions which have nothing in common, it is plain that the courtier-philosophers have made a mistake in the conduct of their life; and this seems to me to be shown, with entire clearness, in the five very different cases which I have ventured to detail.

INGLEBY SCOTT.

THE TRAPPING OF WILD ANIMALS BY THE TCHUVASHES OF SIMBIRSK.

THE small hamlets of the Tchuvashes are scattered among the extensive forests, abounding in bears and wolves, of the region watered by the river Sesoura. During the nights the inhabitants are frequently roused from their sleep by the discordant howling of whole troops of wolves.

In the summer time, a single wolf will sometimes drive away and destroy half a score of sheep, a feat which he performs in the following manner. Observing that the sheep are feeding quietly in the near vicinity of a village, without the immediate care of a shepherd or other protection, the wolf creeps stealthily towards them, and when near enough, suddenly throws himself upon the flock; and seizing one of the sheep by the upper part of its neck, he runs alongside of it, guiding it to the wood, and all the while whipping the sheep with his own tail. The rest of the sheep are, at first, scattered on all sides in alarm, but soon collecting again, they draw out in a line, raise their snouts, and begin beating the ground with their front feet. Then recovering from their panic, and seeing their comrade running away with the wolf, they resolve to overtake them, and the whole flock hurries after the wolf. The wolf, in the mean time, having dragged and driven his victim into a convenient spot, throws it to the ground, and tears open its throat. The sheep, on reaching the wolf, again extend themselves in line, and begin stamping with their fore feet, looking on while the wolf is killing their companion.

It is known that, during the excessive heat of summer in those regions, the wolf eats no flesh, but feeds by lapping only the blood of his prey; and therefore, having slaughtered his victim, and drank his blood, the wolf throws himself again on the nearest sheep, which he kills as before. The sheep, scattered at first by his assault, collect again, and form in line, with their snouts in the air, and their fore feet beating the ground; then following the wolf, wherever he may have found it expedient to hurry his second victim, they stand, as before, in a close row, beating the earth, till he is ready for another rush upon them; when, precisely the same manœuvres are repeated over and over again, till the wolf has destroyed them all.

The Tchuvashes practise a variety of methods for trapping wolves, among which is one by means of hurdles. They prepare two lines of hurdles, in a spiral form, leaving a space of about fourteen inches between them. The interior of this passage is lined with a quantity of sharp projecting points of strong brushwood, about six inches long, so disposed as not to point towards the opening, but to the centre of the spiral, offering therefore no impediment to a free entrance, but entirely preventing all possibility of drawing back. At the top, and in the centre of the spiral hurdle, they place, within a cage, a young pig, who keeps up all night a continual squeal.

The wolf, in winter, hungry enough to devour even the bass mats and ropes dropped by travellers on the road, hearing the cry of the pig, hastens to secure the savoury morsel. Ranging round the trap, he soon finds the opening, and creeps within. He finds the entry easy enough; but at the end of the spiral, he can neither turn, because of the narrowness, nor can he draw back, on account of the sharp prongs of the brushwood, which pierce into his back. In this position he must remain, hearing the tantalising cry of the pig over his head, till the Tchuvashe puts an end to his sufferings.

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As to the bears, it happens sometimes that they make their appearance among the villagers, mounted, as it were, on their horses, though this prank they commonly pay for by their hides. More frequently, the small and feeble horses of the Tchuvashes are caught by the bears in the Sesourian forests, and destroyed without resistance. The bear is accustomed to scramble on the horse's back, and grappling his victim with three of his paws, he suffers the fourth paw to trail against the ground, till the poor horse, fatigued and tormented beyond his strength, falls exhausted to the ground, and becomes an easy prey to the bear. At times, however, the horse succeeds in reaching the village, with the bear still clinging to him, when he is quickly relieved from his rider.

The Tchuvashes commonly kill bears with the gun, but they also employ, by way of trapping, a log of wood; and sometimes drug the animal with brandy. In trapping with the log of wood, they select some narrow spot in the accustomed track of the bear, where they can avail themselves of two trees, standing near enough together; from these trees they suspend, by a strong rope, a heavy log of oak, in such a way, as entirely to block up the passage of the bear, yet hanging free to swing, and on a level with his head. The bear, upon his wonted march, meets with the log, which bars his farther progress; he raises his snout, examines it, smells it, touches it, and finding no artifice in it, throws it aside, and then deliberately pursues his way. The log, however, like a pendulum, returns from its impulse, and strikes him on his back. The bear quickly turns to the log, seizes it, and throws it away again, then raises his head to see what becomes of it. The log flies back, and hits him perhaps on the shoulder. The bear is now furious, collects all his strength, and with a loud growl, again hurls away the log, and stands with open mouth, trembling with rage, observing it. The log returns with its whole weight, and striking upon his skull, ends at once the contest and the indignation of the bear.

The Tchuvashes sometimes overpower the bear by means of brandy. Across his usual path they either find or place a fallen tree, in which they scoop out a hollow receptacle, which they fill with brandy. The bear, passing, smells the liquor, and at once drinks, for he is as fond of spirits as he is of sweets. The drink soon takes effect; and the bear falls into a dead sleep, during which the Tchuvashe kills him.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

"Yet once more on the organ play
To me, old neighbour mine;
Try if my heart may be refreshed
Still by its tones divine—"

The sick one prayed, the neighbour played,
So played he ne'er before;
So glorious are the tones that he
Knows his own touch no more.

'Tis some unearthly blessèd strain
Bursts forth as he doth play—
He stops with awe—the list'ner's soul
Hath gently passed away.

Julia Goddard.

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EXPLORATIONS IN AUSTRALIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "ONCE A WEEK."

SIR,—In your excellent article on the recent exploration in Australia by Mr. Stuart, in the 86th Number of ONCE A WEEK, you speak of the Victoria River being made known by the travels of Mr. Gregory.

This, I beg to inform you, was *not the case*, as you will find by referring to vol. ii. page 40 of my account of "H.M.S. Beagle's Exploratory Voyage in Australia" (published by Boone, Bond Street), during which the Victoria was the most important of several rivers discovered in that ship between the years 1837 and 1843.

Mr. Gregory's farther exploration of this noble river quite bears out my anticipations of the extent it penetrates into the interior.

The discovery of the Victoria I have this reason to remember, that it nearly cost me my life, through being speared in the lungs by a native.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. LORT STOKES, Captain R.N.

ADMIRALTY SURVEY OFFICE, STONEHOUSE, PLYMOUTH, *March* 11, 1861.

LOOK AFTER BROWN.

THERE was not a busier man in all the little town of B—— than Mr. John Ferret; a lawyer by profession, he was everything else almost by election, and really did nearly as much good as harm, and that is saying a great deal in his favour, considering he *was* a lawyer. Ferret was a constant patron of all the itinerant lecturers who visited B——, and a certain purchaser of every new invention pertaining to domestic economy or enjoyment. Patent stoves, patent bedsteads, patent frying-pans, and patent anything, had irresistible charms for him, and at the period of our tale, he had become the proprietor of the Patent Niagara Shower Bath, warranted to wash a blackamoor white, so tremendous was the rush of its waters. This terrible machine was erected in a small breakfast parlour, as its dimensions exceeded the capacity of Mr. Ferret's dressing-room, and was, on the 12th of last December, a source of considerable amusement to Wapshot, the page in waiting to Mrs. Ferret. That young gentleman was delighted at the roar of the descending streams which followed the pulling of a cord resembling a bell-rope, and his speculations as to the effect to be produced upon his master were made manifest by the performance of a kind of war-dance, which ceased only on the entrance of Mrs. Ferret.

"Wapshot! sir!" exclaimed the lady, "what are you about?"

"O! mem, only hear," said the excited Buttons, pulling the string. "That's master's new shower-bath."

The fall of water was terrific.

"It certainly is very powerful; but Mr. Ferret will be the only sufferer," remarked the lady. "Thank goodness! it has nothing to do with the house arrangements, this time."

The pleasant anticipations of Wapshot were doomed to disappointment, for a knock at the door, and its consequences, brought Mr. Ferret instantly in pursuit of his wife. In his hurry to communicate with his *cara sposa*, Mr. F. had evidently forgotten the progress he had made in his bathing costume, and being a bald-headed man (with the most imposing wig in B——), he had surmounted his glossy cranium with a long, conical oil-cloth cap, according to the "Directions for Use," which accompanied the bill and recipe for the Niagara.

"Bless me!" exclaimed Mrs. Ferret, in astonishment at her husband's singular appearance.

"And bless me!" rejoined Mr. Ferret, "since it comes to that—there's a letter addressed to you—I have opened it, as I did not know the handwriting, (pray excuse the liberty,) and left by a gentleman who promises to call again in half-an-hour. It is from Mincing Lane."

"What, from dear old Uncle Richman!" cried Mrs. Ferret.

"It is, Barbara, and this is what he says:

"'DEAR MADAM,—The bearer of this is a friend of our house, and desirous to be introduced to Mr. Ferret. The name of the bearer is Mr. Brown.—Yours, &c.,

"'GEORGE RICHMAN,
'for
"'RICHMAN & Co.'"

"The gentleman is to call again?" inquired Mrs. Ferret, and not waiting for a reply, added: "Dear old Uncle! It's a long time since we heard from him. I'm so glad he has not forgotten us, and it's lucky we can show him a civility. He is so very rich."

"And *we*," remarked Mr. Ferret, laying great stress upon the personal pronoun, "*we*, his only relations, I say we, my dear, because with all your worldly goods you did me endow, and I looked upon your uncle Richman as part of your marriage settlement. Ha! ha! Barbara!"

Mr. Ferret had not done laughing at his own happy conceit, when Wapshot placed in his hand a telegraphic message, and which that intelligent servitor called a "legtrif."

"From Mr. Richman, also," said Mr. Ferret, and read aloud:

'From George Richman, London, to John Ferret, B——. "Look after Brown."'"

"Our expected visitor, my dear. What's he mean by 'Look after Brown?'"

We have hesitated to confess that Mr. Ferret had any weakness beyond that love of novelty which we are told in the Latin grammar is common to all, but he had. Mr. Ferret was of a most suspicious nature, and trusted nothing and nobody until he had turned them inside out, as he expressed it.

"What's he mean?" answered Mrs. Ferret, "that we are to show Mr. Brown every possible attention. 'Look after Brown.'"

"Well, I don't read it so," said Ferret. "'Look after,' means 'look *sharp*' after Brown."

"What a suspicious creature you are, Ferret!"

"And you are so confiding you would trust the cat with the cream-jug," retorted Ferret.

"Didn't you annoy our neighbour from India by your ridiculous notion that he lured our ducks

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ɔ lay in his garden," said Mrs. F. with a sneer. 'The man was so hurt at your insinuations hat he left his lodgings, and has lived at 'The ieorge' ever since."

"So much the better," replied Ferret, declining, owever, to satisfy his wife why it was more esirable for Mr. Mango to live at an inn than ı lodgings; and adding, "However, I shall ake care of Brown, whenever he puts in an apearance."

They did not wait long for that pleasure, for Vapshot very soon after introduced a much sunurnt middle-aged gentleman as Mr. Brown to the air of Ferrets.

Nothing could be kinder than his reception by he lady, nothing much colder than his introducion to the gentleman.

"And dear uncle? is he quite well?" said Mrs. 'erret.

"Quite so—apparently," said Mr. Brown, autiously.

"No appearance of his distressing asthma, and iennial gout?" asked Ferret, stimulated to join he conversation by Mr. Brown's slight hesitation ı certifying to Mr. Richman's condition.

"I was not aware he was so afflicted," replied Brown; "I am not an intimate friend of Mr. Richman. His house was in connection with my gent in Calcutta, and I applied to him to assist ıe in my inquiry for a Mr. Mango. I was told hat he was living here, and that you would kindly ıtroduce me."

"Dear me, how unfortunate," said Mrs. Ferret, ɔoking askance at her husband.

"Not at all! not at all!" exclaimed Ferret; 'a man who allures silly creatures to desert their atural protectors—to forget the hand that feeds hem—"

"You astonish me!" said Brown. "Mango ras thought to be an eccentric man, but the soul f honour. May I inquire whom he has lured ıto error?"

"Four Aylesbury ducks, sir. Encouraged hem to lay on his premises," answered Ferret.

Brown evidently thought Ferret insane, and onsidering his extraordinary costume, and the idiculous charge against Mango, there was ufficient cause for the opinion. Brown thereɔre said very mildly, "Oh, was that all! you ave relieved me greatly. And where shall I find Ir. Mango?"

"At the George Inn," replied Mrs. Ferret; 'but I hope you will take dinner with us to-day. Ve dine at five."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Ferret, but I must eturn to London this evening," answered Brown.

"Then oblige us by taking luncheon at twelve."

"I have a board to attend at twelve," said 'erret, glancing savagely at his wife.

"Mr. Brown will excuse your absence, I am ure," replied Mrs. Ferret, returning the look.

"I am sure I will," said Brown, with an emhasis which made Ferret start, and almost larmed his jealousy.

"At twelve I will be punctual," said Mr. Brown, referring to his watch, which, to his pparent surprise, had stopped an hour ago.

"Pray, make use of mine," exclaimed Mrs. Ferret. "It was a present from my dear uncle, and goes capitally."

"Goes! of course it does!" whispered Ferret, holding up the telegram at the back of their visitor.

"I thank you very much," answered Brown, "and will, with your permission, leave my watch with you. It is a strange-looking affair."

It was, and quite justified Ferret's remark, who, on learning that it had come from India, observed,

"The climate must be favourable to watches, if they generally grow to the size of the present specimen."

Mr. Brown merely looked at him in reply, and then addressing Mrs. Ferret, said, with some earnestness, "It is of English make, ma'am, and I hope to have something to tell you about it when I return."

"When he returns," whispered Ferret again, showing his telegram.

"Which will be at twelve," returned his wife, pointing significantly to her letter.

"To a moment," added Brown; "so for the present I wish you good morning."

"John Ferret," said the lady, when Brown had left the house; "John Ferret, I blush for you! How can you be such a bear!"

"I am ashamed of you," retorted Ferret, "for being such a fool. Do you expect to see that watch any more? You had better have a handle put to the one he has left you, and use it as a warming-pan. To call that a watch! A steam-engine of twenty horse-power at least! Ah! you may well stare at it. However, it's your own doing, and if you lose your watch, don't ask me to buy another."

Mr. Brown's odd-looking timepiece seemed to interest Mrs. Ferret strangely, so much so that she burst into tears and left the room.

Mr. Ferret was rather pleased than otherwise at his wife's tribulation, receiving it as a testimony to his oratory and discrimination, two things upon which he prided himself exceedingly.

A client was now announced, and Mr. Ferret, utterly unmindful of his singular head-dress, requested the new comer to be shown into the breakfast parlour.

"Well, Spooner! an early bird this morning," said Ferret. "What's the matter? Sit down."

Mr. Spooner, who was at all times very nervous in Mr. Ferret's presence, now evinced an increased trepidation at finding he had intruded upon the worthy lawyer's privacy, and it was not until he had been told to "go on," and to "fire away," that he ventured to observe that he had "come for a little advice."

"And shall have it cheap," said Ferret, encouragingly. "Thirteen and fourpence an hour isn't dear. Is it?"

"No, sir; I suppose not."

"Five minutes past ten," continued Ferret, looking at his watch; "say ten, so fire away."

Mr. Spooner shook a good deal, and obeyed.

"I have been broken into, Mr. Ferret."

"What?"

"I was a victim to burglary last night. I was in bed."

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"Nothing unusual in that," said Ferret.

"No, sir—and asleep."

"And snoring?"

"No, sir; thank goodness my worst enemy can't accuse me of that! I heard a noise in the wash-house. Up I gets—"

"And down you goes, of course; and there you saw?—"

"A man who cried out, 'Take care—'"

"Of Brown?" exclaimed Ferret, starting up.

"I can't say, sir, but he threw a bottle-jack at me, and I threw a boot-jack in return, and—and—and knocked off this," said Spooner, producing a blue bag, which contained something bulky.

"Knocked off his head?" inquired Ferret.

"No; I wish it had been. It's only his hat," and Spooner produced a low-crowned broad-brimmed beaver, very much the worse for the service it had seen.

Now, strange to say, Brown's hat was just the same shape, and as "trifles light as air are to the jealous mind confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ" (the idea is not ours), and Mr. Ferret being, as we have already observed, of a suspicious temperament, he instantly exclaimed,

"As I live, it's that scoundrel, Brown."

"What a clever man you are, Mr. Ferret! you know the hat. The man was—"

"Tall," said Ferret. Brown was tall.

"No—short," said Spooner.

"No—tall," cried Ferret: "he can shut himself up like a telescope, no doubt."

"You think so?" asked the wondering client. "Rather fat—"

"When compressed. Draws out long and thin," remarked Ferret, determined not to lose his man. I know the fellow—he was here before I had breakfast. But I was up to him. Don't mind showing you:" producing the telegram. "Read that. 'Look after Brown.'"

"Dear me! what information you have, Mr. Ferret. What's to be done?"

"Spooner, I wouldn't let that fellow escape for a thousand pounds. You shall identify him; he will be here directly. Mrs. Ferret must not suspect we have found out anything, or such is her infatuation she will be giving the vagabond warning. No; you shall stay here. Ah! a brilliant thought! Get in here," said Ferret, undrawing the curtain of "Niagara."

"In there!" replied Spooner, hesitating to enter the bath.

"It's quite safe, only a very little damp: and the smell of the paint is quite refreshing," said Ferret, as he handed in his unwilling client.

Mr. Ferret was doomed to have a busy morning, for Spooner had scarcely been made a Companion of the Bath when Wapshot announced a stranger newly come by the train.

Ferret would have made some preparation before receiving him, but the business which had brought the stranger to B—— evidently admitted of no delay, as he followed Wapshot into the room, and introduced himself.

"My name's Drabs, sir," said the new comer. "I'm from Pankers."

"Well," replied Ferret, rather annoyed at the intrusion, "that's a great deal of information in a few words. Pray, Mr. Drabs, who is Pankers?"

"Pankers," answered Drabs, "is a meterer-politan parish, and I am its beadle—plain as I appear."

"A parochial peacock without its feathers," thought Ferret. "Travelling *incog.*—and for what purpose?"

"The fact is," said Drabs, settling down in an arm-chair, "the fact is, in our parish we have more wives and small children than we knows what to do with, and a unmitigated vagabond has left us five—"

"What—wives?" inquired Ferret.

"No; children, and one wife," replied Drabs. "We've traced him down here, and I've been referred to you, as Clerk to the Guardians, to help us to get him back again. He ain't particular what he calls hisself. Sometimes it's Down, sometimes it's Crown, sometimes—"

"Brown—Brown!" exclaimed Ferret; the one idea still uppermost in his mind.

"Well, let us think," said Drabs, sucking the knob of his stick, and cocking one eye up at the ceiling. "Well, I should say it's very likely he might a' called hisself Brown at some period or other."

"Then I've got him, Drabs," cried Ferret. "A human cuckoo that leaves his brood in any nest that will hold them! He'll be here directly."

"But are you sure he's my man?" asked Drabs, not to be too hasty in the matter.

"Tall!" said Ferret.

"Well, betwixt and between"

"Rather thin?"

"Not corpulent, certainly," answered Drabs, glancing at his own well-developed figure.

"It's the same man!" said Ferret. "I expect him here every moment. You shall pounce upon him like a hawk. Let me introduce you to another victim of Brown," said Ferret, drawing aside the curtain of the bath, "Mr. Drabs of Pankers, Mr. Spooner of B——. You'll soon know each other—mutual wrongs are like the thongs which bound the *fasces*." A classical figure of speech, in great favour with Mr. F. at all local meetings.

The trap being set and baited, Mr. Ferret proceeded to his dressing-room to make his toilet, exulting in his anticipated triumph over the credulity of Mrs. Ferret, should Brown return, or not.

He was not quite so clever as he thought himself.

There was evidently a culmination of events threatening the House of Ferret this morning, for to the terror of Wapshot (the real egg-sucker) Mr. Mango knocked at the door.

Mrs. Ferret was very pleased and surprised to see Mr. Mango, and told him so.

"You are most kind," said the old gentleman. "I have long desired to pay this visit, indeed it was my business here at B——, but Mr. Ferret's extraordinary conduct with regard to those Aylesbury ducks made it impossible."

"Pray think no more of that, my dear sir. Mr. Ferret had been very ill with a fever and lost—lost—"

"His wits?" asked Mr. Mango.

"No, sir, not his wits, but a remarkable fine

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head of hair, and the loss made him very irritable. Besides, I must own, that, though he is a most affectionate husband, he is the most suspicious man alive."

"What has made him so?" inquired Mango.

"I think it is his profession," replied Mrs. Ferret. "He is a lawyer; and, therefore, sees so much of the bad side of human nature, that he almost doubts if there be a good one. Pray think no more of that ridiculous matter."

"Well, for your sake," said Mr. Mango. "I will not. You know a Mr. Brown, I believe?"

"He called here this morning," replied Mrs. Ferret; "and—really I am ashamed to own it—but John suspects him of some design upon him. I would give a great deal to cure John of this unfortunate disposition to be so distrustful."

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Mango, and it was evident Mr. Ferret was no favourite with the old Indian. "My visit to you," he continued, "has reference to an interview I have had with Mr. Brown."

Mr. Ferret having completed his toilet, substituting a wig, which George the Fourth would have envied, for his oil-cloth extinguisher, fancied he heard voices in the adjoining room, and stealing to the door, as stealthily as a cat, opened it without noise, and to his surprise saw Mr. Mango in conversation with his wife, and heard the hated name of Brown.

"Your maiden name," said Mango, "was Chubb."

"What's that to him?" thought Ferret; "I changed it."

"You were an orphan, and married a man older than yourself."

"Like his impudence," muttered Ferret; "he's been looking up the parish register."

"You had an uncle Godfrey, who years ago went to India—a bankrupt, worthless fellow."

"He had been unfortunate," replied Mrs. Ferret, "but my mother always said he was the kindest of brothers."

Mango paused for a moment, took the hand of Mrs. Ferret, and looking at her, tenderly said, "You are very like your mother, in openness of face and confidence of disposition. Brown has told me of your lending him your watch."

"Of course," thought Ferret, "and laughed at her stupidity."

"He left one with you?" asked Mango.

"Yes, and here it is," replied Mrs. Ferret; "I recognise in it a very old acquaintance."

"And I an older one," said Mango. "Do you mind trusting this to me for a short time?"

"Oh, certainly not," answered Mrs. Ferret, giving Mango the wonderful piece of mechanism.

"I see it all," thought Ferret. "Brown has her watch: Mango gets Brown's, and Mrs. F. is done out of both."

"I knew your uncle well," said Mango. "Some years ago he sent you a locket—I see it there. May I be allowed to look at it?"

"He will have the wedding-ring off her finger, presently," thought Ferret, and began to consider whether he was not bound as a husband to present himself. The return of Mr. Brown left him no alternative.

Either the abruptness of Ferret's entrance into the room or the magnificence of his wig overpowered his visitors, and neither spoke for nearly a minute, whilst he, with arms folded and figure erect, looked anything but a welcome.

"John!" exclaimed Mrs. Ferret, at length, "what is the matter with you?"

A look was her only answer, and then Ferret took from the table the blue bag brought by Spooner, and producing the hat left behind by the burglar, threw it with great force at the feet of Mr. Brown.

"Is the man mad?" cried Mango.

Ferret, undisturbed by the remark, placed himself opposite to Brown, and in a hissing whisper, which would have made any tragedian's fortune, said: "A wife and five children are in Pankers workhouse. Where is the husband? Where is the father?"

"How should I know, my dear sir?" replied Brown, getting rather alarmed.

"The house of a peaceable citizen was broken into last night. That hat was left behind."

"Well, sir," remarked Brown, not in the least understanding why the information was confided so particularly to him.

"But we were warned in time," said Ferret, raising his voice to gallery pitch. "Thanks to the Electric Telegraph. Read that, sir, from our excellent relative, Mr. Richman. 'LOOK AFTER BROWN.'"

"Mad! Decidedly mad!" cried Mango, buttoning up his coat and preparing to retreat; but poor Mrs. Ferret, almost hysterical with disgust and anger, clung round his neck and prevented his egress.

"And dare you, sir," said Brown, as soon as his indignation would allow the words to escape his lips, "dare you, sir, accuse me of burglary and desertion?"

"In unvarnished English—yes," bawled Ferret, "and I've witnesses there," pointing to "Niagara."

"Produce them," shouted Brown.

"I won't till I please!" exclaimed Ferret.

"Mango ring the bell. Let us see if there is a sane person in the house," cried Brown.

Mango had already fixed his eye on the brass ring and cord depending from Niagara, and, without pausing to consider this somewhat unusual position for a bell-rope, pulled away with all his might.

Then came a rush of waters, mingled with roars of alarm and agony from Drabs and the timid client, followed by their immediate appearance in the centre of the room dripping and shaking themselves like two Newfoundland dogs after a bath in the river.

"Where?—Who?—What?" exclaimed all but Ferret, and he pointed with exultation to the saturated pair, "Behold my witnesses!"

"Plaintiffs you mean," said Drabs. "At least I'm one. You shall pay for this trick, Mr. Ferret."

"Nonsense. That's your deserter, Pankers."

"No, it's not; not a feature of any one of the children about him," said Drabs, abruptly quitting the room.

"Spooner, then it's your man," cried Ferret.

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"Not the least like him. I'm a corpse, Mr. Ferret, a corpse! My last injunction to my executors will be 'prosecute Ferret!'" said Spooner, leaving the room, the chattering of his teeth being distinctly audible until he reached the street.

Ferret was confounded.

"Well, sir, a pretty fool you've made of yourself, John Ferret," said his helpmate. "Look after Brown! Look after yourself, I think, sir."

"My dear, there is evidently some mistake," suggested Ferret.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Brown," said Mango to that gentleman, and with whom he had been conversing in a corner. "I was prepared to receive your statement as truth, and would have acted upon it; but when I find a respectable practitioner like Mr. Ferret accuse you of burglary and desertion of your family, I pause, sir—I pause!"

"Say, sir, what have I to gain?" asked Brown. "That watch which you recognise was given to me by your nephew, William Chubb."

"His nephew!" exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Ferret.

"With this will," continued Brown, showing a legal-looking packet, "bequeathing his claims upon you—"

"Ten thou-sand pounds," said Mango. "I acknowledge the debt."

"Ten thou-sand pounds," and Brown rolled the words out as though every letter was a lump of gold—"and which he bequeaths to his cousin Mrs. Ferret here."

Mrs. Ferret subsided on to the sofa, and the hair of Ferret's wig stood on end—almost.

"What do you say, sir?" gasped the astonished lawyer. "Ten thousand pounds, and the debt acknowledged."

"Just so," said Mango; "and I should have made no difficulty in the payment of the money, had not Mr. Ferret accused Mr. Brown of crimes which make me doubt the validity of those documents."

"Oh, don't say that," cried Ferret; "I didn't mean it."

"Pardon me," rejoined Mango. "I am sorry to put you to the delay and cost of sending to India for proofs. The process is tedious, very tedious, but necessary now."

"Oh, John!" sobbed Mrs. Ferret, from the depths of the sofa pillows; "I told you to look after Brown."

"When you can bring me satisfactory evidence," continued Mango, walking towards the door, "I am prepared to pay."

"You don't mean to leave us, Mr. Mango, in this unsatisfactory manner?" cried Ferret.

Mr. Brown appeared about to follow Mr. Mango, but pausing, said:

"Mr. Ferret, my object was to have served you in this matter, but the insult I have received, the injury my character has sustained, must be atoned for. You, as a lawyer, know the course I shall adopt, and you know your own."

"Oh, yes," replied Ferret, in a most despondent tone; "the process is very simple. *Brown* v. *Ferret*, defamation. Damages a thousand pounds.

"Oh, John! John! How could you doubt the meaning of that telegram?" and Mrs. Ferret sat on the sofa like "Niobe all tears."

"You have been a good wife to me," said Ferret, throwing himself on the table and wrapping up his head in the crimson cover, "So young, and yet so wise! You'll find my will at the back of the wardrobe, wrapped up in my wedding waistcoat."

The wife—the woman could not withstand this, and so she threw her arms about the red bundle on the table, and called it her "dear Johnny."

"I've left you everything, and have only to add a law-suit, *Brown* v *Ferret*, damages a thousand."

"Oh! my dear Johnny, you are wandering!" exclaimed Mrs. Ferret, striving to unroll the mummy.

"It was destiny made me erect 'Niagara,'" continued the unhappy man. "An ancient gentleman burned himself on a funereal pyre. I shall take a funereal shower-bath!"

Mrs. Ferret screamed and shook her husband violently, whilst Mr. Mango returned and said, soothingly: "Come, Mr. Ferret, be a man. Proofs of Mr. Brown's respectability can be obtained easily."

"No, no! impossible!" interrupted Ferret; and then recollecting the probable consequences of such a denial, gasped, rather than said, "more libel! more libel!"

"It was fortunate that Wapshot interrupted this agonising scene by another telegram, and which the excited Mrs. Ferret seized and read aloud for the general edification:—"Look after Brown. He is the best friend you have, and the most honourable man alive."

"Hoorah." All is clear at last. The telegraph clerk had only sent one half the message, which had produced such confusion and misunderstanding. The doubts of Mango were only feigned to punish Mr. Ferret, and the old Indian proved the best of the *genus* uncle, making his niece richer than she had ever dreamed to be, and happier by laughing Ferret out of his proneness to suspicion.

The telegram was framed and hung over the mantelpiece in the breakfast parlour *in memoriam* of the eventful day recorded in these pages.

Mark Lemon.

THE BEGINNING OF THE RUSSIAN NAVY.

(FROM THE RUSSIAN.)

At the village of Ismailovsky, Peter the First was one day examining a variety of articles that had belonged to his ancestor, Niketas Romanoff. He perceived, suddenly, a boat that had been long thrown aside, but which differed in form considerably from any at that time in use in Russia. The inquisitive Tzar questioned his tutor, Francis Timmerman, who happened to be with him at the time, as to the properties of this boat, and heard, with surprise, that it was an English boat, employed about ships, and that it could be made to sail with, or, by tacking, even against the wind.

This was an unheard-of novelty for Peter. What a fund of occupation it afforded him! The Tzar was eager to have the boat immediately launched upon the neighbouring river, Yaoose; but from long neglect it had become almost a wreck. It was ordered to be repaired, and a

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carpenter was sent for. By good fortune, the Dutchman Brandt was found, who had constructed the very boat for the Tzar Alexey.

Brandt repaired the vessel, rigged it, and launched it into the river, where he navigated it before the Tzar, who stood watching him from the bank. Having observed the manœuvres of Brandt sufficiently, Peter himself entered the boat, and took his first lesson in navigation. His essays, from the first, were so successful, that sailing in that boat became his most favourite amusement. After a short time, the rivers Yaoose and Moskva appeared too confined a space for the ambition of the young Tzar, and short voyages, as far as Kolomensky, did not satisfy his growing passion. In 1691 he obtained some shipwrights from Holland; and a ship-building yard was erected on the Periaslav lake. Here Peter himself became a workman, and the first yacht that was launched was built entirely by his own hands, under the supervision of the Dutch shipwright, Arriena. On the 1st of May, 1692, the Tzar, delighted with his production, began to navigate the lake, and his excursions were continued till he possessed a fleet of five vessels, when the establishment became a school of navigation, and frequently exhibited examples of naval combats. The lake of Periaslav being only eight versts in length by seven in breadth, did not long suffice for the desires of Peter. In May, 1694, he undertook a voyage to the Solovetsky monastery, which is built on the island of Solovka, in the White Sea. On this occasion, the boldness of Peter had nearly cost him his life. As he was drawing near to the monastery, a storm suddenly arose, of such violence, that his attendants gave themselves up for lost, and he himself prepared for death. He partook of the Holy Sacrament, and then, without fear, awaited the moment of destruction. But the Almighty spared his chosen one. A common Russian peasant, by name Antipo Panoff, preserved his presence of mind, and, acting as pilot, steered the yacht clear of sunken rocks and other dangers, and brought it safely to the shore. Peter the First, as a mark of gratitude for his preservation, erected on the spot where he landed a wooden cross, made by his own hands, bearing the inscription, "This cross was made by Captain Peter, in the year 1694." The next year Peter established a shipyard at Voronetz; and after that he constructed a fleet on the Baltic sea.

The little boat which Peter found at the village of Ismailovsky is preserved to this day, as a sacred relic, at St. Petersburg. It is called "The Little Grandfather of the Russian Fleet."

ALGERINE INTERIORS.

Moustapha Bour-Kaib lives in the large house half way down the hill. In it were born his mother, himself, and his children, and in it (casting his eyes up to Allah) he hopes himself to die. He speaks French well, and piques himself on European sympathies and enlightenment, and says that his wife was the first Moresque attended by a French physician. "Ah ça, Madame, see here the little girl whom *Monsieur votre mari* visited when she was ill," and Moustapha pushed forward a small figure swaddled in full white trousers and a blue shawl, looking like a girl of thirteen, but proving to our great amazement a married lady of no less than eighteen years of age.

The family party, on whom we went to call just at sunset of an autumn afternoon, were seated together in a summer sitting-room or low building standing in the courtyard of the house, and open to the air. There was Moustapha seated on the ground, in blue vest and trousers, and a turban on his head. His face is vivid and intelligent, but deeply pitted with small-pox. His wife is elderly; she was once a great beauty, and her kindly dark eyes retain much sweetness of expression. Her dress was all white; a haik, or square shawl, being drawn round about her head and falling down over her person. The wife and daughter of a French farmer were also seated in the little pavilion, enjoying a regular gossip; the mother a pleasant-looking woman, but Mademoiselle an odious specimen of colonial finery, wearing a tight polka-jacket of the most waspish dimensions, and a broad-brimmed brown hat trimmed with lace; an absurd contrast to the soft, fluent figures of the Moresques. To these personages add several female servants loitering about (for Bour-Kaib is in easy circumstances), and the group of grown-up people is complete. I say grown-up people, for there were two little dark "children of the sun," whose eyes glittered like black diamonds, and who hovered about like the attendant spirits of the Arabian Nights. It seems that Moustapha Bour-Kaib's son-in-law is an interpreter; he was brought up at Paris, and has now a good appointment in Algiers, and is the husband of the young lady in the white trousers and blue shawl. The interpreter went on a Government mission into the interior, a journey of ninety days, and there fulfilled his errand so much to the satisfaction of the native rulers that they made him many presents, and amongst others two little negroes—boy and girl—whom he brought back with him to Algiers. Slavery is abolished here, and the children might run away if they liked; but, having nowhere to run to, they naturally stay with the interpreter, who intends to marry them to each other when old enough, if the enormous quantity of bread and butter, they will by that time have eaten together, does not put a spoke in the wheel.

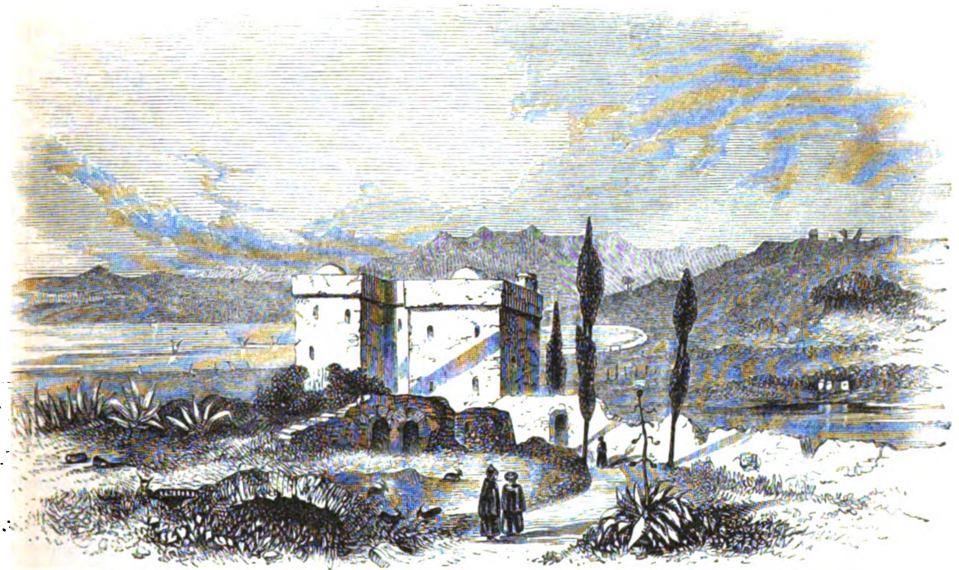
It is a sight to see these little ebony statuettes in the sombre passages of a Moorish house; the pure white architecture gives such fine effects of light and shadow, and nothing blacker than the small creatures of the desert was ever born in human shape. They look happy and well fed, and being legally free are not to be pitied. The interpreter's wife took us over the house, which is large and handsome, but ill-kept. In the bedrooms are iron bedsteads with mattresses and blankets, quite *en règle*. Other furniture there was none; a few carpets and cushions were strewn about, and added to the general air of untidiness. The roof was terraced, and afforded a lovely view over the fields to the sea, and up to the hills behind which the sun was setting. Moustapha Bour-Kaib owns much land and spends money upon his garden. He has a large tank, and pays a franc a-day for his water; the tank being a first

essential in the neighbourhood of Algiers, and always shown to visitors with pride. His orange-tree were magnificent, but an apple-orchard did not answer. We saw some miserable small trees which an English farmer would snub with disdain.

My readers will remember the lady in the "Arabian Nights" who said she should die if her husband did not procure her some apples. "With all my heart," said I, "I will do all that is in my power to make you easy; and went immediately round all the markets and shops in the town to seek for apples, but could not get one, though I offered a sequin each." This husband went all the way from Bagdad to Balsora—a fifteen days' journey—to get apples, and carried off the last three of that fruit at a high price; and then because his wife lost one, and he suspected her of having given it to a lover, he flew into a passion, cut off her head, and divided her body into four quarters, which he packed up in a bundle, and threw into the Tigris. So much for apples!

Moustapha Bour-Kaib asked his wife to show us her own particular garden, which she keeps locked up, and where no one works but herself. It was in a small walled court and contained plenty of flowers, which she picked and presented with grace. He is a jolly, familiar old gentleman, and he promised to bring his ladies to call on us some day soon, when no European gentlemen are to be admitted, and they are to be regaled with coffee and sweetmeats. He has another daughter, a great beauty, but who is divorced from her husband from some one of the light causes allowed by their law of repudiation. She is on a visit up at the hills, so we did not see her. Taken all in all, there is a certain squalor about this household which, in England, would be quite incompatible with easy means.

Grander in style is the house of a Cadi in the neighbourhood, where we paid yesterday a most



interesting call. Indeed, the ladies in that family are among the highest in rank in Algiers, and they were selected to receive the Empress Eugénie during her late visit to the colony, on which occasion one of the daughters was married. The Cadi is a courier of Bour-Kaib's, and all the male members of Bour-Kaib's house went to the wedding. The circumstances of our afternoon call were as follows. Algiers being at this time dignified by the presence of what the "Ackbar," the local colonial newspaper, calls, "un illustre membre du parlement Anglais," we were desirous to introduce his wife and daughter to a Moorish household, and to this end we asked two French ladies, both of whom speak Arabic, to procure an appointment for us. The Moresques dislike *impromptu* calls, and prefer due notice, as it allows them to dress and make their preparations. We proposed to go on Thursday, but an answer was returned through our French friends, that the Moorish ladies were going to the bath and could not receive us until Friday. So, on Friday, a party of sixteen English and French ladies assembled in the broad high road which leaves Algiers on the east, winding up the hills past the little villages, half French, half Moorish, each with its small Catholic chapel or convent, with a tinkling bell. The steep rough lane which leads from the road to the Cadi's house passes by the grounds of the great Orphanage kept by the Sisters of Charity, who cut a new broad path through one of their fields on the occasion of the Empress's visit, in order that she might drive in her carriage up to the Cadi's door. The rough lane opened into a field and then skirted some half-cultivated ground, and a well with a wheel for drawing up water, such as is commonly used here. In some instances jars are tied to a rope affixed to this wheel, and as they come up full, they are tilted over into a trough. The near approaches to the Cadi's house are eminently picturesque, but

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somewhat forlorn. Nothing in Algeria is neat according to our English conception of the word—neither dress nor architecture, nor the fabric of the stuffs of which the dress is made. If you see in a Parisian shop some very neat and even material of woollen or silk, said to be from Constantine, Tunis, or Algiers, be sure it is from none of the three; but from some Lyons loom. In like manner, if you see in this neighbourhood some fair white house with a trim garden and bright glass in the windows, and orderly shutters barred back against the wall—if the roses are trained into a hedge, and the prickly cactus is disposed in artistic clumps, be sure that the house is inhabited by Europeans. At the same time it must be confessed that such trimness is only to be preserved by a constant struggle with the elements; the hot suns of summer force up the vegetation to a wild luxuriance, and the heavy rains of winter beat down the plastered walls and wash away the gravel of the garden; while as to the wind which accompanies the rain, it snaps and tears the trees and the plants with a vicious vehemence which makes the gardener tremble.

Once inside the arched doorway leading into the court of the Cadi's house, the sixteen European ladies, rustling in silks and crinolines, found everything in festive order to receive them. A group of Moresques of all ages, from sixty to six years of age, stood on a sort of raised stone terrace which bordered on the house; in the middle of the court was a large tank of water, and a trellis-work covered with vines. The Moorish ladies, of whom our first glance conveyed an impression of innumerable black eyes and straight locks of hair, and of forms attired in spangled vests and full-coloured trousers, came forward to meet us one by one, shaking hands profusely with our troop of sixteen; and, singling out Madame —— who had arranged the party, they each and all kissed her on both cheeks, from the wife of the Cadi down to the very ugly servant, with strong indications of negro blood in her veins, and deeply pitted with the small-pox.

After the ceremony of welcome they conducted us up-stairs to the chief sitting-room, a long narrow apartment running along the upper gallery of the interior court. Large Moorish houses in the country have two courts, one outside which is more truly a walled garden, where is the fountain and the summer sitting-room, and one which sinks like a square well through the body of the house, lined by the open pillars of the upper and lower gallery, and often exquisitely ornamented with coloured tiles. A staircase leads from the upper galleries to the flat roof, which, in this climate, takes the rank of a third story, and on which separate rooms are sometimes built.

The long *salon* into which the Moresques ushered us deserved that name, for its quaint beauty was much disfigured by a gay French carpet and sundry chairs intermingled with the orthodox cushions. Here we all took our seats, some on the chairs, some on the cushions; sixteen Europeans, of whom two spoke Arabic, and could act as interpreters, and ten Moresques, with a bevy of children clinging to their respective mothers.

The patriarchal heads of this family are at the present time three elderly brothers, who married long ago three sisters, and brought them to live as one family. The old men are still all alive, and of the old women we saw one and heard of another; the third, who was mother to the girl lately married, died, and her place is filled by a young handsome wife, whom the widower took as a consolation; and as he is the Cadi himself, this young wife is virtually head of the female household, and was more splendidly dressed than any of the others, taking precedence of her old aunts.

The sons and daughters of the three original brothers have in several cases intermarried, and they also dwell here with their parents. One or two of the younger wives come from Algiers, and seem to be the only foreign elements. By what stringent laws and customs peace, order, and morality are preserved amidst such a crowd of close relationships, is somewhat difficult for a European to understand. Imagine three Mr. Browns marrying three Miss Thompsons, and bringing them all to live under one roof; then imagine all the first cousins choosing conjugal partners among themselves, accepting, without a murmur, the pretty or the ugly girls as their lot fell, and all equally remaining under the paternal rule! Would not the most frightful jealousies and rivalries occur? Would not John and Charles obstinately prefer Jane, to the exclusion of Mary and Harriet, though Jane had been previously betrothed to Edward? and would not the mothers of all these young people indulge in plots and plans to procure the happiness of their favourites? And if finally the paternal will prevailed, and Jane were married to Edward (though it is more than possible that all the while she liked Henry better than the other three), do you imagine for a moment that John and Charles would sit down comfortably with Edward every day? Yet this is literally arranged in every complex Moorish household, such as the one we visited. Extreme strictness of domestic law, and an utter absence of anything like the romance of affection, can alone render it possible.

When we were seated in state round the room, we began to examine at leisure the wonderful group of figures before our eyes. First in age, but not in honour, came the old wife before alluded to. She appeared to be between sixty and seventy, but looked more distinctively old than would a European lady, because her plain dress, chiefly white, and devoid of ribbons or ornaments, implied that she had totally renounced the attractions of the toilette. Her head was bound in a tight black cap, and her wrinkled face wore an expression of extreme sweetness and dignity. At her knee nestled a tiny boy, one of her grandchildren. The next in age to her might have been about forty; she was no longer handsome, if she had ever been so; but her pleasant, good-tempered face was elaborately painted, and her eyebrows met in long black streaks above her nose. Her short black hair, allowed to fall straight down her cheeks, after the very ugly fashion of the Moresques, was half covered with gay handkerchiefs, and on each side of the temples was stuck a bunch of narcissus. The vest was of

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gay-spangled silk, and the full trousers of sprigged pink cotton, which trousers were gathered at the knee and terminated by white cotton stockings. A pair of immensely wide shoes completed the costume. The Cadi's young wife was one blaze of colour and spangles, and her dress was much more truly Oriental than that of the others, being composed of handkerchiefs and scarfs such as are made at Tunis. She was not particularly good-looking; but she sat on the divan in the place of honour opposite the door, and was extremely civil. Two of the other young wives were remarkable for beauty, being sisters; and one of them had a charming little daughter of six years old, who wore full white trousers, and had her soft, silky hair tied up in a stiff blue pigtail. There were three or four others, but I cannot remember them individually. All these ladies had excellent, polite manners, and talked with much animation to the two interpreters. The conversation turned chiefly upon the children, and all our little questions were answered with obliging readiness. Much amusement was created by three of the European ladies kneeling down before one of the Moresques, who, with a little paint-brush dipped into a small silver jar, painted their eyebrows and eyelashes with the black paint in use for their own toilettes. The effect is not agreeable; the clear open eyes of an English woman acquire, when painted, a soft, languishing expression, strangely at variance with nature.

The next occurrence was the serving of coffee in tiny cups disposed on an oval tray, each cup being half buried in another which does duty as

saucer. They reminded me of eggshells fitting into eggcups, and I think I have seen such occasionally in old English houses, brought home by travelled sons from the East. This coffee is very sweet and thick, and full of fine grounds, being unstrained. The little girl with the blue pigtail (whose picture is below) hit herself a severe blow against the tray, and instead of bursting into a hearty roar, like any English child, she retreated to her mother's side swallowing her tears with an Oriental solemnity that was quite touching from such a mite. We gave her a fine piece of purple ribbon to comfort her, which made her a new pigtail, and brought her smiles back again.

Presently, on being earnestly requested for a song and a dance, they produced a tambour and an earthen vessel with a skin stretched across the bottom. One of the ladies took the tambour, and the negress, who is servant to the household and does all their errands in the town of Algiers, took the pot. The latter then commenced a monotonous chant, drumming regularly on the skin, and the lady accompanied her on the tambour, sometimes joining her in a sort of *refrain*. When this song was concluded, one of the young wives took a handkerchief in each hand, and began to dance to music. This dancing is a most extraordinary performance. The head and shoulders are kept perfectly immovable, while the limbs sway with a kind of undulating swimming motion; yet the whole figure scarcely changes its place. The lady was succeeded by the negress, who executed the evolutions with much more *entrain*, singing all the while. She seemed to consider

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herself an accomplished mistress of both the arts, and was entirely devoid of the timid gentleness shown by all the ladies. The last who came forward, and whose portrait was drawn by one of the visitors, was a sweet young girl of fifteen, a daughter of the house, who took the handkerchiefs and waved them from hand to hand with infinite grace. At the same time I must confess that Moorish dancing is not pretty nor pleasant to European eyes, and might easily degenerate in character from the merely domestic performance which was exhibited to us.

A slight sensation was created by our producing some little photographs of the French Imperial family. The Empress, or as they call her "La Sultana," was recognised at once. They do not appear to have been at all shaken from their usual gentle propriety by the advent of the Court ladies; for it was repeated as a great joke in Algiers that one of them addressing the Empress in a few words of fragmentary French, observed, with dignified amiability, "Toi princesse, moi princesse, princesses toutes les deux." Alas! the Moorish aristocracy is somewhat declined in grandeur, and this family in particular is extremely sore because their town houses have been taken from them—probably under cover of a compulsory sale. A certain destruction of Moorish dwellings was inevitable in the lower part of the town of Algiers, as no streets existed along which a carriage could pass, and others have long served to lodge the bishop and the Government officials.

When at length we rose to go, the same profuse shaking of hands took place, and in passing round the court and down stairs we were shown several of the bed-rooms. In one of these, belonging to a married couple, the husband's turban was neatly disposed on a little shelf. It looked for the moment as if his head were there, for it was the first time I had ever seen a turban, except covering the shaven pate of a Moor.

The whole party assembled in the outer court to bid us farewell, just as they had done to bid us welcome, repeating "Salaam, Salaam," to every visitor. Indeed, nothing could be more thoroughly kind and polite than they were in every particular, and we asked them if they would not pay us a visit that day week, promising that they should not see any gentlemen,—not even the master of the house. But the Cadi's wife shook her head, and said her husband would not allow her to come; and though we begged hard for the young dancer of fifteen, we were told by her grandmother that "she was too old to go out." The objection is to their visiting the houses of Christians, as they do attend fêtes at the dwellings of other Moors. Indeed, I have seen at least a hundred women assembled at a wedding, all buzzing like flies about the bride, or sitting on cushions, partaking of the wedding feast; but no man was admitted to the festivities. I believe the male relations were at the same time holding a gala with the bridegroom in another house.

As we walked away through the field, where a solitary negro servant, wrapped up in a burnouse, was keeping watch over a cow, we discoursed on the high breeding of the Oriental nations, and on their extraordinary self-possession. These women did not commit a single *gaucherie* of any kind; they neither showed vulgar curiosity, nor sheepish shyness at their guests. They regaled us with their coffee and sweetmeats, dressed for us, sang and danced to us, and answered all our questions, put through the interpreters, with a simple sweetness which was inexpressibly touching. Nor is there any lack of native intelligence in their faces, in spite of the empty life they lead. It was, however, curious to see the superior decision of manner shown by the negress. In former times, she would have been the "negro slave" who plays so large a part in the "Arabian Nights," pulling the other personages out of their scrapes, plotting, suggesting, and half commanding her masters and mistresses. Here she was merely an active family *factotum*, who conceived that it fell to her share to show everything off to the best advantage, and not to let the European ladies go away with the impression that the Moresques were behind the times in any single particular.

The singing was purely recitative, and I believe that there was, until lately, strictly speaking, no purely instrumental music among this people; indeed, as they have no musical writing, they can only transmit airs one to another by addressing the ears of their pupils, and so a newly-composed melody and its words naturally go together, and form a sort of intangible property to the musician. A sheik, named Mohommed Chibah-el-Din, was quite bewildered when Dr. Perron told him that a certain air composed by him could be written down, sent to Europe, and immediately performed in any orchestra. Thus, much of the early music is forgotten, and the fame of celebrated singers and composers has in many instances descended to our times, while not a note of their creations is retained. It will be easily conceived that the personal copyright of music was in the old famous days of minstrelsy and romance a subject of jealousy. This is exemplified in the following anecdote. The beautiful Dimn was slave to a great musician, Ishak, son of Ibrahim. On being asked to sing some air taught to her by her master, she answered that he never taught anything directly, and only allowed his slaves to receive fragments of his compositions, through some of his musical friends. "Never," said Dimn, "did I learn anything from Ishak, save on one occasion. He had been dining with Motacem, the brother of Mamoun, and he came back passably tipsy; indeed, I might say, drunk. He sent for me to come to him, and when I entered his room I found him staring at the stars, and chanting a verse of poetry to this effect: 'The night never will come to an end; my eyes are fixed upon the constellations, and they won't stir.' Then taking a mandola, he set these words, and many others, to music, which he polished and perfected to a high pitch of excellence, and, as I was present, I could not help catching the air. When the verses and the music were finished to his mind, Ishak, who had forgotten all about me, and that he had sent for me, suddenly said, 'Where is Dimn?' 'Here I am,' said I; on which he answered, crossly, 'How long hast thou been there?' 'Ever

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since thou beganst,' said I, 'and I have heard everything, but I owe thee no thanks, since it was not by thine intention.' On which Ishak bade

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me take the mandola and sing the air, which I did quite perfectly; on which he was furious with anger, because I had innocently stolen from him this charming composition. So he said disdainfully, 'Thou executest the air extremely badly, and I must re-arrange the composition.' But I told him I would save him the trouble, as I could myself introduce some improvements!" After which saucy response, the beautiful Dimn left the room, and Ishak went to bed very sulky, and would not speak to her for several days.

Whatever life exists among Arabic or Moresque women is best illustrated by stories, since in their general monotonous existence there is little that can be put into a descriptive form. I will conclude by an anecdote which appeared in yesterday's "Ackbar," showing the degree to which a jealous husband in Kabylia confined his wife, and the view she took of her privileges, or as we should say in England, her "rights to labour." A woman of the tribe of Aith-Sinakih went one day to complain to the Cadi that her husband would not permit her to fetch wood and draw water for the use of the house.

"Who then does it?" asked the Cadi.

"Our donkey does both," replied the wife.

"You ought to be very much obliged to your husband for keeping a donkey to do your work," said the judge.

"Nay," said she, "I am, on the contrary, the most unhappy of women, because this very donkey, who does my work, is an excuse for my being shut up!"

Bessie R. Parkes.

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LAST WEEK.

HAVE the Northern States of the late North American Confederation declared war against the Southern States? Has there been a collision between the Papal Zouaves and a regiment in the service of the French Emperor? Has Messina surrendered to the discretion of Victor Emmanuel's general? Has a young lady admitted — or is it at last proved, partly by her confession, partly upon corroborative evidence —that she was the murderess of the Road victim? By the time these pages are in the hands of our readers there may be a satisfactory answer to each of these questions; but meanwhile we know, as a question of fact, that Lord Palmerston's administration, during the last seven days, has been in imminent danger, owing to the dissensions which exist amongst the Liberal party.

The conviction is dawning upon the minds of the chiefs that they were premature when they expressed their opinion so openly in favour of abandoning all attempts to pass a Reform Bill of some kind or another through the two Houses. A party must have a "cry." Now when you have made abstraction of the clamour for a Reform Bill, what is the band which unites the Liberal party together? It is perfectly true, that the country upon the whole, if not indifferent, is not very eager about the matter. We are far more intent upon Garibaldi and Pio Nono than upon Mr. Locke King's motion; but, at the same time, it is felt that considerations connected with our foreign policy can never entirely supersede the interest which we all feel in the conduct of our own domestic affairs. For many centuries past the whole tendency of our constitutional arrangements has been to train up a body of men as political gladiators—let the phrase be understood in its most honourable sense—and now we suddenly leave them without employment. These men have been at one moment engaged in fighting the battle of religious liberty—then they struggled for great constitutional changes—finally, for an entire revolution in the commercial system of this country, and of the world. Many of these great Parliamentary champions still survive, and those who have succeeded them are heirs to the traditions of their fame, to their ardour, to their ambition. A moment has arrived when the political chiefs and the directors of public opinion say to them :—"Peace; pause for a while; put aside all constitutional strife; watch the progress of events on the continent of Europe. Support Lord Palmerston, and be very sedulous in committee upon the Bankruptcy Bill." At first they seemed not altogether indisposed to obey the injunction; but as time has worn on, as continental affairs have not taken the turn of a great catastrophe, they have become uneasy, they fret and chafe under the unwonted restraint. They long once more for the excitement and emotions of Parliamentary warfare. Even if the result is temporary defeat, they had rather be up and be doing than subside into a calm Epicurean indifference. Had the progress of affairs upon the continent of Europe been different—had the Italians taken the Austrian bull prematurely by the horns down yonder to the southward of the Lake of Garda—had the Hungarians burst out into open insurrection, or had the Poles been so imprudent as to anticipate events, it might have been different. In the presence of such overwhelming events our professional politicians might have been content to bide their time, and to adjourn all discussion upon our own constitutional changes, whilst that greater Reform Bill was under the consideration of Europe. This, however, has not been so. In very truth, Europe is casting off her old slough, and the purple rags which represent but the pageantry of former days, far more quickly than if the telegraph brought to us from day to day intelligence of bombarded cities, and hotly-contested fields; but we are not called upon to take any active part in the great drama. Hence the discontent in the Liberal camp, and all this talk about forgotten pledges and forsaken policy. Let us next see what during LAST WEEK have been the actions of our great neighbour.

Louis Napoleon has caused it to be intimated to the Pope, that he disavows all responsibility for the statement made the other day by his cousin, in that famous speech which the Minister of the Interior circulated so rapidly throughout the French Departments. Could any sign more ominous to the Papacy—more significant of a speedy cessation of the French occupation—be conceived? It has been Louis Napoleon's invariable policy in all such matters to act as each of the authors has done with regard to his contribution towards those *Essays and Reviews*, the sale of which our Archbishops and Bishops have so highly promoted. He publishes his little Essay with a contribution from La Guéronnière, and a Review by Prince Napoleon, &c., &c. Each writer disclaims complicity with his fellow; but their works are bound up together—are sold together—are read together, and produce a common effect. Each piece of an eight-gun battery no doubt might bellow out a claim to independent action, but the result is the same as though they had all been of one mind. Prince Napoleon's shell has fallen with great precision into the very presence-chamber of the Pope. The Emperor washes his hands, and declares he has nothing to do with it. As we look at these transactions from a distance, we are all declaring that the Papacy is at its last gasp—the same thing might have been said any day since it became clear that Garibaldi's landing in Sicily did not mean a mere marauding expedition, but the conquest of Two Kingdoms. The Southern section of the Peninsula was even as a matter of opinion the last Harbour of Refuge for the Papacy. As soon as that was closed against the Pope, as a temporal Prince he ceased to exist, save in so far as a foreign—that is a non-Italian nation—might be disposed to maintain his authority for awhile at the bayonet's point. The question, then, is not what is occurring at Rome just now, but, to a certain extent, what is the state of affairs at Vienna?—above all, what is the state of public opinion in France? This French public opinion is the master of the French Emperor as he is the master of the Pope. It is by careful study of it in all its variations that Louis Napoleon is what

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he is. Very often, round the dinner-tables of England, you hear discussions as to what is the real secret of Louis Napoleon's success! He is not a very acute man—he is not a very accomplished man. Most of us could name, amongst our friends and acquaintances—certainly amongst the public men of our time—persons apparently of higher pretensions to success, and yet somehow or another they don't succeed. True, he is the nephew of the most 'successful' man of modern times; but it must be admitted on the other hand, that he has turned his position as residuary legatee to the very best possible account. Our explanation of this phenomenon is two-fold. First, there is the wonderful taciturnity of the man: he can hold his tongue—that is a great matter; but still more, without a passion—without a prejudice—without a conviction—without an angularity of mind (save the Imperial Angle)—he can quietly watch the fluctuations of the political barometer—it is filled with quicksilver which we call "public opinion"—and regulate his policy by the register. A man who will and who *can* do this is in a very fair way to become a very great man in action. Now the private opinion of Louis Napoleon with regard to the Papal question is possibly one of absolute indifference;—probably if the decision of the question lay with him, he would get rid of the Pope to-morrow; but certainly, as a fact, he will go just so far, and not one step further, than the public opinion of France will permit.

What then is the turn of men's ideas in France upon this subject? This is to us the momentous question not only of Last Week, but of many weeks past, and of many weeks to come. In it is involved the reply to this demand of the Birmingham men who met together, the other day, in such numbers, and declared that the question of Reform should no longer be treated as a sham—a mere stalking-horse for the Ins or the Outs. Upon its solution depends the amount and quality of our Navy Estimates—the number and cost to the nation of our new Iron Navy—the reform of the Admiralty, and almost the intensity or slackness of the chace after Sir Baldwin Walker, that run-away Admiral of ours whom we must first catch, and then examine. Is there to be a peaceful end of the Italian—that is, of the Papal question? Our Army Estimates, our expenditure upon fortifications, the enthusiasm of our Volunteers, the quantum of Lord Herbert's graceful oratory, all depend upon the conclusion at which we may arrive upon this point. In point of fact, with the exception of the agitation for secession upon the other side of the Atlantic—and possibly the Yelverton affair—the public action of this country, and of all other European countries, is paralysed until the Papal question is disposed of. It lies with the French Emperor to abandon the Pope to his fate—it lies with the French nation to decide what the action of their Emperor shall be.

Is Louis Napoleon yet strong enough to deal with the Priests who had so large a share in raising him to power? Undoubtedly he would do so if he could; nor are signs wanting to show that, in his opinion, the moment has arrived when he may throw off a tutelage which oppresses him and embarrasses his government, although, in the beginning, it contributed in no small degree to his exaltation to power. What test can we apply to measure the gross ignorance of a French peasant who is vegetating in some village in the Bocages of Brittany, or amidst the jagged hills of Auvergne? The French Emperor must receive reports from the Prefects, and sub-Prefects—from his mayors and village authorities upon such points. With regard to these, English ideas are without value. Louis Napoleon has proved to the world, upon more than one occasion, that he can measure this class of force with sufficient accuracy, and turn it to his own account. If, then, we find him abandoning the Pope's cause, we may feel reasonably secure that the peasantry and peasant-priests of France do not altogether share the sentiments of the Bishop of Poictiers. There is, however, another class of public opinion amongst our neighbours on the other side of the Channel of which we can form a juster estimate. It is the "opinion" of which the head-quarters would be found in the Faubourg St. Germain—amidst the elder representatives of the territorial class—in the *chef-lieux* of the old provinces, rather than of the new departments. It would express in a word the sum of the sentiments rather than the convictions of traditionary France—of that France which reads Voltaire *en cachette*, or not at all; and believes according to the belief of cathedral towns and Madame la Comtesse. This "opinion" has been a power indeed! It has governed Europe for many an age. Napoleon Bonaparte's career was one long struggle against it, and he got the worst of it in the long run. "*Cette conspiration sourde*," of which he used to speak with true Corsican bitterness—that enemy which was guilty of no such overt act of treason as justified the employment of the gaoler and the firing party—was his true antagonist, and he knew it well. The imprisonment of the Pope of that day in a French prison was but an expedient to neutralise the force of this unseen antagonist. Could he have brought the spiritual into due subordination to the political and military chief—and he had remained that military chief, it might have been well. But time passed. The annoyances of peace were harder of endurance than the perils of war. The Great Soldier was in a hurry to get to Moscow; and so the raft, with the Pope on board, drifted back once more to its old haven in the Vatican.

In the recent discussions at Paris we have a kind of test which may help us to something like a correct impression of this "public opinion" of France. Louis Napoleon had judged that the moment had arrived when he could permit the opponents of his government to display themselves before the country in their true colours with the most perfect confidence, that the more vehement was their opposition the greater would be his gain. He has dared to do what his uncle never dared in the plenitude of his power—namely, summon the opponents of his dynasty to take part in the public discussion of his policy. During the First Empire, the Senate and the Corps Législatif were a mockery, because they had the name without

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the reality of authority. The corresponding bodies under the Second Empire are almost equally powerless, although they are invited to canvass and challenge the acts of the Emperor and his Ministers with all the freedom of an English Opposition. When we find Orleanists, Republicans, Legitimists chanting in concert the praises of the Pope, of the ex-King of the Two Sicilies, of the Emperor of Austria, of the ex-Duke of Modena, are we to infer that they represent the real feelings and opinions of the French nation stamped awhile under foot, and repressed by military violence? Or, would it be the better opinion—that Louis Napoleon is so very confident that these gentlemen do *not* represent the views of French society in the year 1861, that he is holding them up, or rather permitting them to hold themselves up as a spectacle to the country—being fully aware all the time of what the result of such an exposure must be?

It would be tedious to our readers, and unnecessary in the pages of this publication to make any more particular mention of the speeches which have been delivered in Paris for some time past. M. Pichou's furious philippic of Thursday last was the culminating effort of this remarkable series of orations. What may be the effect of them in France it would be premature to say, but at least thus much is true, that the Opposition speakers have done more to reconcile opinion on our side of the Channel to the government of the Emperor, than he himself could have accomplished in ten years of cordial efforts to secure our good-will. If France looks upon his government as a bulwark against anarchy and revolution, we on our side may very frankly declare, that if Louis Napoleon stands between us and the violence of French politicians, who seem only to be unanimous in the point of detesting England and things English, we may be content to wish him many long years of life and prosperity. The French Chambers do not seem to be one step further forward in statesmanship and common-sense than they were in those days when they were about to rush into war with us about a trumpery squabble at Tahiti, which might have been settled in an hour before any court of justice in any country. The cry of philosophical and religious France is still "Hatred of England," and for alliance with the military and spiritual despotisms which affect the world.

The Army Estimates, which were brought under the notice of the House of Commons LAST WEEK by Mr. T. G. Baring, are in themselves a sufficient proof that the statesmen who are charged with the responsibilities of the Empire, do not think that the moment has arrived for relaxing their vigilance, or omitting any measure of precaution. Mr. Baring asked the other night for about 15,000,000*l.* of money, and the Navy Estimates may be calculated at about a corresponding sum. Thirty millions sterling a-year for our Military and Naval establishments, and this at a time when, with the insignificant exception of hostilities at the Antipodes with some of the native tribes of New Zealand, the Empire is at peace—surely the sum is enormous! Thirty millions the annual amount we expend in insurance for our ships, and houses, and homes! Still the opinion of the vast majority of the country is, that we have not a man too many under arms, and, as far as our vessels of war are concerned, that we are but making a rush to recover a position which we must maintain or run the risk of losing our position, as a nation, amongst the nations of the world. It is no wonder if the members of the Lower House, who are specially charged with the responsibilities of the purse, display a morbid desire to appoint Select Committee after Select Committee to inquire into the details of this appalling expenditure! Can we not arrive at an equal degree of security, but at a lesser cost? The mistake of the Financial Reformers, or, let us say, of the Peace Party, has been, that they have founded their crusade upon a misapprehension. It is not true that the subjects of the British Queen believe that the Millennium is yet here;—it is not true that they wish to denude themselves of the means of resistance to foreign aggression, or to give up their place at the council board of the world. It is true that they believe that all these important objects can be carried out at a less cost. He will be the true Financial Reformer who can best show us how to pare down a few millions from this sum total without impairing our means of defence or detracting from our national security.

The intelligence from the United States received towards the latter end of LAST WEEK was not very satisfactory. Abraham Lincoln had arrived at Washington, and was about to enter upon his term of office. We must not attach too much importance to the formal expressions of his expectations that ere long the "misunderstanding" which was at present dividing the great North American Confederation into two camps might be removed. There seems little reason to doubt that the leaders of the Southern States are acting upon a settled plan, which has long been matured. It is not probable that they will yield, save to superior force; and the question is, whether the new President—the occasion arising—will be prepared to apply that force in the proper quarter? We are not yet rightly informed what the action of the Border States will be. Therein, if they take part with the President, lies the last hope of a peaceful compromise. Should they go the other way, hostilities seem well-nigh unavoidable. This is the sorriest spectacle which the Liberals of Europe have seen for many a long day. With all their faults of omission and commission, the States were still the only great community which gave the world a proof that human beings could live together in peace and prosperity without the repressive agencies of the old world to keep them in order. Alas! that so fair a prospect is dimmed and spoiled! This will be an eternal regret to every man now living on the earth's surface who respects the dignity of human nature, and who esteems the freedom of the human spirit from spiritual and intellectual police as the greatest gain which successive generations have won in the course of four thousand years.

The death of H. R. H. the Duchess of Kent, on Saturday last, though an event of little political significance, has not failed to awaken in the national mind a general feeling of sympathy with the loss sustained by our Queen.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE agitation which Bertha had been suffering, since the hour when she was roused that morning to hear Henderson's version of Adair's summons, had been so severe that it could receive little addition from a new interview with her rebellious servant. The latter, conscious of her power, had expected that when called to the presence of her mistress in the little bed-room where Mrs. Lygon had achieved her victory over Henderson, she should find Mrs. Urquhart eager to make atonement for the roughness of her husband. But if it is unsafe to calculate upon the acts of strong persons, it is almost as difficult to estimate the endurance of weak ones, and Henderson, to her surprise, found her mistress more than usually self-possessed, and by no means in a penitent state of mind. There was no actual resolution in Bertha, but she had resigned herself to float with a stream that was too strong for her, and she now indulged a vague hope of being safely landed.

"Mr. Urquhart has told you that he wishes you to leave, Henderson," she said, "and of course his will is law. I am very sorry to part with you, as you know, and I shall be glad to do everything for you, and to help you to any new situation. I shall have no hesitation in recommending you strongly to any one. And Mr. Urquhart is ready to behave with the greatest liberality as to wages."

For a few moments Henderson's indignation was so blended with her surprise, that she could not decide upon her reply, and she stood angrily crushing and rubbing a corner of her apron. Then she answered, breathing hard and fast.

"I am to go, Madame?"

"You heard what your master said, Henderson?"

"Yes, Madame, I did. But I took the great liberty to answer, Madame, that gentlemen did not always understand everything, and it was very far from my expectation, Madame, to hear you speak what you have done. I supposed, Madame, that you would make Mr. Urquhart understand

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that I was not to be turned out of the house like a dog."

"What could I say to Mr. Urquhart in the state of mind in which you saw him, Henderson?"

"It is not for a poor servant to counsel or advise her mistress what she ought to say to her master, Madame," returned Henderson, with elaborate affectation of humility; "it is quite enough for her to answer when she is asked questions."

"Mr. Urquhart's determination is very distressing, no doubt, Henderson," said Bertha, "and I am sure as much so to me as to you, for you suit me exceedingly well, and how I shall be able to replace you, I have not the least idea in the world. But who can say anything to him when he has made up his mind?"

"If I did not take that liberty, Madame, it wasn't because I had not anything to say, or was afraid to say it, but because I thought and hoped that you would say it much better than me. Is Mr. Urquhart gone out, Madame?"

"No, he is not," said Bertha; "but what do you mean by asking?"

"My character, Madame, is as dear to me as any lady's is to her, and perhaps more so, as she has everything in the world, and I have got nothing but my good name. And though Mr. Urquhart's tongue is very rough, he has a good heart, and he will do what is just and right."

"I tell you that he is ready to make you compensation for your going away hastily, and I will do a good deal besides."

"You don't understand me, Madame, or you don't want to understand me, but it is not about money I was speaking, after such words as were said to me in the drawing-room, and which I never thought to hear said to me, least of all in your house, Madame; and I know right well that if such words had been unjustly used to a poor girl in the service of Mrs. Lygon, she would never have rested until they were called back, and it is not a gentleman's angry voice and black looks that would have frighted her."

"I do not see why you should speak of Mrs. Lygon, Henderson. You are perfectly aware of the trouble which has come to us all by her visit to France, and I heartily wish that it had not happened."

Henderson's anger suddenly gave way to a feeling of superiority, which it became impossible for her not to manifest by a smile of exceeding insolence.

"What I may know about Mrs. Lygon, Madame, and what I may not know, and what she may have thought proper to tell me, or not to tell me, is not the business now. I only meant to say that she would have stood by a servant that had stood by her, and would have saved her from the disgrace and shame of being turned out of doors."

"There is no turning out of doors," said the humiliated Bertha, "and everything is done to spare your feelings. Of course you would not think of repeating to Silvain the angry nonsense which Mr. Urquhart told you to repeat to him, and you will be able to show him the proof that you were well thought of here. If you like, you can say that you left of your own accord."

It was not in the Hendersonian nature to abstain from trampling on a defeated antagonist.

"Thanking you very much for your advice, Madame, I beg your pardon if I choose to say to Silvain what I choose to say to him. It is for ladies and gentlemen to have secrets between one another, and tell one another the thing that is not, but poor persons are taught that man and wife is one flesh, and that what concerns one concerns the other. Humbly thanking you for your advice, Madame, I don't intend to deceive a man who never deceived me."

Yet, in this speech, Bertha—a woman—heard but a woman's taunt, and a woman's ungovernable tongue, and was saved by instinct from feeling the full force of words that might have shamed her to the soul.

"Your indignation at being sent away makes you very angry, Henderson, but you ought to feel that you have no cause of complaint against me. I have always treated you with the greatest kindness; and trusted you."

"Yes, Madame, and you have trusted me with things that have brought me to this, and for aught I know may ruin me, with poor Silvain. It is a pretty state of things when a lady's conduct not only puts herself in danger, but destroys people about her, who can't help themselves. I don't want to say too much, Madame, for I pity you very sincerely, but I can't have my comfort and happiness broken to pieces because a lady that I live with chooses to play a dangerous game, and has not got the wisdom to play it properly."

"What do you want to do, Henderson—what do you want me to do?" said Bertha, quailing.

"I don't see what you can do, Madame, though I should be ashamed of myself if I was afraid to say anything to my husband—when he had no proof against me."

Bertha gazed, with mixed feelings of fear and of insulted womanhood, upon the inferior who dared address such words to her.

"I think you had better go and consult with Mrs. Lygon before you take any step at all," said Mrs. Urquhart.

"And if it is not making too bold to ask, Madame, what would you like me to say to Mrs. Lygon? I am not a great coward, Madame, but I should shiver in my shoes to stand up before that sweet lady, and tell her what I think, or, I may say, what I know."

"And what do you know, Henderson?" cried the persecuted Bertha, recklessly.

"At least, Madame, I know this much, that one lady is kindly making herself the scape-goat for another lady, but does not think what a wicked burden is being laid upon the scape-goat's back," said Henderson, making, in her lofty anger, an unusual diversion into the regions of imagery.

"My sister knows her own business," said Bertha, in a low voice. "All I say is, that I think you had better consult with her before doing yourself any harm."

The word was not well chosen.

"I am not afraid of doing myself any harm," retorted Henderson. "It is only because I should

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wish to save other people from harm that I don't set myself right in two minutes; but if Madame is much afraid of my coming to harm, she will, perhaps, be so good as to favour me with her leave to go and speak to Mr. Urquhart."

"Henderson," said poor Bertha, "Mrs. Lygon likes you very much, and I am sure would take you to England with her. Why should you not go with her, and Silvain could set up a shop in London, where he would be sure to succeed."

"Begging your pardon, Madame, that will not suit. And if I was to be handed over to Mrs. Lygon, (and I don't say that it wouldn't be a pride and an honour to be with her,) if her character is to be taken away in France, I don't see what place she could offer a respectable girl in England."

"Would you like to marry Silvain, and I could assist you from time to time with money." Such was Bertha's next piteous proposal.

"It is very good, I am sure," replied the inexorable Henderson, "for a lady to take so much thought about the welfare of poor people like me and Silvain; but if it is all the same, we should prefer to take care of ourselves in our own way. But if I might ask a favour of Madame, if I am not making too free—" she added.

"What can I do for you, Henderson?" asked Bertha, eagerly.

"It is not so much for me, Madame, as for yourself. I think if *you* was to go and see Mrs. Lygon, and tell her what has happened, it might be a good thing."

The tone in which the last words were said, implied so much, that Mrs. Urquhart saw that this was what Henderson intended her to do.

"Yes, I might do that," said Bertha, slowly. And even in that hour of trouble she instinctively cast a look into the mirror that was nearest to her.

"It would be a very good thing," said Henderson. And in a moment she darted to a basketed flask of eau-de-Cologne that stood on a table, moistened her mistress's handkerchief, and was bathing Mrs. Urquhart's forehead and eyes as gently and sedulously as if the relations of mistress and maid had been of the most kindly character.

"Do you know Mrs. Lygon's lodgings?" said Bertha, entirely surrendering.

"Quite well, Madame. I will show them to you."

"Yes, but I must not be missed. In the temper in which Mr. Urquhart—"

"I understand, Madame. But we shall not be very long—and—I think you said that you would have no objection to give me a character."

"Of course I will."

"Mr. Urquhart has no objection to that, Madame?"

"On the contrary, he thinks that I have spoiled you a little, and the last thing he said was, that he did not wish to be hard."

"I am sure he is very kind, Madame. Well, Madame, I do know an old French lady, who was brought up in England, and who would like to have an English girl who could read to her, and remind her of young days, and I think that she would take me. But, poor thing, she cannot come out of her room, to ask about my character. It would be a great thing for me, if Madame would have the condescension to visit her; and if I am to turn out of the house to-night, it would be necessary to see her at once. Mr. Urquhart would have no objection to that?"

The tale was told so glibly, that Bertha doubted for a moment whether it were not a true one. She did not repeat it quite so glibly to Robert Urquhart, but told it quite well enough to satisfy a man who was naturally unsuspecting, and who, at this moment, was almost resolutely so—for woman's choicest time to deceive man is when he is generously regretful for having been harsh—and in half an hour Bertha was following Henderson, who, some distance in advance of her mistress, led the way to the lodging of Mrs. Lygon.

"I expected *that*," said Ernest Adair to himself, as he observed Henderson moving down upon the house he was watching from a window. "And here is my lady, walking as fearlessly as if she were a Sister of Charity. I fear that I have undervalued her intellects, or have not pursued the best method of developing them. The woman who, after that pleasant scene to-day, calmly walks off to see the other woman, has shown either marvellous tact or unequalled courage, and I had not credited my poor Bertha with any extraordinary quantity of either. I am truly glad that I determined to be her guardian angel—I shall conduct her to a better destiny than I expected. So, the old lady of the house has no lady staying there—no lodger in the world, never let lodgings—I can see the lies, though I can't hear them. Quite indignant, actually—her departed saint of a husband left her quite enough to live upon without turning lodging-letter—how the old head nods. But the advanced guard closes with the enemy, wants to say a word, enters, and the door closes—my lady looks doubtful, but she will not have to wait long—door re-opens, and Mrs. Urquhart is received with a kindly smile—Madame is up-stairs, and will be delighted to see her, and my lady enters—the old lady stands at the door—I wonder why. No, I see. Because that possibly holy, and certainly dirty, priest is coming by. To be sure; and she receives his benediction, and smiles thankfully—blessed are they that tell the truth, when it is quite convenient, for they shall be allowed to lie when it is not—did he mumble that beatitude to her? Now then, how long shall I give the amiable sisters for their interview?"

CHAPTER XLIV.

It was a quiet, neat little chamber in which Laura received her sister. The single window looked upon the street, but creepers had been trained upon wires that were drawn from the sill to the eaves of the two-storeyed house, and a pleasant light came through the green leaves, and a pleasant perfume from some flowers that showed among them.

"I had expected you sooner, dear Bertha; but I suppose that it was impossible for you to

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escape. Did you come alone?" said Laura, embracing her.

Mrs. Lygon had been writing, and several sheets covered with manuscript lay upon the table. As she put them together, Bertha suddenly turned away her eyes, as if some recollection had come upon her. Mrs. Lygon misconceived the action.

"These are scarcely secrets, dear, and you know them."

"I wish I did not," said Bertha, seating herself.

It was a childish exclamation, and produced only a look of calm pity from her sister, who, having placed her writing in a drawer near her, sat down opposite to Bertha.

"Have you any news to tell me?" asked Laura.

A simple question, to elicit such an answer as Bertha might have given. But, in truth, she had come with the hope that, though at the bidding of Henderson, she would be compelled to tell her sister of the girl's discharge, and perhaps of the earlier portion of the scene that had led to it, the more terrible revelation might be spared. If any sort of a peace should be made with Henderson, and if Laura should be induced to leave France, Bertha would have temporised to her heart's content.

"Yes," said Bertha, "two or three things have happened, but I hoped that you would take my advice, and go home."

"Your advice, dear?"

"Yes, I wrote to you to go home. You had my note in the garden, I know, for Henderson told me that she had delivered it into your hand."

"My dear Bertha, you need not be energetic on such a matter. Of course I had your note, and I have not gone home."

"It is very easy for you to be calm, but if you had to go through the scenes that I experience, you would not be quite so composed. Are you going to stay here?"

"That may depend upon what you have to tell me."

"I do not know why it should," replied Bertha, "because what I have to tell you does not concern yourself, but me."

"And I came to France on my own concerns, not yours?"

"If you are going to reproach me with that, I wish that I had not come to you," said Bertha. "It is too much that I should be attacked on all sides in the way I am."

"Bertha," said her sister, calmly, "if you consider the circumstances under which I left the house of your husband, and yet think that this is a tone which you ought to use to me, I too, shall be compelled to wish you had not come. But do not cry, dear. I know your nature, and I do not reproach you that while you think nothing of the sacrifices others make for you—sacrifices you can scarcely understand, Bertha, the smallest affliction to yourself makes you petulant. You are my sister, and I am true to you in spite of all. Now, tell me your news."

"Well, Robert has taken a strong dislike to Henderson."

"I am not surprised at that. Of course he thinks that she was party to my returning to the house, and even if he thinks that she was not to blame,—a man does not like the presence of any one who reminds him that he has been deceived. We must not let her suffer."

"That is what I told her; and I said that I thought you would take her to England with you."

"You must make no engagements for me. I know not what my course may be, but we can do something for her."

"It must be done soon, for Robert insists on her leaving."

"When did he tell you so?"

"To-day," said Bertha.

"Then it is Henderson's affairs that have brought you, not mine or your own, and yet you knew that I was here, Bertha."

"What good could I do by coming?" replied Bertha, "and then I was afraid of exciting Robert's suspicions, after what had happened. But what can be done for Henderson?" she persisted, anxious to evade any closer inquiry.

"You must try and find her another place."

"But there is no time. Robert is so resolved on her leaving, and she is naturally unhappy about it."

"But he does not wish to discharge her at a moment's notice—surely we have much more pressing matters to consider than what is to be done with Henderson."

"Yes—but you don't know her," said Bertha, reddening. "She is afraid for her character, and something must be done."

"She brought you here, did she not?" said Mrs. Lygon.

"Yes."

"Henderson!" said Mrs. Lygon, opening the door quickly.

The girl was seated at the foot of the stair leading up to the room. Laura might have been excused for supposing that Henderson had been pursuing her trade of listener, but even Tasso's Erminia could hardly have "precipitated" from the door to the spot which Henderson occupied.

"I am here, m'm," said the girl, springing up. "You might think, m'm," she hastened to say, "that I was listening at the door, but far from that, m'm, if you'll believe me, I was determined that nobody else should listen."

"I did not suspect you, Henderson," replied Mrs. Lygon, quietly. "Come in. We were speaking of you. Mrs. Urquhart tells me," said Laura, resuming her seat, "that Mr. Urquhart does not wish you to continue in his service."

Henderson darted a quick glance at her mistress.

"Those are the quiet words in which ladies put things, m'm. Mr. Urquhart has turned me out of his house."

"No, no, not that," said Bertha.

"I am ordered to be out of the house, to-night, m'm," said Henderson, addressing Laura, "which is one and the same thing."

"I did not understand you, Bertha, to say that the discharge was so immediate."

"I said there was no time to lose," stammered Bertha.

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Mrs. Lygon looked at her even more piercingly than Henderson had done.

"Did Mr. Urquhart himself order you away?" Laura said, turning to the girl.

"Yes, m'm," she replied, compressing her lips.

"When?"

"This morning, I told you," interposed Bertha.

"As soon as M. Adair had left the house," added Henderson.

Laura started—turned deadly pale—and gazed on Bertha without speaking. A pause, and then a thought sent the blood to Mrs. Lygon's face, and it was almost breathlessly that she asked—

"Whom did M. Adair see?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Urquhart, m'm."

Once more, pale as a marble statue, and as motionless, Laura sat gazing intently upon Bertha.

Neither spoke, but Bertha made convulsive movements with her hands, and gave other evidence that she was fearfully ill at ease.

Laura continued to gaze upon her sister. But the eyes of the latter were averted, and it needed a subtler interpreter than the girl to say what was denoted by that rigid expression on Mrs. Lygon's beautiful features.

Henderson could bear the suspense no longer.

"I know I ought not to speak until I am spoken to, m'm," she said, "but those who are at all, ought to be trusted altogether, and though I ought not to give my opinion," she added, (again using the curious plea by which the inferior classes conceive that they have excused themselves for doing wrong—the avowal of a full knowledge that they know they are not doing right), "between two ladies who are sisters there ought to be no secrets."

"Henderson," said Mrs. Lygon, suddenly arousing, "it is not for you to say anything to me which your mistress has not ordered you to say. Remember that."

"Begging your pardon, m'm, a hundred times, and a thousand at the back of that, if needful, what you say is quite right, and it is a liberty in me to say whether it is right or wrong. But Mrs. Urquhart is not my mistress now, being, as I am, discharged—"

"Mrs. Urquhart is my sister, Henderson," said Mrs. Lygon, firmly.

"Then let her behave as a sister," burst out Henderson, breaking through all propriety, and forgetting even her respect for Mrs. Lygon, in the resolve to make a revelation. "Things have happened in our house which you ought to know, m'm, and out of it also."

Mrs. Lygon rose, and pointed to the door, but the gesture had not its effect.

"And I could run out at that door, and hide my head, m'm, for presuming to speak in such a way, but I feel that I must speak, and I will. Mr. Adair has been in prison, m'm, and master found Mrs. Urquhart in the prison too, and how they have worked upon master I don't know; but if you'll take my opinion, the lady that left our house because she was too proud to say that she had a right to stay in it, that lady has been given up to save her sister who won't even tell her the truth."

"If we are ever to speak again in this world, Henderson," said Mrs. Lygon, when the impetuous rush of words ceased, and the girl stood with swelling nostril, yet with eyes ready to run over with tears, "you will instantly ask pardon of Mrs. Urquhart, and of myself, for your having dared to speak as you have done."

Down, actually on her knees, fell once more the excitable Henderson, and poured out apology, thick and fast, but, (with the pertinacity of her nature,) interwoven and interlaced with her petition for forgiveness, reiterations of the story she had been telling so volubly. There was no escaping from her assurances that Mrs. Lygon had been wronged, or from her prayers to be pardoned for having revealed the wrong; and in the most effectual way she forced her narrative, over and over again, upon the ears of her to whom she seemed to be suing for grace. And when she was almost silenced, Laura knew far more than had passed the lips of the girl.

"Go down-stairs," said Laura, still preserving her calmness.

"This moment, m'm," said Henderson, springing to her feet; "and now, m'm, never heed me, or what is going to happen to me and mine, for that's of no account now. Do justice to yourself, m'm, for the dear love of those who are left behind you in England—do that, m'm," cried the girl, tearing open the door, and rather plunging from the room than leaving it.

Mrs. Lygon secured the door.

"Now, Bertha, the truth?"

"O, don't torment me; don't, don't," said the miserable Bertha, wringing her hands, and writhing on her chair.

"Have done with that folly," returned her sister, almost sternly. "It will not avail you here, to-day. Tell me what you have done, or permitted to be done, with my name and fame."

"I cannot tell you—you have heard from her—Robert believes that you are not—not good."

"He believed that when he took my hand from yours, and I, your sister, from sisterly love bore that we should change places, that I should be led away from you for fear I should dishonour you by my touch. I bore *that*—and now I would know how you have repaid me."

"What could I do?"

"I ask you what you *have* done? Did you go to the prison and meet this man?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"He sent for me," gasped Bertha, "at least I thought it was better that I should go."

"Better than what?"

"Better than you."

"He sent for me, then? Ah!—I can have the truth by a word to *her;* but do not you humiliate yourself any more. But I will have the truth."

"Yes, he sent for you, and I went, and Robert found me there."

"And you had to give a reason for being in that man's company in a prison, and you said—"

Bertha was silent, but weeping hysterically.

Her sister took her hands from her face, as one might deal with a rebellious child.

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"And you said— If you do not answer I will have *him* fetched."

"I said nothing," sobbed Bertha, in her sister's grasp. "I had no words and no voice. But he spoke. Was it my fault that he said what he did."

"Your fault! What did he say?"

"That I had come to beg him not to injure a certain person."

"He made no such weak, foolish speech; and if he had made it, Robert would have given him the lie. He said that you had come to beg safety for me—me—he named me?"

"Could I prevent it?"

"Am I accusing you? And you listened, and confirmed his falsehood by your silence?"

"It was not quite a falsehood."

"Bertha!"

"I had been begging him on my knees not to do anything at all. I had told him that we were trying to get the money for him, and that we should do so very soon, and I was imploring him not to ruin us both—this was when Robert came in."

"There is no quarrel between you and Robert. I could see that by a glance at your face. The shame—the guilt—has been transferred to me. Do not dare to deny it—let me know all—give me a chance for my life, Bertha."

"Do not speak so. O! why did you not go to England?" said Bertha, crying bitterly.

"I *will* go to England," replied Mrs. Lygon, in a strange tone, "only I must know exactly how I stand with friends and enemies. Perhaps I will go to-night."

"O! do, do."

"Then there is a reason why I should go at once—*escape*."

"Yes—at least there may be—I do not know what Robert will do. He may send for—"

"Do not *you* mention that name," replied Laura. "Tell me what passed between your husband and that man."

"He is a bad man, a very cruel man—"

"I know what he is—say what he did."

"He had a book of letters."

"Letters!" gasped Mrs. Lygon, her face once more becoming ashy white.

"And he gave them to Robert to read. O! do not look so dreadfully."

"Never mind my looks," said Mrs. Lygon, with a distorting smile. "So he gave Mr. Urquhart a book of letters?"

"A book, yes," said Bertha. "You have seen the book, then?"

"I have seen it—yes, I have seen it," repeated Mrs. Lygon, slowly, and gazing intently into the eyes of her sister. "And *you* saw Robert read it?"

"He read every word."

"Then he said—what? Do not fear to tell me exactly."

"He called me to him, and showed me some of the—the letters."

"And you read them?"

"A few words, here and there, only, Laura."

"And you said—what did you say for your sister, Bertha?"

"What *could* I say, with those letters before my eyes?"

"True—very true—what could you say with those letters before your eyes," repeated Mrs. Lygon, slowly. "What could be said? There was no one to dash the book on the ground, and cry out that wickedness was at work, and that God was just—no one to speak for me, and to demand that I should be heard before I was judged. A sister was there, but there was no one to do this."

"O, Laura, Laura, remember who was in the room."

"Yes, Ernest Adair was there. And Robert Urquhart was there. And I will tell you who else was there. A wife, who, if her husband had laid his strong hand upon Ernest Adair, and had sworn to kill him on the spot, as he would have done, had he known all—a wife was there, who even now keeps a place in her heart for that villain, and would have tried to stay her husband's hand, at the price of her sister's honour."

"It is false that I care for Ernest Adair," said Bertha, terrified, and crying.

"It is true," replied her sister. "I was not long in discovering that. You were wearied with his importunities, and frightened at his menaces, and you would gladly have been separated from him by some shift, some accident. But the moment that you found this could only be done with peril to him, old, evil feelings came back, and you would have saved him."

Bertha flushed angrily under these words, and angrily she replied.

"It is not for you to speak to me thus. You had better think of your own position, and escape to England as soon as you can. Mr. Urquhart intends to write to Mr. Lygon to-night, and you know best whether you wish to meet him."

"Was this what you came to tell me, Bertha?" said Mrs. Lygon, calmly. "I heard nothing of this from you until that girl had been with us."

"It is not pleasant to tell such things, but I have told you now."

"It is not pleasant. No, you are quite right, Bertha. Let us speak of something else. Let us speak of your position."

"Leave me alone. I must manage for myself, as I have done before, and as I suppose I can do again."

"You wish for no further assistance from me?"

"I do not know what assistance I have had. You have made every day a terror to me, and I have wished myself dead a thousand times."

"You may have to wish it again, poor child, before all is over. Do you suppose that such men as your husband and—Mr. Lygon—are likely to leave this terrible story where it is? Do you think that Ernest Adair will not sacrifice *you*, when he is pressed, and the time comes?"

"No, he will not," said Bertha, promptly. "I am not defending him—"

"Yes, defend him; why not? You have already saved his life—will you shrink from doing him a smaller service! Why should you not defend him—he will need defenders soon."

"Then you are going to persevere in your plans," said Bertha. "I think that it is very wicked

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and very unwomanly, and in spite of all that has taken place, you are not justified in such revenge."

"Revenge! How little do you know of me. But I must not talk with you upon this. Even now, while you are almost hating me in your heart, you need my help. What do you intend to do with Henderson? She is not your sister—she has no pity for your weakness and folly, and she does not recollect being one of two children walking about a great garden with their arms round one another's neck, and talking innocently of love and marriage, but vowing to one another never to be separated—she is enraged with you, and at all events she has her own battle to fight."

(To be continued.)

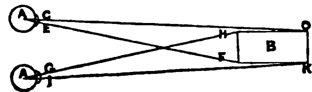
OCULAR STEREOSCOPY.

ALTHOUGH we are all familiar with that ingenious and beautiful instrument, the stereoscope, I think there would be found upon inquiry but a small number among the readers of this article who are equally well acquainted with the fact that ninety-nine persons out of every hundred are provided with a perfect substitute for this apparatus in their own unaided eyes. That the eyes are capable, without external assistance, to produce all the phenomena of stereoscopic vision is a fact, but the comparative rarity with which a natural aptitude for using them stereoscopically occurs may account for the general ignorance in the matter.

There are a few persons, however, in whom, from some cause or other, there exists a natural capacity for ready convergence of the optic axes (in the manner hereafter described) upon any required point. Possessing this power myself, and consequently dispensing with the assistance of the stereoscope, I have been so frequently asked by friends, anxious to do the same, to say how it may be managed, and describe, if possible, some simple means by which the art may be acquired, that I have given the subject a little consideration, and propose to beg the attention of a larger audience for a short explanation of the method by which this end may be accomplished. Previously, however, to proceeding with details, it will be necessary that we should all know a little something of the principles on which the phenomena of stereoscopic, or more properly binocular, vision depend. This subject has been treated so much at length by several modern writers, that I shall do no more than give, in a rapid and very much simplified form, the results of their researches and experiments.

Binocular vision, then, or the seeing with two eyes, is a most important element in the faculty of sight. To this we owe all our real sense of distance and relief; with one eye alone we could have no further conception of solidity than such as is furnished by our judgment and experience; the single eye would see only a flat landscape or unrelieved statue where this strange "second sight" shows us substantial realities, possessing all the charms of nearness, distance, and relief. This phenomenon depends upon a fact which I will endeavour to illustrate. Everybody is aware that we see two totally distinct and different pictures of any given object with the right and with the left eyes. To prove this, hold up a thin book with its back facing you, when the right eye will see the back and right side, while the left eye sees the back and left side of the volume: thus there are manifestly two pictures of the object completely unlike, painted one on either retina, but forming only a single impression in the brain. A more curious illustration is this. Stand at arm's length before the looking-glass, shut the right eye, and with a forefinger cover its reflected image; now open the right and shut the left eye, and the finger will follow the change; passing apparently across the nose, and settling with its point upon the left eye. Here again is a marked discrepancy between the pictures presented to either eye. The reasons of this difference are simple enough. Our eyes are fixed at a distance from each other averaging $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches; and since all rays of light travel in straight lines, the angle made by those pencils proceeding from any object we may view, and entering the one eye, differs from that formed by the rays which reach the other in a greater or less degree directly proportionate to the distance of the thing looked at.

The following diagram makes this immediately apparent:



Here A A represents the eyes $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart, and B an object about 12 inches distant from them; the lines C D, E F, and G H, I K, will accurately represent the respective pictures presented to either eye.

Now, this is the process which takes place whatever we may look at, and it is in virtue of this peculiarity that the effects of solidity and relief are produced.

The two pictures thus formed on their respective retinæ, both in themselves flat, combine in the brain into one, the resultant image being characterised by the most perfect sensation of relief.

To many it may seem rather paradoxical to declare that monocular vision is destitute of any real sense of distance; and some, I dare say, will be inclined to deny the fact on the supposed evidence of their own senses. Habit, judgment, and experience are so intertwined with our sense of sight, as with every other human faculty, that it is very difficult at first to realise the truth that one eye does not give the same effect of solidity as two. The following experiment, however, will perhaps help objectors to a solution of the question.

Place upon the table an empty small-mouthed phial, and taking another similar bottle full of water in one hand, shut either eye and approach the phial upon the table; then, without any searching motion stretch your arm quickly out and pour the water from the full bottle fairly into the other. In doing this, although you may not be absolutely unsuccessful, you will not fail to be conscious of a difficulty in judging dis-

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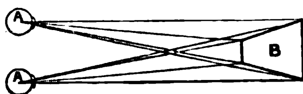
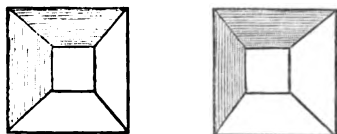
tance, which disappears immediately upon opening the other eye; plainly proving that judgment and experience, without any optical sense of relief, were guiding your first efforts. A similar uncertainty will be experienced on endeavouring to approach and snuff a candle with one eye shut. But to return to our argument.

When once it became clearly understood that in natural vision it was the two pictures carried to the brain from the retinæ, which were by their coalescence the cause of the perception of relief, an inference was soon made that if it were by any means possible to produce on paper a faithful copy of either image as seen by each eye separately, these pictures might on being properly viewed be naturally expected to coincide as their originals do, and give a similar sensation of relief. On experiment this actually proved to be the case. There is no need now to enter upon a description of the first approximately correct drawings which were made to test the truth of the theory; they were produced at a period just prior to the rapid modern development of photography, and it is not therefore surprising that this art was soon brought to bear upon them. Without photographic aid, indeed, the stereoscope could never be more than a piece of philosophical machinery, useless out of the study or lecture-room, inasmuch as nothing but the camera could possibly produce pictures of the requisite accuracy. To give one illustration, however, of the means by which the draughtsman's art may be made to prove the truth of the binocular theory, we take the following simple figure:



Here A A represent the eyes; B, a square based cone cut off at the top, which will be seen with either eye, as shown by the lines of sight.

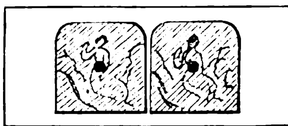
Proceeding now to draw the two figures mechanically as they appear at both A and A, and doubling the size of B, for the sake of greater distinctness, we get the following result:



two pictures which, when viewed in the manner immediately to be described, will form a single image, having all the appearance of perfect solidity.

It being now clearly understood that the common stereoscopic slide is nothing more nor less than two exact representations of any given view or object as we naturally see it with our two eyes, and that these pictures need only to be looked at, one with the right and one with the left eye, to ensure all the conditions necessary for the production of a sense of distance and relief, I proceed to describe the means by which any person having eyes of tolerably equal value as regards sight, may be enabled to make the images combine and get the stereoscopic effect.

On looking casually at a slide, or any other object, the natural tendency is of course to concentrate the axes of both eyes upon particular points of it successively; so rapidly is this done, that the whole surface of the picture is traversed instantaneously, and the general appearance gathered in a moment. This disposition to concentration of the optic axes is so strong, that some little practice will be required to overcome it, and make each eye act independently of the other with readiness, notwithstanding the assistance which will be given by the following plan. Procure a stereoscopic slide, consisting of a group of statuary, or any subject having a single, strongly-marked, and prominent feature, with considerable natural relief; bore two holes three-eighths of an inch diameter, and two and a quarter inches apart, through the centres of each photograph, as in the sketch below:



Then, sitting at one end of the room and in a good light, select some object, such as a vase or book, about twelve feet distant, hold the perforated slide close to the eyes, and look steadily at the thing determined upon through the holes, as through a pair of spectacles.

Now gradually remove the cardboard from the face, taking care to preserve its level, and keeping the eyes still fixed upon the distant object. As the picture is withdrawn, the two perforations will be found to coalesce, and form a central hole between two others, through which the vase or book selected will be seen; the appearance then presented by the slide will be as in the diagram:

for it follows that, having succeeded in bringing the holes drilled through the centres of the photographs into coincidence, the pictures must coincide as well and form a central image, over which, if the eyes are allowed to wander without changing the inclination of their axes, a perfectly solid stereoscopic view will be the result. This, however, will not be obtained all at once. On the first few trials, it is probable that so soon as the eyes are released from their allegiance to the distant point of convergence, and brought to dwell upon the slide, the old natural instinct of concentration upon the object viewed will instantly return, the central picture vanish, and the experiment become a failure. When this happens, repeat the operation described, always beginning with the slide used spectacle-wise, close to the face, and then gradually removed: in the course of half-a-dozen efforts the relieved image

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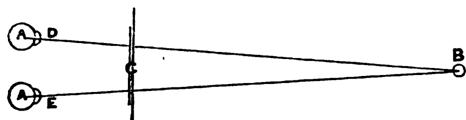
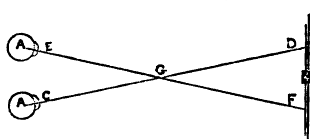
will at length be seized with the eyes, which, having once fairly got, they will hold with considerable tenacity. The optical grasp of the stereoscopic picture, however, may, when once obtained, be greatly increased in power, and made more permanent, by placing a card, or the hand held edgewise, between the eyes and the slide, forming a division between the two photographs; not only is the natural tendency of the eye to return to its instincts thus lessened, but the two external pictures are obliterated, and the true binocular image only retained, every detail standing out in perfect and complete relief. The following diagram explains the rationale of the previous process at a glance:



Here A A are the observer's eyes, B the distant object, D B and E B lines of sight passing through the holes in the slide C. By this simple means each eye has been made to see only one picture, and that the one which the same eye would see in a natural inspection of the original objects represented. The conditions of binocular vision being thus complied with, the coalescence and consequent solidity of the photographs follow as a matter of course. The holes described will not be found requisite in more than one slide, for when once the artificial habit of converging the optic axes on a distant point is formed, the effect may be as readily obtained with an opaque picture as with one rendered transparent by the perforations. In any case of difficulty, however, such as combining subjects composed of many and minute, instead of few and prominent points, recourse must be had to the drilled slide, and the proper convergence having with its assistance been obtained, the refractory photograph may be slid over the prepared one, when success is pretty certain.

Before closing this paper, another and simpler mode of attaining the same results may be described. This, though easier of accomplishment, is less convenient for general application for reasons to be mentioned presently. It has its special merit, however, in being the only ocular stereoscope capable of combining larger pictures than the common photographs.

Bearing in mind what has previously been said in connection with axial convergence to a point beyond the picture, it will be clear on glancing at the sketch below that the selection of a point of convergence situated *between* the picture and the eyes will also be the means of presenting one image to each eye, but their relative positions will be reversed. Referring to the diagram, A A are the



eyes, B the slide, E F and C D the lines of sight crossing each other in the point G. To carry out this arrangement, take a photograph, and holding it about twelve inches from the face, place a forefinger just half way between the eyes and slide; then look steadily at the finger tip, and, allowing the eyes as before to wander towards the picture, while they keep true to the convergent angle, the two views will be seen gradually to cover one another, and finally coalesce, presenting once again a central image; this time, however, *not* in relief. Convexity has changed to concavity, and things sink back where they should stand out. The reason is simple, but sufficient, as we just now hinted, to render this, the easiest method of producing ocular stereoscopy, practically useless. Although we have succeeded in combining the pictures, the change thus effected in their relative positions is of course fatal to the results. The right hand photograph (contrary to the natural state of things) has been presented to the left eye, and vice versâ. Now cut the slide in two, make its left side right, then combine as before, and again the sensation of complete relief will be produced; but since all ordinary stereoscopic slides are made for an instrument which insists on right being always right—and no one will care to divide all his pet pictures in this remorseless way—I think it will be best to substitute the perforated slide and patience for the scissors.

Method number two, however, can, as we said before, be used with larger photographs, properly arranged as regards reversed position, than number one. In the first, the point of convergence being beyond the picture, it is manifestly impossible to combine photographs whose centres are farther apart than two and a half inches, that being the average space between the eyes, inasmuch as when this dimension is exceeded convergence of the optic axes must of course cease and divergence begin. When this occurs the lines of sight recede from instead of approach each other, and might be extended indefinitely without meeting. Thus the point at which the pictures coincide being annihilated, their combination into a single image becomes impossible. In the second process, however, this is not the case, the lines of sight being capable of almost any amount of divergence when the point of intersection is brought between the picture and the eyes.

In the above remarks I have touched only on one or two out of many interesting points in connection with the peculiar phenomena incidental to binocular vision. Those who wish to go farther may readily find able guides to its deeper mysteries. This paper aims only at opening a few eyes to the sense of an interesting and not wholly useless power which they possess, and thus putting the ocular stereoscope—the oldest, cheapest, and best form of the instrument—in the hands of all who may think a little time and patience not too high a price to pay for its possession. D. P.

SIR JOSHUA'S PUPIL.

A YOUNG apprentice with very little heart in the study of his craft, after the manner of young apprentices, toiling in a watch and clock-maker's shop in the town of Devonport, heard one day the fame of great Sir Joshua's achievements in

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London sounding through the county—became conscious that the good folks of the shire took pride in the son of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, Master of Plympton Grammar School. Why should not he, the apprentice, become as great, or nearly so, a credit to Devonport, his birthplace, as was Sir Joshua to Plympton, *his* birthplace? Could one man only have art, abilities, and ambitions, and make for himself the opportunity to employ and gratify them? So the apprentice asked himself. And he must have been a clever fellow, that apprentice! He soon convinced himself—that was easy; but he convinced his family. He convinced several of his townsmen—difficult task, decidedly—that the best thing they could do with him was to send him up to town to study under his countryman, Sir Joshua, and to become, like him, a great painter. He had his way at last. In his twenty-fifth year he was painting in the studio of Reynolds, living under his roof.

After all, his dearest wishes gratified, perhaps the pupil was little better off. If cleverness, like fever, were contagious, it had been all very well. But the master was but an indifferent master. He could not, or would not, instruct. He was himself deficient in education—had few rules—only a marvellous love and perception of the beautiful, and an instinctive talent for its reproduction on his canvas. It was as certain as it was innate, but not to be expressed in words, or communicated or reasoned upon in any way. The deeds of genius are things done, as of course, for no why or wherefore, but simply because there is no help for it but to do them. So the pupils painted in the studio of their supposed preceptor for a certain number of years, copying his works; or, when sufficiently advanced, perhaps working at his back-grounds, brushing away at draperies, or such conventional fillings in of pictures, and then went their ways to do what they listed, and for the most part to be heard of no more in art chronicles. They had probably been of more use to the painter than he had been to them. Certainly our friend the clockmaker's apprentice was. For when there arose a cry of "Who wrote Sir Joshua's discourses, if not Burke?" this pupil could give satisfactory evidence in reply. He had heard the great man, his master, walking up and down in the library, as in the intervals of writing, at one and two o'clock in the morning. A few hours later, and he had the results in his hands. He was employed to make a fair copy of the lecturer's rough manuscript for the reading to the public. He had noted Dr. Johnson's handwriting, for *he* had revised the draft, sometimes altering to a wrong meaning, from his total ignorance of the subject and of art: but never a stroke of Burke's pen was there to be seen. The pupil, it must be said for him, never lost faith in his master. Vandyke, Reynolds, Titian—he deemed these the great triumvirate of portraiture. Comparing them, he would say, that Vandyke's portraits were like pictures, Sir Joshua's like the reflections in a looking-glass, and Titian's like the real people. And he was useful to the great painter in another way, for he sat for one of the children in the Count Ugolino picture (the one in profile with the hand to the face): while posed for this, he was introduced as a pupil of Sir Joshua's to Mr. Edmund Burke, and turned to look at that statesman. "He is not only an artist, but has a head that would do for Titian to paint," said Mr. Burke. He served, too, another celebrated man. With Ralph, Sir Joshua's servant, he went to the gallery of Covent Garden Theatre, to support Dr. Goldsmith's new comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," on the first night of its performance. While his friends are trooping to the theatre, the poor author is found sick and shivering with nervousness, wandering up and down the Mall in St. James's Park. He can hardly be induced to witness the production of his own play. Johnson's lusty laugh from the front row of a side box gives the signal to the worthy *claque*, who applaud to an almost dangerous extent, in their zeal for their friend, because there runs a rumour that Cumberland and Ossian Macpherson and Kelly are getting up a hiss in the pit.

"How did you like the play?" asked Goldsmith of the young painter, who had been clapping his hands until they ached, in the gallery by the side of good Mr. Ralph.

"I wouldn't presume to be a judge in such a matter," the art-student answered.

"But did it make you laugh?"

"Oh, exceedingly."

"That's all I require," said Goldsmith, and sent him box tickets for the author's benefit night, that he might go and laugh again.

Sir Joshua's pupil was James Northcote, a long-lived man, born at Devonport in 1746, and dying at his London house, in Argyll Place, Regent Street, in 1831. If he had a Titianesque look in his youth, he possessed it still more in his age. Brilliant eyes, deeply set; grand projecting nose; thin, compressed lips; a shrewd, cat-like, penetrating look; fine, high, bald forehead, yellow and polished, though he often hid this with a fantastic green velvet painting cap, and straggling bunches of quite white hair behind his ears. A little, meagre man, not more than five feet high, in a shabby, patched dressing-gown, almost as old as himself, leading a quiet, cold, penurious life. He never married. He had never even been in love. He had never had the time, or he had never had the passion necessary for such pursuits, or he was too deeply devoted to his profession. He was always brush in hand, perched up on a temporary stage, painting earnestly, fiercely, "With the inveterate diligence of a little devil stuccoing a mud wall!" cried flaming Mr. Fuseli.

He received many visitors in his studio. He was constantly at home, and liked to talk over his work, for he never paused on account of the callers. He never let go his palette even. He went to the door with a "Gude God!" his fanourite exclamation in his west country dialect, "what, is it *you?* Come in:" and then climbed his way back to his canvas, asking and answering in his cool, self-possessed way, all about the news of the day. Yet he was violent and angry, and outspoken sometimes, was Sir Joshua's loyal pupil.

"Look at the feeling of Raphael!" said some one to him.

"Bah!" cried the little man. "Look at

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Reynolds: he was all feeling! The ancients were *baysts* in feeling, compared to him." Ag again: "I tell'ee the King and Queen could not bear the presence of *he.* Do you think he was over-awed by *they?* Gude God! He was poison to their sight. They felt ill at ease before such a being—they shrunk into themselves, overawed by his intellectual superiority. They inwardly prayed to God that a trap-door might open under the feet of the throne, by which they might escape—his presence was too terrible!"

Certainly he was possessed by no extravagant notions of the divinity of blood royal.

"What do you know," he was asked, "of the Prince of Wales, that he so often speaks of you?"

"Oh! he knows nothing of me, nor I of him—it's only his *bragging!*" so the painter grandly replied.

He could comprehend the idea of distinction of ranks little more than old Mr. Nollekens, who would persist in treating the royal princes quite as common acquaintances, taking them by the button-hole, forgetful altogether of the feuds of the king's family, and asking them *how their father did?* with an exclamation to the heir-apparent of, "Ah! we shall never get such another when he's gone!" though there was little enough veneration for the king in this, as he proved, when he measured the old king, sitting for his bust, from the lip to the forehead, as though he had been measuring a block of marble, and at last fairly stuck the compasses into his Majesty's nose. Even the king, who was not very quick at a joke, could not fail to see the humour of the situation, and laughed immensely.

Modern taste prefers Northcote's portraits to his more pretentious works. The glories of Mr. Alderman Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery have pretty well passed away. However, Northcote's pictures were among the best of the collection. His "Arthur and Hubert," and the "Murder of the Princes in the Tower," and "The Interment of the Bodies by torchlight," were very forcible and dramatic works of art, and possessed more natural attractions than the pictures of many of his competitors. His pupilage with Sir Joshua prevented his falling into the washed leather and warm drab errors of tone that then distinguished the English school of historical painting. In the picture of the Burial of the Princes, Fuseli criticised:

"You shouldn't have made that fellow holding up his hands to receive the bodies. You should have made him digging a hole for them. How awfully grand; with a pickaxe, digging, dump, dump, dump!"

"Yes," Northcote answered; "but how am I to paint the sound of dump, dump, dump?"

The Boydell pictures were for a long time very popular, and the engravings of them enjoyed a large sale. Of course, Northcote despised Hogarth. Abuse of that painter seemed to be one of the duties of the British historical artist of that day. Yet he paid him homage: he painted a series of pictures, Hogarthian in subject, and proved to the satisfaction of everybody, one would think, the absolute superiority of Hogarth. Mr. Northcote's moral subjects, illustrative of vice and virtue, in the progress of two young women, are not to be mentioned in the same breath with the "Marriage à la Mode." Not merely were they deficient in expression—they were not equal in point of art-execution, though of course the more modern painter had planned to excel in both these qualities. But Northcote's portraits are really admirable—broad and vigorous—with much of Sir Joshua's charm of colour, if not his charm of manner exactly.

For fifty years he lived in Argyll Place, passing the greatest part of that time in his studio—a small room not more than nine feet by twelve crowded with the conventional articles of *vertu* that were then considered to be the indispensable properties of a painter. His maiden sister—"Northcote in petticoats," she was often called, she was so like him in face, figure, and manner—superintended his frugal household. Its economy was simple enough. The brother and sister were of one opinion. "Half the world died of over feeding," they said. They went into an opposite extreme, and nearly starved themselves. When there was a cry in the land about scarcity of food they did not heed the panic; they were accustomed to a minimum of sustenance, they could hardly be deprived of that. Fuseli, who sowed his satire broadcast, exclaimed one day: "What! Does Northcote keep a dog? What does he live upon? Why, he must eat his own fleas!" But the painter did not attempt to force his opinions upon others, so the kennel and the kitchen fared better than the parlour. The servants were indulgently treated, permitted to eat as they pleased and die in their own fashion—of repletion or apoplexy, if it seemed good to them.

If he was cold and callous and cynical to the rest of the world, he was ever good and kind to the pinched elderly lady his sister. By his will he gave directions that everything in his house should remain undisturbed, that there should be no sale of his property in her lifetime. He was counselled by considerate friends to have all his pictures sold immediately after his funeral while his name was fresh in the memory of the public; it was urged that his estate would benefit very much by the adoption of such a course. "Gude God, no!" the old man would cry; "I haven't patience with ye! Puir thing! d'ye think she'll not be sufficiently sad when my coffin be borne away and she be left desolate! Tearing my pictures from the walls, and ransacking every nook and corner, and packing up and carting away what's dearer to her than household gods, and all for filthy lucre's sake! No; let her enjoy the few years that will be spared to her; when she walks about the house let her feel it all her own, such as it be, and nothing missing but her brother. I'd rather my bones were torn from my grave, and scattered to help repair the roads, than that a single thing should be displaced here to give her pain. Ye'll drive me mad!"

One day there was a great crowd in Argyll Place. Not to see the painter, not even to see a royal carriage that had just drawn up at his door, nor a popular prince of the blood who occupied the carriage, but to catch a glimpse of one about

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whom the town was then quite mad—raving mad, a small good-looking schoolboy, a theatrical homunculus, the Infant Roscius, Master William Henry Betty. Of course rages and panics and manias seem to be very foolish things contemplated by the cool grey light of the morning after. It seems rather incredible now that crowds should have assembled round the theatre at one o'clock to see Master Betty play Barbarossa in the evening; that he should have played for twenty-eight nights at Drury Lane, and drawn 17,000*l.* into the treasury of the theatre. He was simply a handsome boy of thirteen with a fine voice, deep for his age, and powerful but monotonous. Surely he was not very intellectual, though he did witch the town so marvellously. "If they admire me so much, what would they say of Mr. Harley?" quoth the boy, simply. Mr. Harley being the head tragedian of the same strolling company—a large-calved, leather-lunged player, doubtless, who had awed provincial groundlings for many a long year. Yet the boy's performance of Douglas charmed John Home, the author of the tragedy. "The first time I ever saw the part of Douglas played according to my ideas of the character!" he exclaimed, as he stood in the wings; but he was then seventy years of age. "The little Apollo off the pedestal!" cried Humphreys, the artist. "A beautiful effusion of natural sensibility," said cold Northcote; "and then that graceful play of the limbs in youth—what an advantage over everyone else." As the child grew, the charm vanished; the crowds that had applauded the boy fled from the man. Byron denounced him warmly. "His figure is fat, his features flat, his voice unmanageable, his action ungraceful, and, as Diggory says [in the farce of "All the World's a Stage"], 'I defy him to *extort* that d—d muffin-face of his into madness!'" Happy Master Betty! Hapless *Mister* Betty!

Opie had painted the Infant as the shepherd so well known to nursery prodigies watching on the Grampian Hills the flocks of his father, "a frugal swain, whose constant care," &c., &c. His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, who was a patron of the stage—or the people on it, or some of them—brought the boy to Northcote, to be represented in a "Vandyke costume retiring from the altar of Shakespeare"—rather an unmeaning ceremonial. But the picture was a great success, and the engraving of it published and dedicated to the duke. He was then about forty—a hearty, bluff gentleman, supposed to be free and breezy in his manliness from his service at sea, kindly and unaffected in manner, had not the slightest knowledge of art, but regarded Northcote as "an honest, independent, little, old fellow," seasoning that remark with an oath, after the quarter-deck manner of naval gentlemen of the period.

The prince sat in the studio while the artist drew the Infant. Northcote was not a man to wear a better coat upon his back for all that his back was going to be turned upon royalty. He still wore the ragged, patched dressing-gown he always worked in. The painting of Master Betty was amusing at first, but it seemed, in the end, to be but a prolonged and tedious business to the not artistic looker-on. He must amuse himself somehow. Certainly Northcote's appearance was comical. Suddenly the painter felt a twitching at his collar. He turned, frowning angrily, but said nothing. The prince persevered. Presently he touched lightly the painter's rough white locks.

"Mr. Northcote, pray how long do you devote to the duties of the toilet?"

It was very rude of his Royal Highness, but then he was *so* bored by the sitting.

The little old painter turned round full upon him.

"I never allow anyone to take personal liberties with me. You are the first that ever presumed to do so. I beg your Royal Highness to recollect that I am in my own house."

He spoke warmly, glanced haughtily, then worked at his canvas again. There was silence for some minutes. Quietly the duke opened the door and left the room. The painter took no notice.

But the royal carriage had been sent away. It would not be required until five o'clock. It was not yet four, and it was raining!

The duke returned to the studio.

"Mr. Northcote, it rains. Will you have the kindness to lend me an umbrella?"

Calmly the painter rang the bell.

"Bring your mistress's umbrella."

Miss Northcote's umbrella was the only silk one in the house. The servant showed the prince down-stairs, and he left the house protected from the shower by Miss Northcote's umbrella.

"You have offended his Royal Highness," said some one in the room.

"*I* am the offended party," the painter answered with dignity.

Next day he was alone in his studio when a visitor was announced.

"Mr. Northcote," said the duke, entering, "I return Miss Northcote's umbrella you were so kind as to lend me yesterday."

The painter bowed, receiving it from the royal hands.

"I have brought it myself, Mr. Northcote," the duke continued, "that I might have the opportunity of saying that I yesterday took a liberty which you properly resented. I am angry with myself. I hope you will forgive me, and think no more of it."

The painter bowed his acceptance of the apology.

"Gude God!" he exclaimed, afterwards telling the story, "what could I say? He could see what I felt. I could have given my life for him! Such a prince is worthy to be a king!"

More than a quarter of a century passed, and then the Duke of Clarence was the King of England—William the Fourth. The old painter was still living, at work as usual, though weak and bent enough now, but with his brain still active, his tongue still sharp, his eyes still very brilliant in his lined shrunken face. "A poor creature," he said of himself, "perhaps amusing for half an hour or so, or curious to see like a little dried mummy in a museum." He employed himself in the preparation of a number of illustrations to a book of fables published after his death. He collected prints of animals, and cut

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them out carefully; then he moved about such as he selected for his purpose on a sheet of plain paper, and, satisfying himself at last as to the composition of the picture, he fixed the figures in their places with paste, filled in backgrounds with touches of his pencil, and then handed the curious work to Mr. Harvey, the engraver, to be copied on wood and engraved. The success of the plan was certainly as remarkable as its eccentricity.

He employed his pen as well as his pencil, contributed papers to the "Artist," and published, in 1813, a life of Sir Joshua. A year before his death he produced a "Life of Titian," the greater part of which, however, was probably written by his friend and constant companion Hazlitt.

He was in his small studio, brush in hand, very tranquil and happy, within two days of his death. It seemed as though he had been forgotten. "If Providence were to leave me the liberty of choosing my heaven, I should be content to occupy my little painting-room, with the continuance of the happiness I have experienced there, even for ever." He spoke of his works without arrogance. "Everything one can do falls short of Nature. I am always ready to beg pardon of my sitters after I have done, and to say I hope they'll excuse it. The more one knows of the art, and the better one can do, the less one is satisfied."

Sir Joshua's pupil—"Of all his pupils I am the only one who ever did anything at all,"—died on the 13th July, 1831, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. DUTTON COOK.

THE BEARD MOVEMENT.

"We do not for one moment presume to say whether it is right or wrong,—only if this sort of thing is to prevail, what's to become of Captain Heavy Swell?"—PUNCH.

WE shall not be diffuse on the subject of beards generally. Such a dissertation would possess no capillary attraction for the reader. We purpose to narrow the question, *vide* "Punch," as between the captain and the divine.

In a sanitary point of view, the ecclesiastic and the soldier stand nearly together. Does the campaigner ask a natural protector from the damp of the bivouac and the dust of the march, the clergyman requires the same for his constant country rides and his cottage evening lecture. Granted that the exposure of the one is much less than the exposure of the other, we observe *per contra* that the strain upon the throat of the one renders him much more liable than the other to atmospheric influences.

In this sanitary point of view we cannot gain much light from the ancients. Vulcan, who of all the gods most needed a natural protector, curiously enough, despite the dust and smoke of the forge, is represented by the Etruscans beardless. In other points of view we see with the eyes of antiquity a few advantages and disadvantages of the beard, both in ecclesiastical and military matters.

Let the captain come first. The beard has proved an incentive to glory by way of ensign. In the tenth century, King Robert of France was conspicuous by his long white beard, which he suffered to hang down over his cuirass to rally his troops in battle.

Plutarch has spoken of the beard as a covering for scars. Scars on the face of a soldier, however, are generally deemed comely, though some enemies we know to have been terrified when the Romans were directed to strike at the face.

One unquestionable good service which the beard has done to the soldier has been the negotiation of a loan, for money, we know, forms the sinews of war. When John de Castro borrowed 1000 pistoles from the inhabitants of Goa, he sent them part of his beard as security for the loan, telling them that all the gold in the world could not equal the value of this national ornament of his valour.

We note, however, one disadvantage of the beard in war, as commented upon by Alexander, who, according to Plutarch, commanded the Macedonians to be shaven, lest the length of their beards should give a handle to their enemies.

As regards the clergy, the long beard may be taken to indicate wisdom. Thus Horace, Lib. 2, Sat. iii. 34, speaks of it as the sign of a philosopher:

Sapientem pascere barbam.

Persius too calls Socrates "Magistrum barbatum;" and Juvenal speaks of a man as "dignum barbâ." Certainly there is in the beard somewhat of dignity to the instructor, as there is in it somewhat of terribleness to the warrior, though this dignity the cassocked divine must be content to share with the Gymnosophists, or Indian philosophers, who, as Strabo tells us, used to attract the veneration of the people by the length of their beards.

Ecclesiastical discipline on this subject has been influenced by varying reasons. Sometimes the clergy have been forbidden to shave, shaving being effeminate; sometimes the razor has been prescribed to them, because pride lurked in a beard.

In early times, beards were undoubtedly worn by ecclesiastics. Then came a smooth-faced interval. Then the beard flowed once more, as witness the portraits of Bishop Gardiner and Cardinal Pole, in the reign of Mary. Then the razor reigned again.

As an illustration of the persecution of clerical beards, only here the bishop was the shavee, we cannot refrain from copying an amusing anecdote related by Southey in his "Omniana," 191.

"Guillaume Duprat, Bishop of Clermont, who assisted at the Council of Trent, and built the College of the Jesuits at Paris, had the finest beard that ever was seen. It was too fine a beard for a bishop, and the canons of his cathedral, in full chapter assembled, came to the barbarous resolution of shaving him. Accordingly, when next he came to the choir, the dean, the prevot, and the chantre approached with scissors and razor, soap, bason, and warm water. He took to his heels at the sight, and escaped to his castle of Beauregard, about two leagues from Clermont, where he fell sick from vexation, and died."

One reason against bearded ecclesiastics we may hope has passed away for ever. It was valid in the seventh century, when we read ecclesiastics could not be distinguished from the laity by their actions, but only by their want of beards.

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Now, like "Punch," we leave the verdict to the reader, merely recording against one practice our unqualified prohibition, as has been done before. Du Cange tells us, in the General Court of Catalonia, 1351, "Ne quis barbam falsam seu fictam audeat deferre vel fabricare." J. S. V.

THE BEGGAR'S SOLILOQUY.

I.

Now, this, to my notion, is pleasant cheer,
  To lie all alone on a ragged heath,
Where your nose isn't sniffing for bones or beer,
  But a peat-fire smells like a garden beneath.
The cottagers bustle about the door,
  And the girl at the window ties her strings.
She's a dish for a man who's a mind to be poor;
  Lord! women are such expensive things.

II.

We don't marry beggars, says she: why, no:
  It seems that to make 'em is what you do;
And as I can cook, and scour, and sew,
  I needn't pay half my victuals for you.
A man for himself should be able to scratch,
  But tickling's a luxury:—love, indeed!
Love burns as long as the lucifer match,
  Wedlock's the candle! Now, that's my creed.

III.

The church-bells sound water-like over the wheat;
  And up the long path troop pair after pair.
The man's well-brushed, and the woman looks neat,
  It's man and woman everywhere!
Unless, like me, you lie here flat,
  With a donkey for friend, you must have a wife:
She pulls out your hair, but she brushes your hat.
  Appearances make the best half of life.

IV.

You nice little madam! you know you're nice.
  I remember hearing a parson say
You're a plateful of vanity pepper'd with vice;
  Yon chap at the gate thinks t'other way.
On his waistcoat you read both his head and his heart:
  There's a whole week's wages there figured in gold!
Yes! when you turn round you may well give a start:
  It's fun to a fellow who's getting old.

V.

Now, that's a good craft, weaving waistcoats and flowers,
  And selling of ribbons, and scenting of lard:
It gives you a house to get in from the showers,
  And food when your appetite jockeys you hard.
You live a respectable man; but I ask
  If it's worth the trouble? You use your tools,
And spend your time, and what's your task?
  Why, to make a slide for a couple of fools.

VI.

You can't match the colour o' these heath mounds,
  Nor better that peat-fire's agreeable smell.
I'm cloth'd-like with natural sights and sounds;
  To myself I'm in tune. I hope you're as well.
You jolly old cot! though you don't own coal:
  It's a generous pot that's boil'd with peat.
Let the Lord Mayor o' London roast oxen whole:
  His smoke, at least, don't smell so sweet.

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VII.

I'm not a low Radical, hating the laws,
Who'd the aristocracy rebuke.
I talk o' the Lord Mayor o' London because
I once was acquainted with his cook.
I served him a turn, and got pensioned on scraps,
And, Lord, sir! didn't I envy his place,
Till Death knock'd him down with the softest of raps,
And I knew what was meant by a tallowy face!

VIII.

On the contrary, I'm Conservative quite;
There's beggars in Scripture 'mongst Gentiles and Jews:
It's nonsense, trying to set things right,
For if people will give, why, who'll refuse?
That stopping old custom wakes my spleen:
The poor and the rich both in giving agree:
Your tight-fisted shopman's the Radical mean:
There's nothing in common 'twixt him and me.

IX.

He says I'm no use! but I won't reply.
You're lucky not being of use to him!
On week-days he's playing at Spider and Fly,
And on Sundays he sings about Cherubim!
Nailing shillings to counters is his chief work:
He nods now and then at the name on his door:
But judge of us two at a bow and a smirk,
I think I'm his match: and I'm honest—that's more.

X.

No use! well, I mayn't be. You ring a pig's snout,
And then call the animal glutton! Now, he,
Mr. Shopman, he's nought but a pipe and a spout
Who won't let the goods o' this world pass free.
This blazing blue weather all round the brown crop,
He can't enjoy! all but cash he hates.
He's only a snail that crawls under his shop;
Though he has got the ear o' the magistrates.

XI.

Now, giving and taking's a proper exchange,
Like question and answer: you're both content.
But buying and selling seems always strange;
You're hostile, and that's the thing that's meant.
It's man against man—you're almost brutes,
There's here no thanks, and there's there no pride.
If Charity's Christian, don't blame my pursuits,
I carry a touchstone by which you're tried.

XII.

—"Take it," says she, "it's all I've got:"
I remember a girl in London streets:
She stood by a coffee-stall, nice and hot,
My belly was like a lamb that bleats.
Says I to myself, as her shilling I seized,
You haven't a character here, my dear!
But for making a rascal like me so pleased,
I'll give you one, in a better sphere!

XIII.

And that's where it is—she made me feel
I *was* a rascal: but people who scorn,
And tell a poor patch-breech he isn't genteel,
Why, they make him kick up—and he treads on a corn.
It isn't liking, it's curst ill-luck,
Drives half of us into the begging-trade:
If for taking to water you praise a duck,
For taking to beer why a man upbraid?

XIV.

The sermon's over: they're out of the porch,
And it's time for me to move a leg;
But in general people who come from church,
And have called themselves sinners, hate chaps to beg.
I'll wager they'll all of 'em dine to-day!
I was easy half a minute ago.
If that isn't pig that's baking away,
May I perish!—we're never contented—heigho!

GEORGE MEREDITH.

ANECDOTES OF THE GENERAL ALEXANDER, COUNT SUVAROFF.

(FROM THE RUSSIAN.)

ALEXANDER VASSILIEVITCH SUVAROFF, surnamed Rhymnitsky, born in 1729, was the descendant of a Swedish nobleman, naturalised in Russia, during the reign of the Tzar Michael.

In 1749, Suvaroff happened to be on guard at the country palace of Peterhoff, when the reigning empress, Elizabeth, suddenly appeared on one of the walks near him. Suvaroff, without delay, presented arms. The Empress admired the enchanting view of the open sea, and then, turning her attention to the youthful guard, she said:

"What is your name?"

"Alexander Suvaroff, may it please your Majesty."

"Art thou any relative to my faithful servant, General Suvaroff?"

"I am his son, your Majesty."

"I congratulate you, my friend, for having such a father. Try to follow in his steps, and serve me with equal zeal and fidelity, and I will not forget you."

"Happy to do my best, your Majesty," answered the youth, with emotion.

"And here is for thee a ruble," said the Empress, offering him a silver coin.

"All-gracious sovereign!" replied the young guard, "it is forbidden to the soldier to receive money while on guard."

"Ah! young man," replied the Empress, smiling; and then patting him on the cheek, and allowing him to kiss her hand, she added: "Thou, I see, knowest thy duty. I will leave the money on the ground. Take it when thou art relieved."

Suvaroff again presented arms, and with looks of joyful gratitude, watched the form of the departing Empress. When relieved, picking up the coin, he kissed it; and resolved to preserve it as a precious pledge of his sovereign's gracious notice. The next day, the private, Alexander Suvaroff, was sent for by his general, before whom he appeared.

"I congratulate thee, Suvaroff," said the general, "I have just received an order from the Empress to make thee corporal. Continue to serve as thou hast done till now, and thou wilt not remain without reward."

In the very beginning of the reign of Catharine the Second an occurrence took place which drew upon Suvaroff the particular attention of his sovereign.

When commanding the Souzdal regiment of foot, he built at Ladoga, at his own expense, a school-

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house for soldiers' children; and, in this school, he was himself the teacher of arithmetic.

Suvaroff was earnestly desirous of giving his soldiers a lesson in taking a place by storm; and, for this object, at the season for manœuvres, he resolved to carry by assault a monastery that happened to be situated at no great distance from his quarters. With his peculiar rapidity of combination, he laid down the plan of the assault; disposed his forces, attacked the monastery, and carried it. The circumstance naturally occasioned much remark, and eventually reached the knowledge of the Empress. She expressed a wish to see the strange mortal who had distinguished himself in so novel a manner, and she received him with extraordinary favour.

It was from this time that the shrewd sense of Suvaroff led him to feel that, according to established forms, he might remain long unnoticed in his career; and he therefore, encouraged by his success on this occasion, assumed from policy a mark of sportive eccentricity, which accordingly appears, more or less, in all his subsequent proceedings and conduct.

An example is afforded on the occasion when, without orders from his superior officer, General Weimar, he sallied from Lublin against the great Polish hetman, Oginsky. On taking this step, he simply wrote to Weimar:

"The match is at the gun, and Suvaroff's in the field;"
and at the head of only one thousand men, he defeated Oginsky at Stolovitcha, dispersed the confederates, and reduced them to submission. He then, through Brest, returned to Lublin, having pacified Lithuania, and deprived the confederates of their last hopes of raising disturbances in that province. General Weimar removed him from command, and ordered him to be tried by court-martial. Suvaroff observed:

"Judge me, and punish me, if you will; but for all that, Oginsky is crushed, and Lithuania is quiet."

Catharine the Second relieved him from his trial, and sent him the order of Saint Alexander Nevsky.

During the second Turkish war which was carried on by Russia in alliance with Austria, a numerous Turkish army, under the command of the Grand Vizier, by having skilfully covered its movements, succeeded in surprising the Austrian forces, under the Prince of Coburg. In such perilous circumstances, the Prince was compelled to demand succours from Suvaroff, who, with his division, was at no great distance.

To the messenger despatched for this purpose by the Prince to Suvaroff, the latter answered:

"I come," and began his march. Immediately on his arrival, the Prince sent to invite him to a conference. The answer was: "Suvaroff is saying his prayers."

The uneasiness of the Prince increased, and after waiting in vain, he despatched another express, who brought back for reply: "Suvaroff is at supper." The oddity of this conduct astonished the Prince, who, losing all patience, sent a third express, when the answer was: "Suvaroff is asleep."

The truth of the matter was, however, very different. Suvaroff had not thought of sleep. He had betaken himself to the top of a lofty tree, to ascertain the disposition of the enemy. Under the tree sat his adjutant, and some officers of his staff. Till it became quite dark, Suvaroff did not descend from the tree, and when he did so, he observed to his generals:

"Now, I will begin my business. And if the Prince sends again, let the answer be, as before, 'Suvaroff is asleep,' for if I go to him, we shall pass the night in arguing about tactics; we shall not agree; and shall lose time for nothing."

At dawn of day, however, he waited on the Prince, and agreed on the measures to be taken. The Turks, in the meantime, confident of victory over the Austrians, crossed the river Rhymnik, in spite of its steep banks, and began the attack. To their great surprise, they were met by the bayonets of Suvaroff. When it was announced to the Grand Vizier that the forces were commanded by Suvaroff, he refused to believe it, saying:

"It must be another Suvaroff, because the first died of his wounds at Kinburn."

On this day, the banks of the Rhymnik witnessed a most sanguinary battle, in which the Turks were utterly defeated, and Suvaroff, himself, led the pursuit.

For this victory Suvaroff received the Order of Saint Andrew, set in brilliants, a sword of honour, also adorned with diamonds and laurels, with the inscription:

To the conqueror of the Grand Vizier.

He also received a diploma creating him a Count, with the surname of Rhymnitsky; and in addition the Order of Saint George of the first class.

It is well known that Suvaroff insisted on the strictest observance of all military duties by those under his command. On one occasion, at the fortress of Rochensalma, in the island of Kotka, in Finland, Suvaroff had allowed one of his adjutants leave of absence for a few days. The term expired, but the officer did not appear. Suvaroff recollecting him, inquired for him, and hearing that he had not returned, was displeased. The adjutant soon after made his appearance, and his first question was:

"Has the Count inquired for me?"

"Yes, several times," replied his comrades, "and he seems by no means satisfied. If you wish to smooth over your fault, you had better wait upon him without loss of time, and beg forgiveness."

As said, so done.

"Where is the Count, just now?" asked the adjutant.

"He is bathing in the sea," was the reply.

The adjutant, in all haste, directed his servant to hand him his parade uniform. The white pantaloons and high boots, with all other appliances, were soon put on, and in full dress the officer proceeded to his general, bathing in the sea.

Suvaroff, on perceiving from a distance the approach of the returned officer, began to go farther from the shore. The adjutant at once guessed that the Count intended to play him a trick, and without any hesitation as to sparing

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his parade dress, instantly entered the water, and went straight to his general. Suvaroff saw that the officer had guessed his intention, and went still farther into the sea, and the adjutant still followed him. The water now reached up to the general's chin, but the officer still proceeded.

Suvaroff, at last, seeing that his adjutant was as thoroughly drenched as a half-drowned hen, and that the punishment had been sufficient, stopped, and allowed the officer to come near. The adjutant drew himself up, placed his hand to his casque, and made his obeisance. Suvaroff, smiling at his wetted adjutant, gave him a gentle reprimand, and then dismissed him to his quarters to re-dress himself, and for the future to observe regulations more closely, unless he wished again to bathe in the sea in full uniform.

In the year 1794, Poland rose in arms, at the instigation of Kosciusko. Catharine the Second sent Suvaroff to suppress the disturbances, and to punish the originators. The news of his appointment to the chief command was received by the troops in Poland with transports of joy, and his presence awaited with the utmost impatience. Suvaroff arrived in a common kibitka, or covered sledge; a very plain, but with him a very favourite vehicle. He took up his quarters in a hay barn; bringing with him his usual retinue, consisting but of three persons: the kosak, Ivan, inseperable from his master; the valet, Proshka; and the cook, Meetka. Suvaroff instantly issued his orders, and then, partially closing his eyes, he very distinctly pronounced the words:

"The troops march when the cock crows. March boldly. Regiment after regiment. Let not heads wait for tails. Hurt not the inhabitants."

With this speech he dismissed his hearers. Ivan, the kosak, handed brandy; and Proshka, the dinner, consisting of broth and pudding of buckwheat. After his dinner Suvaroff undressed, and lay down to rest on the hay, over which was thrown merely a mantle of thin blue woollen stuff. He rested not long; but was soon seen sitting on the hay, considering with great attention a map of the country, which was spread out before him. His pocket-watch struck seven o'clock, afternoon. Suvaroff at the sound jumped up, and clapping his hands together three times, slowly sung out:

"Kickerykikeeh! kickerykikeeh! kickerykikeeh!"

The drums at once began to roll, and the whole camp was quickly in active, but orderly commotion. The tents were rapidly struck, and within a quarter of an hour the entire body of 14,000 men were in full march to deadly battle, rejoicing in their hearts, and full of reliance on the genius of their leader.

Their first achievement was the taking of Kobrin; the next was the defeat of the enemy, at Krupchitza. Suvaroff, on the 22nd of October, 1794, took Prague by storm; and on the 29th of the same month Warsaw submitted without a blow. The victor rode into the capital of Poland, simply on horseback, in his ordinary uniform, without wearing any mark of distinction, and his despatch to the Empress consisted but of three words:

"Hurrah! Warsaw's ours!"

The Empress returned an answer equally laconic:

"Hurrah! field-marshal!"

Accordingly, for these services, Suvaroff received the truncheon of a field-marshal, set with diamonds, and an estate with 7000 peasants, situated in the neighbourhood of Kobrin.

OUR DOGS.

Amongst the various classes of animals which have been made the companions of man, there are none which bear comparison with the dog for assimilation with the habits and feelings of the human race. Others may obey, but the dog anticipates; and well repays the trouble of domestic training, not only growing more attentive to his master's wants and wishes, but more intelligent himself, more capable of understanding, and, consequently, of responding.

The peculiar attachment of the dog to the human race is perhaps the most remarkable phase of canine character. It is the more so because it appears to supersede his attachment to his own species. How long, for instance, a dog will watch his master's movements in eager anticipation of the accustomed walk or ride, when he is all the while at perfect liberty to take the same journey with any of his own four-footed friends. But, well as he likes to meet with them, to ask questions, or do a stroke of battle by the way, he seldom condescends to make a journey except in the company of man. There are, however, exceptions to this rule. Amongst the many dogs that were domesticated beneath my father's roof, I knew two terriers who lived together on such intimate terms, that they did manage sometimes to transact a little business on their own account, without the intervention of man. They were observed to be frequently absent together for two or three hours in the day; and, curiosity being excited, they were watched as they proceeded from the house; when it was discovered that hunting was the occupation which drew them away in company. Their mode of pursuing this sport was remarkable. My father's dog, Spot, a white wiry terrier with two or three black patches on his coat, was the *gentleman* of the party. When they found a suitable position for making observations, Spot used to seat himself upon a little hill, if such could be found, about the centre of the field; and here he remained, keenly observant, until his friend, by scouring round and round, had started a hare or a rabbit, when both struck off in pursuit. It happened by some accident, that the more humble friend, who did the scenting and starting the game, had his leg broken. It was bound up, and soon healed; but for some time he was considerably disabled. He still loved the sport, and his friend loved his companionship; indeed, we used to call them David and Jonathan, their lives were so united. It seemed to be agreed between them how they should meet the difficulty caused by the accident; for, on repairing to their accustomed hunting-ground, the lame dog took the elevated position on the hill, and Spot then hunted until

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game was found, when they ran as usual in company.

There was certainly no training of man in this case; yet both were highly educated dogs, and might have learned something from human fellowship, which was directed by instinct to their own purposes. The advantages of canine education are not to be set aside by a few rare instances of this kind. Indeed, when people complain of a dog that it will not obey, does not understand their meaning, and has no sense, depend upon it the animal has been tied up in his youth; has never seen the world so as to adapt himself to it; and, above all, has never been brought under the direct teaching of man. I once had a fine-looking animal of this description. He would neither come nor go at my bidding, did not even know how to get out of the way of danger, and finally made such a fool of himself as to fix his affections upon a cat, which he attempted to follow into all sorts of impossible places, and once did follow by running rapidly up a high ladder to the top of a hay-stack, from which elevated position he was unable to descend without assistance.

We have only to watch the shepherd's dog to see what early training will do. Instinct, no doubt, does something, but a ready apprehension of its master's meaning, and a ready obedience in keeping back, as well as chasing, can only be the result of education, und of association on familiar terms with the habits of man. The noble sheep dogs peculiar to the Pyrenees afford a striking example of this. By no means particularly gentle in their own nature, as many travellers can testify, they become, under the direction of the shepherd, the most docile of companions; and though large and lion-like—for they have tawny hair, and black eyes, with a good deal of mane like the lion—may be seen walking patiently behind their master, ready to obey the slightest signal of his lordly will. Their relation to the sheep, too, like that of the shepherd, is of a milder and apparently more benignant nature than with us. The Pyrenean shepherd always walks *before* his sheep, literally, as well as scripturally, *leading* them; while the large, noble looking dog guards them on either side, occasionally mixing with the flock, appearing rather to fill the place of an elder brother than an enemy, or an object of terror to the sheep. In this manner, accompanied always by a few goats, which give more of picturesque effect to the group, the shepherd of the Pyrenees may be seen winding his way amongst rock and box-wood up to some height amongst the lofty mountains. Here, especially on the southern side, a rich pasture is found; and here the shepherd and his dog, with the goats and sheep, take up their residence for three or four of the summer months, or until approaching winter drives them downward by slow stages into the valleys below.

If the Cumberland shepherd's dog is less noble looking than that of the Pyrenees—and he certainly is not half the size—he has a beauty and docility of his own which adds no small amount of interest to the rambles of the traveller through our own lake scenery. It is not long since I had an opportunity of watching the intelligence and obedience, often displayed by these beautiful animals, in one of the wildest mountain solitudes of Cumberland. On a projecting turret of rock, about half-way up the side of a rugged hill, I observed a man standing. It was too distant for me to hear what he said; but I saw by his gestures, for it was a fine clear morning, that he was issuing orders to some subordinate agent in one of the many defiles or valleys which run out from the wide amphitheatre through which we were passing. I could not proceed without ascertaining what the commander of this unseen force could be about; and I soon discovered a black dog, no bigger than a speck in the distance, fetching up some half dozen sheep, which he brought to a particular spot in the open plain; and then, looking out for his master's signal, set off to penetrate another valley, with a similar object. I waited until the dog had in this manner collected the whole flock; when the shepherd descended from his post of observation, and taking charge of the sheep himself, drove them in one united flock over the brow of a neighbouring hill. As soon as the master took the sheep under his charge, the dog dropped modestly behind. His occupation for a while was gone; and I saw him, all the rest of the way, close to his master's heels, with head and tail depressed, as if he had shrunk into total insignificance, both in his own and in his master's esteem.

To my mind, it is both instructive and affecting to see in my walks, as one often does, the dog that is left watching by himself in charge of his master's sheep, or it may be of his coat or wallet. But I seldom see an instance of this kind of docility and faithfulness, without being painfully reminded of a circumstance which impressed me deeply when a child. The narrator knew the man; and the circumstance occurred in a bare, cold, wild district, not far from our residence. A shepherd, or farmer, had the care of a flock of sheep near a small town, where he was tempted to the public-house. The weather was intensely cold, and he could not well have remained with his sheep; so he gave them in charge of his dog, while he went to regale himself by the fire of the little inn. Here he remained so long in a state of drunken insensibility—sheep and everything forgotten—that the poor dog was found dead at his post. The dumb animal had never left his charge. More than two days elapsed without any one coming to relieve guard. He had neither food nor shelter! and yet, faithful to his trust, hungered and died in the act of duty.

One of the most amusing effects produced upon dogs by their association with man, is seen in their increased sensitiveness to ridicule. It is possible they may have a kind of ridicule amongst themselves, and they are no strangers to the sensation of being laughed at. Indeed, it would be difficult to say positively what they have *not;* for the curious etiquette which prevails amongst them would warrant the belief that they have many social customs and institutions, all of which may be attended, for anything we know to the contrary, by the same sensitiveness which we ourselves experience to praise and blame, or to any other impressions produced by social intercourse. When two dogs meet, there always passes between them

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a kind of intelligence, as to whether they shall fight, or play, or go quietly about their separate business; and until this is settled, both stand still, or walk round each other, keenly observant of any warlike indication, on the slightest expression of which a battle ensues. It is true there are rude animals that rush instantly upon any dog which may happen to be passing, as there are human barbarians who refuse to be amenable to the laws of good society; and such dogs may not inaptly be styled the plebeians of their race. While thus standing until the mode of procedure is decided, nothing can induce either animal to run, however great may be the need for haste. It is evidently an occasion for the nicest punctilio, and it is curious to observe how the smaller animal of the two, when thus situated, will raise himself on his toes, and try, by every means in his power, to look tall and commanding, so as to overawe the stranger with a sense of his dignity and power. No actual diminutiveness has anything whatever to do with this display of majesty. Indeed it is to be questioned whether a little dog, any more than some other small animals, ever did discover that he *was* little. On the occasion of these accidental meetings, as already said, the dogs never run—nothing can make them run—until the interview is concluded. If they run, they are most probably laughed at, and certainly they present every appearance of having lost ground in public opinion; for other dogs will then join in the pursuit, so that the poor craven runaway has enough to do to escape, amidst the jeers and the hootings of his persecutors. Out of these, their natural habits, there may possibly arise a kind of dim perception of what it is to be made game of by man.

Dogs are often very indignant at being cheated, and seldom take a practical joke as fun. I knew a fine pointer that lived so much with his master, and understood his meaning so well, as to be deeply hurt whenever he was made the subject of loud or continued laughter. He was my brother's dog; and once, when out with him on a shooting expedition, he took a strange fancy to leap over a long pole placed across the path. There was space enough for a dog twice his height to pass under it; but no, he would leap over; and each time, the pole being long and weak, as his toes touched it he fell backwards over, looking of course extremely ridiculous. My brother watched him with considerable curiosity, and at last burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter; upon which, the dog, as if conscious of his own absurdity, hung his tail, and walked away. He was naturally the happiest and most exulting companion in the field, and fondly attached to his master; but on this occasion nothing could induce him to look after another partridge, or to remain where he was subject to have his feelings so lightly treated. Another time he received a similar insult from his master at the breakfast table. He retreated in the same manner; and such was his embarrassment, that he was found by the servants sitting bolt upright on a chair beside the kitchen clock.

But to speak of the entertainment afforded by this social animal, even from his early puppyhood, would be to fill volumes; and after all, no language could describe the look, the manner, the action, which combine to render the dog so irresistible and piquant in his drollery. It is action, in fact, in which he so far surpasses other animals; and this must be the subject of familiar observation to be thoroughly appreciated.

On the other hand, there are pictures impressed upon the memory, for which neither pen nor pencil have ever been found sufficient—pictures of domestic scenes, or of solitary experience, in which the dog has occupied a place not inferior in pathos to that of his human associates. What household sorrow has ever been so deep, that the familiar dog could not enter in and take his part? What lonely sufferer has ever been quite alone, while his dog was left? What outcast from the human family has ever felt himself utterly discarded, so long as his dog did not forsake him? There is such a thing as being so poor in human love, as to be doubly thankful for the affection of a dog; and there are moments in human life when the sympathy of a faithful dog is more welcome than that of many friends.

To these animals has been attributed, I do not know whether justly or not, a kind of instinct bearing reference to the subject of death. Certainly they are capable of being strongly impressed by the usual evidences of household mourning, as well as of individual sorrow. A fit of weeping will often bring a dog to the mourner's feet, and cause him to look up, and even whine, with the most piteous expression of countenance. I remember a circumstance connected with a dog, which it is still painful to recall, though the poor fellow was soon committed to a quiet grave. I had gone to be with my father in his last illness; and while he lay on the bed from which he was not likely ever to rise again, his dog, a young and really worthless animal, cared for by nobody, seemed wholly at a loss what to do with himself. The last partialities of old people are often their greatest weaknesses, and certainly this dog had nothing to recommend him but his great love for his master, and his faithfulness in attending upon his steps. He was a bounding foolish creature, of no particular kind, and consequently despised. I soon found that, although he had never seen me before, and I had taken but little notice of him, he was transferring all the warmth of his affection from my father to me. I did nothing to encourage it, for I could not bear to think of his forlorn condition, and his presence was painful to me; but still his attachment grew, until the animal seemed to haunt me. I never opened my chamber door in the morning but he was there; I never walked in the fields but he pursued my steps. People said I must take him away with me. I could not do that; but I felt painfully, as the poor creature seemed to feel, what a desolate lot his would be when the great event should be over, and when all who had congregated in the old hospitable mansion should have gone back to their different homes.

I had soon too much to think of to pay any attention to the dog; only I observed that he was still continually beside me. When I departed for the last time from the well-known door, some friends accompanied me in a close carriage, from the win-

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dows of which I never looked until we had proceeded about two miles, when the driver informed us that a dog was following the carriage. It was my father's dog. We endeavoured to send him back, but he would not go, and I was obliged to place him in custody at the nearest town, about four miles distant. This was but a simple fact; yet how touching in all its tender and painful associations! This unfortunate animal, without much distinctive character, had been educated to love, to obey, and to depend, in all his actions upon an individual of the human family. Had he been a dog of nobler capabilities, with such an education, he would have been invaluable; for it is the constant association with an intelligent and attentive master which makes all the difference between a dog that is more pleasure than trouble, and one that is quite the reverse.

Indeed the difference between an educated and an uneducated dog is so great, as almost to justify the belief that something more than instinct has been bestowed by nature upon this interesting animal. Hence, to those who have carefully observed this difference, and whose delight it has been to make the dog as wise and as happy as such a faithful companion deserves to be, nothing can appear more absurd, and few things more cruel, than to keep this fine, sensitive, and noble creature closely confined through all the years of his naturally joyous and bounding youth. The very sociability of the dog, and its power of attaching itself to us by real affection, and not by mere self-interest, ought to teach us more consideration in return, than to practise this almost universal and outstanding cruelty, which the spectacles of every day, and the sounds of every night, sufficiently prove that we cannot do without inflicting absolute torture. I wish every ear in these British realms was as sensitive as my own to the mournful howlings of chained-up dogs, panting, struggling, and imploring to be free—to be free, if only for an hour each day—to be free to rush and bound and gambol over field and common, with the wild, invigorating enjoyment which it does good to the tired human heart only to behold. The very life of the dog is in action. Look at his limbs—their wiry structure, and the quivering, nervous sense that aches for freedom to spring, and dash, and bound wherever there is space for exercise, and air to scent and pant in. Yet, behold! on the morning of a fresh, frosty day, what tortured captives clank in their chains, which no generous hand ever comes to loosen; and then, at the close of the same day what piteous howlings tell the often-repeated tale of a life-long anguish, doomed to know no amelioration; until the cramps of death shall kindly come and still for ever that unconquerable animation which is the natural and inalienable birthright of the dog.

It may be said of the dog, as of the human slave, that long habit under close confinement tames down his nature to some degree of contentment. And we might in return inquire respecting the dog, as well as other captives, how much does he lose in being worn down to this degrading condition? But it would perhaps be more available to the practical purposes of benevolence, to consider how much man is himself a loser by keeping a howling, struggling monster on his premises, instead of a faithful, happy, and amusing friend—a friend whose companionship would give interest to his walks and rides, whose intelligence would grow beneath his training, whose gambols would cheer his loneliness, whose affection would solace him in moments of sadness, and whose welcome would never fail him (though others might) even at his own door. S. S.

SONNET FROM PETRARCH.

"Se la mia vita da l'aspro tormento."

Lady! if I survive this bitter smart,
And struggle on—in spite of wasting tears
And weary sighs—to see in future years
Youth's radiant light from those sweet eyes depart
Time's silver mingling with thy golden hair;
Thy dainty robes and garlands laid aside;
And faded that bright face, that in its pride
Doth make me fear to tell my love's despair.
Then shall I grow more bold, and dare at last
To utter all my woe—to number o'er
The years, the days, the hours that evermore
In grief I spend; then, though the time be past
For love and love's warm hopes, yet thou wilt deign
Some tardy sighs to pay for so much pain. W.

A NIGHT RIDE TO THE GUILLOTINE.

During one of my visits to France, I found myself obliged, for reasons well known to my friend, the editor of the "Chemical ——," to stop at a little inn by the roadside about five leagues from Troyes. It stood quite alone, with the exception of one small house adjoining it, occupied by the landlord's son. It seemed a singular spot to select for the establishment of an inn, but it had, in fact, been at one time a post-house, and was the place at which the diligence halted, when those vehicles were the only means of transport for such as could not afford to travel like an English milor. At present, it was seldom it had to accommodate a traveller within its walls for a night, but this did not greatly grieve the landlord, inasmuch as in the days of his prosperity he had acquired a snug little farm, which gave plenty of occupation to himself and his son, and three or four labourers.

As the first idea which occurs to the mind on reading of a traveller stopping at a lonely inn is that the said traveller is about to describe how, in the middle of the night, the bed began to sink through the floor, or the roof of the bed to descend in unpleasant proximity to his face, or the landlord came stealing in with a knife in his hand with sanguinary and felonious intentions towards him, in which he was foiled by the little dog who barked at seeing such—sport I was going to say, only it would be improper to suppose that little dogs, or any other animals, regard that as sport when practised by human beings towards each other, which the latter do not hesitate to call by that name when they practise it against animals—I must say, in justice to my landlord, and not to let him lie for an instant under such a dreadful suspicion, that he was, as far as I know, a thoroughly honest fellow, and that any designs he might have on my purse were only such as he might lawfully entertain in his Bonifacian capacity. Not, be it under-

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stood, that I wish to throw doubts on the veracity of those travellers who have described similar adventures. Was it not at a solitary roadside inn in England that a waggoner stopped to refresh himself and his horses; and was it not the landlord and a friend of his who followed the said waggoner for three or four hundred yards after he resumed his journey, knocked him on the head, and afterwards put it under the broad wheel of his own waggon? Was it not the landlord of a similar house of accommodation in France—who died quietly in his bed some four or five years ago—who used to drug the liquor of such unfortunate travellers as stopped for the night at his house, and bury them in an adjacent field before they had time to wake? And was it not within the last few months that in making a railway cutting they found the skeletons of his victims—the poor old woman who hawked needles and thread, beside the *colporteur*, whose books lay mouldering along with him in his unconsecrated grave; the miserly Savoyard beside the hard-working and still more miserly Auvergnat, both returning from Paris to establish themselves with their hard-earned savings as small landed proprietors among their relatives in their own country? It is worthy of mention, as illustrative of the foresight of this Boniface, that he is said to have been so remarkably kind and charitable to the two last-mentioned classes of individuals when they were tramping up to Paris, that they always made a vow they would stop and drink a bottle or two of wine at his house on their return; and, considering how many skeletons were found in this field, and how thoroughly he must have been used to this method of disposing of his guests, it is not impossible that he died regretting the crop of Savoyards and Auvergnats he had sown, and which he would not have an opportunity of reaping. Finally, was it not the landlord of an inn in an Italian city who, also within the last twelvemonths, was suspected by his guest to have sinister designs upon him, and consequently, finding it would be impossible to leave the house without resorting to force—a course of proceeding not to be thought of by an unarmed man in opposition to two armed ruffians—pretended to go quietly to bed, but only lay, with his clothes on, beneath the sheet, until he saw his host steal softly to his bedside, when he sprang out, snatched the knife from the hand of his would-be assassin, and, by a lucky thrust, laid him dead across the bed before he had time to utter a single exclamation? Is it not further recorded in the "Opinione," the "Independente," and sundry other Italian newspapers, how the said guest stood, afraid to move, not doubting that there were others only waiting for the signal to rush in and bear off his corpse, until he heard the rattle of some earth against his bedroom window. That he opened the window, and heard one request him softly to put the *cosor* in the sheet and lower it down. That he thereupon tied the body up in the sheet as compactly as was possible, and tumbled it out of window into the arms of the individual in the garden, and then crept quietly out of the street door to a post of the municipal guard close by, and made them acquainted with what had happened; and that the guard having made their way into the garden, found the landlord's son in the act of filling up a hole, who replied to their inquiry, "What are you doing?" "Burying a dead ass;" but was horrorstruck, on being made to take out the body and unfasten the sheet, at finding that what he had termed a dead ass was the body of his own father.

I might go on quoting numerous other indisputable occurrences of a like kind at inns, but that would be to wander too far from the subject which I set out with the intention of narrating; and I have said sufficient to prove that inns have been the scene of even more horrible crimes than most of those already described. Besides, I have instances enough recorded in my note-book to form a distinct article.

It was about noon when I took possession of the room appropriated to my sole use for the remainder of that day and night, and it was just two hours past midnight when I sealed and addressed the envelope ready for the post. Not caring about sleep just then, I poured myself out a cup of coffee, lighted a cigar, and leant out of window to smoke it with the satisfaction of a man who feels that he has done his duty.

I had hardly time to distinguish all the beauties of the scene which the moonlight rendered visible, before my attention was attracted to the sound of horses' feet and the rattle of wheels, which faded almost away, probably from being stifled by the trees which lined the road for a little distance, then again burst out afresh, and I knew by the sound that cavalry were approaching. In a very short time they had halted in front of the inn, and the captain called out to me—

"Now then, my good fellow, just step down and let my men have some hay and water for their horses, and be quick about it."

"Monsieur seems to have mistaken me for the landlord. He had better direct his men to knock at the door."

Mille pardons, Monsieur. I should not have expected to find a traveller at this out-of-the-way place."

"Probably not; and as the fact of its being an out-of-the-way place renders it likely that you will not get the refreshment you would prefer, perhaps you will do me the honour to come up to my room and take a cup of coffee with me, as soon as the door is open."

"Monsieur is an Englishman, I perceive. I shall be very happy to accept his invitation."

As I had no desire to be mistaken for a Frenchman, my vanity was not at all hurt by this intimation that my accent was not Parisian. The captain gave some directions to his men, and then called to the landlord to show him up to my room. He was a resolute-looking man, with a somewhat domineering manner, not unusual among French officers in general, and cavalry officers in particular, but was an agreeable, manly fellow notwithstanding. I gave him a cup of coffee, and handed him my cigar-case, and after thanking me, he remarked:

"It is by no means an usual circumstance for us to be on the march at this hour, but a very unpleasant duty has devolved upon me—that of conducting an escort of two wretches who are to

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be executed for murder at Troyes, some four or five hours hence."

"Is there any particular reason for sending them so far to be executed, at the last moment?"

"It seems there are peculiar circumstances connected with the affair which induced the authorities to order it to take place at the principal town of the department. The time for their execution had been fixed—though the criminals themselves do not know it yet—and at the last moment the order was sent down for them to be transferred to Troyes."

"And they are to be put to death this morning, you say?"

"Yes."

"I am not partial to such scenes, but as I have never seen the guillotine in action, I think I should like to be present. Would that be possible?"

"That depends. You would not like to ride with one of those miserables. Besides, each has got his priest with him. Has not the landlord got a horse he could lend you?"

I went down to consult the landlord, and found that he had a jewel of a horse, one that could trot easily the five leagues in two hours. Having arranged with him to have this horse got ready for me at once, I returned to the captain to inform him of my success, and received an invitation from him to ride with him. It then occurred to me to ask him what were the peculiar features of this case which caused the ordinary custom to be departed from.

"It would give me great pleasure to tell you," he replied, "but it would really take too long, as we must be on the march again in a few minutes, but I think I can get you the newspapers which contain a full account of the affair." Then going to the window, he called out, "Sergeant Boichot! have you not the journals which contain the report of the trials of the condemned?"

"Yes, my captain," I heard the man answer.

"Then have the kindness to bring them up here. A gentleman wishes to see them."

Directly after a trooper entered the room, holding in his hand several numbers of the "Journal des Débats," which he gave to me with a request that I would accept them. In return I requested him to do me the favour to accept a small packet of English tobacco and a *petit verre*, which, after looking at his commander's face, he did. The captain, intimating that it was now time to go, I put the papers in my pocket, buttoned my coat, and we descended into the road. The early morning air was so fresh and cool that I was glad when he gave the order to advance at a trot. We kept steadily on for about half-an-hour, when we came to a steep hill, up which we proceeded at a walk. The bright moon was still shining, and the landscape on either side of the road was beautifully lighted. Everything looked so still and quiet that I could not help shuddering when I thought of the wretched men in the vehicles beside me, and of the short time that would elapse before they would be sent violently from a world so beautiful. At this moment I heard one of them exclaim, in a voice which thrilled through me, "Blessed Mary! have mercy upon me!" Then I heard another voice responding, but the sound was drowned by the voice of the captain, ordering his men to advance, and we were again pushing along at a good pace. The same thing occurred several times when we slackened speed, but no sooner did an exclamation, "O Jesus, son of Mary, have mercy on me!" or any similar one, reach the captain's ears, than he immediately resumed a trot; as if he were anxious to get out of hearing of such painful sounds. There were very few opportunities for conversation during our ride, so that I had full leisure to enjoy the beauties of the country under the different aspects it presented, as the daylight gradually eclipsed that of the moon. It was about five o'clock when we arrived at our place of destination. Due notice had been received of what was to take place, for we found the civil authorities in readiness to take charge of the prisoners. I invited Captain Richard to breakfast with me, but his duty compelled him to decline it. I therefore left him, with a promise that I would meet him at the prison entrance in two hours. The street in front of the prison was swarming with people, a large proportion of whom, it was evident, had come in from the country around; and at the hotel which had been recommended to me I found everybody astir, early as it was. Having ordered a breakfast, I carried a chair into the balcony, and took out the newspapers which Sergeant Boichot had given me. The evidence extended to a great length, so I reserved that for future perusal, and for the moment confined myself to the statement of the public prosecutor, which, as is usual in such statements, contained every detail of the charge capable of proof, and something more. The incidents of the case were of an extraordinary character, and the only deviation I have made from the facts of the case as stated in the newspapers has been in altering the names, so as to avoid hurting the feelings of the relatives of the murdered man.

Five years previous to the period of which I am speaking, M. Courtaud was a landed proprietor in the neighbourhood of ———. He was a man about fifty years of age, had a wife some score of years or so younger, and three little children. Among others whom he employed on his estate were two brothers, named respectively Sylvestre and Jean Débordet. The first of these was a kind of overlooker about the house and farm-yard, and rumour associated his name with that of Madame Courtaud in a manner not favourable to the latter's reputation. Jean Débordet was a labourer, and one Martin Tréport was the gamekeeper, and gave an eye to the woods to prevent the villagers from pilfering. There were some other servants whose names it is not necessary to specify, but who will have to be mentioned in the course of the narrative. Madame Courtaud had been staying for some weeks with her mother in Paris, and her husband had written to her that he intended to join her in the course of a day or two. The day before he intended leaving, he dismissed Jean Débordet, and more than once repeated, what he had often before said, that he would sell his property and remove to Belgium, in consequence of his domestic troubles. The person in whom he was said to place most confidence was Martin Tréport, and to him he was

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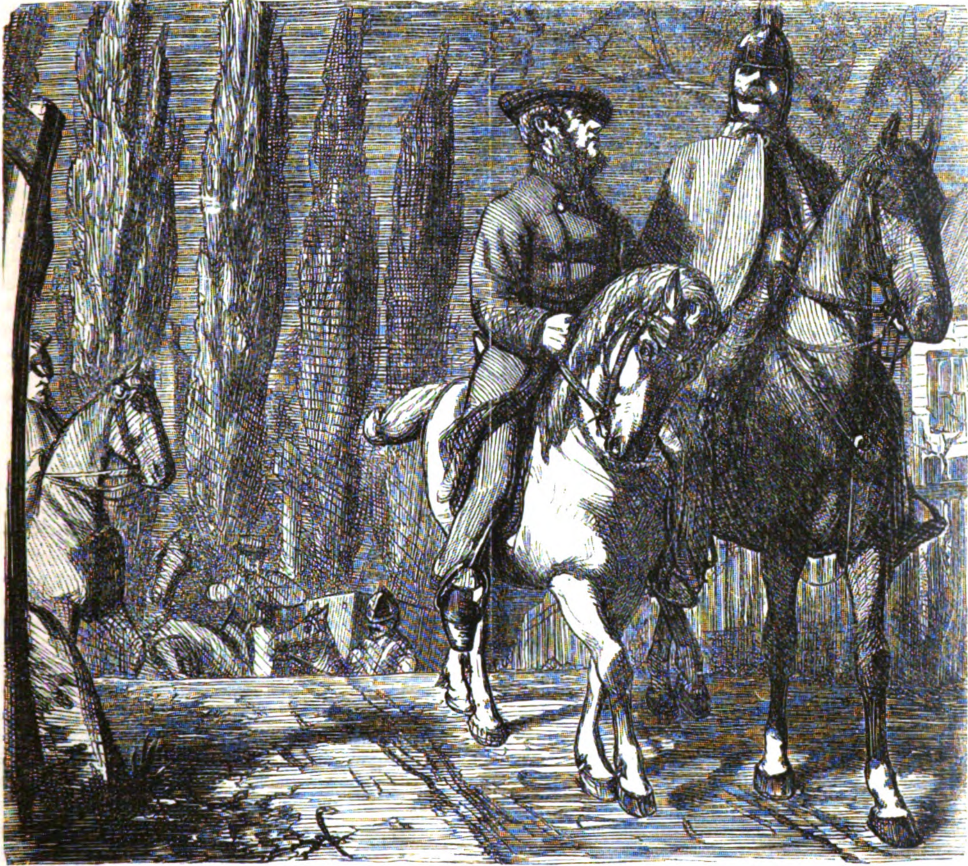
in the habit of confiding his griefs. It was therefore natural that he should direct him to meet him in the wood, close by a tree known as the "Hanging Oak," which stood near the road, to receive his last instructions. From the time when he left his house to keep his appointment until late the same evening nothing was heard of him, and as it was an unusual circumstance for him to be absent about the fields so many hours, and especially when it was known that he was about to start for Paris, some of the servants proposed a search, and having heard the appointment with Tréport, they decided on beginning it at the "Hanging Oak." On arriving at the tree they found it was not necessary to continue their search any further, for their master's body lay before them, covered with blood about the breast. They carried him home, and a doctor was sent for, but all he could say was that the unfortunate man had been dead some hours. An examination was made of his clothes, and sticking to them, and partly driven into the wound itself, they found the paper which had served as wadding for the gun with which he had been shot.

The only persons upon whom suspicion could fall were Martin Tréport, the gamekeeper, and



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the brothers Débordet. The first had orders to meet his master at the very spot where he was murdered, and about the time when it was supposed by the doctor the crime was perpetrated. He was apprehended, and several damning facts were brought against him on his trial, the strongest of which was, that the wadding found on the body had been torn from a number of "Le Feuilleton Littéraire," found in his bedroom. Notwithstanding this powerful circumstantial evidence, his counsel urged his cause with so much force; dwelling on the absence of all motive on the part of the prisoner, that he was the person in whom the deceased had placed all his confidence, and from that very circumstance he had nothing to hope for from Madame Courtaud, that the jury acquitted him. There can be little doubt that there was another consideration which very materially influenced their conclusion, and this was, that there were others about the estate who knew of the appointment, and who really had motives for putting Courtaud to death. The brothers Débordet were then arrested, but they brought forward evidence to prove an *alibi*, and were set at liberty. So convinced, however, was the attorney-general of the guilt of all the parties, that he caused them to be placed under the secret surveillance of the police.

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Of course Madame Courtaud could not, with any decency, retain Tréport in his situation after this, so he was deprived of his post, and it was given to a man named Barral, who had been one of the witnesses to prove an *alibi* in favour of the brothers. As it was, she was guilty of the indiscretion of retaining Sylvestre Débordet in her service, which effectually destroyed what little reputation she had left.

In the following year the last-named individual invited one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution to dine with him; he accepted the invitation, and a few hours afterwards was seized with violent colic, followed by vomiting, and died. In the same year Sylvestre himself had a fall, and did not long survive it. Time passed on, and few people thought of the tragedy except when they passed along the road where it had been committed—which they took care not to do after nightfall—and saw the monument which had been erected on the spot to commemorate the deed. But the old saying that "murder will out" was verified in this instance. One October evening, five years after the murder, a woman-servant, named Prudence Giraud, was returning from market on horseback, and, without thinking, took the shortest road through the wood. Just as she arrived opposite the monument the horse took fright and very nearly threw her off. That the woman herself had been frightened was so evident that, on arriving at home, her master asked her what had happened, to which, still trembling, she answered, *That she had had as great a fright as when she saw M. Courtaud killed.* This answer led to her being pressed with other questions, and, eventually, she made a statement which led to the apprehension of Jean Débordet, Barral, and a third named Arnault. As for Tréport, though her statement was positive as to his having been the actual murderer, he could not be tried a second time for the same offence, and he was no sooner convinced of this than he, too, began to relieve his mind by confessing, and one of the earliest consequences of this was the apprehension of Madame Courtaud; but as a preliminary examination showed that all the evidence against her was nothing more than a repetition of something which Sylvestre had told Tréport, she was almost immediately liberated, and the attorney-general put her on his list of witnesses. Before the trial came on she had quitted France, but not before she had caused her counsel to address a strong protest to the legal authorities, denying any share in the crime.

When the day arrived for the trial the greatest interest was manifested by a large number of auditors in hearing it. The court was crowded to excess, and when in calling over the names of the witnesses—of whom there were eighty-five—the name of Martin Tréport was uttered, there was a general rising on tiptoe in the desire to see him, for there was a rumour abroad that he had already fainted three times that morning, and was in a very bad way indeed, and might not survive the trial. After some formal questions had been put to the prisoners, the first witness was called: this was Prudence Giraud. Her evidence was, in substance, as follows. She was returning from a village fête with one named Vital, and on reaching the Hanging Oak, they turned aside into a thicket which grew there, and laid down to rest themselves. This was about a quarter of an hour before sunset, and directly afterwards they saw M. Courtaud and Martin Tréport approaching from different directions, who met quite close to the thicket, and were joined by Sylvestre Débordet. Some quarrelling and recrimination ensued, when Débordet suddenly exclaimed: "C'est fini, il faut qu'il passe ici le gout du pain?" M. Courtaud tried to run away, but Sylvestre seized him by the thigh and threw him down. He made no attempt at resistance, and merely exclaimed, "I am a lost man!" and the next instant Tréport placed the muzzle of his gun close to his breast and fired. Almost simultaneously with the explosion, the three prisoners at the bar rushed up and assisted in completing the murder, and afterwards in rifling the pockets of their victim. The horror of the hidden spectators caused them to make a movement which attracted the attention of Sylvestre, who looked round, but seeing nobody, and probably trusting to the other murderers having kept a good look out, did not make a search, but said to his accomplices, "Sauvons nous—il est mort," and they all started off in different directions. In her cross-examination she stated that the reason why she had not mentioned the matter before was, because she was afraid, and Vital had told her not to do so. On some minor points she varied slightly from her first statement, but it in all essential respects remained unshaken.

The next witness called was Tréport, and before he began to give his evidence the president addressed him in solemn language, warning him that though he could not now be tried again for the offence of which he had been already acquitted, yet, if he concealed anything, or made any statement not strictly true, he might be sure that he would be punished with the utmost severity the law inflicted on perjurers, &c.

Tréport listened to this exordium, calm and unmoved. He was deadly pale, and seemed to have very little life left. The manner in which he gave his evidence was like that of a man who was past caring for anything. He deposed that about a month or six weeks before M. Courtaud's death he was at the public-house which had the sign of the "Hanging Oak," that Sylvestre Débordet was there also, and that while drinking together the latter repeatedly observed, "How much better off we should all be if M. Courtaud was dead!" That a day or two after he was at the same place, and Jean Débordet came in, kissed him on both cheeks, and was remarkably kind and affectionate to him. That he spoke in plainer terms as to what was proposed. Subsequent conversations took place between them on the same subject, in which he was sometimes threatened, sometimes cajoled. On the morning of the day on which the murder was committed, M. Courtaud directed him to meet him a little before sunset at the "Hanging Oak" in the wood. Sylvestre came to him directly M. Courtaud had left, and took him into his room, and gave him some brandy, and again urged him not to delay any longer in finishing the affair. While

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on his way to the place where he was to meet M. Courtaud, Sylvestre met him, and asked him if his gun was loaded, and finding that one barrel was empty, he took it from his hand, and loaded it himself with some pieces of lead he drew from his pocket, some of which he also put into the other barrel. They were standing at this time about twenty paces from the "Hanging Oak," and could see Mr. Courtaud approaching; upon which Sylvestre gave him back the gun, saying, "If you don't finish him now, my brother and I will kill him and you too." At the same time he pointed towards a tree, from behind which his brother, Jean Débordet, was looking out. He, Tréport, then advanced to meet his master, who asked him who it was he was talking to, and before he could answer Sylvestre himself came up, and M. Courtaud asked him what business he had there? That they began quarrelling, and Sylvestre suddenly caught M. Courtaud by the leg, and threw him to the ground; and, the witness continued, "I pulled the trigger—and then ran away. I reached the house before Sylvestre, and when he came in, he said—'Take care you keep a quiet tongue in your head. It was Madame who ordered it, and we shall live together now like husband and wife—and you will be none the worse off for that.'" In his cross-examination he stated that Jean Débordet and Arnault came up the moment after he fired, but he did not remember seeing Barral there. He did not add to his previous statement, but at the same time he adhered to it in all its particulars, and other witnesses were called who confirmed it on several points. At the same time he tried to excuse himself from a portion of the odium of the crime, by insisting that he had been forced to do it while he was drunk.

Vital, when called upon for his evidence, flatly denied that he had ever had any sort of connection with the witness Prudence Giraud, or that he had seen the murder committed, but the latter made a statement, confirmed by the examinations of the medical man, which seemed to prove that he was unworthy of belief. The trial lasted for several days, and the condition of Tréport, who was continually recalled to confront a witness, or to answer questions arising out of the facts stated, at the end of that time was wretched in the extreme. He had scarcely eaten or drunk a mouthful during the whole time. His face had become covered with wrinkles, his features were altered, and his voice could hardly be heard. During the time he was out of the court, he remained in the waiting-room, his face buried in his hands, and shaken by a convulsive trembling from head to foot. His unfortunate wife remained constantly at his side, and never left him for an instant.

The result of the trial was the conviction of all three prisoners, but extenuating circumstances were admitted in favour of Arnault, so that he was spared from the ascent to the scaffold which his accomplices were doomed to make.

When I had finished these papers and my breakfast, I had my horse brought out, and, finding I had nearly half an hour to spare before keeping my appointment, I rode round by the mill to take a look at the people who had assembled to see the execution. I was obliged to keep on the outskirts of the crowd, and never having seen an execution before, I could not help being shocked by the levity of these people. Men were hawking about cakes, rolls, and lots of other eatables, which were bought freely, and devoured amidst laughter and jokes, as if they were at a fête. I have since thought it possible that this might not prove that they were without sensibility, but might have been caused by a holiday kind of feeling, mixed with satisfaction at the idea that such a fate as that they had come to witness would never befall them. Returning into the town by another road I reached the prison gate a few minutes before the time agreed upon, and directions were given by Captain Richard, which enabled me to follow in the rear of the procession, and to go close up to the scaffold. The prisoners were brought out in two open carts, and then, for the first time, I had an opportunity of seeing what they were like. Neither of them appeared to be more than thirty years of age, and it was impossible to detect in their faces any signs of ferocity. Stupid enough they looked, certainly, but there was much more of the sheep than of the wolf in their physiognomy. Each held a crucifix in his hand, and each had a priest beside him who prayed incessantly. Their responses were fervent, and there was an agonising earnestness in their tone which was dreadful to hear. As the cortége moved slowly through the throng there was no longer any of that levity perceptible which had shocked me a few minutes before. Everybody, men and women, seemed to sympathise with the criminals, and I noticed lips moving, as if some among the spectators were offering up prayers for their souls. There was a pause when we reached the foot of the scaffold, and the priest recited more and longer prayers. Then one of the criminals ascended the steps, holding the priest by one hand, and the crucifix in the other. This was Barral. He looked slowly along the sea of upturned faces, as if he would like to see somebody he knew. Then he looked up to the bright blue sky for a minute. I could see the tears glitter in his eyes as he brought them down to their former level; and I heard him say distinctly, as his head was being arranged in its place—"Je meurs, mais je suis innocent. Elle m'a tué. Je suis innocent, O mon dieu!" The heavily-loaded axe descended like a flash of lightning; and, guilty or innocent, a soul was liberated to enter upon the next mysterious stage of existence.

It was now Jean Débordet's turn: and he was by no means so calm as his predecessor. There was a good deal of difficulty in getting him up the steps of the scaffold, and his mind seemed so occupied by fear that he appeared hardly conscious of the priest's attempts to encourage him by prayer. He clung to his hand, and when forced to leave go, his hand kept opening and shutting, just as a drowning man clutches at the water when he sinks below the surface. He did not suffer long, though it may have seemed ages to him, for the axe, which had been raised to its former position, again descended, and again was the flight of an immortal soul accompanied by groans, sobs, and stifled screams. G. L.

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LAST WEEK.

Once more we have heard the boom of the great bell of St. Paul's. It is a sound which awes the child whose heart is thrilled by it for the first time, and which awakens solemn and pathetic emotions in those who are old enough to remember the various tollings of that bell from the opening of the century till now. With the Duchess of Kent has passed away the last but one of the royal generation which in our childhood filled so large a space in the national eye and mind. The Duchess of Cambridge is now the only one left; the only one who now stands between the Queen and the honours of — not age, exactly, but of the last generation. It is true, the King of the Belgians is the Queen's uncle: but his relation to the English people is that of husband to the Queen's cousin; so that, in the particular of British royalty, they are of the same generation. These considerations have a strong interest for persons who remember the splendid group of the royal family in Hyde Park, when George III. reviewed the Volunteers, under the expectation of invasion; or even those who used to go on Sundays to Windsor, to see the princely family take their walk on the Terrace. All that train of fine young men and of blooming young women are gone. When the Princess Augusta died a few years since, the great bell tolled for the last of them, and there remained only the widows of two of the younger Princes. Of these, one is now gone; and both entered the family so late that we may regard as closed the scene which was really a striking and beautiful one, when the royal youths and maidens were in their prime.

The Duchess of Kent had no interest in the scene till her younger brother, Prince Leopold, married the heiress of the British throne. How strange it would have appeared to her if she could have known on his wedding day that the throne would be occupied, not by a child of his, but by one of hers! She was then, in May, 1816, a widow of thirty, with two children, ten years old or upwards,—the boy being the ruling Prince of Leiningen, declared of age at nine years old. This was the Prince of Leiningen who died not long ago. Two years after her brother's marriage with the Princess Charlotte, and again in the month of May, she took for her second husband the Princess Charlotte's uncle. Prince Leopold was a childless widower, and the succession to the throne was open. When the fourth of these eventful months of May came round, the Princess Victoria was born; and when the fifth arrived, the Duchess of Kent, in widow's weeds, had been recently receiving deputations of condolence, and presenting her child to them. There was something touching in the spectacle of that infant in her mother's arms,—the only one present who was unconscious of her peculiar destination.

Through many doubts and difficulties, and even dangers, the devoted mother prepared her child for a life of sovereignty. Through royal marriages, births and deaths, and the prospect of George IV.'s divorce, and Orange conspiracies headed by one of the competing Princes, the Duchess trained her daughter for the throne,—racked with anxiety, no doubt, through many a dreary day and night, as to whether anyone would after all, rightfully or wrongfully, step in before her. When only the Orangemen, with their peculiar theory of succession, remained to be dealt with, parliament and the people took up the matter effectually. The day came,—a sunny June morning in 1837,—when, at five o'clock, as the lights were going out in the death-chamber of the old King, the doors of Kensington Palace flew open before the Primate, the Lord Chamberlain, and the royal physician, and the Duchess saw her child greeted as Queen. Few mothers have had such an experience. From that time, she has been more and more respected and appreciated by the English people; for the simple reason that her merits have become more plainly disclosed by the virtues of her daughter. She lived very quietly through this last period of nearly a quarter of a century, always near the Court, and enjoying the growing up of her grandchildren, and the settlement in life of the eldest. It was on occasion of the marriage of the Princess Royal that the public became aware that the life of the Duchess of Kent was approaching its close. Her appearance in the wedding procession moved many hearts; for the ravage of disease was plainly visible in her countenance. Her death after that could not take the nation by surprise: but she sank suddenly at last.

There is a sincerity which cannot be mistaken in the condolence of both Houses of Parliament, and of the whole people, with the Queen and her family. Death never came so near them before; the death of a mother is like no other bereavement, and the daughter was, in this case, like an only child to an only parent; for she was too young to know her father. All these circumstances considered,—the romantic interest of the earlier part of the story, the grave and eminent position of the parties, their merits, and their mutual devotedness, —it is no wonder that the death of the mother, and the affliction of the daughter and her family, should be the chief point of interest of Last Week. Prince Alfred is in the West Indies, receiving joyous honours on all hands, in unconsciousness of the grief at home: but the rest of the family were together at Windsor, as soon as they could be assembled; and there the quiet and heartfelt sympathy of the nation has waited upon them from day to day.

The great political event of the time, — the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln as President of the United States—became known to us in its details, last week. We must still give the name of United States to the republic; because, to assume its expiration is to beg the whole question which the President and the American people have now to settle. While all constitutional authorities agree that the republic can not be one of the Powers of the world, if the several States can secede at pleasure, and that no recognisable secession has therefore taken place, the world must still give its customary title to the republic.

It is too little understood or remembered in this country that the Federal Government has nothing to do with the division into States. It governs the American nation as one, and undivided; and the

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people of the whole area of the republic owe the same allegiance and duty to the General Government; so that the Government has to deal with the seceders as individuals, without any regard to the State to which they may belong.

Thus, it is not South Carolina which has seceded, but a certain number of people who live there; and so on, throughout the whole set.

This is of importance in every way; and chiefly because the citizens can be loyal to the General Government, and render service to it without being disloyal to the sovereign rights of their own State. Those who fulfil their duties, live where they may, are on good terms with the president and his government; and those who refuse their duty will be summoned to discharge it, live where they may.

The practical consideration here is that the Secession leaders assume a false authority when they talk of a Southern Confederacy. They have made no appeal to the people at large; they act out of their own heads, and have no right to speak for anybody but themselves. Thus it is that Mr. Lincoln could not recognise any such confederacy, and could address himself to "dissatisfied fellow-countrymen." He was not concealing or evading anything in doing so, but simply speaking in the spirit and forms of the constitution. The plain point of his address is that if any persons seize the national forts, and steal the national property, he will deal with them for the treachery or theft as rebellious individuals, and not as political antagonists. A short time will show what steps he will take in this direction.

We ought to remember now the strange incidents which seemed to connect Walker, the filibuster, with Mr. Floyd, Mr. Buchanan's Secretary of State, some time since. This Mr. Floyd, now on his trial at Washington, was formerly minister to Mexico. He was the proprietor of a newspaper at Mobile. That newspaper was full in its disclosures of Walker's proceedings,—it related his boasts, it magnified his prospects, and did its utmost to make a hero of him. At length, it reported a declaration of Walker and his mate Henningsen, that they were instigated and encouraged in their buccaneering schemes by Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet; and that they were sent by that Cabinet into Mexico, to stir up mischief, and make an opening for American intervention. This story seemed too bad to be true: but it was never contradicted by the President or his Cabinet; and the recent disgrace of Mr. Floyd is a strong confirmation of it. He is charged with delivering over the national money and other property to the Secession leaders, and thus showing himself as thorough a traitor as Walker was a buccaneer.

As to the prospect,—it should never be forgotten that it is not the planters, nor any considerable slaveholders who desire the African slave trade, or the acquisition of Cuba, or any great extension of territory. They have the land and the negroes; and they want no rivals. But they are a mere handful of men among the white population. On their side there is the fact that new territory is no longer procurable, that Mr. Lincoln's election shuts slavery out of the north and west. Beyond Texas spreads a parched desert, on which not even a railway can be made. Central America is too strong for any force which the Southern States can send abroad; and the Cuban and American planters are equally determined against a junction. Slavery is impracticable in the territories on the Mexican quarter, for various reasons. Thus, the seceders cannot extend their territory: and it is certain that, if they were united and orderly, instead of distracted and turbulent, they have not food to eat, nor clothes to wear at home, nor money to buy them with. The future of the Free States is more obscure at present, simply because the people have had no opportunity of speaking since they elected Mr. Lincoln. The tariff is the work of representatives chosen long ago, without any view to the present crisis. We must wait to see whether they discern the guilt and folly of it as plainly as other folks do. Thus waiting, we are glad to hear that the 4th of March went off well at Washington, with peace, order, and civility on every hand. Time must show the value of Mr. Lincoln's address;—some say, its meaning also. But to simple English eyes it seems plain enough. He will not compromise the constitution. Unless, therefore, the seceders yield otherwise, they must yield to force, by restoring the rights and the property of the general government. Meantime, a few incidents which have occurred since the 4th of March have a significant appearance. One incident is, the preparation actually made throughout Virginia and Kentucky by slaveholders to migrate to other States. It will be so impossible to keep their slaves after any partition of the territory between two governments, that they are sacrificing their lands to remove their slaves to a safer place. Free labour, already established to a considerable extent, will flow in at once, and cover the deserted estates, carrying the Border States over the frontier, in a trice. Virginia has for some years been more and more rapidly stripped of her slaves; and she now talks of the time when none will be left. In Maryland all will be gone within ten years; and in Kentucky the people have never been at all in love with slavery. It was forced upon them by William Clay; and they would now, as they clearly show, willingly embrace any safe and creditable means of separating themselves from the Southern system. In Missouri, the people are rancorously divided on the subject, the anti-slavery party being strong enough to return a member to Congress within two years. Thus the Border States are not likely to go into the Southern Confederacy with any enthusiasm, if at all; and every drove of negroes which leaves them commends them to the policy of the North. Another incident is that hunger is becoming an urgent evil in several of the Slave States. An agent who is gone from Mississippi into the North-West, to buy corn, is commissioned by some hundreds of families who have no food in store, and no money with which to pay for any. Their agent, an army officer, is to try to obtain credit till next autumn, and to despatch corn down the river with all speed. As for the rest, ships are recalled from distant seas, and troops are moved to critical points: and we may expect soon to hear of an actual struggle of some sort. Mr. Lincoln refuses to recognise the commissioners sent to Washington by the South;

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and the South promises to avenge the slight. It is not to be supposed that victory will go with the side on which there is already a dearth of food and money. The prospect is very sad, any way; but the most impossible thing of all is compromise, or any reconciliation which will admit of re-union. The controversy cannot be stopped now.

The fact most worth attention at present is, perhaps, that all the great controversies which are shaking society, from California round to far Cathay, are implicated more or less with the question of the rights of labour; and most of them arise directly out of that question. Last Week brought us the terms of the Russian Emperor's proclamation of the prospective freedom of the serfs; and news of the effects produced in Poland by that proclamation; and tidings from the indigo, and cotton, and corn districts of India, and from Western Africa, and from Haïti, and from America, and from the manufacturing districts of France, and from several parts of our own country,—all indicating the connection between the politics of nations and the industry of their working-classes.

The meaning of the Russian proclamation is that the Czar cannot hold his position in Europe, nor keep his empire together, unless he obtains materials for a middle class, and for good patriotic service, by making freemen of the labouring class. His empire depends on it; and he has withstood the antagonism of the nobles and the official body with so much vigour and firmness as to have carried at least the announcement of the scheme. The journals of several countries have been precipitate in announcing the actual emancipation. It must take some time to effect the necessary settlement of the land; and two years are allowed for all preparations. Those two years must be the most critical in the history of Russia thus far. The risks and dark uncertainties to be encountered are only less than those which would have been braved in giving up the scheme. The needful preparation —of reforming the official body—has not been made; the nobles are, generally speaking, fiercely opposed to the change,—and between their hostility and the prejudices and ignorance of the serfs, there is but too much probability that mischief will arise. The Czar manifests heroism in holding to his purpose. If he achieves his aim, he will prove himself one of the greatest of rulers; and if he fails — fails, nobly and unflinchingly — he will have the sympathy of all good men, now living and to come. Meantime, he sees what becomes of the freed and escaped slaves of his favoured allies, the Americans. As the prospects of cotton become precarious, escaped and freed negroes pass over more and more rapidly into Haïti to grow cotton. Haïti seems to be at last really well-governed, and to be prospering in every way. Arrangements exist by which a large migration is going on thither from the American ports; the results will be seen in next year's crop of Haïtian cotton. The African Civilisation Society, in this country, proposes the same object; but without the same prospect of success, because its scene of action is a barbarous country, remote from America, and because it makes its appeals in a missionary sense where that appeal will fail. We all wish well to good missionary schemes: we all desire the civilisation of Africa: we all believe in the inexhaustible returns which Africa will yield to such industry as will supersede the slave-trade, and the wars undertaken for its support. We all wish well to the aims of the Society; but we do not believe —and nobody who understands the American case will believe—that "the best of the coloured people from the United States" will go to Africa, on any inducement whatever. Those people hold annual conventions, in which they solemnly pledge themselves to resist all attempts to expatriate them. They declare themselves Americans, and intend to stay where they are, and to stand by their race till not a slave remains in the country. Moreover, there is no inducement to them to go,—except the few who devote themselves as missionaries. They aspire to rise in the social scale, and abhor the notion of going to a barbaric country. They can get wealth at home more certainly and easily than in Africa; and at home they will stay. By the way, their methods of industry show that it is not certain that the Russian serfs will become squatters in the wilds of Southern Russia, as many people apprehend. The Americans have not done so; nor our West India negroes; nor the coolies who have been imported into the Mauritius under good conditions. The social spirit has entered into the labouring classes of the world: they feel that they cannot live by bread alone; and already we see the relation they bear to politics becoming more evident from day to day. At home we recognise this in the various trade disputes going on, in the talk about piecework in rural districts, and pay by the hour among the builders, and plans for negotiation, and struggles for power in the manufacturing districts. The same fact is at the bottom of the French Emperor's bold pertinacity in introducing free trade, and of the enthusiasm in Poland at the readiness of some of the landowners to enter into the Czar's scheme of emancipation. The rise of the working-classes will determine the political destinies of society; and an emancipation here, a reform bill there, and free-trade everywhere, are only questions of time.

Meanwhile, the political excitement goes on. The Vienna elections, the audacious speeches in the French Chambers, the boasts at Madrid, the royal terrors at Berlin, the wrath and anguish in the Vatican, the solemn joy which breathes through the utterances of the Italian parliament, all exhibit the same tendency of affairs. Popular interests are moulding all the governments of the civilised world; and the welfare of labour is at the bottom of all popular interests. It is a great thing to live in the day when it is so, and to see King and Kaiser setting themselves to serve the servants of the human race.

The weather of Last Week was still stormy and cold: but the equinoctial week might well be so. The spring sowing has not been a favourable one, generally speaking; and the best weather can give us only an average harvest. Such seasons make us feel keenly the blessing of having free access to the food markets of the world.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XLV.

"You seem to take a pleasure in making the worst of my situation," said Bertha.

"Indeed I do not," replied Mrs. Lygon, "but it is necessary that you should understand it. You have taken Henderson into your confidence, and she will betray it to-night."

"Yes," said Bertha, almost spitefully, "she is an enemy to me; but she has become wonderfully attached to you."

"And you are angry with me for that, and yet, Bertha, you wish me to intercede with your servant for you. No, do not answer; do you think that I would willingly humiliate you? Do you refuse to let me speak to her?"

"Refuse,—no," replied Mrs. Urquhart, sullenly.

Mrs. Lygon again summoned the girl, who came with her customary alacrity, but whose eyes gave testimony that she had been crying, as she did everything else, with all her might.

"Henderson," said Laura, "I believe that you consider me your friend.'

"Indeed and indeed I do, m'm, if you are good enough to let me call you so," replied Henderson.

"Are you willing to be guided by my advice?"

"Would you please to put it in the way of orders, m'm. It would be much more becoming in me to take your orders."

"I have no right to give you any orders. But if you are disposed to follow out my wishes, I will tell you what they are."

"Indeed I will, m'm. And if I don't I give you leave to think me all that I know you was told to think me, and I can't say worse than that, m'm."

"Then leave Mr. Urquhart's house, without any rebellious behaviour. Do not use a single disrespectful word to any one. Get yourself a quiet and decent lodging in Versailles, where you may easily be found at need, for I think that you will be needed to assist in a good work. Remember that you will be unfit for such work, your word will not be taken, and your services

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will not be asked, if you now do anything wrong or hasty."

"I hope I understand you, m'm. Will the work be for you?"

"Yes."

"I will do everything, m'm, exactly as you order me. And I am sure you would like me to ask Madame's pardon for anything I said to her, when I was naturally put out, as I certainly was, m'm, about being ordered out of the house. I ask your pardon, Madame, and humbly, I do, indeed."

"Very well," said Bertha, much relieved, yet unwilling to own her obligation, "no more need be said upon a disagreeable subject."

At a signal from Mrs. Lygon, Henderson again withdrew.

"You are secured from that danger, for the time," said Mrs. Lygon, calmly, "but the greater danger is behind, and against that I can do nothing to protect you—now. Heaven help you, my poor Bertha."

"Why do you delight in terrifying me, I ask you?" replied Bertha. "Unless you have irritated *him* beyond all bearing, he will do no more than he has done before, and I must try to meet his demands. It is a very sad thing that you came over at all, but the best thing you can do is to go back again, and keep out of the way until the storm has blown over."

"That is your advice to me?"

"Certainly it is, and the sooner you return to England the better. And now I must hurry home again, for fear of some fresh unpleasantness. Good bye, Laura. You know that I should much like to hear of you, but I am afraid it will not do for you to write to our house, so I must trust to hear of you in some other way. Good bye."

And the kiss which Bertha gave her sister was scarcely warmer than her words. She gave it, and turned to go, taking special heed to her drapery, lest it might be damaged in the narrow stair that led from her sister's room.

But Laura's heart could not brook that parting, and as Bertha was taking careful hold of her dress, preparatory to descending, Laura sprang forward, threw her arms round her neck, and kissed her again and again.

"There, go now, Bertha. I do not think that we shall ever meet again. God bless you."

Mrs. Urquhart murmured some almost unintelligible words, settled her bonnet, which had been somewhat disarranged by Laura's vehemence, and she went down.

Henderson was waiting below, and opened the door for her mistress. Bertha passed out into the street, and the next moment encountered Ernest Adair, who had descended from his post of watchfulness, in order to await her re-appearance.

He did not speak, but raised his hat, and smiled, as approving what she had been doing. Mrs. Urquhart passed on without returning his salute; but Henderson, following, gave him a look of undisguised hatred.

"Your prospects are improving, Matilda," he said, carelessly.

"Not when I am looking upon a wretch," replied the undaunted Henderson, promptly.

"You may apply to me for a character, if you like," responded Adair.

We must not set down mention of the quarter where the lady's-maid energetically declared that she would prefer to obtain a testimonial. She then hastened on after Bertha.

Mr. Adair entered the house, at once informed its mistress that he was sent on by the lady who had gone out, mounted the stair, and knocked at the door of Laura's apartment.

Supposing that Henderson had returned, Mrs. Lygon made the usual answer to a knock, and Ernest Adair presented himself.

"I am the most unwelcome visitor Mrs. Lygon could receive," he said; "but my visit is necessary."

Without a word, Laura rose, collected the papers she had laid aside on Bertha's entrance, and placed them in her pocket, then put on bonnet and shawl, and deigning no notice of the intruder, left the house. With all his effrontery, Adair was abashed for the instant, and had not even presence of mind to examine the room, as he would otherwise assuredly have done in search of anything that might be turned to his own account. But he followed Laura into the street, and rapidly recovering his self-command, once more addressed her.

"Action of this kind is childish, Mrs. Lygon, under the circumstances. You do not suppose that I shall be turned from my purpose of speaking to you by any assumption of displeasure on your part. How far do you wish me to follow you before you accord me five minutes of attention? There, it is as idle to look up and down for a gendarme—you will see none in this secluded part of the town, or if one should appear, he will not interfere with *me*. Be pleased, therefore, to listen to me."

Laura stood still, and made no reply.

"Your sister has been with you, and has apprised you of what has occurred at Mr. Urquhart's. If she had not come, I should have felt it only justice to you to have given you that information, in order to enable you to provide for your own safety."

"Justice," Mrs. Lygon repeated, scornfully.

"You are right, the word was ill-chosen—I should have said kindness, for your own conduct would have made it perfectly just in me to have left you to discover what had occurred by your meeting the consequences. In spite of all that you had done, or intended to do, however, I had not designed to strike, but I had no alternative."

Mrs. Lygon still listened, in silence.

"The treachery of your friend and agent, M. Silvain, with whom I have a long account to settle, sent me to a place at which I requested your attendance, but as it pleased other persons to disobey my orders, and as your sister was discovered by her husband kneeling at my feet, there was no means of saving her but one."

"I received no message from you."

"I am aware of it, and you are, to a certain extent, exonerated from blame for what has happened, an additional reason why I am still willing to do anything in my power for you."

"You can do nothing."

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"It may be so. Or you may believe that I will do nothing, and your own conscience tells you that you have deserved nothing at my hands."

"I cannot understand you; but it is useless to talk. You have completed your wickedness, and can injure me no more."

"I have said that it was not my intention to strike."

"No matter—it is done. You were stronger than I was, this morning; now I am stronger than you. You cannot make my position worse than it is."

"And you would imply that you can do much in the way of revenge? I doubt not that you will attempt it."

"I do not wish to speak of revenge. Some fearful day the judgment of God will certainly overtake you for what you have done."

"I understand that pious form of words, and also that you would gladly be the humble instrument in bringing an enemy to destruction."

"Ernest Adair, you said just now that you had acted in order to save my sister. If there is any lingering goodness in your nature, any spark of regard for her, you will make those words good. You have ruined my reputation in order to preserve hers—you will be content with that cruelty, and for the future you will spare her."

Adair looked at his victim long and silently. At length he said:

"You are a brave woman. I would say a good woman, but that you would despise such a tribute from me. But you are good, and you are brave, if in the midst of the most deadly affliction that ever came upon a wife and a mother, you have a thought for another, for the very person who has brought you into your sorrow."

"Have I your promise to cease all persecution of my sister from this moment?"

"If I give it, you will forgive what I have done to you?"

"No. I will never forgive you," said Mrs. Lygon. "Never," she added. "But if you will now leave her unmolested, I will try to act as if I had forgiven."

"Truthfulness, even in misery," replied Adair, with something of admiration. "Let me strive to imitate it, and say frankly that I am grieved that I cannot give the promise."

"What!—you will persecute her still?"

"I cannot allow you to achieve, in the moment of defeat and ruin, the object which you came over to accomplish so triumphantly. Not that I have any false pride, or desire for mere victory. I have my eye only upon my own interests, and these will not suffer me to alter the course which I have hitherto pursued."

"She can do nothing more for you now," pleaded Mrs. Lygon. "You had already driven her nearly to distraction, and now that you have aroused her husband's suspicions, she will not dare to run any further risk—will you not desist from useless torture?"

"I know not why I should enter into explanations with you," said Adair, "but I seem compelled to tell you that I think—let me say that I hope—you mistake your sister's position. She is now so thoroughly reinstated in the good opinion of Mr. Urquhart, so taken anew to his heart, as it were, that he will be eager to show her every indulgence. His liberality, which had been somewhat restricted, I really cannot tell why, will break out again, and—I speak very coarsely, but I prefer not to annoy you by a kind of diction which you detest—Mrs. Urquhart will be able to help me more largely than heretofore."

"There is no answering such cold-blooded wickedness," said Mrs. Lygon, in a low voice.

"*You* might, of course, stop this flow of advantage to me," said Adair, "but there is no one else in the world that can, and I am quite sure of your inaction."

"I!" said Mrs. Lygon, glancing at him for a moment.

"I forgive the scorn in that look," he replied, "for the sake of the assurance it gives me that, however you may seek to revenge yourself, you will abstain from any vengeance that may compromise your sister. Let me add another word. I believe that I have, by my frankness in avowing that I still intend to obtain money from your sister, exposed myself to whatever danger your hatred may bring upon me."

"Leave Bertha in peace, and I—no, it would be false to say I could forgive you, but I will never seek to injure you."

"If I do not make that promise, you will do your utmost against me."

"What can I do?"

"You are a determined person, and you have great power of self-assistance. That consideration, if there had been no other, would have been enough to justify me in preferring to sacrifice one who can do so much for herself, and to save one who is so utterly helpless. You have made two distinct attempts upon my life."

"Your life! I! Are you mad, Ernest Adair?"

"Even my knowledge of Mrs. Lygon's habitual truthfulness cannot do away with my own personal knowledge of circumstances. I cannot forget that the first agent selected was Silvain, who was sent to pick a quarrel with me, and endeavour to kill me in a duel; or that the second was a ruffian who had probably escaped from the galleys, and who would have assassinated me in a quarrel at play. *Me servavit Apollo*," added Adair, in his old sarcastic manner.

"And you dare to accuse me, even in your heart, of being party to such attempts? You dare not, Ernest Adair! and such charges are mean, dishonest efforts to justify your wickedness towards me. You know that you are speaking falsely."

"I do not, though it is difficult to look at you, and believe that you are trying to deceive me. I have, however, heard the most audacious falsehoods from women who have looked as truthful as yourself, and I believe no woman. I was about to offer you one caution."

"I am beyond your reach now," said Mrs. Lygon.

"Whether that be so or not, Bertha is still within it. The sop has been flung to Cerberus, but he may easily be awakened."

"You mean—"

"I mean this. For my own sake, I will do all in my power to keep your sister in her present

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position. I will levy my taxation with all the caution I can exercise. But if I discover that any one—I need not be more explicit, Mrs. Lygon—that any one is plotting against me, I will take the shortest way towards ending the whole complication of interests."

"You would ruin Bertha with her husband?"

"Only in self-defence—but in self-defence I will do anything. That was what I designed to say to you, and I think you will now feel that I was warranted in intruding upon you."

CHAPTER XLVI.

Mrs. Urquhart returned home, and found her husband awaiting her in the drawing-room.

"Have you placed yon girl?" was his question, asked in an indifferent tone.

"I think so," replied Bertha; "but I did not see the lady—she was too ill to be seen. But Henderson leaves, of course, to-night."

"Certainly—we'll have no more of her in this house. And now about this sad affair, which looks sadder the more I think about it."

"Then don't think about it, dear," was Bertha's answer. "I wish we had never known anything of it."

"Sometimes I am weak enough to wish so too, Bertha," he said; "but it is childish to wish to continue deceived in the character of those we love and trust. And if there was a woman in the world whom I loved and trusted next to yourself, it was your unhappy sister. Poor Arthur will bitterly remember what I said to him about her at parting, when I charged him to keep his faith in her, and some day to tell her that it was I who had so counselled him."

"Poor Arthur," said Bertha, putting her handkerchief to her eyes.

"There's a question or two I would like to ask you, my woman," he said, drawing her near him; "but I'm loath to talk to you too much about such a grief."

"No, please do not," said his wife.

"I will only ask you this, at present," said Robert; "and when we have got over the blow a bit, you shall tell me more. How came this fellow, Adair, to know anything about you, and why did he presume to send to you to come to him?"

There was a whole history of a life—of two lives—that might have been told in the reply; but that history was not for Bertha to tell. She pondered for a moment as she stood nestling under the wing of her husband, and then she said, boldly:

"I know nothing about him, except through Laura, and of course she must have been in communication with him."

"And bade him send for you?"

"I suppose so."

"You think he wanted hush-money from her, and could not get it?"

"Laura cannot have much money to spare, you know. Arthur has a good salary, but the house is an expensive one."

"Ay, and to think of the bad woman stealing the money given her by her trustful husband, and handing it over to yon white-faced scoundrel. It's not the money I am thinking of, wife, but the mean, shameful deceit. I would say that she must despise herself whenever her husband takes out his purse for her, but she is past feeling in that way. However, she is your sister, my woman, and whatever I may think of her, I'll say but little in your hearing."

"Try and forget her," plained Bertha.

"No, that will not do. Besides, I have my duty to do by that poor Arthur. What will he do with the children. I am minded to have them over here, Bertha. What would you say?"

"O no, Robert. Indeed I could not take the charge of children. I am not fit for it, and that makes me thankful that we have none of our own. Do not think of that."

"It is not whether we would like the charge or not," said Robert, gravely, "but whether it is not our duty to undertake it. A woman who is a wife, and might be a mother, should not talk about unfitness for such a work, I think. But there is time to consider that when we know what Arthur intends to do. I must write him to-night, but it is the heaviest letter I ever sat down to pen, Bertha."

"I *could* not do it," replied his wife.

"We can do anything that Providence is pleased to set before us in the way of our allotted duties," said Robert, "and I have not much patience with people who dare to think Providence is unreasonable. But, as I said, it's heavy work. And there's another thing I must do. That fellow Adair said, truly enough, that the police here know everything, and he proved it by telling me some matters of my own, that I did not suppose anybody but myself had heeded. I would like to be informed whether this omniscient police knows anything about Mr. Adair himself, and what his comings and goings may be?"

It may easily be imagined that the latter part of this speech was a bad hearing for Bertha, who said, hastily,

"Surely you would not stoop to spy on him."

"Surely I would stoop, or climb either," he answered, coolly, "or do anything else that wasn't dishonest, to get the right to lay hold on the rascal. But it would be of no use for one to make inquiries here, as the folk, by his own tale, are all his own accomplices. But there's a high fellow in Paris, who owes me a day in harvest, and who would, I think, make it his business to find out the matter for me. I'll write to him about it, anyhow."

"What is his name?" asked Bertha. A vague idea that Adair might profit by the information, and in some way prevent revelations, hurried through her mind.

"You don't know anything of him," replied her husband. "He is not one of the people who are talked about, being wiser in his generation, and preferring to pocket his gains in silence. I rather helped him to the filling of his pockets, I fancy."

Bertha did not dare to press the question of the name, but the cunning of which she had a considerable share suggested other means of knowing it.

"If you are going to write letters, Robert

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dear," she said, "I wish you would sit up here and write them."

"What for, my woman?"

"Because what I have gone through to-day has made me so fearfully nervous that I cannot bear to be left alone. I must have your company a great deal more than I have had it of late, bad man," she said, affectionately pulling at his huge fingers.

"Very well, my woman, so be it," said Urquhart, and he sat down to write, bestowing contemptuous imprecations on the gaily bedizened blotting case, and the lady-trifles around it.

This was his letter to Arthur Lygon.

My dear Arthur, *Versailles.*

I think that by a merciful dispensation your mind has been some way prepared for sad news, and that the blow which this letter will inflict upon you will not be so fearfully felt as if it were altogether sudden. I am not a man of many words, and I know not how to lead up to a revelation which it has become my painful duty to make to you. But I am writing to a strong man, and not to a weak woman, and I know that I would myself feel that the quicker bad news were given to me, the kinder would be the man who told them.

Your wife is unworthy of you.

By a strange chance, which I will not now stop to tell, the end of the chain of evidence came into my hand this day. I have since had the whole case before me, and it is my duty to extinguish every spark of hope by telling you that I have read a series of letters, in the handwriting of Mrs. Lygon, which place her guilt beyond a doubt. My poor dear fellow, you must discard her at once and for ever.

How my heart bleeds for you, Arthur, I can never tell you. When I recal our last conversation, and the counsel and charge I gave you, and the picture I made of your again meeting your wife, and making her happy in your love, I can but think what blinded, deceived creatures we are, and how weak and presumptuous it is in us to say what we will do on the morrow.

But this we must do, if permitted. I hasten off these lines because it is not fit that you should be without the knowledge an hour longer than needful. I had thought to be myself the bearer of the sad tidings; but you will, I know, choose to be alone at the first shock. But write by return, or telegraph an appointment to meet me, at any English place, or where you will, as I must recount to you the whole details, and say much that must not be said in a letter. Only this—the person is not one of your own friends; I do not think you know him—you are spared this additional pang, but this is all. Do not hope, for a moment, that when you receive the particulars, they will contain aught of comfort, for it will not be so. But take no step whatever until we meet, and I will abide at home until I receive your answer.

Poor Bertha sits by my side, sobbing her heart out. God bless you and console you, my dear Arthur. Your sorrowing friend,

Arthur Lygon, Esq. Robert Urquhart.

Such was the missive for England.

A few hasty lines were then penned to the Paris official, from whom Urquhart expected to gain information as to Ernest Adair, and Bertha, in spite of her affliction, had presence of mind enough to suggest that such a letter ought to be sealed. Her husband handed it to her for the purpose, and the same evening Ernest Adair received a note apprising him that Mr. Urquhart was applying to M. ———, Bureau de ———, Paris, for knowledge which must certainly not reach him who asked it.

"I must get in my harvest at once," was his comment on the note, "or it will be blasted."

But he did not neglect a precautionary measure in regard to the application by Urquhart, and while taking it, soliloquised upon the extreme happiness of that good man in having so good a wife as Bertha.

CHAPTER XLVII.

When the arrangements of this world cease to permit inferior persons to aid in working out the fortunes of their betters, it will be time for the novelist to apologise for plebeian portraitures. In the meantime he must take the actors as he finds them, in the drama of nature, and the footman must come in with a message when the heroine has finished her declamation.

The fretful Silvain, when it was explained to him by Henderson that she herself had been extruded from Mr. Urquhart's house, and that Ernest Adair had in some way poisoned the mind of the Scot against the beautiful lady whom the Frenchman almost adored, rose into a state of wrath which was far above raving. He was at a white heat. He scarcely spoke at all, but occasionally slapped his heart, pulled his hat on very firmly, and emitted savage noises with an oathy flavour in them. There was an utter absence of tenderness in his conversation with Matilde, as if her wrong had to be avenged before her sorrow could properly be consoled. He walked about vigorously, suddenly checking himself for no apparent reason, and then addressing himself to think intensely. The lion was eager for a spring, but the direction in which the vengeful leap was to be taken was undecided.

"Nothing whatever is to be done yet, M. Silvain," was Henderson's reply to a muttered threat delivered for the tenth time to a large bottle of tooth-brushes that adorned the perfumer's counter.

"It is impossible to submit to such insults, Mademoiselle," was the reply.

"Do not talk nonsense. If a lady like Mrs. Lygon can wait to be righted, I suppose that I can wait. At all events, I have told you her wish, and that wish is mine."

Certainly Mademoiselle's slightest word was a law which should be observed with the utmost loyalty, but it was permitted to one to speak.

"And that is why you do not speak, I suppose," retorted Henderson, "but only walk about the place in a passion."

Silvain could not trust himself to speak on such a subject in the words that befitted the presence of his beloved Matilde.

"Then the less said the better," remarked his

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Matilde. "Listen to me. There are new plots being hatched, Silvain; mark my word if it is not so. Last night that Angelique was sent out of the house with a letter, and the fuss that she made about it, and the way she talked about being in time for the post, when it was long past the post hour, made me notice her. I was just leaving, so I offered to put the letter in, but she would not let me touch it. Then I determined that I would know where she was going, and though she took pains not to be traced, and turned back two or three times, she was no match for me."

"No, indeed," escaped the lips of the girl's admirer.

"She left the note for that man, Adair."

An execration which followed the mention of the name, seemed a form with which M. Silvain made it a duty to comply, he having already gone through it at least a dozen times in the course of Henderson's narrative.

"Well, swearing does no good that I know of," said the girl, "so please not to do it any more while I am here. If ever you swear, after we are married, Silvain, it will be a bad day for you."

The Frenchman actually missed the opportunity of making what seemed the inevitable remark that the one vow at which his mistress had hinted would, &c., &c., &c. He simply begged pardon.

"I got back," continued Matilde, "before that heavy-legged Angelique could, and I said that she had been gone a long time, and that I thought she must have been delivering the letter in Paris. She got angry, and told me to mind my own business, forgetting that if I liked I could walk her out of the house in ten minutes."

"You shall do so."

"I shall do nothing of the kind. How do I know that she may not be useful in some way, and I had better have to deal with her, who I have got under my thumb, than with a new servant who does not know me. Do you think a woman is such a fool as to remember some angry words, when she can gain a point by forgetting them? We leave such folly to men, M. Silvain. I made it up with Angelique, and gave her a China stud for her neck-ribbon, and we agreed to be friends for ever, and I could have got out all about the letter, only I knew it without, and besides I had another reason."

Might M. Silvain ask it?

"Yes, to be sure. I did not want Madame to know that I had two upon ten."

The phrase was incomprehensible by M. Silvain, notwithstanding that his mistress was good enough to translate it into *deux sur dix*.

"Why, you stupid," she said, laughing, "it is what one shopman in London whispers to another when he wants to put him on his guard against a customer who looks like a thief. 'Two eyes upon ten fingers.'"

M. Silvain was charmed, but not into the ecstacies which, on another occasion, would have been evoked by the explanation.

"Mrs. Urquhart has got to play her own game now, with Angelique to help her, and a nice game they will make of it. O, Silvain, he is coming here."

"Who is coming?" cried Silvain.

"Adair."

The perfumer seized a huge pair of scissors, which gave rather a ludicrous look to a demonstration of wrath by no means ludicrous. Henderson snatched them, impatiently, from his hand, and darted into the apartment behind the shop, saying, as she closed the door,

"Don't let him see me, or I shall be obliged to say something I might be sorry for."

"He shall enter the room only over my body," was the chivalrous rejoinder.

Ernest Adair—with his accustomed cigarette—entered the shop, and took a chair with perfect *sang froid*.

"Well, Silvain, here I am again, but without the guard of honour that was good enough to attend me from your place the other night."

"If you come as a customer, Monsieur, I beg to decline serving you; in any other capacity I beg to decline knowing you," was Silvain's answer. It would have been angrier, but he knew that every word was heard by Matilde.

"Bah! let us have no such nonsense, man. Why, if I can forget and forgive, surely you may. If I say nothing about your having been seduced into hiring that ruffian Haureau to attempt my life, I do not think it is for you to recollect my irritation at being trapped and locked up."

"You are making an untruthful statement, M. Adair. The charge against me is false, and M. Haureau, who is a man of honour ——"

"Ha! ha! A man of honour who has had the misfortune to differ with the world on first principles, and whose theories have been rewarded with a bit of chain and a cannon-ball at the end of it."

"It is false again, Monsieur. M. Haureau has been a brave sailor; and he assures me that not all the coarse language which you used towards him should have provoked him to touch you, but that he was excited by your shameless attempt to cheat him. As for any idea of assassination, your own terrors must have created it, and transferred your own dagger to the hand of my friend."

"Be it so, my dear Silvain; but, as you have heard bad language and seen bad play before, do not let those accidents of the other night deprive me of the title you confer on the amiable Haureau —that of your friend. I bear you no malice. I forgive you as freely as I did for insisting on fighting me, for the sake of that spiteful little devil, Matilde, whom her master has very properly turned out of his house. There! don't look savage, and don't seize the glass pestle, because it might break in your hands. I am not come to renew a quarrel with you, but to offer peace."

"I wish to discontinue all intercourse of every kind with you, Monsieur."

"But there must be two parties to such a severance of partnership, and I decline to be cast loose. Don't talk nonsense. Quarrels and points of honour are not for perfumers and people of that kind. We have been useful to one another, and may be useful again. Whether or not, we have each a few secrets of the other's, which it might be highly inconvenient to have divulged in unpleasant ways."

"You have no secret of mine, Monsieur, and I have no longer that interest in your proceedings that can make me care to remember any

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secret of yours. Be at ease as to my revealing anything that concerns you, and do me the favour to drop my acquaintance."

"I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Then you will compel me to have recourse to violence."

"What, again. Have you got Haureau locked up in that room, ready to be let loose upon me again? Let us see?"

"Dare not to approach that room, Monsieur, at your peril."

(To be continued.)

LIFE IN ILLINOIS.

Like most other American citizens who are engaged in business, I have had opportunities of seeing how people live in the North-west, now that it is so well settled and populous as to aspire to furnishing a President. It was before Mr. Lincoln was a candidate that I was in Illinois; but it was since that state of affairs arose which caused Mr. Lincoln to be a candidate.

After a visit to my Alabama relations, I went, as the shortest way in time, to NewOrleans, in order to ascend the Mississippi. I went to St. Louis to see certain commercial correspondents; and there I heard enough about Kansas to be prepared for any political convulsion that could be brought about by regiments of ruffians, collected together to hang and ruin the free settlers who dared to desire that slavery should not be introduced into their territory. The voyage up the Mississippi had been spoiled by the presence of a company of these fellows. They were "Mean-whites," recruited for this service in the Cotton States; furnished with arms and a bible each; plied with drink and a few dollars, and sent away, after prayers on parade, to strengthen the Border-Ruffians of Missouri in preventing popular election taking place in Kansas, and in making the settlers from the Eastern States sick of their enterprise. I will not describe these wretches further than by saying that they were gambling all day and all night, and drinking and swearing while they gamed; that they tried by intimidation to borrow money of the other passengers when they had lost their last dollar; and that the captain of the steamer privately engaged some of his respectable passengers to watch in turn, day and night, against arson or other mischief from the desperate gang. They found me out for a Northern man; and my refusal to lend money, when I had no more than enough with me for my own expenses, raised great enmity against me. I had not been a day in St. Louis before I found myself an object of attention,—just as I had been at Charleston. It was reported that I was there to provide for the passage through Missouri of "a lot of d—d Yankees," with their waggons and farm stock. To this it was presently added that I was awaiting the arrival of some packages of Sharp's rifles, sent by "d—d Yankee sniggling saints and parsons," to enable the Kansas settlers to hold their ground, live on the land they had bought, and manage their own affairs. As it happened, I knew no settler, had nothing to do with Sharp's rifles, and held no commission from saint or parson: but I made no secret of my opinion, when it was asked, that law-abiding citizens have a right to live on their own land in their own way, without molestation from strangers; and to vote as they think proper, without having to run the gauntlet of any armed banditti, only to discover at last that the ballot boxes had been filled with fictitious votes in the night, or openly burned with their contents in broad day. I also said, when asked, that I did not think it hospitable to demand of an Englishman who was on board whether he ever saw so free a country, and to threaten to shoot him when his answer was not a flattering one. Being pressed, he said that there were countries in which any man might say what he thought on any subject without unpleasant consequences; and that such countries were practically more free than the Mississippi valley. For this he was threatened with lynching in one form or another; and it was a real relief when we saw him steam away up the Ohio, instead of attempting to explore any part of Missouri. My opinion of the manners of his examiners put me in almost equal danger; but a single day sufficed for my business at St. Louis: I baffled all inquiries about the length of my stay, and the direction my travels would next take: and the ferry had landed me in Illinois early the next morning, while my critics were persuaded that I should proceed to Kansas after plotting abolitionism for a week at St. Louis. My correspondent there wrote to me afterwards that those gallant Southerners were openly boasting that they had set scouts along the roads to Kansas, who would have prevented my passing the frontier, and who were still on the look out for the boxes of arms which I was supposed to be forwarding to the Kansas farmers.

At Alton, in Illinois, I saw the door of the printing-house from which Lovejoy, the martyr, looked forth when he was shot, on that night in 1837, when he had sustained a siege all day, after his press and types had been thrown into the Mississippi, and he had refused to promise to drop his newspaper, and to leave the place. He foretold that he should free the town, and perhaps the State. He did free the State. His brother is now among the staunch supporters of liberty of speech and the press in Congress; and the State has furnished the first Free-soil President. I was a boy when Dr. Channing obtained a public meeting at Boston in honour of Lovejoy the martyr,—formerly a citizen of Massachusetts, and thereby entitled to this tribute on the part of his fellow-workers in behalf of the liberty of the press. I well remember the countenance and voice of the venerable divine, when he moved the resolutions framed in concert with the best men in Boston. It was a critical hour for freedom in the leading State of the Union; and many youths besides myself received then the inspiration on behalf of liberty of conscience which will now, I trust, guide and conquer in this our great day of revolution. The frail form, the quiet bearing, the countenance, at once stern and serene, and the gentle and moving voice, awoke the citizen soul in many that day; and thus, after he has been dead nearly twenty years, Dr. Channing is one of the leaders in the second American revolution.

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These things were in my mind as I was travelling over the Illinois prairies, intensely enjoying the sense of liberty as I looked over the wide green landscape, breathing freely, and moving in security over the territory which, like all other American territory, is declared by the constitution to be free to all the citizens of the Union, to go to and fro. Dr. Channing had by law this right: yet, after that meeting, there were half the States of the Union in which he could never more set his foot. This was the bitter thought which spoiled much of the pleasure of that journey;—that such a man could not have come out alive from any attempt to use his constitutional right of visiting every part of his native country. From such a fact revolution was sure to arise, sooner or later: and now the day has come.

I was on my way to visit an old school-fellow who had married in New England, and gone to the West to found a family and fortune. I passed through Springfield, where I must have seen the modest dwelling in which Mr. Lincoln received the news of his election to the Presidency in the most critical time of the Republic—the most critical since Washington bade farewell to Congress, and retired to Mount Vernon. Time will show whether the plain lawyer's house at Springfield will become a second Mount Vernon, where pilgrims will go to honour the memory of the founder of a regenerated Republic. No one can foresee whether this will happen, or whether it is too much to expect that such a deed should be repeated in the same country in the course of a single century: but it can be no wonder that those who have carelessly passed that dwelling should strive to recall its aspect, and be glad to have seen it, however unconsciously.

My friend Harry Dana's farm lay some few miles north of the railroad to Chicago. It was near sunset when I got out at the station; and it took some time to get a country waggon in which to finish my journey; but I resolved to proceed, being assured that I could reach my destination by ten o'clock. I have never lost the impression of that first trip over the prairies. As long as there was light enough, the green bottoms within the windings of the river, and the grassy hills, belted with wood, were enchanting. As the twilight thickened we came out on more level ground; and the dim expanse, at the edge of which the stars rose on the one hand and set on the other, made a magical scene to New England eyes. A sudden light in the northern sky almost put out the stars in that quarter; and presently we had such an aurora as I never saw before or since. I have seen more than one as bright; but never such definite forms as the rays assumed. A great column of them gradually spread out and over at the top, not far from the zenith, till they presented the appearance of a vast silvery wheat-sheaf, contracting and expanding, growing dim and brightening, while capricious lights frolicked all about it, so that I was not surprised when my driver told me that his children thought, when they looked out from their beds, that the angels were at play when their day's errands were done. Here and there we caught a gleam of the river, between its dark turns. When we passed near a clump of trees a few fireflies rained off from the sprays. Their pale green sparks were soon put out by a red glare, at some distance to the right of our course. (I cannot call it a road, as we were passing over grass, with intervals of swamp, when our wheels seethed through the water.) The light came from a huge fire on the ground; and between it and us there was the black figure of a man, pacing to and fro till the sound of our vehicle made him turn and peer in our direction. I at once thought of the slave-coffles I had seen on the other side of the Ohio, and supposed the man to be a slave-trader; but a moment's reflection showed me that we were out of the range of that kind of traffic: and so my driver said. "We have no such doings here," he declared: "we live in a free State. I guess them are emigrants."

It was a party of emigrants on their way to Kansas. There was a desire for a parley on both sides. I was curious; and the watcher was anxious to learn whether his way was well open,—what the next twenty miles of road were like, and also what o'clock it was. While we talked, a score of heads rose up from the waggons which were ranged at the back of the fire; and two or three men looked out from the lean-to below the waggons. They were not going by St. Louis. They meant to cross the Mississippi higher up, and keep clear of the Missouri frontier: but they had to explore their way as they went. My good-natured driver gave them some appropriate advice, counselled them to keep their arms loaded, and to put on a bold face if anybody should interfere with them on the other side of the river, and assured them they had nothing to fear in his State. They had better cross the river as early in the morning as they could, and carry provisions, so as to avoid observation from the whites, and inspire respect in any Indians they might chance to meet. A female voice from behind asked whether the fire might not bring down the Indians upon their camp: but she was assured that there would be more danger in darkness; and too much discomfort to the watchers, and delay in the morning about getting breakfast: and so we bade them a very good night. My driver observed that there were burnt spots here and there all over the Illinois plains, from the number of emigrant camps that year. Many thousands must have gone to Kansas over that particular prairie.

Once more in the dark we went at a foot-pace, my driver watching for landmarks where I could see nothing. On the skirts of the firelight we had seen a prairie wolf crossing our path, and now my attention was called by the whip to something which was trotting beside the waggon. It was a black bear, which soon disappeared. The time seemed getting very long when a yellow spark appeared in the distance—whether far or near I could not tell. It was my friend's house—not far off, I was told—but there was the river between.

I was advised to look for the foot-bridge, which was somewhere near; for there was no saying what the state of the ford might be. I might get wet, or be drowned. I should hear the waggon come up on the other side, if it got through; and if not, I must make the best of my way to the light yonder before it went out.

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I never before groped for a bridge in a strange country when all alone. I should never have found it but for the wax-candle I always carry in travelling. The night was so still that I could light and carry it behind my cap. Thus I found the track, and then the double plank and rail; and thus I escaped falling into the deep rushing river where, in the middle, the footway was reduced to a single plank which carried no rail. I almost wished I had stuck to the ford; and the more when, arrived on the further bank, I could see no light in the distance, and hear nothing of the waggon. I had to amuse myself with the rustle of night birds, and the distant bark of a dog for a time which seemed endless. I had put out my candle as a reserve in case of further dangers. After a while I began to shout, but got no response. The jingle and creak of the waggon reached my ears at last, but from the wrong side. My comrade had failed at the first ford, and had had to try back for another, and he guessed it was now not far from midnight; so Dana's lights might well be out. It was in fact past midnight; but not the less was there a welcome for us both. Dana was up and active in a moment, and neither men nor horse went supperless to bed.

During the last half-mile, I had had an impression that we were on a rising ground; and, as soon as I looked from my window in the morning, I saw that it was even so. And such a rising ground! The dwelling stood on a terrace which extended to an unknown distance on either hand, with such regularity of height, and such perfection of level that it seemed to have been formed by rule and measure. It was richly grassed; and it descended to the prairie below by a grassy slope of about sixty feet. How level the prairie was, was shown by the prodigious extent that was commanded by this elevation of sixty feet. Where the blue and brimming river wound between belts of noble trees, those trees bounded the view; and in other parts clumps of forest-trees screened the horizon: but there were wide intervals in which the range of vision was free till the haze of distance confounded the earth and sky. As far as one could distinguish colours from the grass, the prairie was a perfect garden of bloom. During the week that I passed at Dana's, when we were seldom withindoors during the day, we lived among such wild flowers as I had never seen before.

There was white convolvulus trailing everywhere, with blossoms as large as my hand; scarlet lilies; the pink and white moccasin flower; the American primrose, ground ivy, scabious, and strawberry-blossoms still, though the fruit was ripe. Every morning, on rising, I saw the children below, some with tin cans, gathering strawberries up to the very housewalls; and below the slope, they could pick enough for the family breakfast in the space of a few yards. Moreover, they were larger and sweeter strawberries than our New England gardens yield. One child was playing with a spotted fawn which he had tamed; and another was coming in with a basketful of eggs which he had been hunting up among the tall weeds.

What a contrast was all this to the Mississippi steamboat, with its constraint and disorder, and disgust and danger! What a contrast to St. Louis, where repose and ease seemed to be unknown! What days I should have here, I thought,—in the free air, and amidst this glorious beauty, and far away from social troubles and personal risks!

They were charming days,—those seven sunny days on the prairie. Dana owned seven hundred acres in one plot, bought at the government price (1 dollar and ¼ per acre) some years before, and now worth so much more that he would have been a wealthy man if he had chosen to sell his land. He had no need of money except to send his children to school as they grew old enough. Boys and girls were to go to the college, within easy reach, established for the education of young people of both sexes and of all complexions;—a kind of institution which Southern people regard as almost diabolical, from its receiving whites and blacks without distinction. They can with difficulty imagine the spectacle of children of all shades of complexion sitting together on the benches of the common schools in Massachusetts; but the idea of young men in one part of a college, and young women in another, studying for professions, on terms of perfect equality as to colour, is either rejected as incredible, or dismissed as too shocking to be entertained. Negro physicians, clergymen, and educators have gone out of that college as well qualified as their white fellow-students; and Dana told me that, as the college was a good college, and in every way convenient for his children, he should send them there, notwithstanding the one inconvenience that the institution was subject to occasional disturbance from the South, and that its students lay under a certain amount of obloquy, or at least suspicion, afterwards, on the other side the great rivers. His sons would probably settle on the land he was holding for them; and his daughters would either marry within the State or remain with him and their mother; so that it would not matter to them what was thought of their mode of education five hundred miles away. They themselves knew that this education was the best that could be had for them; and they must take it with its one drawback. He did not consider the presence of well trained girls of colour any hardship upon his daughters; and the boys had all due respect for the attainments and character of the negro students who had won honours. The difficulty was not about that, but about the outcry the Southern people were always making against this college. He had for some time been attending to tillage and the sale of the produce of a part of his farm, in order to provide for this method of education. He had little other use for money, and should leave his sons' portions to be broken up by themselves, when they chose to settle.

It was truly a primitive mode of life. The cultivated part of the land stretched back behind the dwelling, so as to leave the prairie unbroken in front: but the stock was allowed free range in the fine herbage. All the cattle and horses were home-bred. All the food, except tea and coffee, salt and spices, was home-grown. The household had fish from the river, venison without limit from the prairie, and wild pigeons and

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partridges and waterfowl; wild and home-bred turkeys; half-wild swine, affording delicious hams; inexhaustible beef, fowls, eggs, milk, bread and cakes of half-a-dozen different grains; sugar from the maple woods, and vegetables produced at home; the fuel was from the woods; the bearskins and other furs were obtained by the family rifles; and shoes and harness and easy-chairs were made from leather dressed by family hands. The house was a log-house, and not the less comfortable for that; but it was in detached portions, two or three rooms being built as they were wanted, without any meddling with the original dwelling of four rooms.

Such was the abode in which I spent one of the happiest weeks of my life. Dana was happy, I saw, with his clever and warm-hearted wife, and his children,—so unlike children anywhere else! In regard to their pursuits and their mental independence, they might be called, by New England relations, rather wild. Their riding, hunting, and strong originality of character, at all ages, from two to fourteen, would make a Boston grandfather stare; but their manners were good, and their minds cultivated. A more thorough deference to parents than they manifested, I never saw; and their domestic behaviour was altogether good. They spoke out all they thought, safe from restraint or disrespect from father or mother, and, in return, father or mother's will was law.

I became intimate with them, one after another, in the course of exploratory rides, mornings of shooting in the woods, and evenings of fishing in that exquisite river. Sometimes the girls rode their favourite horses with us; or we drove them in the family waggon. Mrs. Dana was no slave, any more than the rest. She went out with us, in as frolicsome a mood as anybody, knowing that we had rather have her with us, and take pot-luck at home, than sit down to the choicest dinner, or supper, at the cost of leaving her behind to see to it. Her eyes feasted on the red bird, or the blue bird, flitting over the corn-field, or the woodpecker with his crimson cap, or the groups of deer, as if she had left her Yankee town only last week; and she looked on the Indians who crossed our path with almost as much interest as I did. It was a remarkable spectacle, the march in single file on the verge of the wood, the men stalking on first, and the squaws following, laden with baskets and bundles of children; or the men standing on logs out in the river, with their nets, while the squaws sat on the pebbly margin, cleaning the fish, and preparing to broil them at the fires they had lighted under the bank.

Perhaps, on the whole, the evenings were the best time of day. We were out of doors, as we had been all day, sitting on the steps of the piazza, or on the grass of the terrace; or under the great beech, or the locust trees. We fell into story telling, night after night; stories of critical sporting adventures, of lynchings of negroes or abolitionists, or supposed gamblers, and swindlers, and horse thieves, in the wilder part of the north-west. There were stories of Indian surprises; and of the feuds and revenges which belong to a half-civilised state of society. One chapter of romance was never opened at al; and, as I fancied, was carefully avoided. Before I left, I learned the reason why.

Up to the last evening of my visit, we had lingered over this kind of entertainment till it was starlight, and the night wind whispering in the prairie grass warned us in. It might have been supposed that we should be later than ever on my last evening; but Dana interrupted a story before the twilight was nearly gone, with

"Come, let us go in. We can hear the rest in the house."

Mrs. Dana instantly gathered up her knitting and rose, sending the children trooping before her into the house, and at once to bed, in their various parts of the composite dwelling. Though the story was left unfinished, there was no remonstrance on any hand. Off they went, as fate decreed, and I found myself alone with my host and hostess, when the lamp was lighted. I observed that the shutters were fastened, a thing I had not seen before; and I supposed that this betokened leave to me to sit up a while longer. I offered, however, to retire. Dana was to drive me towards Chicago the next day; and he might wish to rise very early, to dispatch business before we started.

"No, no, sit you down," said both. Dana observed that there was no saying when we might have an hour's talk again, and his wife declared that she did not intend us to go to bed hungry. Supper was coming by-and-by. So we sat down round the lamp. But Dana did not altogether give his mind to conversation at first. I thought him absent. In less than half an hour, I fancied I heard a gentle knock, given three times, at the shutter. Nobody took any notice for a moment, and Dana finished what he was saying. Then he rose, and left the room. Mrs. Dana conversed as usual during the ten minutes or more of his absence, and did not look in his face when he returned. The Irish servant brought in supper, and was sent to bed, and some time after, Mrs. Dana retired. As my friend and I remained for nearly another hour without his adverting to anything that had happened, I supposed that nothing had in reality happened. I could not quite believe that it was the red-capped woodpecker that had tapped at the shutter; indeed I was certain that it was a human knock: but it might be accounted for in many ways; and I was probably making much of a trifle, or of nothing.

We were four or five miles on our road the next day in Dana's most showy vehicle, the carryall, which usually appeared when the family went to Chicago—when he drew rein, and pointed with his whip up a track which had just diverged from ours to the northward.

"Do you see those people?" he asked.

"I see a party of people a long way off; but I can't tell one from another, or how many there are."

"Try again," said Dana, producing a good pocket-glass. "Now what do you see?"

"A woman and some children; stay, I think there are three."

"Never mind how many. Is one of them a boy?"

"Yes; there is a big boy."

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"And another?"

"Yes; I fancy the little one is a boy."

"How old?"

"Why, I should think six or seven."

"Good! And how is the woman dressed?"

"She is almost out of sight now; but I see something yellow on her head. Yes, it is so."

"Who wear yellow handkerchiefs on their heads?"

"Negro women, to be sure."

"No doubt. Now then, you have seen on that north road a negro woman with a little boy, somewhere about six. If you are asked, mind that; and never mind the other children."

"But I know nothing about them," I observed.

"Just so. So much the better. *I* know nothing about them either."

"That *is* odd," I said to myself, but aloud.

"You think so," said Dana, smiling. "Well: odd things do happen in our rough north-west." And he drove on briskly.

A few miles further on, we came in view of a long stretch of open country, here and there dropped over with woods, thickets, and graceful clumps of trees. Dana here paused again, took out his glass, and examined the track before us, which was visible for miles.

When we were proceeding again, he said, "Now I am going to tell you something that for your own sake I had rather have kept to myself. But I see there is no help for it; and I will make you master of the situation before we come up with somebody who is travelling on before us yonder."

"Then there *is* a mystery!" said I.

"Ah! you got scent of it: but, like my wife and other prudent people, you ask no questions. It is really so. My wife knows little more than you do. It is the only safe way,—so often as she is questioned."

Dana then told me that his house is a station of the Underground Railroad; or, as it is necessary to explain in Europe, a house of call for runaway negroes. There are such planted at intervals all the way to Canada, and fugitives are passed on from one to another till they are safe. As I was on my departure, my host told me how he managed. He had so built the outlying portion of his house which contained his book and business room as that a narrow space was contained between the inner end and the wall it joined, affording room for two or three persons to lie down or walk about. He alone entered this place, to ventilate and sweep it, and lay in clean straw for bedding, and biscuit and water for food when wanted. Sometimes he had, and sometimes he had not, notice of the approach of such a visitor. Everyone made the signal,—viz. three taps on the shutter at night. Last night, when we were sitting abroad, he saw somebody among the trees, where none of his own people were likely to be; and in fear of other eyes wandering in that direction, he had brought us all in. He had also sent all the young ears to bed and sleep.

On making the answering signal from the door, a negro woman and child,—a boy of seven,—appeared. They had passed the night where so many of their people had slept before them; had had biscuit and water at night, and corn bread and cold bacon this morning, and were started in the direction of the Lake before anybody else was up. They were before us now; and Dana had a mind to give them a cast, so as to bring them to the Lake shore to-night, and afford them a better chance of escape. He had put in skins and coats enough to cover them up within, if I liked to sit in front with him. So it was settled.

By means of our glass, we saw the poor creature leave the path and enter a thicket as soon as our wheels could be heard. Nothing was visible when we stopped before the thicket, till Dana called, and told her who he was, and that he would set her on her way. She had been terribly frightened, but was now all alacrity;—stepped in, covered up the little fellow, who entered into the spirit of the scene wonderfully; and neither spoke nor moved till we were within five miles of Chicago. Then she had to move pretty quickly.

I was constantly looking back, while Dana was on the watch forward. I fancied I saw dust far away in the rear of some distant trees. Within one minute, mother and child were hidden in the wood, a few yards from the track, and I was in lazy possession of the back seat of the carryall, Dana leaning on his elbow talking to me, while his horse jogged on in a very leisurely way.

"Here they come!" said Dana. "They are the kidnappers, I am certain. You may as well let your pistols be seen, or they will take you for a Yankee at once."

The fast trot and the dust soon came up behind us. Two men, heated and dusty, passed us, drawing rein as they did so, and looking into the carryall. Their impertinence was met by a stern stare from Dana, and a very full gaze from me. One asked a question or two about the road, and the other approached me, as if for a traveller's greeting; but he put his whip-handle down among the coats, till I turned it out without ceremony, and asked what he wanted. He laughed, and said he was not after robbery, but the contrary: and then both inquired of Dana whether he had seen a negro woman, who might be a runaway, anywhere on the road.

"Had she a child with her,—a little fellow, black like herself?"

"Just so," exclaimed both, in high excitement. "Where? where?"

"I saw such a woman, with a little boy, taking the road to the north where it forks from this, half way between here and Mitchell's house. Did you not see them?" Dana asked of me.

I said I had seen them, but not near enough to observe what they were like.

The pursuers here fell out, and let us know a thing or two. One had wanted to follow that northern track; and the other, who would follow the Chicago road, now heard that he was an ass. One was certain they might have got the truth out of Dana's wife, but for the other, who, on his part, was sure, from her manner, that she had never set eyes on the runaways. Her husband might be a d—d nigger thief,—might be or not,—could soon tell if he saw him; but that the lady knew nothing of these particular runaways he was confident. After a good deal of wrangling of this sort, and

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many oaths at the woman who had given them more trouble than she was worth,—she and the boy together,—there was one thing that they did agree on,—that no time was to be lost in getting upon that northern track. After starting back again, they turned in their saddles to thank us for our polite readiness to serve them,—so unlike, they were pleased to say, the vile nigger-stealing ways of the free States generally. We jogged on till they had disappeared,—turned, and quickly took up our joyful charge, who were now safe enough. We left them at a safe house in the outskirts of Chicago, whence they would be embarked, after dark, for Canada, in a trading sloop which had the freedom of the Lake.

I needed no persuading of the wisdom of Mrs. Dana in remaining ignorant of such visits, while her husband was at home; nor of his discretion in choosing to know as little as possible of the history of his guests till they were in safety. He promised me any news of this woman and child that might reach him. At present we knew only that her husband had preceded her. Being kindly warned to stay safe in Canada, when once there, instead of being tempted back by any inducement whatever, she said, "Sar, my husband is thar," as if that settled the matter.

Some weeks later, Dana wrote me the story. The husband had been sold away from Kentucky to the South, because he was above his condition. His wife resisted all attempts to make her take another husband till, at length, her master, rather than lose more time, "gave her his own son." Some little bird told her that her husband had escaped to Canada, and she resolved to follow him with his elder child,—the younger being unable to walk so much, and too heavy to carry. She hoped to buy him in time. The good Quaker woman at whose house she told her story, asked whether she would not also free her two mulatto children,—her master's grandchildren. She was embarrassed and agitated, and for long made no reply; and when she did, it was to say that to be sure those two "bright" ones *were* her children; but she did not think she ever *could* tell her husband that she had had them. Dana observed that slaveholders are precisely the people who know least of negroes. They suppose them brutes; and such proofs of fidelity and chastity as this woman unconsciously affords, either never meet their ears, or cannot find entrance to their understandings. The husband and wife and boy were together when Dana wrote; and they were not long in earning the price of the younger child.

It does seem strange to me, in reviewing my experiences in various parts of my own country, that we can, as a nation, have gone on so long ignoring the grand topic which is all important to all the citizens. For years, Europe has heard us talk about everything else, while the institution of Slavery has engrossed our minds, shaped our politics, corrupted our religion and morals, destroyed our temper and manners, and extinguished our freedom. Our visitors from Europe have seen this; but we have pretended to be blind to it. I cannot charge myself with this self-deception. My travels show how impossible it would be to deny the all pervading interest of the subject. As a brother, an uncle, and a citizen, I have learned what part slavery really plays in our polity and society. In any capacity I must rejoice that the hypocrisy at least is over, and that we are at liberty to assume the truth of the case in our acts and calculations. Whatever pain and perplexity may be in prospect, there is an end of the boast that we have no pains and perplexities.

There is yet another phase of life in my country,—that of the land of my own forefathers.

A Son of the Pilgrims.

STEER N.W.

THE FIRST OFFICER'S STORY.

About two years ago, I left the service. I was tired of it; and as I wanted some more exciting employment, I joined a whaler. We were unlucky—somehow, I bring no luck anywhere—and we were nearly empty. We were cruising up here to the north, and thinking of making for home, as the weather had changed: and the ice forms precious quick in those latitudes when it once begins. The captain naturally wanted to hang on to the last for the chance of another haul.

One bright afternoon, just after eight bells, I made up the log, and took it to the captain's cabin. I knocked at the door, and as nobody answered I walked in. I thought it odd the captain hadn't answered me, for there he was, sitting at his desk, with his back to me, writing. Seeing he was employed, I told him I had brought the log, laid it down on the table behind him, and as he made no answer, I walked out. I went on deck, and the first person I met was the captain. I was puzzled—I could not make out how he had got there before me.

"How did you get up here?" I said; "I just left you writing in your cabin."

"I have not been in my cabin for the last half-hour," the captain answered; but I thought he was chaffing, and I didn't like it.

"There was some one writing at your desk just now," I said; "if it wasn't you, you had better go and see who it was. The log is made up. I have left it in your cabin, sir," and with that I walked sulkily away. I had no idea of being chaffed by the captain, to whom I had taken a dislike.

"Mr. Brown," said the captain, who saw I was nettled, "you must have been mistaken, my desk is locked. But come—we'll go down and see about it."

I followed the captain into the cabin. The log was on the table, the desk was closed, and the cabin was empty. The captain tried the desk—it was locked.

"You see, Mr. Brown," he said, laughing, "you must have been mistaken, the desk is locked."

I was positive—"Somebody may have picked the lock," I said.

"But they couldn't have closed it again," the captain suggested; "but to satisfy you, I will open it and see if the contents are safe, though there is not much here to tempt a thief."

He opened the desk, and there—stretched right across it—was a sheet of paper, with the words, "Steer N.W." written in an odd cramped hand.

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The captain looked at the paper, and then handed it to me.

"You are right, Mr. Brown; somebody has been here. This is some hoax."

We sat there some time talking, and trying to guess what could be the object of such a joke,—if joke it was meant to be. I tried to identify the back of the man I had seen at the desk with that of any of the crew. I could not do it. It is true I had at first taken the man for the captain, but now points of difference suggested themselves. I had not looked very attentively at the figure, but still I was under the impression that the coat it had on was brown, and the hair, which appeared under the cap, seemed, as I remembered it, to have been longer and whiter than the captain's. There was only one man on board who resembled in the least the figure I had seen. I suggested to the captain that it might have been old Shiel, the boatswain. He did not like to suspect the old man, who was a great favourite; besides, what motive could he, or indeed any one else, have had in trying to change the course of the vessel.

Not to appear to suspect any one in particular, the captain determined to have up all the crew. We had them up, one by one. We examined them, and made all those who could write, write "Steer N.W.," but we gained no clue. One thing was very clear—it could not have been old Shiel, who was proved to have been forward at the time I was in the captain's cabin. The mystery remained unsolved.

That evening I sat drinking my grog with the captain in his cabin. We were neither of us inclined to be talkative. I tried to think of home, and the pleasure it would be to see old England again, but still, my thoughts always wandered back to that mysterious writing. I tried to read, but I caught myself furtively peeping at the desk, expecting to see the figure sitting there.

The captain had not spoken for some time, and was sitting with his face buried in his hands. At last, he suddenly looked up, and said,

"Suppose we alter her course to North-west, Mr. Brown?"

I don't know what it was; I cannot hope to make you understand the feeling in my mind that followed those words; it was a sense of relief from a horrible nightmare. I was ashamed of the childish pleasure I felt, but I could not help answering eagerly, "Certainly; shall I give the order?"

I waited no longer, but hurried on deck and altered the course of the vessel.

It was a clear frosty night, and as I looked at the compass before going below, I felt strangely pleased, and caught myself chuckling and rubbing my hands—at what, I cannot say,—I didn't know then, but a great weight had been taken off my mind.

I went down to the cabin, and found the captain pacing up and down the small space. He stopped as I came in, and looking up, said, abruptly,

"It can do no harm, Mr. Brown."

"If this breeze continues," I answered, "we can hold on for thirty hours or so, but then, I should think—"

"But then—we shall find ice. How's the wind?"

"Steady, North by East."

We sat down and finished our grog. I had the morning watch to keep next day. I was too restless to sleep after it, so I kept on deck the whole of the day. Even that did not satisfy me. I was continually running up into the tops with my glass, but every time I came down disappointed. The captain was as unquiet as myself. Something we expected to happen, but of what it was to be we could form no idea. The second officer, I believe, thought us both crazy; indeed, I often wondered, myself, at the state I was in. Evening came, and nothing had turned up. The night was bright, and the captain determined to carry on under easy sail till morning.

Morning came; and with the first grey light I was on deck. It was bitterly cold. Those only who have seen them can form an idea of the delicate tints of the morning sky in those Northern Seas. But I was in no humour to appreciate the beauties of nature. There was a mist low down on the horizon: I waited impatiently for it to lift. It lifted soon, and I could not be mistaken,—beyond it I could see the shimmer of ice. I sent down to tell the captain, who came on deck directly.

"It is no use, Mr. Brown," he said; "you must put her about."

"Wait one moment," I said; "wait one moment, the mist is lifting more, it will be quite clear directly."

The mist was indeed lifting rapidly. Far to the North and West we could see the ice stretching away in one unbroken field. I was trying to see whether there appeared any break in the ice towards the West, when the captain, seizing my arm with one hand, and pointing straight a-head with the other, exclaimed:

"My God! there is a ship there."

The mist had risen like a curtain, and there, sure enough, about three miles a-head, was a ship seemingly firmly packed in the ice. We stood looking at it in silence. There was some meaning after all in that mysterious warning, was the first thought that suggested itself to me.

"She's nipped bad, sir," said old Shiel, who, with the rest of the crew, was anxiously watching our new discovery. I was trying to make her out with the glass, when the flash of a gun, quickly followed by the report, proved that she had seen us. Up went the flag, Union downwards. We needed no signal to know her distress. The captain ordered the second officer off into the boat. I watched him as he made his way over the ice with a few of the men towards the ship. They soon returned with eight of the ship's crew. It was a dismal account they gave of their situation. They might have sawed their way out of the ice, but the ship was so injured that she could not have floated an hour. The largest of their boats had been stove in, the others were hardly seaworthy. They were preparing, however, to take to them as a last resource when our welcome arrival put an end to their fears. Another detachment was soon brought off, and the captain

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with the remainder of his crew was to follow immediately.

I went down to my cabin, and tried to think over the singular fate which had made us the preservers of this ship's crew. I could not divest myself of the idea that some supernatural agency was connected with that paper in the desk, and I trembled at the thought of what might have been the consequences if we had neglected the warning. The boat coming alongside interrupted my reverie. In a few seconds I was on deck.

I found the captain talking to a fine old sailor-like looking man, whom he introduced to me as Captain Squires. Captain Squires shook hands with me, and we remained talking some time. I could not keep my eyes off his face; I had a conviction that I had seen him somewhere, where I could not tell. Every now and then I seemed to catch at some clue, which vanished as soon as touched. At last he turned round to speak to some of his men. I could not be mistaken—there was the long white hair, the brown coat. He was the man I had seen writing in the captain's cabin!

That evening I and the captain told the story of the paper to Captain Squires, who gravely and in silence listened to our conjectures. He was too thankful for his escape out of such imminent peril to question the means by which it had been brought about. At the captain's request he wrote "Steer N.W." We compared it with the original writing. There could be no doubt of it. It was in the same odd, cramped hand.

Can any one solve the mystery? H. A. H.

EFFIE GORDON.

I.

"Bear me to my lowland castle,
Lay me on my bridal bed,
Let my wife and winsome baby
Kiss my lips when I lie dead."

II.

Up the glen rode brave Lord William
At the dawning of the day,
O'er the braes of blooming heather
Light he spurr'd his bonnie bay.

III.

Past the braes of blooming heather,
Hard beside the gloomy Pass,
There he sees the bracken moving,
And a shadow on the grass.

IV.

Well he knew that waving tartan,
Well he knew that sable plume,
When he saw the fierce Macgregor
Bounding from the yellow broom.

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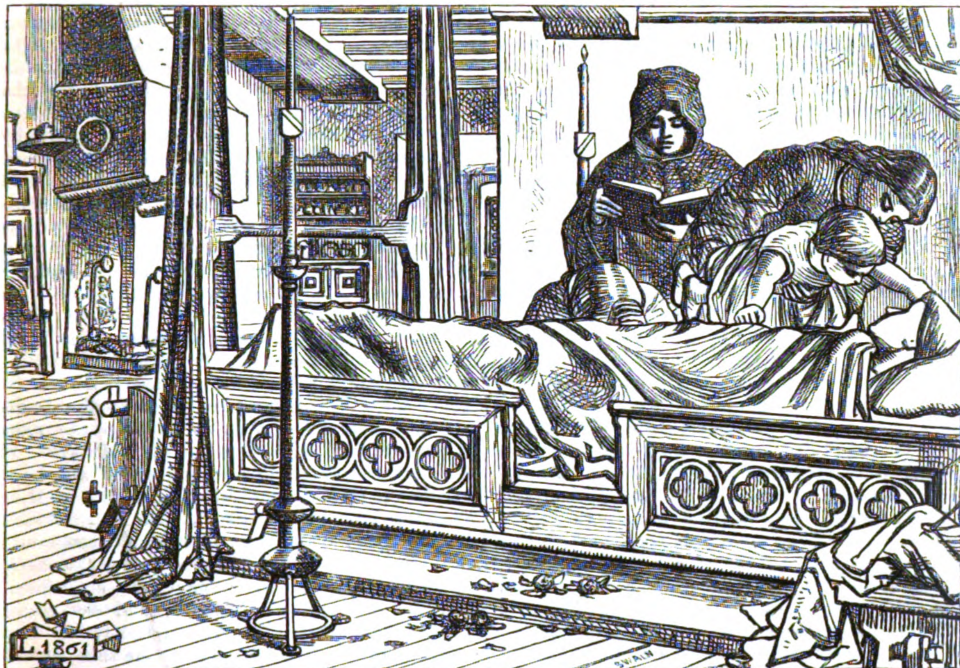
V.

"Draw the rein, thou false Lord William,"
With a mocking laugh he cried;
"Would ye win our Highland quarry
As ye won your Highland bride?

VI.

"Long I loved sweet Effie Gordon,
Bonnie blossom, fair and bright!
I had clasp'd her to my bosom,
Fickle heart, so false and light!



VII.

"Pricking homeward from the foray,
When I reach'd the border side,
There they told me, false Lord William,
Thou had'st won thy winsome bride!

VIII.

"Now ye clasp *my* Effie Gordon,
Wedded wife with babe so fair!
But I love her, tho' she left me,—
Left me to my heart's despair!

IX.

"And this heart that love must cherish
'Till I lose its crimson tide,
Lying in my bloody tartan
Dead upon the border side!"

X.

Out he swept his flashing broadsword,
Backward bounds Lord William's steed,—
"Coward!" shouts the fierce Macgregor,
"Quick I'll stay thy craven speed!"

XI.

Brave Lord William check'd his courser
Half-way down the torrent's side:
There Macgregor's arrow struck him,
Drinking deep the fatal tide.

XII.

Loud he laugh'd, the dark Macgregor,
As from rock to rock he sped,
"Never more shall perjur'd Effie
Clasp him on their bridal bed!

XIII.

"Weep and wail, false Effie Gordon!
Widow'd wife, with babe so fair!
Yet I love her, tho' she left me,—
Left me to my heart's despair!"

B. S. Montgomery.

MR. TRAIN AND THE BAYSWATER TRAMWAY.

Per favour of Rowland Hill, the present writer received a pink-coloured invitation to inspect this system, and afterwards adjourn to St. James's Hall to a "turtle lunch." The ticket of invitation was unique in its kind, containing a list of guests some three feet in length and some eight hundred in number, and amongst them Mr. Train invited himself, the whole of the Press Periodical and sundry of the Press Erratic, Bank of England directors, and dignitaries, or pseudo-dignitaries, of many kinds, whatever might be the weight of their avocations. Colonel Anderson of Port Sumter, Don Jose Salamanca, Holman Hunt, Thackeray, Dickens, Paxton, and Peto, the Marquis of Westminster, Dr. Charles Mackay, Poet Massey, and Brassey, and Pliny Miles, author,—and

soldier-philosopher of course,—were all mixed up together in admired confusion. It was an injustice to leave out the Man in the Moon, the Emperor of China, and the King of the Sandwich Islands.

A railway friend accompanied the writer to this so-called tramway, stretching one mile west from the Marble Arch. It is not a tramway, but a railway with an edge rail, flanged wheels to run on it, and points and crossings to turn out of one line on to another, and a siding to enable carriages to pass each other, as on ordinary single lines of railway.

The rail is a flat bar of iron, five inches wide, one inch thick on each edge for the width of an inch and a half, and half an inch thick in the middle. The rail is spiked down to a longitudinal timber of its own width and eight inches deep, and the longitudinals are kept in gauge by timber crossties at frequent intervals, to which the longitudinals are spiked by the aid of iron corner plates. The total depth from the top of the rail to the bottom of the crossties is fourteen inches. The carriages are omnibuses, with seats wider than common, the passengers seated side by side as usual, and with space enough between for a row of stand-up passengers when traffic is abundant. At each end is a projecting gallery, with side entrances. In the front gallery the driver stands, dressed in rifle uniform, and driving a pair of horses in the attitude of a classic charioteer. In the hind gallery stands a rifleman conductor, who at present rifles the passengers of their cash at the rate of two-pence per mile—double the rate of the ordinary omnibuses, and as many passengers as can, or will, stand in the galleries by the side of the riflemen. The carriages, regarded as travelling apartments, are well constructed, light, and well ventilated, for which the through passage gives them a great advantage; but as a piece of mechanism intended to run light, they are very defective. The wheels are of cast iron, disc form, 2 feet 9 inches in diameter, and hard-chilled on the peripheries, but are very narrow, and are keyed fast on the revolving axles, precisely like railway wheels, with all their disadvantages, and more than their friction, as the narrowness prevents any lateral play on coned surfaces, to compensate for curves or irregularities. The springs are mere lumps of vulcanised indiarubber, resting on the axle boxes, with slight vertical movement. The motion is tolerably easy, and will be while the road is in order, but will not be when the road gets out of order; but the grind and ring of the cast-iron wheels is not pleasant. There is, moreover, a great mechanical mistake in construction.

The rails, as at present laid, are supposed to answer two purposes: the portion elevated half an inch is for the rail carriages, to be guided by the wheel flanges; the flat portion, three and a half inches in width, is supposed to be a tram for ordinary wheels to run on. If the wheels are of the right gauge, this may be done; but the attempts of various cab-drivers to drive on them were far from successful. The raised rail is not sufficiently elevated to keep them on the track as a guide, and considerable skill would be required to drive in a straight line upon them, even with a two-wheeled cab, and with a four-wheeled cab or omnibus still more difficult.

It is a mistake to have kept the rail only half an inch in elevation. It would have been no greater impediment to ordinary carriages, had it been higher; and it is also a mistake to have attempted making a tram with the same rail. The tram is of no use unless seven to eight inches in width, so as to allow free lateral play for the wheels. The object in making the plate five inches wide is to prevent bending laterally by the blows of wheels of vehicles crossing the road, but the vertical thinness will expose it to bend vertically under heavy vehicles, and the engineers have yet to find out, that as road rails are exposed to a greater violence than railway rails, they must in some way be guarded or made stronger. If this Bayswater line is to have any durability, it must be bordered with stone kerbs, or some other material, better than Macadam, or the wheels of ordinary vehicles running along the edge will cut deep grooves, in which water will lie and penetrate to the foundation, and it will not do to open up the road to pack ballast, as is done on the railways. If the timber springs in the ground, it will be a constant source of annoyance, as it will be if it rots. It is creosoted timber, but there are two kinds of creosoting, one which penetrates throughout, and one which merely dies the surface skin-deep There is another mistake: the wheels are American, and the rails are English, and the wheel flanges are of greater depth than the rails. The result is, that the wheels run on the thin centres of the rails, and will bend them into hollows. As the flanges grind down, the wheels will bear on two several surfaces of different diameters, and the result will be that every wheel will act as a brake, which the horses will soon find out, to the cost of their owners. And it is curious to find that a patent has been taken for so especially bad a form of wheel and rail, *i.e.*, a wheel which is to run either on rail or common road, and badly on both.

One advantage in the new carriages is the arrangement of brakes to stop the carriages without horse-power, either to take up or set down passengers, or in descending inclines; but there would be obviously no difficulty in applying brakes to the ordinary omnibuses, and the only wonder is that it has not been done already. The principal reason for this omission is, that conductors and drivers prefer the work to be done by the horses.

The advantage to be obtained by the system is, if anything, a better road to run on. From this point of view, then, we have to compare the Bayswater rail with the Bayswater road. The rail is a hard surface, but is liable to dirt. The road in good Macadamised condition is also a hard surface, also liable to dirt. The rail has lateral friction, the road has not. On the road, large sized independent wheels run; on the rails, iron rollers of small diameter run, and upon the whole it is doubtful if the rail as laid and used has any advantage other than guiding the vehicles, with the disadvantage of the wheels being quite useless off the rails.

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There is an important advantage in the rails over the Macadam. Rightly constructed and laid, they would cost far less in maintenance. The Macadam is a crumbling substance, the iron is durable; but the utmost that can be expressed in favour of the present sample at Bayswater, comes from the lips of one of the engineers: "It is a step in the right direction," a cant phrase now applied to all sorts of inefficiency.

The objections made by the inhabitant of Connaught Place—that his horses will slip on going into the park—can only have reference to the broad space occupied by the points and crossings, and the double line of rails. There is nothing in the ordinary line to affect this question, provided it were properly bordered with stone. It is a great thing to get it experimented on, and it is to be hoped that the defects it exhibits will not be taken to be essentials of the system.

The examination being over, the writer accompanied his railway friend to the "turtle lunch," though what the lunch had to do with the Bayswater rail was not very definite; but, as there were to be five-minute speeches, with Mr. Train in the chair, it was probable that some useful information might be given. At any rate, there was Mr. Train to be seen and heard, and the press had spread his fame far and wide.

Is it lawful to eat turtle, or see turtle eaten, at St. James's Hall, and then criticise the founder of the feast? On the whole, it is probable that, as the feast was devised for an advertisement, the notice of the feast in the press may be regarded as a natural concomitant, agreeable rather than otherwise. Mr. Train was certainly the great feature, and such an amount of excitement in a man who is reported to be a teetotaller is rarely witnessed. He puts us in mind strongly of Alexandre Dumas. Why he should advocate tramways especially, no good reason appears, for there is no doubt that he could advocate anything else just as well. Mr. Train is not a rhetorician, still less a logician: but assuredly "those lips are well hung that can keep so large a table in a roar." He certainly does not belong to the dull Anglo-Saxon race, nor does he speak with the drawl of New England. The mercurial Celt, French or Irish, is a strong element in him, mingled with much geniality from other sources, and he appears to care little what he says in quality, if the quantity be sufficient. There is in him no lack of the accompaniment of oratory—action, and his own sensations of mirth carry away his hearers with him. Men of Mr. Train's faculties seem to be an Institution of Speculation, and so belong to the public. His laughter is catching, and every one laughs without knowing why. There is humanity about the man and his everlasting hilarity. When he gave the toast of Queen Victoria, she seemed to be his own natural sovereign, and the Prince Consort and the rest of the Royal family were all members of his own family. Equally genial was he with the President of the United States, though some of the guests murmured—

"Under which king, Bezonian?"

Masterly was his introduction of his patrons. "The Press, as the next power in the world to the sovereigns," and "The Metropolis Board of Works," took rank before the whole of the Government, after which came "The Authors and Artists." "Corporations, the givers of Tramway Concessions." Army, Navy, and Volunteers. All very pleasant and laughable; but not yet a solution of the question, how best to construct rails in the streets and roads of the metropolis and elsewhere. W. Bridges Adams.

TUSCAN NOOKS AND BYE-PATHS.

A system of railways affords admirable facilities for the thorough exploration of a country to those who know how to use it judiciously. To the great mass of travellers it has, on the contrary, the effect of rendering all districts, save those actually traversed by the iron line, more completely unknown than they were in the old days of jog-trot locomotion. The termini of railways are great cities. And the ease and luxury with which we are whirled from one central point of curiosity and attraction to another bids fair to make us less acquainted than ever with all else than the cities of the lands we travel through, unless for those who will make the staff and wallet supplementary to the iron horse. Florence is not altogether an unknown city. The railway journey thence from Leghorn is not quite unbeaten ground to English travellers. But of all the thousands who have traversed it within the last ten years, I would wager much more than I should like to lose, that not ten have enjoyed the "excrescence" from the beaten track, which I am about to describe as desirable paralipomena to the red-book, which despotically guides the travelling Briton on his course.

Did the English traveller ever hear of the town of Vinci? No. How should he, since the omniscient red-book ignores the existence of any such spot. But Leonardo da Vinci, he has heard of? "Altro!" "I should think so;" as the Tuscan phrase may be rendered colloquially; the exact translation being "other;" quasi dicat—"other than that!"—"something more than that." Well, Leonard of Vinci took that name from his birthplace, a little town at the foot of the Monte Albano, not seven miles from Empoli, on the left-hand of the railway going to Florence.

Empoli, the reader will remember, because it is a first-class station on the railroad. The Monte Albano, too, our railway-traveller has probably never heard of; but has a vague idea that it is somewhere near Rome.

The Tuscan Monte Albano, my dear sir, is that long mass of mountain, rising to the height of about two thousand feet, which bounds the valley of the Arno on your left, as you speed Florenceward. The upper part of it is bathed in an ineffably lovely purple light by the setting sun; and below, the deepening shadows in the ravines, that score the long flank of the mountain, climbing upwards with the inexorable rapidity of a twilightless southern night, are chequered by the lights that rest on prominent knolls covered with fruit-laden chesnuts. Do they not look inviting—those deep-green villa-studded recesses of the hills?

Should you not like a ramble among their greenery? and, at the same time, a visit to the old-

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world little town perched on a knoll between two ravines next the mountain's foot, where the encyclopædic Leonardo received his earliest impressions of this fair earth's forms and colours? If so, the best way to manage it will be thus. We won't quit the train at Empoli. You are looking to take your ease in your inn at Florence to-night. And assuredly you would take no ease in any hostelry at Empoli. Complete your journey to Florence, and when you have settled yourself comfortably in your quarters there, we will have a day among the hill-tops and sides of Monte Albano.

The early morning train on its way from Florence to Leghorn leaves the former city about seven, supposing our excursion to take place in September—the month of months for rambling in Italy—and drops us at Signa, the second station on its road. At this point the Arno quits the broad basin at the upper end of which Florence is situated, and enters a defile of the hills. The magnificent basin in question extends in an unbroken level of extreme fertility far away to the north-west, some twelve miles to the city of Prato, and eight or nine more beyond it to the city of Pistoia, both independent republics in the olden time. But all the portion of it beyond Signa, at which point the Arno quits it, is not the valley of the Arno, but that of the Ombrone, a turbulent and frequently mischievous stream which comes down from the chesnut-covered mountains behind Pistoia. It was at the defile of Signa, that, in the fourteenth century, Castruccio Castracani, the celebrated chieftain of Lucca, the greatest captain of his day, and a terrible thorn in the side of fair Florence, conceived the notable idea of building such a dyke across the course of the river, as should have the effect of drowning the cities of Florence, Prato, and Pistoia at one fell swoop!

I do not know what Stephenson or Brunel might have said as to the practicability of the scheme. But as the fall of the river in that part of its course, which lies between Florence and Empoli, is less than three feet in a mile, and the distance is only seven miles, the height of wall necessary for such a purpose would be nothing very considerable. To construct a dyke of sufficient strength for the purpose would have been a work of very much time, and its success would seem to depend on the condition,—that the men of the three great cities to be drowned should sit quietly watching the progress of the work. In any case the great Ghibelline captain did not add this colossal scheme for destruction to his other claims to immortal honour, but contented himself with burning and utterly destroying the town, castle, and bridge of Signa; as is testified by a Latin inscription still legible over one of the gates. The date of this destruction was 1236.

The little town of Signa occupies the south-easternmost spur of the Monte Albano; if indeed the knoll on which it stands can be called so, cut off as it is from the rest of the mountain by the Ombrone, which passes through a deep gorge just before it falls into the Arno. Beginning our walk therefore by climbing this buttress of the mountain, we have to descend again to cross the Ombrone, before we begin in earnest our ascent.

"Proibbito di battere a stormo!" we read, painted in huge letters on the wall of a farm-yard a little before crossing the Ombrone. "Forbidden to raise the country by an alarum!"—a reasonable, but one would have thought needless, prohibition in this quiet rural district. But the legend is, and may probably remain for a few generations a sign of the recent times of Tuscany.

In the months which followed the bowing-out of our grand duke, one of the favourite but very weak devices of the enemy was to endeavour to raise false alarms in the country, to persuade the simple countryfolks that "the Austrians were upon them!" and thus to create disturbances which it was hoped might spread, and which if the confusion caused by such means could be made to lead to nothing better, might at least lend some appearance of support to the assertion that Tuscany was neither tranquil nor contented. The inscription will in all probability remain where we saw it, till it needs an antiquary to explain its meaning, and may come to be regarded as a curious memorial of times, which will appear scarcely realisable to our descendants a hundred years hence.

The Ombrone crossed by an ancient bridge, we follow a very steep but carriageable, or at least gigable, road circling the side of the mountain, which brings us to the old Medicean Villa of Artimino, at an elevation of about eight hundred feet above the valley. The situation is a remarkable one for the very extensive view it commands over the upper part of the Florentine basin, and up to the hills and convent of Vallombrosa in one direction—over the lower part of the same basin, with the cities of Prato and Pistoia, and the chesnut-covered Pistoian mountains in the background, in a second—and over the lower valley of the Arno as far as the Pisan hills in a third.

In the old days, when Italians were by their interminable quarrels and internecine wars between city and city preparing the way for the three hundred years of slavery and tyranny from which they are just emerging, there was a castle or fortified village up here belonging to the Pistoians, and forming one of their outpost bulwarks against their neighbours the Florentines. Of course, therefore, Artimino has a long chapter of history belonging to it, was taken, re-taken, and taken again. When all this disorder had in due course prepared the way for "order" under the absolute sway of the Medicean dynasty, there remained a mere skeleton of long-since gutted walls. At the foot of the hill, in the direction of Prato, one of the most prominent objects in the landscape is the huge Medicean Villa of Poggio a Caiano, the well-known scene of the extraordinary death of Duke Francis and his celebrated Duchess Bianca Capello. In all probability his brother, the Cardinal Ferdinand, poisoned them both. The circumstances of their death, however, are mysterious and doubtful. At all events Ferdinand succeeded his brother, and was wont to take his pleasure at Poggio a Caiano quite as agreeably as if no such tragedy had, whether by his own instrumentality or not, been enacted there. Upon one occasion, when staying there, his highness, while hunting on Monte Albano, made a halt before the crumbling walls of the old castle, and turning to his architect Bernardo Buontalenti, who was among his suite: "Bernardo,"

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said he, "just on this spot where I now stand, I must have a palace large enough to accommodate me and my whole court. Set to work, therefore, and do not be long about it."

So the present Villa of Artimino was built, and was ready to receive its guests in 1594. Leopold the First afterwards gave the mansion, together with large estates extending down into the valley beneath it, to the Marchese Bartolommei; and the property is now held by an English lady, the widow of the last Marchese.

A more delightful spot for a summer retreat from the heat of Florence, when the flagstones begin to be warmed through, cannot be conceived. It has what the villas of the Valdarno are apt to be deficient in, plenty of wood around it, chiefly holm-oak, good for shelter, for shade, and for picturesque beauty of form and colouring. The house, a vast square building, consisting of ground-floor, *piano nobile*, or first-floor, and garrets, must have afforded ample accommodation, one would have thought, without the range of buildings at some little distance, pointed out as the lodging of the pages and courtiers. The arrangement of the building affords a curious instance of the slowness with which the habits of domestic life were wont in those slow-going times to suit themselves to new circumstances, however palpable the advantages to be obtained from the change. When Buontalenti built this villa for Duke Ferdinand, it was no longer necessary that a prince's dwelling-house should be constructed with a view to security from attack. Yet no other motive can account for the sacrifice of all the convenience and beauty entailed by the abandonment of the ground-floor to offices, carriage-houses, or mere emptiness. A range of small prison-like barred windows all round the lower part of the building indicate that nearly one half the space of the huge mass was put to no better purpose. Indeed provision is made to enable the noble owners to avoid even passing through that part of their mansion. A large flight of double steps on one side of the palace leads to an open *loggia* or arcade which forms the entrance to the *piano nobile*, or part of the mansion occupied by its masters. The result is that no attempt has been made to adorn the space immediately around the house.

It stands in the midst of an open esplanade bounded by the woods above mentioned. This space is occupied entirely by coarse, unmown, uncared-for herbage, growing up to the very foot of the walls beneath the prison-like windows. Yet with the aid of the fine old woods, and especially of one or two magnificent old patriarch holm-oaks in the foreground, and the enchanting views that might be obtained by a little judicious opening of vistas, it would be easy to transform this space into the most charming gardens. But then for the due enjoyment of them it would be necessary to get rid of the Newgate-looking windows, and cut the apertures down to the ground.

But a serene eminence who opens his way to a throne by drugging his brother and sister-in-law, naturally prefers iron-barred windows to flower-beds, and very probably agreed in opinion with a recent grand-ducal minister in Florence, who would not permit a newly-made piazza in the city to be planted with trees, because "it was injurious to public morality," seeing that the trunks of them might serve to conceal an assassin while waiting for his victim! The minister thus careful of the public morality dwelt himself on the piazza in question.

Leaving Artimino behind us, and following the crest of the mountain in its direction towards the north-west—a walk of some five or six miles, always ascending more or less, brings us to the culminating point of the Monte Albano range at a place called Pietra Marina, an elevation of about 1800 feet above the level of the sea. A huge rock, projecting through the thin and scanty soil, has given the place the first half of its name, while it owes the second part of it probably to the fact, that the sea beyond Leghorn is visible from it. Those who are used to mountain rambling must often have observed that the extent of view from an eminence depends more on the circumstances of its position relatively to the surrounding country than to its own elevation. And Pietra Marina is a strong instance in point. The height is nothing considerable; but the extent of view from it is very remarkable. From Mount Falterona, the highest of the Tuscan Apennines, and the tops close under which both Arno and Tiber take their rise on the one hand, the eye ranges to the islands of Elba and Gorgona on the other. A small building has been erected on the summit for pic-nicking and such like purposes by the sovereign owners of Poggio a Caiano, far in the valley beneath. Together with the sovereignty of Tuscany, that of these four walls has now passed into new hands; and, in sign of ownership, some zealous hand had already blazoned the arms of Savoy on the white-washed walls over the door. But some other equally zealous adherent of fallen fortunes had given vent to his legitimist sympathies by defacing the new painting. The "reactionist" had not, however, been allowed to have the last word. For lower on the wall, beneath the insulted emblem, might be read, "Morte ai codini!"—"Death to the pig-tailed fogies!"—the holding of anti-national opinions being (poetically) supposed to be confined to such old-world superannuated slow-coaches as are characterised to the popular mind by the wearing of the tail so dear to our grandfathers. The "codini" are our Jacobites.

We called a halt, drew forth our cigars, and sat down to enjoy the grand panorama beneath us. The day, though not a favourable one for a bird's-eye observation of the distant parts of the immense horizon, was especially so for adding all the accidental beauties of contrasted light and shade to the landscape. Heavy masses of black clouds, threatening rain, were playing at hide-and-seek with a brilliant Italian sun. There was a good deal of wind too; and as the purple darkness was ever and anon rolled back by it, and the unmitigated sunlight suffered to illuminate one portion of the panorama after another, Florence, Prato, Pistoia, Empoli, were in turn brought out clear and sparkling in the midst of a surrounding setting of dim and uncertain depths of indigo coloured cloud.

About fifty yards from the spot on which we

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had perched ourselves, a couple of bare-legged lads of fourteen or fifteen were sitting, apparently in charge of some very lean and ragged-looking sheep which were gleaning a scanty meal on the stony hill-side below us. The elder was industriously employed in plaiting straw as fast as his fingers could shape it. The younger, as handsome a young dog as ever looked the very personification of idleness, had also his bunch of straw attached to his jacket; but he made no pretence of doing anything with it. While his elder silently plied his task, he drew from his wallet an enormous slice of bread, although it was not yet nearly mid-day, and sat slowly munching it, and staring at the extraordinary phenomenon presented to him by our presence there with the quiet, impassive, contemplative look in his great black eyes of a ruminating bullock. A peasant from one of the little Hill-villages above the Baths of Lucca once told me that there was no such thing as a watch or clock in his "paese," but that it was always considered mid-day when the "paroco"—the village priest—was hungry, for he always then ordered the bell for noon to be rung. I suppose the young shepherd on Pietra Marina made it noon from observations of the same sort.

At the further, that is the north-westernmost, extremity, the Monte Albano rises into another somewhat less elevated point, called St. Alluccio from an ancient tower, the remains of a hermitage which once stood there. The walk from one of these points to the other is a very fine one of some four miles along the crest of the mountain. In some parts the waters have washed away the mountain sides till a mere ridge remains, so that a traveller ascending from the lower valley of the Arno might almost shake hands with one climbing from the valley of the Ombrone, before either of them had quite reached the summit of the backbone which separates them. A peripatetic lecture on the old history of Tuscany might be given here with advantage, so storied are the hills, valleys, towns, and hamlets which lie beneath the eye on either side. From the great battle of Altopascio, in which the Florentines suffered defeat at the hands of the men of Lucca in the fourteenth century, to the half-serious, half-horseplay raids of commune against commune, as shown in the chronicles of St. Miniato and Empoli, all the life and history of the mediæval communities might be illustrated with references to the localities spread out around and beneath on all sides. The ill-famed site of the great defeat of Altopascio lies in the valley to the right, Empoli on the Arno, and more distant St. Miniato, with its crown of lofty towers, in that to the left. The legend of the quarrel between Empoli and St. Miniato is a curious specimen of the sort of half-earnest, half-jocose feuds which were common when war was the business and playing at war was the recreation of men's lives. In reply to some bragging menace of the Empolitans, the men of St. Miniato—which is situated on the hill on the other side of the Arno—had replied that not a man of Empoli should ascend their hill till an ass was seen flying through the air. To which the Empoli heroes replied, that such a sight *should* be seen ere long; but that they would have the key of St. Miniato town-gate without a man of theirs mounting the hill to fetch it—a boast which was thus made good. On the first dark night a large number of goats, with lanthorns tied to their horns, were driven in long procession up the steep hill-side beneath the walls of St. Miniato by the girls of Empoli. The unaccountable appearance of these bobbing and dancing lights coming up the hill was at once attributed by the Samminiatesi to the source to which everything unaccountable was attributed in those days—the Devil. A general panic seized on the inhabitants. The clergy, who were the only class likely to know better, of course found their account in the Devil's habitual interference with men's affairs, and encouraged all such delusions. Everybody hastened either to shut himself into his own house, or to escape from the city in the opposite direction. The gate towards the enemy was left guardless, and the Empoli girls took possession of the keys and carried them back in triumph to their husbands and lovers. The next day Empoli sent an embassy to St. Miniato, to say that if the men of St. Miniato would favour them with their company at a festival on the day of Corpus Domini, then near at hand, they should, on request, have back their keys, and see an ass flying through the air. The invitation was accepted, and the boast made good by throwing a luckless donkey from the top of the lofty church tower into the piazza. The brutal joke was thought so good an one, that it has been repeated ever since on the anniversary of that day. Modern humanity has not been able to persuade the Empolitans to abandon the "peculiar institution" of their city; but it has succeeded in introducing a compromise, by virtue of which the hapless donkey is not *thrown*, but run down by a rope and pulley from the top of the tower.

But the sites which lie around Monte Albano are suggestive not only of memories of battles and feuds, though these occupy here as elsewhere the largest portion, alas! of human history. Altopascio is not famous only for its great battle, but also as being the cradle and earliest seat of the knights hospitallers, whose institute became spread over all Europe. And beneath us on the opposite side of the hill—the Valdarno side, that is—lies Vinci, the birthplace of one of Nature's special favourites. Shall we descend from our vantage point by the side of old St. Alluccio's bleak tower to the northwards, traverse the plain on which the great battle was fought, and so make our way back to Florence by the Lucca and Pistoia railroad? Or shall we find our way down the steep wood-clothed flank of the mountain on the Valdarno side, and visit Leonardo's birthplace, thence crossing the valley to Empoli, and so to Florence by the Leghorn rail? The second scheme was quickly decided on, *nem. con.* The interest attaching to memorials of one of the great creating intellects of the world outweighed that offered by reminiscences of destruction on however large a scale.

Besides, the appearance of the little town itself as it lay far beneath us, bright as the sunshine rested on its white walls amid the embowering chesnuts and vines, was in itself exceedingly attractive. So we began our descent on Vinci.

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The first portion of this was accomplished by a dash in a direct line down the mountain side through a thick copse-wood of chesnut, the young branches of which lent us a very welcome aid in coming down a slope steeper than any house-roof. But we soon fell into a road cut along the hill-side, of which we were fain to avail ourselves, though doubting whether it would lead us to our object. The hamlets and townlets scattered over the Tuscan hill-sides are so numerous and so much like one another, and so unlike themselves when seen from a different point of view from that from which you have first observed them, that, in making for any one of them across the country, one is apt to be misled by mistaking one tower and cluster of houses for another. But Vinci is too distinctively marked to be mistaken. The black and sturdy tower of its ancient castle, and the white and slender tower of its church rising side by side, distinguish it from every neighbouring tower and town. The site, too, is peculiar. It stands perked up, bright and clear-looking, on a knoll between two dark-green richly-wooded ravines, the last protuberance of the mountain before its base meets the fertile flat of the valley.

A very pleasant walk, at first through chesnut woods, then through olive groves, and lastly between corn-fields divided, sheltered, and festooned with vines, brought us duly down to the neck between the two ravines, over which was the entrance to the town. It was about one o'clock, the hour of the siesta; and the city of the Arabian Nights, where all the inhabitants were turned to stone, could not have been more deadly still and life-abandoned. We had breakfasted at six; and had been on foot nearly ever since. We were intent, therefore, on finding a hostelry of some sort. But we traversed the entire town without seeing the smallest sign of "entertainment." Surely, there must be a *café* in the place, we said. The inhabitants could no more exist without one, than without water. At last we descried an ostler-looking sort of man sitting, in his shirt-sleeves, on a door-step; and asked him if there were such an establishment in Vinci. Our appearance and our demand seemed to occasion him the most overwhelming astonishment. He contemplated us for a minute in speechless wonder, and then with a profound yawn called another man from the house, who was equally astonished, and who equally yawned before he could bring his mind to bear on the extraordinary circumstances before him. A consultation then took place in an under tone between these two representative men of Vinci, from which I gathered that they were coming to the conclusion that for the honour of the town it would be better to take the strangers to the house of a gentleman in the neighbourhood! A strong protest was immediately entered against any such measure; and a second petition put forward for direction to something of the nature of a *café*, however humble. Thereupon the second man got himself into motion, and led us to a sort of general shop in the main thoroughfare of the place, to which a little room, with three or four marble-covered tables denoting its destination, was attached.

"Lemonade?"

"No lemons."

"Café au lait?"

"No milk!"

Coffee, however, and bread were forthcoming; and our morning's work made this somewhat meagre fare very acceptable.

While we were discussing it, the little *café* gradually filled with citizens of Vinci anxious to look at the strangers, whose arrival had already, it was evident, become known to the community. They did not affect to disguise their object by ordering anything in the *café* for their own consumption, but looked on at the progress of our meal with the greatest, and it must be added, most benevolent interest. For if a bit more bread was wanted, or a second cup, or rather tumbler of coffee (such being the mode of taking it in humble houses in Italy), two or three of the spectators would start up to procure it. Having somewhat satisfied our hunger and thirst, we asked if any conveyance was to be had to carry us to Empoli, a distance of six or seven miles. No reply was made in words, but one of our guard of honour went off, and in a minute returned with an old man, who was presented as the livery-stable keeper of Vinci.

"Had he a 'bagarino' (a little light four-wheeled gig), and a horse that he could send to Empoli?"

"'Gnor, no! ma c' è un baroccino sulle cigne, e un cavallo come se ne vedono pochi, ma pochi davvero;" which is Tuscan for, "No, sir. But we have a cart on straps, and a horse such as one rarely sees, but rarely in truth."

The *baroccino sulle cigne* is a vehicle consisting of a huge pair of wheels, an axle and pair of long poles, connected by two shorter cross-bars. The part between the two cross-bars constitutes the body of the carriage, and the projecting remainder of the poles the shafts. A stout net-work of rope is attached to the four sides of the frame that has been described; a mat is supported by this, and forms the bottom destined to support the feet. A strong iron arm, some eighteen inches long, is erected in a vertical position from the four corners of the frame; and two strong straps, *cigne*, are suspended from the tops of these irons, one from front to back on the off side, and the other on the near side. On these, about the middle of their length, a seat is fixed; and they to a certain degree do the work of springs. The seats thus placed may be increased to any number that can be placed on the straps; and I have seen as many as sixteen persons accommodated on four seats, and thus carried on one pair of wheels. Such is a *baroccino sulle cigne*.

Well! how much was asked for taking us to Empoli on the *baroccino* with the peerless horse? Three pauls, about sixteen pence, was the sum demanded for the six miles. It must be owned that, if the steed might have been more than matched without looking far for his peer, the modesty of his owner's demand was of rare quality. So the *baroccino* negotiation was concluded; and we proceeded to the next point of our business.

"Did any one there happen to know the name of one Leonardo da Vinci?"

"Altro! altro! altro!" a whole chorus of *altros*. Every man there should rather think that he *had* heard of one bearing that name. Could any of

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them point out the house in which the great painter, poet, architect, mechanician had been born? Of course they all knew it; knew all about him, his fame, his birth, and story. For whatever a Tuscan peasant is ignorant of, and he is profoundly ignorant of most things, he is rarely uninformed of the glories of his country's palmy time. We soon learned that the house in question was not in the town, was about a mile and a half from it in the direction of the mountain, on a farm called Anchiano. We had, in fact, passed very near it, as we came down from St. Alluccio.

"Who was willing to earn a paul by accompanying us to the spot?"

The lounging, ostler-like man, our first acquaintance in Vinci, who seemed to have nothing on earth to do, declared that his avocations were too pressing to permit his having that honour. But a blacksmith, a fine, strapping fellow, some six feet two or three in his stockings, volunteered to be our cicerone. And charging the owner of the *baroccino* to have the peerless steed ready in harness in about an hour, we started on our path up the hill again.

"We shall have a glass of wine, or two, this year," he remarked, as he pointed out the abundant crop of all but ripe grapes in the vineyards through which we were passing. "Not that the malady has ever been so bad on this hill-side, as it has in many parts of the country. We grow the Trebbiano grape here chiefly, and our wine is as good as any grown on the Chianti hills; ay, better; and worth two *lire* the flask every drop of it" (about sixpence a bottle). "Here we come on the farm where the professor was born."

"Il professore," he called the great artist; as did all the Vinci people in speaking of their celebrated townsman. "Il maestro," the term would have been in his own day; and the change marks curiously the artist's progress in social estimation and pretension, which has been contemporaneous with his decline in artistic worth and merit. For, though, etymologically, he who claims to be a *master* in any art, makes a higher pretension than he who calls himself merely a *professor* of it, yet the former title was in the great days of art shared by the artist with the master tradesmen of any other craft. His "studio" was a "bottega," *a shop* to all intents and purposes; and he was the "master" of a picture manufactory. The master mason, or master carpenter is still "il maestro;" but the line which modern reverence for head-work, as distinguished from hand-work, has drawn between the artist and the artisan, has in Italy classed the former with other academic personages of all kinds, and dubs him "professor" accordingly.

"Here," says our blacksmith cicerone, "is the house, a peasant's dwelling now, as it was a peasant's dwelling then. For our Leonardo, you know, was born a peasant. His mother lived in that house; but not his father. He was a lawyer, and lived in Vinci. He had a wife, too, and other sons in Vinci. But it was only the farm-girl's child that the world has heard of."

There stood the Tuscan farm-house before us, amid its olives, figs, corn-fields, and vineyards, evidently just as it stood four hundred years ago; and the inmates were around it occupied with the same cares, and busied with the same labours, with one notable exception. The Indian corn culture, which now makes so conspicuous and characteristic a part of Tuscan rural economy, could have contributed no part to the scene in 1452—the year of Leonardo's birth. At present it is one of the most picturesque features in the appearance of a Tuscan farm. Whether the *contadino* family be engaged in gathering the huge ears from the stalks in the field, while the primitively constructed red cart with its pair of great dove-coloured Juno-eyed oxen, and a coarse white sheet at the bottom of it, to save the grain that may be shaken from the full ears, waits its load hard by; or whether, somewhat later in the year, each farm-house is seen clad from eaves to foundations with a rich red-gold coloured robe, formed of tiers of the ripe maize strung one over the other on the walls to harden in the sun; or whether the whole strength of the family be seen engaged, as was the case before us, on the esplanade of concrete prepared for this purpose in front of the dwelling, in stripping the yellow-red grain from the ear-stalks—each stage of the Indian corn harvest is picturesque and characteristic.

With this exception, the house and its surroundings were before us just as they must have appeared to Ser Pietro, the well-to-do Vinci lawyer, when he used to come up the hill to the farm to visit the pretty Caterina, who became the great "professor's" mother. A remarkably pretty successor in "her place" was not wanting to complete the similarity of the scene. Having saluted the group at work in shucking the maize in front of the house, who seemed at once to understand our motive in coming there, and courteously bade us enter the open door, we found Caterina's nineteenth century representative busied in the same cares as must have occupied her predecessor. But either from an improvement in *contadina* morality, or from the difference existing between a blacksmith and a lawyer, some manifestation of rural gallantry on the part of our cicerone was rewarded by a resounding slap on the handsome face of the tall gallant, the little Lucretia jumping fairly off her feet to inflict it. But both the offence and its chastisement seemed to fall perfectly within the recognised limits of rural *persiflage;* and passed with perfect good humour on both sides. While we were examining the two large rooms and outhouse, which form the ground story of the house, and remarking that although the tiles, which formed the ceiling, had evidently been renewed at no very distant date, the beams exhibited unmistakeable manifestations of great antiquity, the head of the family came in, and very courteously begged us to satisfy our curiosity without stint. His house, and more especially its plenishing in all kinds, was immeasurably inferior to that of a farmer of similar standing in our own country. But it must be owned that his bearing and manner, the easy unembarrassed courtesy of his hospitality, and his intelligent appreciation of the interest we took in the locality, were as far to the advantage of the Tuscan as compared with the British small farmer. Three spacious rooms up-stairs, under the tiles,

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completed the dwelling, which evidently must always have been, as it is now, of a very humble order. Yet it had, and still has, over the door of entrance a coat of arms cut in stone, with a smaller carving on either side of it, one representing a tower, which is the bearing of the Bardi family, and the other the Giglio of the Florentine republic. In one of these five rooms the infant Leonardo first opened his eyes, and saw above them these identical bare old beams, beneath which so many births and deaths have since then followed each other. But little of suggestion can be got from the fact, that the eyes, which had in them the capacity of becoming so exquisitely appreciative of beauty in every kind, cast their earliest glances on bare rafters and tiles, rather than on gilded ceilings. Not so, however, of the outdoor scenery, among which the encyclopædic genius passed his earliest and most impressionable years. Admirable and intensely Tuscan are the views from the space in front of the house. Behind these are the mountains with their stony sides and friable soil covered with chesnut coppice wherever the plants can find a few feet of earth, with their wonderful atmospheric colouring, matching in turn every tint of the "Claude glass," and with their multiplicity of little hill-side churches and villas, each with its three or four tall cypresses around it. In front, there is a profusion of all the riches that make Tuscany the garden of Italy; a land not only flowing with wine, and oil, and corn, but actually producing them all contemporaneously from the same field, with figs and peaches added into the bargain. Below them is the wide valley of the Arno, with the town of Vinci, and its black, dungeon keep,—besieged, defended, taken and retaken again and again. This was the world of which those exquisitely adjusted perceptive faculties first took cognizance; and those who remember the bits of landscape which the great painter was so fond of introducing into his pictures, will be struck by the reminiscences of the scenery here spread before him, which are often to be traced on his canvas.

On returning to Vinci, we found our *baroccino* awaiting us, and having with some little difficulty scrambled into its seat, started on our way to Empoli. Just at the end of the little town, on the hill which the road descends to reach the flat of the Valdarno, there is a chapel, in which an altarpiece by Leonardo, painted by him in his youth for his native town, has been preserved. We were much disappointed by not being able to see it. The chapel was shut, and the sacristan, who had the key, was absent. This was the sole *contretemps* which occurred during our little excursion. The peerless steed did his six miles nobly in an hour and a quarter; and the rail took us up at Empoli, and brought us to Florence in comfortable time for dinner. T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE.

DANGEROUS!

I AM not going to trouble you about things and people conventionally dangerous—the hawks and moles, the jays and stoats, which society nails up upon its barn-door plain for all folks to see. There they hang, and there I leave them. My business is with people of a very different class—people who are supposed to be "dangerous," but who are not—who don't look dangerous, but who are. And so *place aux dames*.

Of the genus *Fascinatoria*, the *Syrena Circalibra*, or circulating library Syren, is a very well-known variety. It infests French romances in yellow wrappers, and the early works of young novelists who write about what they have not seen. The French variety is to be known by the locality of its dwellings and elegance of its furniture; the English, by the whiteness of its linen and the smallness of its boots. One of these latter is now conspicuously before the public, in the pages of a popular magazine; and I protest to you, that if any accident should happen to her washerwoman, or her boot-lace, there would be an end of the character at once and for ever. She could do no more mischief, being in fact as powerless as poor Aladdin, when he lost his wonderful lamp. The Syren always grows curls, they are invariably perfumed, and she is incessantly shaking them against gentlemen's faces. She is not unfrequently a very naughty person, in more ways than one; and she sings like an angel. I have made her my study. I have her—so to speak—stuffed, and preserved in a glass case. In all candour, I must say that she is a most unnatural production. I am led to class her with those gorgeous contortions of mother-of-pearl and tinsel, which one sees in the fishing-tackle shops ticketed "artificial minnows." I know that there are fish who are fools enough to snap at the delusive bait, and am told that the sons of men may be angled for, with a hook, by the *Syrena Circalibra*. I have never met with one in my waters. If I ever do, I shall give it a wide berth. So will you. The snowy, lace-edged petticoat will not catch you, or the boots beguile. You will not be struck and landed, or break away and pine in some silent pool, trying in vain to rub a hook out of your gullet. No! this is not the sort of being which I label "dangerous."

The *Virginia Saltifora*, or ball-room belle, is another specimen of the *Fascinatoria*, which is supposed to be "dangerous." She is to be found upon the back of songs, of the "Will you love me then as now?" order, and of dance music. She also frequents the fashionable novel, appears at Christmas in books of beauty and other annuals, and in May smiles upon you from the walls of the Royal Academy. Her dress and general "get-up" is something bewildering to behold. She is always in full costume—wreathed, white gloved, bouqueted, satin shod, silver sheened, clothed in white samite, mystic—wonderful! She requires the whole of the front seat of the carriage for the accommodation of self and flounces. She retires to her toilette at five P.M., and the link boys touch their hats to her at a quarter to midnight. As she enters the "gay and festive scene," a buzz of admiration runs round the room, and in ten minutes her engagement-card is full. Henceforward she reigns supreme. What care those happy youths, whose names are down for the late dances, will take of her chaperone, for fear she should want to go before their turns come round! What scheming there will be to get her down to supper! What dreadful falsehoods the Honourable Coolman

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Flirtford will fabricate to edge himself in for that waltz which is played whilst the musicians are taking their refreshment! She is the very flower, spirit, pride—everything else flattering that you can suggest — of the ball. But time flies; you cannot dance, and talk soft nonsense for ever. The candles are getting low, the daylight streams in through the chinks of the shutters, and the detestable sparrows *will* chirp their welcome to the smiling morn outside. The *Virginia Saltifora* must go. Never was lady so well escorted to her coach. She is surrounded by a crowd of grief-stricken and assiduous cavaliers. A juvenile peer of the realm has darted upstairs to fetch her bouquet from the mantelpiece; a secretary of legation holds her fan; a Crimean colonel spreads the opera cloak over her lovely shoulders from behind, and a popular preacher ties the cords in front. A sucking barrister has got her broken sandal, and thinks that his fortune is made. She has rejected the proffered arm of young Willows, of the Rudd, Buckinghamshire, and the poor boy's peace of mind is ruined for a week. She bestows a smiling adieu upon all, and slides her little hand along the coat sleeve of that dark cynical Colin Grey, who is just passing out without noticing her, and leaves her chaperone to be handed into the carriage by the lord, the soldier, the pet parson, the country gentleman, and the man of law.—Is not this being "dangerous?"

(See page 417.)

Well, I don't know. The danger I wot of is incurred when the beadle of St. George's, Hanover Square, waves aside the dirty little boys from the façade steps, and his lordship, my hero, and my heroine, his lovely and accomplished bride, are whirled away by Newman's greys into the unknown matrimonial land. Sometimes the *Virginia Saltifora* is so dangerous as utterly to destroy noble and wealthy bachelors; but, somehow or other, I do not think that, taking it as a class, it is so very "dangerous" after all. I see it about a good deal, with every charm in good fighting order, and every snare set; but where are the victims? The Crimean Colonel and the pet parson have tied opera-cloaks and been smiled upon before. The young lord will soon find out that there are plenty of *belles* ready to run after *his* bouquet, if he had one; the barrister will be told that it is a cruelty to ask a girl to marry on six hundred a-year; the young squire will get over his little attack, and Colin Grey will go home, stuff a very large pipe with very strong Cavendish, and smoke it gloomily. Our *belle* is like a sportsman who, with a strong shooting-gun and heavy charges takes aimless shots, right and left, into the middle of a covey before it is fairly off the ground. Half-a-dozen birds are wounded—one has its leg broken—another has to do without any feathers on its back; a third falls "winged," and running up a drain is lost, and so on. There is nothing for the bag. No execution done. Are you not acquainted with some families in which the "beauty"

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daughter did not make the first—or the best—match? Do you not know of instances in which that young lady's marriage has brought trouble upon herself and her friends? How many ball-room belles of—well, say nine-and-twenty—have you met about this season?

No! the real object of bachelor dread is the *Anglicana Domestica*, or English Hearth Flower. This is a sort of girl that the Royal Humane Society ought to be compelled by act of parliament to label "Dangerous." She may be found at many a fire-side, but notably in country-houses about Christmas time. She is not a "beauty" like the *Virginia Saltifora*, or a professional enchantress like the *Syrena Circalibra*, though it must be admitted that she does her bootmaker credit, and that she has a large running account with the laundress. Do not run away, though, with the idea that she is plain. The shape of her head is classical, her eyes are large, kind, and lustrous, her teeth are white and regular, and her figure—perfect. Still she has not a good feature in her face. In stature she is usually *petite*, in complexion a *brunette*. She shakes no perfumed tresses under your nose; indeed, she avoids essences and scents, and is redolent only of that exquisite bouquet which suggests nothing at all, but the plentiful use of cold water. I should call it the "odour of sanctity," did I dare to be irreverent and had forgotten that the saintly ones of old were not remarkable for the use of the liquid which produces it. She dearly loves a good dance, but does not talk "ball" or think "ball," and to her ear the march of intellect is not written in two-four time, and published by D'Almaine & Co.

The *Anglicana Domestica* is accomplished, as you may find at your leisure. She does not interlard her conversation with French and German words, neither will she pelt you with old red sandstone, pterodactyls, and oödic forces upon first acquaintance. Ask her to play and she will sit down, without an excuse, and run you off sparkling little Reveries, and dreamy Nocturnes, one after the other. You must not expect firework pieces and bravura songs. She has not a powerful voice, and is not such a goose as to think she can please you in a back drawing-room, with what you have heard from Titiens upon the opera-stage the night before. She will warble little ditties that you have not heard elsewhere, and is remarkable, generally, for having all sorts of things that other people *could* have very easily, but, somehow or other, don't find out. Thus she is never dressed in the height of the fashion, but wears what is going to be, or ought to be the fashion. Pretty girls—her companions—bow down and worship her cuff, or her wreath, or the bodice of her dress, and, "Oh! *where* did you get the pattern of that EX-quisite"—whatever it may be?—is their cry. Then our *Anglicana Domestica* gives a little laugh, and confesses that she cut it out herself yesterday; so it is borrowed and lent. She would strip the nose off her face and lend it to a friend, if it would do her any good; but, plague take the copy! it never will look like the original; and by the time it is made she has invented something else about three times as bewildering that puts it quite in the shade. Herein lies her "dangerous" character. She is the sort of girl that a poor gentleman may marry,—so patient, so cheerful, so contriving, so unselfish is the British Hearth Flower. I believe that it is the easiest thing in the world to be a Duchess, though, I confess, I never was one. You have only to look haughty, do nothing, and hold your tongue, consistently, and you will pass for an exceedingly well-bred person, and a superior being altogether. A poor gentleman's wife has much to bear, and I respect and love the home specimen when I see how well she goes through it all.

What is the consequence of this? My friend Jack Steadman—whom I have known ever since he was my fag at school—comes fidgetting into my chambers as I am writing this. He has come thus fidgetting about many times before. He had met the *Virginia Saltifora*, and was going to cut somebody's throat—probably the Honourable Coolman Flirtford's—because she did him out of that last galop, or he was going through a course of strychnine and charcoal hot-air baths, because she would not look at him in the park. I soon got accustomed to such ebullitions. I used to give him one of my strongest cigars, and bid him sleep upon it—the blighted affection, I mean, not the cigar. He did, and smothered it. But now I see, by the expression of his countenance, that there is something serious the matter. With a shy sort of happy grin, he asks me if I remember the little girl with the big grey eyes that we met last July, at the Fizzeyman's pic-nic. *I* know what is coming. The little girl with the big grey eyes that we met at the Fizzeyman's pic-nic is an *Anglicana Domestica* of the most dangerous type. I remember calling upon her mother one day with Jack. The owner of the eyes was practising in the back drawing-room, and Mr. Jack must needs go and turn over the music for her. I kept a sharp eye upon them whilst Materfamilias was recounting the horrible profligacy of her late cook. There sat the daughter in her simple morning dress, with natty little linen cuffs at her wrists and a natty little linen collar round her throat, a natty little belt round her natty little waist, and great wavy masses of glorious brown hair glistening in her natty little net. She had just concluded a piece; and, with one hand hanging on the keys, she looked up in Jack's face, whilst the chords were still quivering, and asked him how he liked "that." I never saw a girl look more "dangerous." I tell Jack that I *do* remember this person, and then, looking more shy and stupidly happy than before, he tells me that he is engaged to her, and "I say, old fellow, you know, you must be my best man." His best man! Hang his impudence! What else have I been to him all his life?

And so roving Jack is led into captivity. Our acquaintance, the *Virgina Saltifora*, comes in state to the evening party that is given afterwards to finish up the scraps of the wedding breakfast, and dances and flirts till she can hardly stand. But nothing comes of it, and the week afterwards her cousin is heard of as about to sell out of the Guards, and settle down into matrimony with one of the bridesmaids to the "little girl with the big grey eyes,"—another specimen of the *Anglicana Domestica* that nobody heard of before.

Albany Fonblanque, Jun.

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LAST WEEK.

Last Week opened gravely, and somewhat drearily. Everybody one met was in mourning on Sunday; and, on the Monday, we all knew what was going forward at Windsor. On that chill misty morning, when heavy raindrops fell through the fog, the Queen's mother was committed to the tomb, amidst trappings of black cloth, the wailing of the organ, the laments of the choir, the thrilling words of the burial service, and the impressive presence of files of mourners,—men in long black cloaks, and women enveloped in crape veils which allowed no face to be seen. The glow and glitter of the crimson and gilt coffin in the midst was a strange and striking spectacle. The chief mourner, the Prince Consort, was at times overpowered; and it is no wonder. Within a few years he has attended many funerals. This was one which at once constitutes him and the Queen the elder generation; and the music chosen for the occasion, in aid of the solemn service, might well strike upon heartstrings already under tension. It was understood that the Queen participated unseen in the rendering of these last offices of respect. The contrast was somewhat like that of a return from a soldier's funeral. The band which goes to the soldier's grave playing the Dead March in Saul, comes back marching quick to a lively air; and, just so, as soon as the royal funeral was over, the parliamentary and gay world were streaming out of town for the Easter holidays.

In the absence of parliamentary news at home, there was much interesting intelligence from abroad. The recent demonstrations at Warsaw had made Russia the first object of attention. The manifesto on the Serf question arrived entire at the beginning of the week. It is a remarkable document, both because it is evidently the work of the Emperor himself, and because it opens a scheme which will be a historical event, whether it succeeds or fails.

Nobody will agree with the Emperor as to the early character of Russian serfage; for it is unlike the slavery of patriarchal origin in being a modern institution, arbitrarily devised and imposed for particular purposes: but from that point of the history the Emperor will have the sympathy of all sound-hearted readers of his manifesto. He exhibits the abuses which have vitiated the system, and the obstacles which prevented emancipation during the two preceding reigns; and he proceeds, in a tone of high enthusiasm, to declare his belief that it is his mission to complete the work. If he lives, such a conviction and such a spirit will achieve the object, unless success be indeed impracticable. It would be easy to show how many chances there are against success: but it is a truer and wiser course to keep in view the fact that the danger from flinching would be greater still. All experience shows that delays in working great social changes, and especially in conferring new liberties, are so mischievous as to bring all parties to beg for an abolition of the interval. It is alike so when a distant day is appointed for the removal of protective duties, and for the emancipation of slaves. The silk and iron masters pray for the shortening of their suspense; and the West India planters desired to repudiate the term of apprenticeship, when they saw how well immediate emancipation answered in Antigua. We shall see how it will be in Russia with the two years which the Emperor declares to be the shortest time required for the arrangements between the landowners and the labourers. The serfs are exhorted to go on just as they are during that term. It remains to be seen whether human nature is capable of such an effort. Within the same time it will also be seen whether the nobles have so far changed their mood as to deserve their Sovereign's praises. If they fulfil his declared expectations, they will merit the admiration of society; for they fully believe that the measure will not only ruin their fortunes, but overthrow their position. They will unquestionably be much at the mercy of their labourers. The American planter would be sure of abundance of labour to-morrow if he freed his slaves to-day; and the whole money value of his negroes would pass at once into his land: but it is otherwise in Russia. There is no immigration of labourers there, and no concentration of labour in the agricultural regions of the empire. The issue will probably be, that the best masters will now be best served, while the selfish and tyrannical will be forsaken. We must not forget, though, whatever may happen, that, imperative as is the claim of the serfs for the long-promised freedom, that claim involves danger to the rank and fortune of their masters. Much more consideration is due to the nobles of Russia than to the planters of America, in asserting the rights of white serfs and black slaves.

The Czar has a mind full of cares just now. The uprising of the new Italian kingdom filled him with grief and wrath: but it appeared that he had already become calm, if not complacent, on that subject, when the Warsaw demonstrations took place. Nothing could be a stronger evidence of the change of times than the way in which the news of the Warsaw uprising has been received at St. Petersburg. We hear no menaces now, such as the present Czar, as well as his father, has addressed to the Poles. We now see negotiation going on, and already a recognition of Polish nationality such as few hoped ever to witness. The Czar cannot help himself. While elections are going on in every town in Austria, and Hungary is hourly expected to declare her independence, and the whole East of Europe is disturbed, and the popular voice is heard in the Prussian Chamber, exchanging greetings with free Italy at Turin; and when the dead silence of the French people is at last broken, and their Emperor is compelled to hear democratic truths in reply to his permission to speak of his government,—it is no time for insulting or crushing the Poles. There are difficulties in abundance at home too: dissensions in the Imperial family about the course which government should take; poverty pressing throughout the empire; low credit abroad, official corruption at home; no possibility of raising or keeping up an army; revolution becoming the fashion in Europe, and thrones emptying and filling almost month by month! At such a time the Czar has to decide whether to fix his hopes on European or Asiatic empire. His serf emancipa-

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tion seems to show that he clings to an European ambition; and if he does, he must deal gently with the Poles. However this may be, there is no man in any country, or rank of life, more laden with care than the Czar in his cabinet at St. Petersburg, or in his carriage as he speeds from one point of his vast territories to another. It would be difficult to insult the people of War saw after the disclosure they have made of their quality. There is nothing nobler on record, of its kind, than their self-rule and composure, under the strongest emotion. Perhaps there is nothing stranger on record than the fraternisation of all the citizens, after long periods of feud and party hatred. The Jews forming part of the funeral procession to the Christian cemetery; the Jews admitted to the guilds on terms of equality; and Jews presenting crucifixes to churches, and Christians giving ceremonial adornments to synagogues, are phenomena from which every despot in Europe should take warning.

The French Chambers, and the Emperor listening to what was said there, were among the leading interests of Last Week. The Emperor's reply to the address makes the best of a difficult situation. He says it is useful to the people to hear, and to members to utter whatever has to be said about the measures of government, while, as he intimates, it makes no difference to government what is said. The question, however, is whether he saw, or did not see, when he permitted debate, what must happen;—that where there is no constitutional ministry to appeal to as the real ruling power, all discussion must be either flattery of the Emperor or defiance of his government. He must now see this: but he cannot retract; and we may expect portentous incidents in the Chambers from this time forward.

The American mails of the week did not throw much light on the prospects of the States. It is very remarkable that the fire-eating South had as yet shed no blood. Considering the readiness to fight for any reason or none which distinguish the citizens of that region, it is baffling to all expectation that there should have been no violence beyond that of words. As long as the forbearance lasts, whatever its cause may be, we are justified in supposing that some other issue than civil war is possible. On the one hand, reconciliation is apparently out of the question: and on the other, the aggressive party which is fighting somebody every day of its life, is cautious and slow in the particular case in which it had most loudly boasted of its hostile intentions. A few more weeks or days must show what the Washington Government means to do. In the meantime, we find that Mr. Lincoln and his Ministers have again, and decisively, refused to recognise Commissioners from the Seceding States; that Fort Sumter is to be evacuated, as costing too much force to retain it; and that the new President's receptions at Washington are proceeding just as if nothing had gone amiss with the glorious Union. Thousands of ladies make their curtseys as they pass before him, and their thousands of husbands shake the white-gloved hand which is to extricate them, or plunge them deeper in revolution; and no bystander would suspect that the republic had fallen to pieces since the great man was chosen to stand where he does. At present, all that we can see of him is that he differs from all recent Presidents in not abusing the abolitionists, in not deprecating the discussion of slavery, or any other leading topic, and in neither flattering any political party, nor dressing up his political avowals in religious professions which honest republicans think should be kept for another time and place. Thus all we know amounts to very little: but it is something that the new President is not nervous, nor loquacious, nor visibly menacing on the one hand nor timid on the other.

Every European ship must now be carrying evidence to the Northern States of what is thought here of their tariff. It will be well if, before any new elections, they can be led to consider how damaging a protective or prohibitory policy must be if even France, in its critical political state, has to give it up, and if Turkey is found to depend for safety on her liberal system of trade. Among recent disclosures from abroad, few have been more interesting or encouraging than those which show what benefits are in store for us, and what prosperity may yet be possible for Turkey from the liberality of her commercial system. There are scarcely any commodities which are not produced, or may not be grown, in some of her constituent provinces, in Africa, Asia, and Europe: and there are no bounds to the wealth which may arise from her wisdom in imposing low, impartial, and lessening duties, on export and import. It is a popular wonder how Turkey continues to exist under gross misgovernment and incessant prophecies of her destruction. There must be some source of health which keeps her alive: and there can be no doubt that it is to the freedom of industry and commerce, under a system of local self-government, that her unsubdued vitality is owing. The Americans have the municipal privilege; but they deny themselves the liberty of commerce; and if they do not discover their mistake very soon, they will lose their place in the competition of nations. Their most instructive study at present would be the commercial treaty between Turkey, England, and France, which may be seen in our newspapers of last week.

We had no relief of mind during the week about the famine in India, except such as arises from an attempt to help the sufferers. At first, a great mistake was made about affording this aid. The Lord Mayor was discouraged by somebody in his proposal to convene a public meeting. We were all amazed and shocked at being informed that the London public had recently had so many calls on their liberality, that the claims of the famishing Hindoos would be coldly received. It was an intolerable thought that millions of fellow-subjects were dying for want of food that might be bought, and that there could be any doubt about sending it to them. The mistake was presently repaired, however. The Lord Mayor was so urged and supported, as to call a public meeting, and meantime to send £1000 by anticipation to Calcutta. Down to the evening of the day of meeting, the donations received by the Lord Mayor in aid of the Famine

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Relief Fund, amounted in the aggregate to upwards of £4000.

The news from India was not all of a dismal character. Mr. Laing's scheme of a mild and moderate (some say minute) paper currency, bringing a gold one in its train, is likely to meet with such approbation here that by midsummer it may be in full operation.

Up to Last Week there had been an evident unwillingness to speak much of the Builders' Strike, partly owing to a hope that the folly might die out, and partly because we are all heartily ashamed of the disgrace brought upon society by it. Last week, however, the affair became conspicuous among our social interests, and every consideration requires that it should be studied with care and treated with frankness. We must not turn from it because we are tired of the subject of strikes; for the case is one of importance far beyond what is supposed by the men involved in it; and it must be treated openly and truthfully, because insincerity and concealment may betray a large class of fellow-citizens to crime and misery, and may bring grave calamity upon society at large. It is remarkable that the former strike of the building trades, a year and a half ago, was watched, not only with interest but for guidance, by the Liberals of Italy, who said that they should know by the result of that contest what the worth of English liberty and its institutions really was. If it were possible for the spirit of tyranny to prevail among our working-classes, so as to deprive their members of their rights over their own labour and its sale, the free institutions of England could not be practically worth much. And if such nonsense and false pretence as was put forth by the agitators for ten hours' wages for nine hours' work could gain the victory over common sense and the great natural laws of society, it would appear that our political system was no more efficacious than others in encouraging and favouring intelligence and industry. The Italian patriots, in the midst of their own struggle, watched us accordingly. They saw the failure of that strike. They heard of the enormous losses which injured everybody and benefited none. They read of the suicides, the deaths from starvation, the miserable destitution of the victims of the movement. They knew that, during the winter of 1859-60, many hundreds of families who should have been living in warmth, plenty, and comfort, were shivering in cold and want. They saw that while the tyrannical attempt had failed of its object, it was too plain that the fine old spirit of English liberty had sunk very low in the breasts of many of our citizens. Men who could submit to such oppression as was inflicted by the leaders of the Strike were little like the stout artisans of two centuries ago, who had as fine an instinct for liberty as any of the chiefs of the Great Rebellion.

Now again we are to see what the same body of men are worth as law-abiding, liberty-loving Englishmen. The Nine Hours' movement is revived, at a season when the convenience of the public and of the master-builders is known to demand the utmost industry and dispatch in all the building trades. The employers have anticipated the demand which was known to be preparing by a very sensible proposal, and one which completely throws the responsibility of any quarrel on the leaders of the movement. The employers propose to pay their men by the hour, instead of the day, raising their wages a little in order to make the even sum of sevenpence per hour. On this plan, every man can determine the length of his own day's work. Any nine-hour man can work his nine hours, without hindrance or question on any hand. The falseness and thorough dishonesty of the leaders of the last strike is now proved by their reception of this fair proposal. They did let out, on the former occasion, that their object was to compel the employment of more men than the natural demand indicates. They talked of intellectual cultivation in the evening hours, and of moral improvement, while admitting that they wanted to put inferior workmen, who were hanging about unemployed, on a level with superior artisans, who would naturally rise in position by their own merits. And now the disgraceful truth comes out more clearly than ever, that this tyranny is indeed the actuating spirit of the movement. We all agree in disapproving of excessive toil, and in wishing that men of every class should improve their minds and enjoy their homes at leisure hours; and this is exactly what payment by the hour ensures to the workman who values such benefits. But here comes in the dictation of the agitators. They will allow no man to judge of his own affairs, and decide on his own hours of work and rest. By a letter from one of the secretaries, published in the newspapers, we are frankly informed that their object is to prevent the men working overtime. It is to be hoped that these agitators will be as frankly informed that they may themselves work as much or little as they please, but that they have no sort of right to control the industry and earnings of other men.

If the men generally have not the spirit to assert their rights in this way, the prospect before them is dreary. Public and private charity will not again undertake to maintain them in winter, if they refuse good wages in spring and summer. Their trade too will pass out of their reach. There are plenty of men in the world who will be abundantly ready to work for such wages as are now to be had. The Exhibition Building, and many others, must be ready by a certain time; and the opinion of society is so entirely on the side of justice and liberty to employer and employed, that every aid will be afforded to those who will stand by their rights and their duties. Such strangers as will have to be brought from a distance will stay where they are so well off; and the result will be what we have so often seen in other departments of industry,—a permanent lowering of wages in the Building Trades.

The Edinburgh joiners, and other branches in other places, have come to terms with their employers in time for the work of the season. If the London men have a spark of courage and sense, they will do the same. If not, they have nothing before them but poverty and shame.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"WHAT, secrets from an old friend, Silvain?" said Adair. "For shame, that is a disloyalty for which I did not give you credit."

And Adair moved towards the door of the bower.

The Frenchman sprang to face him, and in a menacing manner bade him stand back.

"Is it such an awful secret?" said Adair, mockingly. "Ha! I have solved it. We are untrue alike to our friend and to our mistress. You fear that I shall acquire the mastery of a fact which will disarrange the relations between yourself and Matilde. But I am her friend, you know, and insist upon knowing the truth."

He pressed forward, smiling, and rather with the intention of provoking the Frenchman than of persisting in his attempt, when Silvain rushed upon him, and, taking him somewhat unawares, thrust him violently from before the door. Adair staggered backward, and only preserved himself from falling by clinging to the door-post of the shop.

When he recovered himself, he made no effort to renew the conflict, but looked at Silvain for a few moments with a very diabolical expression, and then said:

"It is decreed, it seems. One of these days, Silvain, I shall kill you."

"The traveller is not always killed by the thief, but sometimes the thief by the traveller," returned Silvain, undauntedly.

"I shall do it," said Adair, between his teeth. "Look to yourself, Silvain," he added, leaving the shop.

As soon as he was gone, Henderson re-appeared, and the proud lover began to apologise to her for having been compelled to disregard her admonition to do nothing against Ernest Adair. He was promptly forgiven, and even rewarded with a kiss, a favour very charily vouchsafed by the prudent English girl, and M. Silvain was in the seventh heaven of delight for the rest of the day. *Majora canamus.*

French officials usually exhibit a promptitude not so often displayed by their English contemporaries. Whether it be for good or for evil that the government functionary in France is invited

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to communicate with you, he never neglects you, and he seldom makes the Dawdle Move with which British bureaucracy always begins the game, in the hope that something may turn up to prevent you from again pestering your betters. Mr. Urquhart had not to wait three or four days without reply to his note to M. —— of the Bureau, that at the end of that time he might receive a formal acknowledgment of his letter, and an assurance that it was under consideration, which is a euphuism, here, for under the letter-weight. He received no letter at all, but was called upon by an ugly little man in plain clothes, who had more real authority than was delegated to a hundred showy officials in splendid uniform, and who apprised him that if he chose to go to Paris, and see M. ——, he should have all the information he desired, up to the latest date.

This communication he mentioned to Bertha, and, as may be believed, it was sufficiently perturbing to her. She had helplessly calculated on some cessation of her troubles, and, having contrived to make Adair aware that his character was to be inquired into, she trusted that his devices would be brought into play to avert the revelations which might be expected. Mrs. Urquhart was, indeed, less anxious upon this point than she would have been had she really comprehended the méchanism of the system that was working around her, and she limited her apprehensions to the terror lest her meetings with Adair, and his correspondence with her, should be brought to the knowledge of her husband. This exposure would be bad enough, but she had sufficient confidence in a woman's power of cajoling the man who loves her, to make her hope that even if the revelation came, she should, when she heard a definite charge made, be able to render it harmless by liberal asseveration and some display of extra emotion. For, weak as she was, she was strong against Urquhart, and fool as she was, she was wise enough to know it; and but for her constitutional timidity she might have deceived him with perfect ease to the end of the chapter. Had the information asked by Mr. Urquhart been given in a letter, which he would probably have handed to her, and demanded her reply to what might concern herself, Bertha did not despair of being able to put such a gloss upon its language as, now that Urquhart's indignation had concentrated upon Laura, would justify him in regarding his wife's conduct with indulgence, and as part of her sisterly efforts for the salvation of the character of Mrs. Lygon. But when Bertha heard that there was to be a personal interview with an official upon whose table met the wires of the police-telegraph of France, she trembled, and would have trembled still more had she known how much that telegraph could reveal.

"I have a mind just to run over this night, and see the man," said Robert Urquhart, when he had informed her of the visit he had received. "I would like to lose no time."

"Pray, pray, do not leave me yet, Robert dear," said his wife. "I am in no state to be left. Until we hear what Arthur is going to do, and all about it, do not let us be separated."

"Why, my woman, you were not used to make such a work about separations. I have gone off for a month at a time, and left you with dry eyes, and I've even fancied that you were not that ill-pleased to be rid of your tiresome husband."

"If you dared to think so, bad man," said Bertha, taking his hand, "you did me great wrong; but you never did; and if I did not cry when you went away, perhaps it was only that I might not send you off with melancholy thoughts, and you do not know what a cry I may have had after you had left—and now I just won't tell you, for presuming to say such things. But stay with me now, Robert."

"My dear woman! But you see this is the state of the case. If Arthur writes me to meet him, meet him I must, and I would like to have all the particulars about yon rascal cut and dry against I met poor Arthur."

"Make one journey do, then. Is everybody to be thought of except your own wifie, as you call her?"

"It will be only an affair of three or four hours, or less," said Robert. "I feel, my woman, that it's a hard time for you, and that to hear such awful things of your sister is enough to break your heart, but we'll do no good by greeting. But I'll tell you what we'll do. You shall just come over to Paris with me, and so I'll only leave you for the time I'm talking with the man at the bewro."

"No, Robert, I could not bear even that short railway journey in the state in which my nerves are."

"Then we'll have the carriage, for go I must, my woman." And she knew his word was fate. It was his way to try to win her assent to his plans; but when he had resolved on action, Bertha knew by divers experiences that she could as easily have turned him by her physical as by her moral force.

The carriage was ordered to be ready in half an hour.

"Oh," thought Bertha, "if I had not been deprived of that clever insolent girl! If Ernest should have taken no precautions, I am leaving my home for the last time."

And as they drove off in the open carriage, she actually stood up and gave a remorseful look at the home which an honest man's love had provided for her, and in which, had she been worthy of his love, she might have spent so many a happy year. It was a low, mean kind of remorse, however, that came upon her,—she was thinking little of him, much of herself, and it was upon the luxuriously furnished drawing-rooms, which she might never tread again, that her penitence was dwelling, not upon the image of the strong, good man who might that night be pacing those rooms in an agony of shame and indignation. Standing up, with such thoughts in her heart, she withdrew her eyes from the receding house, and the next instant they lighted on the figure of Ernest Adair.

He must have been concealed behind the trunk of one of the large trees of the pathway, and have glided round it as the carriage passed, so as to avoid observation, but he was watching for her look.

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As he caught it, he made her a sign, which she interpreted, as he intended, as a reassuring one. He placed his hand on his heart, and nodded three or four times, as intimating that all was right, and that she was to be of good courage.

So she took her seat, much comforted.

"What were you looking at, my woman?" said her husband.

"I wanted to see whether that stupid Angelique had closed the windows which you opened. If she does not shut them, we shall have the dust in, and when that gets into the books and things, it is a day's work to get it out again. But you men never think anything of a woman's trouble."

So dilated on household trifles the single-minded wife, as she went to Paris by the side of her husband.

But she soon became silent, and then Urquhart, deeming that the sorrowful story of her sister was weighing down the spirits of his wife, took the hand that was near him, and with a gentleness of tone that was rare in him, for his robust nature was somewhat noisy and outspoken, and it refined only for a few—and for those only when they were in sorrow—he sought to comfort her for what had come upon Laura. He assured her with all earnestness, that though he came of a nation in which such sin as Laura's is held to be black and unpardonable, he loathed the injustice that made a family suffer for the guilt of one member, and that if Bertha feared lest his pride might be wounded at his being known as the connection of one who had so disgraced herself, his wife did him wrong. She had been dear to him for herself alone, and it was herself alone that would ever make her less dear. And with other words of love and comfort, and with a kindly pressure of the little hand in his own, the single-minded husband went to Paris by the side of his wife.

Meantime, though Ernest Adair had made the sign which, and not her husband's affectionate language, was the real consolation to his perturbed helpmate, Adair himself was by no means in a pleasant state of mind.

The new outrage which he had received from Silvain was not much. It was something, for no man likes to be so assaulted. But there was no humiliation—not even the small humiliation of being physically worsted, for Adair had been set upon unawares, and the force with which his antagonist had repelled him had in great part been due to a stratagem, well known to the gymnast, and which, suddenly brought into play, would almost have staggered the giant Urquhart himself. Ernest Adair knew that either with or without weapons, Silvain could not hold his own in fair conflict. And though Adair had uttered a savage threat, on leaving the perfumer's, there was not much savageness in his heart, beyond that perfect indifference to the feelings and interests of others which—if not pushed to ostentation—helps more honoured men than Ernest Adair to the good things of this world. He was almost inclined to smile at the transaction, by the time he reached the end of the street. But, there, such inclination deserted him, and with singularly good reason.

An ugly little man in plain clothes came round the corner.

Ernest instantly recognised him, and after the fashion of a craft of which both seemed to be masters, Adair was about to pass the other with the most vacant look of non-recognition.

"No, I want you," said the stranger. "Walk beside me."

They turned, and proceeded, side by side, without a word. The stranger made for the palace, and into the gardens, Ernest attending him submissively, until they reached an unfrequented corner, where both men gave a rapid searching glance all round them. The double lynx look was enough—a spy no larger than a mouse could not have remained concealed after that look. Then the stranger said, in a cold, business-like tone, and in English,

"This will not do, M. Ernest."

Under ordinary circumstances, and even if a man's conscience told him exactly what was referred to, the answer in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred would have been a demand as to what it was that would not do. Ernest Adair simply replied,

"I have been a little unlucky."

"We do not allow persons to be unlucky."

"I can say no more," said Ernest, "except that I do not think my ill-luck will return."

"That remark shows that you are unaware of your position, and I need not tell you what is the consequence of my convicting an *employé* of such ignorance."

"It is not probable, M. Wolowski, but it is possible, that I may be in possession of information of a later date than yours."

"It is not probable, certainly," said the Pole, with a slight sneer. "Does your late information carry you to the fact that a Scotch gentleman has demanded of us your biography?"

There was something of an answering smile on the lip of Adair, as he silently drew out Bertha's hasty note, apprising him of the letter that had been written by Mr. Urquhart.

"That is something—not in itself—but as showing that you still retain an influence in that quarter. What do you infer from seeing me?"

"That the Scotchman is to receive ample information, and none at all."

"On the contrary."

"I am to be sacrificed?" asked Ernest, livid with anger.

"Those are my instructions."

A fierce oath from Adair drew a contemptuous expression from his companion.

"It is ever with regret," said M. Wolowski, "that I sacrifice a useful and creditable man, but I perceive that I have no cause for regret in your case. Your habits demoralise you, and at an important crisis you blaspheme instead of thinking."

"You mistake me," replied Adair. "It is because I was thinking that I spoke angrily. I find myself betrayed at a moment when I specially need forbearance, if not assistance."

"I do not think that you must expect either. Plainly, this Scotchman has claims on us, and it is felt that he must be treated fairly. I have seen

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him, and at this moment his carriage is at his door, waiting to convey him and his wife to Paris. He goes to the bureau, by invitation."

"After what I have done," said Ernest, hardly able to articulate for his wrath, "after all my services—"

"After all your services you were paid for all your services," replied the Pole, coldly. "Do not talk idly."

"I expected some consideration, however," said Adair, struggling for self-mastery under the icy and scornful rebuke of his superior.

"And it is shown to you," replied Wolowski. "I come direct from the Scotchman to you, to give you warning, which, from all I hear of him, may be a valuable present to a man who values his life."

"M. Wolowski," said Adair, with an earnestness strangely unlike his ordinary manner—he spoke, in fact, as one who pleads earnestly for something very near his heart,—"I had some hope that you entertained a private regard for me."

"I do. I see much in you that I appreciate, though you are not what you were some time ago. But can it be necessary for me to tell Ernest Adair that I do not permit private feelings to interfere with public duty?"

"I speak in vain, I see," said Ernest, "and yet I would make one appeal to you. For myself, I care little, I can make my way in some other part of the world—in Brazil, in the United States, anywhere. But, apart from your duties, M. Wolowski, you are a man of heart."

"It may be so, but I am not now apart from my duties, and certainly if I could be astonished, it would be at hearing the word 'heart' from M. Ernest Adair."

"I hardly know my own voice while I am talking thus," said Adair, hurriedly, and entreatingly, "but I *must* speak to you. Give me time—give me a little time."

"To escape? Is it not given? A gentleman who drives in his carriage to Paris is in no violent hurry. There is the railway station," he said, pointing, "and there lies England."

"It is not that. Let me have time to save *her*."

"What? *You* wish to save her?"

"Yes, yes, I must, I will. Wolowski, I shall simply go mad if you do not stop this matter until I can extricate her. Then, do as you will. It is not much to ask, and I have served you well."

"Your demand should certainly be received with favour, but that of the Scotchman predominates."

"I swear to you that unless you do this, I will waylay your Scotchman, and shoot him dead."

M. Wolowski almost laughed.

"My instructions do not extend to the saving the gentleman's life," he said. "I had only to invite him to Paris. But your excitement, though utterly absurd, is respectable. May I ask what has aroused this consideration for a lady whose interests you can hardly be said to have been very actively promoting of late years?"

"I cannot see her murdered—and murdered she will assuredly be by that infernal husband, when he leaves your bureau. Do you refuse to interfere?" said Adair, with compressed lips.

"If I answer yes, what do you purpose to do?"

"Answer me, that is all," said Adair, fiercely.

"What time do you desire?"

"Three days."

"Take four, and then say again that I have no private regard for you."

"I will repay you, I will," cried Ernest Adair, with a deep oath. "Claim it when you will. Wait for me."

And he bounded away, as if on some mission of the utmost moment.

The mission was to hurry, at the top of his speed, to the first point whence he could see whether the Urquharts had departed. The carriage still at the door rewarded his straining eyes and panting heart. Then he checked his pace, but made his way rapidly round the back of the house, and again darted out into the road just in time to see Urquhart handing his wife into the carriage.

Adair concealed himself, as has been mentioned, and when the moment arrived, he gave Bertha the sign. Then he returned towards the palace, but met M. Wolowski strolling leisurely from it.

"I can wait and talk to you for an hour if you like," said the Pole; "but then your Scotch friend will reach Paris before me. On the whole, I think that if your arrangements permit, you had better come with me. As I am to lose your services, I should like to tender you a few of mine. There will be a train in ten minutes. Come."

CHAPTER XLIX.

"I REPEAT, that I am sorry to have to dispense with you," said M. Wolowski, as soon as they were seated in the carriage—a hint from the Pole having secured the exclusion of other travellers, "but you owe it entirely to yourself that we can use you no longer."

"Of course there are plenty of good reasons for getting rid of a man who can be sacrificed with advantage," replied Adair.

"Gambling, drunkenness, stabbing, idleness, and intrigue *are* good reasons," said the Pole, quietly.

"Much better ones are thought of no weight when a man is wanted," said Ernest. "I remember Marchaud was in favour for a very long time after it was perfectly proved that he was a parricide, M. Wolowski."

"Your memory is quite accurate. But parricide is not a habit; few men indulge in it very often; and in Marchaud's case his one error did not prevent his rendering very faithful service to us. You, my poor Adair, have permitted your cardinal sins to engross your time, and to make you comparatively valueless. Therefore, you must perceive that if we can oblige a valuable friend by giving you up, you yourself indicate what the course must be."

"I shall say no more. I thank you very much for deferring the blow, and I shall make the best use of the time you allow me."

"You will not tell me your plans, I suppose."

"Certainly it would be worth my while to affect to conceal them," said Adair, with a half

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smile. "I mean to save this woman from her husband."

"Why should you do so?"

"Because I must.."

He did not make the answer offensively, but as one who had or chose to give no other reason.

"I am sorry. I am grieved. Because this folly shows so clearly that you are bent upon a downward course. I did not suppose that you, of all the men and women in my employ, would have ruined himself for a piece of sentimentality."

"You inform me that I am ruined already."

"All words are comparative. We shall give you up to the Scotchman, if you choose to be given up; but if you do not, there are other fields of labour."

"Oh, I can live. I have told *you* that."

"Live, but how? Your sheet anchor is a billiard cue—break your wrist, and you are a beggar. For with the cards, I need not remind you, Adair, that you can never make a living."

"I can live, I tell you. But I know that my future will be a doubtful one. I cannot work."

"Not doubtful at all. You will pick up victims now and then, and when you get their money you will spend it rapidly. When you have none, which will be your ordinary condition, you will be miserable. When you have undergone so much that you have become reckless, you will drink. When you are drunk you will make some mad *coup* for plunder, and you will either be killed in a brawl, or sent to the galleys."

While the Pole was calmly sketching this outline of a future for his friend, the latter was making his cigarette. And when Wolowski had finished, Adair said, smiling,

"You make me quite happy."

"The deuce I do. I see no particular material of happiness in the picture I have drawn you."

"No, but it is not to be realised. You never took so much pains with any man you designed to abandon. I believe, M. Wolowski, that in spite of my errors, as I hope you will let me call them after what you have been indulgent enough to consider in that light, you appreciate me, and like me, and do not intend that I shall be trampled upon by the Caledonian elephant."

And he smoked with the calmness of one who awaits pleasant but not unexpected good news.

"That," said the Pole, "is a touch of the Adair whom I enlisted long ago, and who was a different person from the *vaurien* before me."

"Vindicate your original judgment, and set me a task."

"Leave Mrs. Urquhart to go to the deuce."

"Sometimes you are frank enough, M. Wolowski. I can but ask you a question. Who is moving against this unfortunate woman?"

"Mr. Ernest Adair is."

"Ah, I am not to be told. But that is the same as telling me. You are urging this course upon me with some zeal, M. Wolowski."

"It is a sign of small-mindedness to be ever suspicious. It is a sign of bad-heartedness to be suspicious of a friend. I have been trying to save you, that is to say, to see whether you would save yourself. You will not. I have discharged my duty."

"There is a motive power at work, M. Wolowski, and I am nothing in the game but one of the pawns. You have let that light in upon me. I believe that you do not intend to give me up, but that is a very small part of the business. So, it is designed that she should be ruined."

"How can that be, Adair, when we give you four days to save her?"

"Save her. I can merely save her from brutal outrage. She abandons her home, and becomes an outcast."

"Mrs. Lygon does?" asked the Pole, as if for information, and as if the name had been used throughout their conversation.

"Mrs. Lygon—who spoke of her?" said Adair.

"Oh, you were describing so exactly what you have brought her to, that for a moment I confused the fortunes of the sisters."

"I perceive," said Ernest Adair, gloomily, and throwing away the end of his cigarette, he remained silent and thoughtful for some minutes.

At the end of that time his companion said,

"Entirely wrong, and perfectly unjustifiable."

"What?" asked Adair, looking up.

"The conclusion, and the revenge. Do you think I do not read your mind? Do you think that we are unaware of your last interview with Mrs. Lygon?"

"You know that I spoke to her. That you should know what passed is an impossibility."

"This from an old hand like yourself."

"For that reason I say it. We met, M. Wolowski, beside a dead wall. There was no one in the street."

"The wall may have been dead, but the person close behind it, I have reason to think, was not dead, for he has the honour of addressing you."

"You were there?"

"Yes. But do yourself no injustice. You bore your part excellently, nobly, and it was only at the end, when you were weak enough to let your heart be softened by the lady's unselfish behaviour, that I felt at all ashamed of you. When I heard your voice becoming suddenly respectful, and your language that of praise, I could have hissed at you through the rotten old bricks, only that would have been rude to your companion."

"You are one of the ablest men in the world, M. Wolowski, and born to adorn the situation which you hold; but, *aliquando Homerus*, you know. And as you have revealed to me so much, I believe without intending to be quite so explicit, I am certain that you are about to tell me the rest. I am a vain man, but not vain enough to suppose that you are sufficiently interested in my affairs to take the trouble of coming and personally supervising them."

"There you show both modesty and sense."

"But your powers have been invoked against me, and I comprehend how."

"There you utter absurdity and falsehood."

"No matter. I am in your hands. I have under-estimated an enemy."

"That is a fatal strategic blunder, but a greater blunder is the imagining an enemy that does not exist. You affect to think that this poor English-woman, whom you have separated

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from her husband, the clerk of the Plaudit Office, and who is half mad at the position into which you have plunged her, is moving heaven and earth and the police against you, for the sake of vengeance. Bah! Adair, your brandy-drinking has deteriorated your once masculine understanding—we do not talk upon even terms."

"True—we do not, but not for the reason you give."

"Well, be it as it may, take this from me, who, having no interest in deceiving you, will not deceive you. The woman from London is not at the table."

"But there *is* a table, and players are seated," retorted Adair, with great quickness.

"Good boy—sharp at his lesson."

"I am back again in favour, I perceive. What must I do to deserve it?"

"Leave Mrs. Urquhart to her fate."

"Are those the only terms?"

"Are they not easy ones? You can get no more money from that quarter, Adair; that is the first consideration."

Hardened as he was, a faint sign of shame came over the pale face as he was urged to take this view of his relations with a woman who had trusted him.

"So," continued the Pole, "to say nothing of the immorality of the course you have been adopting, in abetting a wife in plundering her husband—a rude exclamation of impatience, M. Adair, but I pass it by—it is useless to think of that any longer. Let her take her chance—if she is worth anything, she will lie herself out of harm's way; if she cannot do that, she is unworthy the attention of an intellectual man like yourself. Now, take my advice, and instead of availing yourself of the four days I have conceded to you, take the boat for England to-night, and lie there *perdu*, until you hear from me."

"I should read in the Paris news of a murder," said Ernest, with something like a shudder.

"You will read nothing of the kind, at least in connection with the Hotel Urquhart. Come, we are getting near Paris."

"If there were any way of ensuring her personal safety."

"It will not be endangered. Don't you know that the Scotchman is a religious man, and keeps the commandments, and all that sort of thing."

"You do not know him."

"It has been my business to know him, for some very good reasons, M. Adair, during the time that you have been pursuing the far more interesting study of the character of Madame. You need not dread personal violence—as for the rest, women must take their chance of that when they play interdicted games. Come, decide, because I never go back from my word, and if you still insist upon the four days I gave, I shall have to hurry to the bureau. Consider whether you are able to bear a life of general privation, relieved by a few orgies, and finished in the embrace of the law.'

"You talk," said Adair, suddenly manifesting some self-assertion, "as if I were capable of nothing but the infernal work which I have been doing of late years. I am not a fool, and I am well educated, and if I choose to change my name, and take up some honest calling—"

"It would be my painful duty to prevent any such contamination of virtuous households," said the Pole, coolly. "We are in charge of public morals."

"Do you defy me to escape you?"

"If you repeat the question, I consign you to the charge of the first gendarme. Come, come, Adair, be reasonable. I did not think that intemperance could have produced such an effect upon you. *You* take up an honest calling, and even an honest man's wages. What are you thinking of? Perhaps you contemplate returning to that English town with the diabolical name, Lipwait is it not, and again addressing yourself to the writing copies for the little ladies."

You hate Ernest Adair. It is right that you should hate him. Therefore, be glad to see that he looks actually livid at these words.

"No, you do not think of Lipwait," continued the Pole, "but perhaps of some other quiet rustic home, where M. Ernest Adair, gambler, drinker, seducer, liar, *mouchard*, arriving under some new and gentle name,—shall we say as Mr. Manly, or Mr. Rightheart,—shall forget all his old evil courses, and shall pass the rest of his life in the practice of every moral and social virtue. It is very unhappy for him, and for me, that I must find out Mr. Manly or Mr. Rightheart, and explain to the rustic authorities that the gentleman is a living proof of the efficacy of conversion."

"Hear me, M. Wolowski, and spare me that kind of talk."

"My friend, I am told that it is exactly in your own style, and that it is with talk like this that you have been so successful in impressing your views on the minds of the Mesdames Lygon and Urquhart."

"Listen to me, I say. I must have a better price for doing what you propose."

"Why do you say that, when we are not obliged to give any price at all?"

"Yes—or you would not have offered so much. I am a bad employè, but you will not part with me, and you will accede to my terms. I think I know why you would retain me; but that matters not. I do not ask much."

"There is no harm in stating what you would have."

"Give me the means of putting *her* out of harm's way before her husband sees M. ——, and then let the Scotchman learn all that you can tell him."

"Bah! You want to fly with the foolish woman."

"No, no; a thousand times no. I would not be encumbered with her folly and helplessness for her weight in ingots of gold. I will simply place her out of the way of his rage, and when he has cooled down she may face him if she pleases."

"This sentimentality is perfectly affecting," said the Pole, with a laugh that was almost good-natured. "I thought I understood human nature, but we are but children lecturing on a skeleton. Never say again that I am not your friend."

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"You will do this?"

"That I may be able to do it, let us get into my carriage, which I see is waiting for me."

The train stopped, and the two travellers left the carriage. Unless a third person had been told to observe their reception by the officials of the railway line, he would probably have not noticed a shade of difference in their behaviour towards himself and towards the men who had just alighted. But, once invited to observation, he would have seen (and would avail himself of the hint in subsequent travel) that whereas he was looked at carefully, almost scrutinisingly, by more than one of the officials, and perhaps by a person whom he did not know to be in office, not one of the railway people appeared to be at all conscious of the presence of M. Wolowski or his companion.

(To be continued.)

PISCICULTURE IN FRANCE.

WHAT the French style "the planting and cultivation of the sea," and the English, less ambitious in speech, would be content to call "the artificial raising of fish," is being carried on in France with a perseverance and success which promise to yield very valuable results, and at no distant date. The various operations of modern pisciculture, due to the inventive genius of the humble fisherman Rémy, and zealously promoted by the labours of the indefatigable M. Jacques Coste, under the joint auspices of the Imperial Government and of the Society of Acclimation, are being rapidly reduced to a system at once easy of application, and of almost certain success, and destined, apparently, to render the raising of fish as common as that of kine, sheep, wheat, and potatoes.

Rivers, lakes, and ponds, exhausted by the improvident greed of fishermen, and the destruction of the young fry, are being restocked from the great raising-establishments founded in various departments; while the coasts of the Channel, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean, are being converted into oyster-grounds which threaten, if their tenants continue to multiply as rapidly as they are now doing, to ensure a surfeit of that dainty for the entire population of France.

The fishermen of the Isle of Oléron have for many years past practised the artificial raising of the famous "green oysters" for which the shallows on the east coast of that island are renowned. They have covered a great extent of the shore with pieces of rock, to which the oyster-spawn attaches itself in considerable quantities; these beds they call *viviers*, and from them, at low water, they gather the oysters, at a certain stage of their development, and transport them to shallow pools, called *claires*, where they are fattened for the market. The *claires* are established on the banks of the Seudre, which, for an extent of several miles, have been divided into shallow flat ponds, by the erection of an infinity of low banks of earth, about a yard high, and from five to six yards thick at their base, which are filled with sea-water by the tide. The industrious population of the region have created some 560 acres of these *claires*; and have devised methods, peculiar to themselves, for improving the oysters brought thither for "education;" the latter soon increasing greatly in size, and acquiring, with the peculiar green tint which gives them their distinguishing name, a flavour which is highly appreciated by French *gourmets*.

But the first of the great "model oyster farms," which, under the auspices of the government, are now beginning to yield such excellent results, was commenced by M. Coste, in 1857, in the Bay of St. Brieuc.

The water is there exceedingly deep; and the violence of winds and weather added greatly to the difficulties of this novel attempt. But all these obstacles have been successfully overcome. The entire surface of the bottom of the bay forming the piscicultural farm is covered with fascines, composed of branches of trees strongly lashed together, and held down by heavy stones; between these fascines, the bed of the sea is paved with oyster and muscle shells, pieces of rock, tiles, and fragments of pottery, destined to attract the spawn, and afford to the young oysters a surface suitable to their development.

The success of the experiment at St. Brieuc has led to the formation of similar "fish-farms" at Arcachon, the Ile de Ré, and in the roadstead of Toulon, all of which are being cultivated with unremitting care, and promise, according to the reports of the periodic inspection to which they are subjected by the agents of the government, and by those of the Society of Acclimation, to inaugurate a new era in the annals of fish markets, and to create a new and inexhaustible source of national wealth.

The last investigations into the state of the oyster-beds of St. Brieuc, carried on by members of the Council-General of the Department, under the direction of the Captains of the Chamois, Pluvier, and Eveil, of the French navy, placed by the government at the disposition of the commissioners charged to carry on the work of inspection, have given results that have far surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the advocates of the new system. Every time the drag was applied it brought up over 2000 oysters; and each of the three fascines of row No. 10, sunk in 1859, and just brought up for examination, was found to contain 20,000 young oysters, from three to five centimètres in diameter. These fascines, exhibited in various towns of Brittany, created universal amazement, and will probably lead to the establishment of many new beds. They were subsequently taken to Paris for the Emperor's inspection; and lastly were submitted to the Academy of Sciences, creating there the same feeling of admiration and astonishment which they had excited among the simple Breton peasants.

The fish-farm of St. Brieuc shows what may be done in deep water, and under the raging waves of the Channel. The establishments in the shallow and sheltered Bay of Arcachon—almost a lake—show what may be done towards utilising shores of this description, where, at low water, the pisciculturists are as busy with their fish gardens as a market gardener with his celery, asparagus, and wall-fruit. Here the Government, with a view to

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awaken the emulation of the spiritless and poverty-stricken people of a region prolific only of sand and dwarf pines, has founded two model fish-farms, for the experimentation of apparatus, and the perfecting of the methods of fixing the spawn and ensuring the easy gathering in of the oyster harvest. The oyster-beds are formed of fascines, laid down in rows like the streets of a town, their interstices being paved with tiles, stones, &c. Over the rows of fascines are suspended moveable floors and collecting-roofs of tiles, covered with putty, stuck full of heart-shells. Beyond the region of fascines, floors, and roofs—all of which are covered so thickly with young oysters that it would be impossible to stick a pin between them—the floor of the bay is paved for a considerable distance with oyster-shells and cardium to receive the young fish. No fewer than one thousand oysters have repeatedly been counted on a single tile; and not only have the quiet waters of this curiously sheltered bay proved to be peculiarly favourable to the increase of the fish, but these are found to be, for the form and cleanliness of their shells, and their delicacy of flavour, superior to the oysters obtained amidst the storms of the northern coast. The initiative of the government has not been thrown away. A company comprising 120 capitalists, and 1200 sailors and fishermen of the region, have formed a fish-farm covering 400 hectares (2½ acres each) of the banks, which is prospering as brilliantly as are the government farms, and will suffice to raise all employed upon it to a position of ease and comfort.

In the Ile de Ré, off the shore of the Lower Charente, in the Bay of Biscay, several thousand fishermen and peasants have taken possession of a stretch of muddy shore, nearly four leagues long, between Point de Rivedoux and Point de Lome, which they have transformed into an immense oyster-field. These people have already 1500 oyster-parks in full bearing; their example is being followed by others, and, ere long, the entire island bids fair to be encircled by a belt of oyster-farms. The establishment of these farms presented peculiar difficulties on account of the depth of the flooring of mud, which had to be cleared away before the oysters could be planted, and also of the necessity of protecting the parks against the depredations of wild animals from the woods that cover the interior of the island. Having cleared away the mud, they paved the entire surface of the bottom with stones and pieces of rock, as has been done on the sites of the oyster-parks at Lolen and at La Rochelle. These serve both to divide the waters when the tide is ebbing, creating innumerable currents which draw away any muddy sediment, and to furnish an enormous extent of surface for the oysters, with which they are literally clothed, the inspectors having recently counted 600 full-grown oysters to the square mètre; and as 630,000 square mètres are now under cultivation, it follows that the oysters on this tract of desert mud, utterly wasted and worthless a couple of years ago, already boasts a crop of 378,000,000 of oysters, worth from six to eight millions of francs. The material prosperity of the creators of this oyster-field appears to have exercised a notably beneficial influence on their intelligence and morals. They have organised themselves into communities; hold a general assembly, in which all the details of the enterprise are discussed and settled by vote; elect chiefs, who direct the operations, and a body of "sworn-guards" who keep watch and ward over the grounds, and superintend the gathering in of the common harvest; vote a tax which forms a fund to defray the working expenses of the concern; and elect delegates to represent their interests before the authorities of the Marine Department of the government. All these measures seem to have been developed spontaneously, and by the mere force of things, among this humble but highly prosperous population.

But the raising of oysters has not been confined solely to salt water and the shores of the ocean. Five hundred thousand oysters were carried over, in the summer of 1860, from the coast of England, in the Chamois, under the superintendence of M. Coste, and were immerged in the pool of Thau and in the harbour of Toulon. Though the oysters were fatigued and weakened by their long voyage, they seem to have thriven in their new homes, despite the different quality of the water; for a piece of the wattling, laid down in lieu of fascines, which has just been brought up for examination, from the roads of Toulon, was found to be fully as rich in infant oysters as the apparatus of the other oyster farms.

The Society of Acclimation intend to establish farms on the shores of the Mediterranean, wherever their conformation appears to be favourable; as the oysters raised in that great inland sea are found to posses a specially delectable flavour, and are superior to all others in delicacy of texture, never becoming tough except when, through extreme old age, they attain a size which wins for them the contemptuous *soubriquet* of "Horse-hoofs."

The Belgian and Danish governments have been the earliest to interest themselves practically in the question of pisciculture; and have delegated, the first a Professor of the University of Louvain, the second a Professor of the University of Copenhagen, to study the details of the new science, under the auspices of M. Coste, with a view to its introduction among the fishing-population of their respective shores.

ANNA BLACKWELL.

THE DUNG-BEETLE.

(A NEW TALE, BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.)

Now the Emperor's Horse got shoes of gold—a golden shoe on each foot.

Why was it that he got golden shoes?

He was the handsomest of steeds: he had fine legs, his eyes were wise-looking, and he had a mane that hung down like a silken veil over his neck. He had carried his master through the smoke of battle and through showers of bullets; he had heard the balls screech and sing; he had bitten, and pawed, and fought when the enemy pressed on; he had leapt with the Emperor on his back over the horse of the fallen foe; saved his Emperor's crown of red gold; saved his Emperor's life, which was more than red gold, and so the Emperor's horse got shoes of gold—a golden shoe on each foot.

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And now the Dung-beetle crept out.

"First the great and then the small," he said; "but it isn't size that makes the difference," and with that he stretched out his thin legs.

"What do you want?" asked the Smith.

"Gold shoes," answered the Dung-beetle.

"You must have a bee in your bonnet," said the Smith. "Must you have gold shoes too?"

"Gold shoes!" said the Dung-beetle. "Am not I just as good as yon big beast, who must be groomed, and currycombed, and waited on, who must have food and drink? Don't I belong, too, to the Emperor's stable?"

"But," asked the Smith, "why did the horse get gold shoes? Don't you know that?"

"Know! I know why well enough," said the Dung-beetle. "It was to put a slight upon me. It is an insult—and so now I will e'en go out into the wide world."

"Sneak off with you," said the Smith.

"Rude fellow!" said the Dung beetle, and so he went out of doors, flew a little bit, and now he was in a sweet little flower-garden, where there was such a smell of roses and lavender.

"Isn't it lovely here?" said one of the small Ladybirds, which flew about with black spots on the red shield-strong wings. "How sweet everything smells here, and how charming everything is!"

"I am used to better things," said the Dung-beetle. "Call this charming! Why there isn't so much as one dung-heap!"

And so he went farther on, under the shade of a tall wallflower; there a Caterpillar crawled up to him.

"How lovely the world is!" said the Caterpillar. "The sun is so warm—everything is so delightful! and when once I fall asleep and die, as they call it, I shall wake up and be a Butterfly."

"Any more fancies?" said the Dung-beetle. "Now we fly about as Butterflies—do we? I come from the Emperor's stable, but no one there, not even the Emperor's charger, who, after all, trots on my cast-off gold shoes, has such fancies. Get wings!—fly!—look at me, how I fly," and so the Dung-beetle flew away, saying, "I don't wish to be out of temper, but yet I am out of temper."

So he plumped down on a great grassplot, and there he lay still awhile and fell asleep.

Heavens! what a downpour of rain fell! The Dung-beetle woke up at the patter, and tried to get under ground, but he couldn't. He rolled over and over, and swam on his belly and on his back; as for flying, it was no good thinking of that: it seemed as though he would never leave the grassplot alive, and so there he lay and lay.

When the shower held up a little, and the Dung-beetle had winked the water out of his eyes, he caught a glimpse of something white. It was linen put out to bleach, and he reached it, and crept under a fold of the wet linen. It was not, truth to say, just the same thing as lying in the warm dung in the stable; but there was nothing better, and so he stayed there a whole day and a whole night, and so long did the rain last. Next morning the Dung-beetle came out: he was so out of humour with the climate.

There on the linen sat two Frogs: their clear eyes gleamed for very joy.

"This is blessed weather," said one: "how it freshens one up, and this linen holds the water so beautifully! I feel such a tickling in my hind legs, just as if I were about to swim."

"I'd like to know, now," said the other, "if the Swallow who flies so far about, if he, in all his many travels abroad, has ever found a better climate than ours—such drizzle and such wet! 'Tis for all the world like lying in a damp drain! If one is not glad at this, one can have no love for his own native land."

"Then you have never been in the Emperor's stable?" asked the Dung-beetle. "There it is both warm and balmy. That's what I have been used to, that's my climate; but then one can't take *that* along with one on one's travels. Is there no dung-heap in this garden where people of station like me can turn in and feel themselves at home?"

But the Frogs did not understand him, or did not choose to understand him.

"I never ask a question twice," said the Dung-beetle, after he had asked it three times and got no answer.

So he went on a bit farther, and there lay a potsherd. It ought not to have lain there; but as it lay it gave shelter. Here lived ever so many families of Earwigs. They don't want much house-room, but they must have company. The lady Earwigs are very tender mothers, and so the young ones of each were models of beauty and wisdom.

"Our son has gone and engaged himself," said one mother; "sweet little innocent! his highest aim in life is to be able, one day or other, to creep into a parson's ear. He is such a childish darling, and this engagement will keep him out of bad company. 'Tis such a pleasure to a mother's heart."

"Our son," said another mother, "was at his tricks as soon as ever he crept out of the egg; he is full of fun, and is putting out horns. What an immense joy for a mother, is it not, Mr. Dung-beetle?" for they knew the stranger by the cut of his jib.

"You are both of you quite right," said the Dung-beetle, and so he was asked to step up into the parlour, for so far one could go into the potsherd.

"Now you must see my little Earwigs," said a third and a fourth mother; "they are the dearest children, and so amusing. They are never naughty except when something pains them inside, but that is so common at their age."

And so each mother talked about her little ones, and the little ones talked too, and used the little fork that they have on their tails to pull the Dung-beetle's moustachios.

"Little rogues," said the mothers, bursting with tenderness, "how they make themselves at home with everything!"

But that bored the Dung-beetle, and so he asked if it were far from thence to the Dung-heap.

"That is far, far out in the world, on the other side of the Drain," said the Earwigs; "so far I hope

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none of my bairns will ever get, else I should die outright."

"So far, though, I will try to get," said the Dung-beetle; and so off he went without leave-taking, for that is the politest way.

By the drain-side he met some more of his race—all Dung-beetles of that ilk.

"Here we live," they said, "and a jolly life, too. Mayn't we ask you to turn down into the fat soil? You must be tired after your journey."

"So I am," said the Dung-beetle. "I have lain on linen in rainy weather, and washing and cleanliness take it out of me more than anything else. I have got the rheumatism, too, in one of my wing-joints by standing in a draught under a potsherd. It *is* really refreshing to come at last to one's own people!"

"You come, perhaps, from the dung-heap?" asked the others.

"Higher up," said the Dung-beetle. "I come from the Emperor's stable, where I was born with gold shoes on my feet; I am travelling on secret service, about which you mustn't ask me, for I won't tell you."

And so the Dung-beetle stepped down into the fat slush. There sat three young lady Dung-beetles, and they tittered, for they knew not what to say.

"They are not engaged," said their mother, and so they tittered again, but it was only out of bashfulness.

"I have never seen fairer young ladies than these, even in the Emperor's stable," said the travelling Dung-beetle.

"Don't deceive my daughters! and don't talk to them, unless you really have intentions—ah! I see you have, and so I give you my blessing."

"Hurrah!" shouted all the others, and so the Dung-beetle was betrothed. First betrothed, then bridal, and then—there was not much to look for.

The next day went smoothly by, the day after it was dull work, but when the third day came, it was time to think of getting food for his wife and perhaps for little ones.

"I have let myself be taken by surprise," said the Dung-beetle, "and so I may just as well take them by surprise, too."

And so he did. Gone he was; gone the whole day, gone the whole night—and there his wife sat a widow. The other Dung-beetles said it was an out-and-out vagabond that they had taken into their family, who had gone and left his wife a burden to them.

"Well!" said her mother, "let her go back and sit among the girls, sit as my child; fie upon that dirty wretch who deserted her!"

Meantime, he was on his travels. He had sailed on a cabbage-leaf across the drain; towards morning two men came who saw the Dung-beetle, took him up, turned and twisted him about, and they were very learned men, both of them, especially the younger.

"'Allah sees the black dung-beetle in the black rock in the black mountain.' Stands it not so written in the Koran?" he asked, and translated the Dung-beetle's name into Latin, and gave a history of his genus and species. The elder was against taking him home, for he said they had just as good specimens, which the Dung-beetle thought was not politely said, and so he flew away from off his hand and fluttered a good way, for his wings were quite dry. And so he got to the hot-house, into which he could creep with the greatest ease, as one of the frames was open. As soon as he got inside, he buried himself deep down into the fresh dung.

"This *is* nice!" said the Dung-beetle.

Soon he fell into a slumber, and dreamt that the Emperor's Horse had fallen and broken his neck, and that the Honourable Mr. Dung-Beetle had got his gold shoes, and a promise of two more beside. That was pleasant, and when the Dung-beetle awoke, he crept out and looked about him. What splendour there was in that hot-house! Tall fan-palms spread out their leaves aloft. The sun made them transparent, and under them there were teeming beds of green, among which shone flowers red as fire, yellow as amber, and white as new-fallen snow.

"This is a matchless array of plants; how nice it will all taste when it falls into rottenness!" said the Dung-beetle. "This is a fine store-room. Some of the family live here, no doubt, so I will go out and explore, and see if I can find any one who is fit company for me. Proud I am, I know it; that is just my pride," and so he went about thinking of his dream about the dead horse and the gold shoes won at last.

Then, all at once, a hand caught hold of the Dung-beetle. He was squeezed, and turned, and twisted.

The gardener's little son and a playfellow were in the hot-house, and had seen the Dung-beetle, and were going to have some fun with him. Rolled in a vine-leaf, he went down into a warm trowser-pocket; he scratched and scraped, but he only got a pinch from the boy's hand, who went as fast as he could to the great lake at the end of the garden. There the Dung-beetle was put into an old split wooden shoe, off which the ankle was broken; into it a bit of wood was stuck as a mast, and to the mast our Dung-beetle was tied by a woollen thread. Now he was a skipper, and was to sail on the sea.

It was a very large lake; as for the Dung-beetle, he thought it was the ocean, and he was so scared that he fell on his back, and scrabbled with his legs up in the air.

So the wooden shoe sailed, for there was a current in the water, but when the boat got a little too far out, one of the little boys tucked up his trowsers in a trice, and waded out and brought it in; but as it was drifted out again and again, the boys got cold, very cold, and they made haste home and let the wooden shoe be a wooden shoe. Then it drifted and drifted ever further and further from land, and it was fearful work for the Dung-beetle, for he could not fly, he was fast bound to the mast.

Just then a Fly paid him a visit.

"This is fine weather we have," said the Fly, "I can rest myself here—I can sun myself here. You must find it very pleasant here."

"You chatter according to your lights," said

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the Dung-beetle; "don't you see that I am tethered?"

"Well," said the Fly, "I am not tethered," and so it flew off.

"Now I know the world," said the Dung-beetle. "'Tis a base world. I am the only honest thing in it. First they refuse me gold shoes, next I must lie in wet linen, then stand in a draught, and last of all they fasten a wife on me. If I make a bold step out into the world and see how one can live and how I ought to live, there comes a man's whelp and throws me into bonds on the wild sea. And all this while the Emperor's Horse trots about on his gold shoes. That cuts me most to the heart. But one must not look for sympathy in this world. My adventures in life are very interesting, but what good is that when no one knows them? The world does not deserve to know them, or else it would have given me gold shoes in the Emperor's stable, when the charger was shod, and stretched out his legs. Had I only got these gold shoes, I should have been an honour to the stable, but now it has lost me, and the world has lost me; all is over."

But all was not over yet, for up came a boat with some young girls in it.

"There sails a wooden shoe," said one.

"There is a little insect fast tethered in it," said another.

They were then just alongside of the wooden shoe; they picked it up, and one of the girls took out a tiny pair of scissors, cut the thread of wool in two without hurting the Dung-beetle, and when they came to land, she laid him down in the grass.

"Creep, creep! fly, fly, if you can," she said. "Freedom is a lovely thing!"

And the Dung-beetle flew straight into the open window of a great building, and there he sunk wearily down into the long, soft, fine mane of the Emperor's Horse which stood there in the stable which had been the Dung-beetle's home. He caught fast hold of the mane, and sat awhile humming to himself, "Here I sit on the Emperor's charger! Sit as a knight! What do I say? Ah! now it is all clear. It is a good thought, and a true thought. Why did the horse get gold shoes? That was the very question that Smith asked me. Now I see it all! 'Twas for my sake that the Horse got his gold shoes."

And so the Dung-beetle got into a good humour.

"Nothing like travel for clearing the brain," he said.

The sun shone in upon him, shone very brightly.

"The world is not so bad, after all," said the Dung-beetle. "We must only know how to take it."

So the world was lovely, for the Emperor's Horse only got his gold shoes because the Dung-beetle was to be his rider.

"Now," he said, "I will step down to the other beetles, and tell them how much has been done for me. I will tell them of all the pleasant things which befel me in my foreign travels; and I will add, that now I mean to stay at home till the Horse has worn out his gold shoes." G. W. D.

FRANÇOIS DE CIVILLE.

If the proverb, "He who is born to be hanged will never be drowned," signifies only that the man destined to die by one sort of death escapes all other extremities of fate, then François de Civille is a notable illustration of the rule; for, though he was neither hanged, nor, as far as we know, ever came in peril of drowning, yet he escaped with life from casualties which would have terminated the career of most men.

A cotemporary* records of him that in 1604 he was deputy for Normandy at the National Assemblies, and that when he signed his name he invariably wrote, "François de Civille, thrice dead, thrice buried, and thrice, thank God, alive again." This was a little bit of exaggeration by the way; but, without over-stating the truth, his history is very remarkable.

> Death, a necessary end,
> Will come when it will come,

writes Shakespeare: and not one moment earlier, however much it may be courted. The thread of some men's lives is as frail as gossamer, whilst that of others is tough yarn, spun off Clotho's distaff as a cart-rope, costing Atropos many a hard clip before her scissors will shear it through.

During the religious wars which desolated France in the 16th century, when equal brutality was shown on either side, Catholic or Protestant, when each household was broken up into factions, when the country was drenched in the blood of the belligerent parties, and the towns rose up to slaughter all soldiers indiscriminately, to whichever side or denomination they belonged; Rouen was in the hands of the Protestants under the Count de Mont-Gomeri, governor of the city. In 1562 it was besieged by the Catholic forces, and for some time held out manfully. Amongst those who fought with pre-eminent valour, and who distinguished themselves, was François de Civille, a man of heroism and endurance, a scion of one of the oldest families in the Duchy, aged twenty-six years, having been born on the 12th April, 1537, and captain of a company of foot-soldiers.

On the 15th October, during the siege, by order of the Count de Mont-Gomeri, Captain Civille was sent to repulse an assault made on the walls between the gate S. Hilaire and les Fourches-Bihorel. During the heat of the contest, the young man received a ball from an arquebus, which struck him in the hand, then, glancing to his cheek, tore it, fractured the jaw, and came out near the nape of the neck. He fell from the ramparts into the moat, where, along with some corpses, a little earth was cast over him as a hasty burial, and he was left as dead. In this condition he lay from ten o'clock in the morning till half-pas six at night. His faithful servant Nicolas de la Barre, in the meantime, having heard of what had befallen his master, and resolving on giving him decent burial, obtained leave from the governor to search for the corpse. In company with Captain Jean de Clère, he left the town on horseback. Arrived at the scene of conflict, the two men unearthed the bodies which lay in the moat,

* D'Aubigné, Mem. iii. 10.

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but could not distinguish the object of their search, and were actually on their way back to the gate, when La Barre determined on returning to the spot and examining the locality with greater attention. This time he was more successful, for the moon, sparkling on a diamond which Civille wore on his finger, attracted his eye; and, on washing away the blood and mire, with which the face was covered, he recognised the features of his master, notwithstanding their frightful disfigurement. The domestic flung himself on the body, covering it with tears and kisses, when, to his great delight, he felt warmth still in it. Carefully raising his all but lifeless master, he and De Clère conveyed him gently to the town, and placed him in the hospital of S. Clara. Here he was attended by the medical men of the garrison, and after his wounds had been examined, he was removed by the faithful La Barre to his own house. Here he remained for five days and nights in a raging fever, and unconscious. The family of Civille having learned the condition he was in, sent two doctors and a surgeon, MM. Gueroult, le Gras, and Davaux, to attend him. His wounds were again dressed, and a seton was put in his neck; his teeth, which had remained clenched, were parted, and some beef-tea was poured down his throat. On the sixth day the dressings of his cheek were removed; and, an abundance of purulent matter having been discharged, the inflammation of the cheek was relieved. The sick man moved, opened his eyes, seemed to distinguish things about him, and uttered the words, "Han! han! han!—my arm!" and then relapsed.

The accounts of Civille's sickness somewhat vary. According to De Thou, the young man lay for four days at the hospital before a surgeon could attend him, and before he was removed to his own quarters.

On the 26th October, eleven days after having received his wound, François de Civille regained the use of his faculties, and was able to converse with those around him, and hopes were entertained of his ultimate recovery, if he received proper nourishment, and was kept quiet. Unfortunately, however, that very day the town was taken by assault, and was given over to massacre and pillage.

As good luck would have it, the house was taken possession of by four Gascon soldiers belonging to the company of a Captain Lago, who was an acquaintance of François, though fighting on the opposite side. The convalescent was not accordingly ill-treated, till, after the lapse of some days, the house was assigned to Des Moulins, lieutenant of the Scottish Guard. De Civille was now removed from his bed, and carried into a closet, where he was laid on an old straw mattress. He was not allowed to remain long in this condition, for, some soldiers having searched the house for his younger brother, and not having found him, in revenge they flung the wounded man out of the window, naturally expecting that he would be killed by the fall. But Providence ordered otherwise. The window opened on a little court, and beneath it was a large dung-heap. On this, accordingly, François fell, without receiving any injury. It was autumn, and the weather was cold. For three days and nights the ill-fated captain lay on the dung-heap, with nothing to eat, and with no further covering than a shirt and night-cap. However, he drew some of the refuse about him over his body to keep in the warmth, burying himself this time. At the end of the third day, M. de Croisset, cousin-german of the sufferer, himself a Catholic, and opposed in politics and religion to his relation, came to the house to inquire after Civille. An old woman, then the sole occupant, informed him that the young man had been cast out of the window, and must have died, three days ago. However, de Croisset betook himself to the court, that he might see to his cousin being properly interred. To his amazement, he found him still breathing, though so feeble as to be unable to speak. He made signs that he was tormented with thirst, and, when some beer had been brought him, he drank it with avidity. The only food which Civille was able to swallow was bread, sopped in water or broth.

M. de Croisset, finding that it was unsafe to keep François any longer in Rouen, obtained assistance from Captain Lago to convey him to his own castle, on the Seine. The sick man was attended by the four Gascon soldiers, who had in the first place taken possession of his house at Rouen. These men were very kind, and did all in their power to alleviate his sufferings on the journey, which were not, however, considerable, as the passage was made by water. The soldiers procured him money, and repeatedly dressed his wounds with clean rags, which he considered as a great comfort.

On reaching Croisset Castle, the concierge refused to open the gate, and François was left for a long while on the bridge in a sharp frost, where he would have undoubtedly perished, had not another servant of M. de Croisset let him into the castle. His misfortunes were not over yet, as there was no medical man or surgical appliances to be had, so that his wounds were dressed with nothing better than bread-poultice soaked in the yolk of eggs. After some days, De Croisset sent to his château a physician and surgeon, and with them came the faithful La Barre, who had found means to escape from Rouen, and discover his master's retreat. When Civille was somewhat better, he was removed from Croisset into the Pays-le-Caux, under the charge of MM. Ruffosse and De S. Marie-le-Bailleul. This was in the month of July, after young Civille had been nine months ill; in six weeks more he was able to leave his bed and walk. As soon as he considered his health sufficiently restored, he rejoined his comrades in arms, and fought long in their cause, though occasionally suffering from his old wounds, which would reopen and give off broken pieces of bone.

The horrors of intestine war were about to culminate. On the Huguenot side, butchery and brutality enough had been shown: the Baron des Ardrets had spared neither man, woman, nor child, but had driven them with the point of the spear over the frightful precipices at Le Puy, and littered the streets with their shattered remains. But the Catholics were equally blood-

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thirsty, and, in 1572, the eve of St. Bartholomew saw Paris, and a great part of France, deluged with blood. Above 70,000 corpses were strewn over the country; yet, somehow—how, we know not—among those corpses was *not* that of François de Civille. Again did he escape death: probably he was in eminent peril, and was wounded, for, as we saw, in 1604 he signed his name as having been *thrice* dead and buried.

In 1585 Civille fled to England, and there he was attended by two physicians of eminence in London—Dr. Lavinius, of Prague, and Dr. Maillard, of Orleans.

In 1600 he was introduced at court, and Queen Elizabeth received him very graciously, listening to the account of his adventures from his own mouth. The Queen made him a present of her portrait, which is still in the family, preserved as a precious heirloom.

M. Du Bois,* from whom we have derived much of our information, and who has taken pains to correct the errors into which De Thou, D'Aubigné, and others have fallen in their accounts of this remarkable man, tells us that he has learned from M. Ernest de Blosseville, a descendant of the renowned captain, that, after having spent a few years in England, and being unable to remain any longer an inactive spectator of the events taking place in his native land, De Civille obtained a company of soldiers from Queen Elizabeth, and with it disembarked on the shores of Normandy.

Here he rejoined his companions in arms, and fought for some while, till the destruction of his party was complete, when he was again compelled to seek refuge in England.

The captain's life had been one of unceasing conflict: he was now advanced in years, and repose for his laurels was necessary.

François de Civille was twice married. He had no children by his first wife, but by his second he left issue; and of his two great-grandchildren, the one married an English gentleman of the name of Brune Sandham; the other M. de Siqueville, a Frenchman of family.

In 1614 François, then aged 78, caught a severe cold, whilst serenading by moonlight a lady with whom he was deeply in love. We will hope, for the honour of the heroic all-but octogenarian, that the second Madame de Civille was dead. The chill settled on his chest, and resulted in inflammation of the lungs, from which he died. This circumstance gave occasion to his epitaph:

Ci-gît qui sut deux fois braver la mort,
Et deux fois revint à la vie,
Et dont l'amoureuse folie
Dans l'hiver de ses ans a terminé le sort.

At the close of the eighteenth century, the elder branch of the family of Civille was represented by Marie-Henriette, sole daughter of Pierre-Auguste-Alphonse, Marquis de Civille-Saint-Mars, and of Marie-Anne, daughter of Marshal de Chastenet-Puy-Ségur. This Marie-Henriette married the Viscount Poret de Blosseville. The younger branch was represented, in the same century, by Marie-Louise, only daughter of Alphonse de Civille, Marquis de Rânes, who married the Marquis de Bailleul. The third son of Madame de Blosseville was authorised by royal patent, in 1815, to take the name and titles of the Civille family. In the possession of his descendants, at the Château Bois-Héroult, near Buchi (Seine Inférieure), is the portrait of Queen Elizabeth, and two of the old warrior, grim and scarred.

S. BARING GOULD, M.A.

* Recherches Archéologiques, &c., sur la Normandie, par M. Louis du Bois, Paris, 1842.

THE SAILOR'S BRIDE.

"OPEN the casement, mother dear!
Methinks the tide is high,
And I would look upon the sea
Once more before I die.

"Some ships are making for the bay;
It may be *his* is one.
Oh, mother! how will Leonard grieve
To come and find me gone.

"I well remember when he sailed
(It was at Lammas-tide),
He said that he would soon return
To claim his rosy bride.

"But, ah! the flush upon my cheek,
That showed like health's fresh bloom,
Was Death's own colour—he had decked
His victim for the tomb.

"I had a vague misgiving then
I could not put away;
And look through parting tears unto
A happy meeting day.

"But he was full of hope—for him
The future had no cloud;
He saw me in my bridal dress,
Not in my burial shroud.

"Alas! he'll be a widowed man
Before I am his wife;
Oh, mother! for his sake and yours,
I sometimes pray for life.

"I know that he will soon be here,
It may be come this day;
I once thought it was very hard
To die, and he away.

"But now I feel 'tis ordered we
That Leonard is not here;
I might have found it was more hard
To die when he was near.

"Tell him I had my little bed
Before the window drawn,
That I might look upon the sea,
And think of him each morn.

"And say that with my latest breath
I prayed God soothe his pain;
And, mother, bid him live that so
We two may meet again.

"I know that you will grieve for me,
But he will be your son;
Tell him I bade him watch o'er you,
When your own child was gone."

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Gazing upon the far-off sea,
Awhile she quiet lay,
Then murmured, "Father, lead my thoughts
From earthly things away."

And with that prayer God gave her peace,
And she was very calm;
And, like the swan that sings its dirge,
Chanted some favourite psalm.

Then stole a cloud across her face;
"All things are growing dim,
Mother! Can this be death? Kiss me,
And give my love to him."

A hand is on the cottage-door;
A face bends o'er the bed.
Too late! too late hath Leonard come;
Love cannot raise the dead.

Marian E. James.

A WORD ON WAGES.

No person who is really desirous of aiding in the promotion of the well-being of the humbler portions of the community can regard without feelings of pain and regret, the repeated attempts on the part of large sections of our industrial population to enforce those doctrines which have been so frequently proved to be at complete variance with the simplest rules of political economy. It may be that part of the mischief is attributable to the thoughtless and unreflecting expression of unsound opinions by those, who, while attempting to assist the cause of the operatives by their erratic lucubrations on the labour question, in reality are doing all they possibly can to injure the best interests of those whom they evince so much anxiety to serve. They denounce political economy as a wicked invention of capital for the purpose of crushing poor helpless labour; but they forget the facts that that science is simply an exposition of certain laws, which experience and study have proved to be as fixed and unchangeable as are all laws which are not of human origin.

It would be quite as reasonable to denounce meteorologists, because they predict the approach of tempests, or investigate the causes of whirlwinds and waterspouts. The meteorologist is not in any way responsible for the effects of the atmospheric disturbances which he predicts, neither is the political economist chargeable with the evils produced by the disregard of the doctrines advocated by him. Were it not for the pernicious influence exercised over the minds of so many of our working men by the productions of these writers, we might naturally feel inclined to laugh at the real or assumed ignorance displayed by the authors in question, respecting those principles which they so fiercely and so recklessly attack. But it is to be feared that many contentions will yet arise between employers and employed, before the absurd dogmas and theories so foolishly propagated are dispelled. This is clearly evident from the revival of the strike by the operative builders of London, for the attempted enforcement of the Nine Hours' System. If we peruse the published reports of the various speeches delivered by the principal speakers and leaders during the late strike in London, we shall find one argument employed more frequently than any other; and that is, the

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assertion that the condition of the operatives employed in the various departments of the London Building Trades has not improved in proportion to the progress of knowledge and general enlightenment. This idea obtains currency amongst many of the educated classes, who entertain a vague impression that the hours of labour have become *longer*, and the rate of remuneration for the same *less*, at the present time, than at a period when less men were employed. Now this assertion or belief has really no foundation in fact, for if we examine into the average rate of wages, and duration of the hours of labour one hundred years since, we shall find that they have been gradually improving since that time until the present; and that the difference between the two periods is somewhat startling. I recently had in my possession a small volume published in London about the year 1747, and which contained an account of the principal metropolitan trades then existing; showing the hours of labour, rate of wages, &c., in each. From this source it appears, that bricklayers received about 21*s.* per week of seventy-two hours; labourers, 12*s.*; carpenters, 15*s.*; plasterers, 30*s.*; joiners, 15*s.*; plumbers, 15*s.*; and masons, 18*s.* The hours of labour in these trades were from six a.m., to six p.m., allowing half an hour for lunch, and one hour for dinner, which would give ten and a half actual working hours, or sixty-three per week; the Saturday half-holiday and "quarter-day" being then unknown.

The metropolitan trades have always received average higher wages than those of the provinces, and consequently it may be fairly assumed that the case was the same then, and that the rates of remuneration in the provincial building trades were less than those quoted above. Well, in Mr. Chadwick's valuable treatise on the rate of wages in Lancashire, we find a statement of the wages and hours of work per week, in the Building Trades of Lancashire, from 1839 to 1859; an extract from which is subjoined:—

TRADES.				1839.		1849.		1859.	
				Time Hours.	Wages.	Time Hours.	Wages.	Time Hours.	Wages.
					s.		*s. d.*		*s.*
Bricklayers	..	Summer	6 months	60	27	57½	30 0	55½	33
"	..	Winter	"	53	27	50	27 0	50	30
"	Labourers	Summer	"	60	18	57½	18 0	55½	21
"	"	Winter	"	53	18	50	18 0	50	18
Masons	..	Summer	"	60	26	57½	28 6	55½	30
"	..	Winter	"	53	24	50	26 0	50	27
Plumbers	..	Summer	"	60	27	60	28 0	56	28
"	..	Winter	"	54	27	54	28 0	50	28
Plasterers	..	Summer	"	60	26	60	26 0	58	28
"	..	Winter	"	53	26	53	26 0	53½	28
Joiners	..	Summer	"	60	26	58	28 0	58	28
"	..	Winter	"	53	26	55	28 0	55	28

By the foregoing table it will be seen that since 1839, the hours of labour have greatly *decreased*, while the amount of remuneration has *increased*; and if we may judge by the London rate of wages one hundred years since, we shall find the improvement to be even greater. As regards the metropolitan scale of labour and wages, we find it stated in the *Report of the Social Science Committee on Trade Societies*, that the metropolitan bricklayers, carpenters, joiners, plasterers, masons, and plumbers receive 5*s.* 6*d.* per day of ten hours; while the labourers receive from 18*s.* to 21*s.* per week. On Saturday the men leave off at four o'clock instead of six, but receive the full day's pay for the same. Now on comparing the hours of labour and the rate of wages of 1859-60 with those of 1747; we shall find that the advance in wages per week is, bricklayers, 12*s.*; carpenters, 18*s.*; joiners, 18*s.*; plasterers, 3*s.*; masons, 15*s.*; and plumbers, 18*s.*; while in the case of the labourers the increase is from 6*s.* to 9*s.*; the *decrease* in the hours of labour being five per week. But this does not represent the full extent of the amelioration which has taken place in the condition of the building operatives; because they can at the present day obtain many articles of necessity or luxury which were beyond the reach of their grandfathers, but which the continual development and improvement of mechanical invention has placed within the means of all. With these facts before us, it appears to be a most lamentable thing that the operatives should allow themselves to be misled into an attempt to regulate the hours of labour, when experience proves that causes beyond the control of either the employers or the employed are slowly but surely effecting the professed aim of the men, namely the reduction of the hours of labour.

Payment by the *hour* instead of the day would appear the most reasonable course for masters and men to adopt, as the men could then work nine or ten hours just as they pleased; the employer paying, and the men receiving, no more than for work actually performed.

But against the adoption of this system, the men engaged in the metropolitan building trades have resolutely "struck," and probably before these lines appear in ONCE A WEEK, all the various building establishments of London will be closed. This time the consequences are likely to prove far more serious to the men, for the employers appear inclined to act on the suggestion mooted during the last strike, of importing German, Belgian, and other foreign artisans to perform the work of those on strike. This is one of the great evils of strikes. By striving to *restrict* the supply of labour they for a short time *increase* the demand. The effect of the shoemakers' strike at Northampton, the tailors' strike, and of the weavers of Lancashire, has always been to introduce fresh hands into the trades, and ultimately to increase the competition in the labour market; and therefore it is to be hoped that the working men of London will pause, ere they continue in a course which is pregnant with danger to the best interests of employers and employed. JOHN PLUMMER.

KETTERING, *April*, 1861.

THE HISTORY OF A LOVE-LETTER.

"FOUR letters for you, ma'am, to-day," said my maid Bridget, breaking in upon my solitude one morning as I sat busily at work upon a muslin frock, being a gift destined for my little godchild on the approaching auspicious occasion of her completing her third year.

"Four letters!" I re-echoed in surprise, letting

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the delicate piece of embroidery fall to the ground, while I took them from Bridget's hand. "Why I did not expect one!"

The damsel doubtless thinking that they would themselves be better able to account for their unexpected appearance than she, wisely forbore to attempt it, and, as she quitted the room, I proceeded, after a hasty glance at the handwriting and postmarks borne by the covers, to gratify my curiosity by opening my despatches.

"What can Martha be writing about again so soon?" was my soliloquy ere I commenced reading No. 1. Martha was my only sister, married some ten years before, and the mother of as many children. "Baby" had "cut his first tooth!" He had been longer about the business than any of his nine predecessor babies, and mamma had been fearful his darling gums were destined to prove a physiological wonder by remaining toothless for ever! Her anxiety was now happily removed, and she wrote "in haste" to bid me rejoice with her. Although she spoke of haste, her letter consisted of eight closely-written pages. She gave in an ascending scale the latest biographies of all her olive branches. Fanny (the destined possessor of the frock) was "growing such a sweet affectionate child." She was "always talking of Aunt Mary. Did Aunt Mary remember next Thursday would be her birthday?" But I must cut sister Martha short.

Letter No. 2 was an intimation from my Aunt Betsy, a maiden lady, that she proposed shortly to spend "a week" with me, "if convenient." Now, although Aunt Betsy never evinced the slightest satisfaction in my society, though she found fault with everything in my house and domestic management; yet her "week" was never less than a month, and kept recurring a good deal oftener than I liked; yet for the life of me I dared not say her visit was not convenient. No, Aunt Betsy knew perfectly well that her proviso was a safe one.

Letter No. 3 was soon dispatched, being an appeal in behalf of missions to some distant Borioboola Gha.

And No. 4? Now, as a lady is always supposed, as a matter of course, to reserve her most important intelligence—the *crême de la crême*—for her P.S., so No. 4, though last, will be preconceived not least. And, in truth, No. 4 contained an offer of marriage. Scarcely could I believe my eyes. Hereby, suppose not, dear reader, that I had never received an offer before. Nor, although I acknowledge myself not so young as I had been, suppose not either that I thought it so impossible I should ever receive another. No, there was no grey hair in my head; there were no wrinkles on my brow; I might without vanity deem it possible I should have a lover yet to come. It was not the offer that astounded me, but that Mr. James Warrington should be the man to make it. A clap of thunder is often made the simile of a thing sudden and unexpected, yet the thunderclap is commonly preceded by some darkening of the heavens—some indications of the approaching storm. Mr. Warrington's offer, on the contrary, had been preceded by no sign whatsoever. There had been neither word nor look. I had given him my hand to shake, and had been sensible of no tender pressure. I had met him out walking, and he had passed me with a bow. I had spent many an evening in his company, and he had never offered to see me home. Yet the letter I now received was assuredly signed with the name of James Warrington. Who was James Warrington? Before transcribing his letter I must, to the best of my ability, answer this question for the reader's enlightenment.

Of Mr. Warrington's birth and parentage I knew nothing; of his worldly circumstances, likewise, nothing beyond what he now told me. He had never been a resident in the place whereof I write myself a citizeness, but about six months previously he had paid a visit of some length at the house of some acquaintances of mine in this city. Their respectability was received as a voucher for his. Mr. Warrington was handsome, gentlemanly in manner and appearance, lively and well-informed, and he speedily became a favourite in our circle in C——. He was invited everywhere. Some few persons indeed there were who whispered, "Who is he?" "Where does he come from?" but the questions remained without an answer, and it might have been he had dropped from the clouds, and after inhabiting this lower sphere of ours for a period of some six or eight weeks, had been caught up again by the same elements. I knew of no *particular* bright eyes that strained their wistful gaze after his flight. I knew of no *one* tender heart that mourned its sun departed. Mr. Warrington had been universally liked by the ladies, and had appeared to like their society, but as far as my knowledge went, he had quitted C—— heartwhole. And now there came this letter for me by the post. It was dated from some street or square in London. Its style I thought singular. It had no formal commencement: thus it began:—

"I love you, Mary, with all my heart and soul, distractedly, devotedly, unchangeably. Forgive this abrupt and incoherent declaration. How long has all utterance been denied me! How often, in the time gone by, when I saw you day by day, and every day loved you more and more, did the words of passion rise to my lips, and I repressed them until my heart well nigh burst. Did you never read my feelings, Mary; Ah yes, I think you must have done so, in spite of all my boasted self-control. Once, in particular, I wonder if you recal the time" (No indeed, I do not), "I felt almost sure you had discovered my secret, and there was a look in those dear blue eyes" (my eyes are brown, he can never have looked at them well), "those dear blue eyes which sent a thrill through me, and inspired me with a hope which has shone before me like a beacon through all this dark night of absence" (more like an ignis fatuus than a beacon, I'm sure—the vain man—seen in my eyes, indeed). "Yes, Mary" (he is very free with my name), I could remain no longer near you without speaking, I could not speak while my worldly prospects were so gloomy and uncertain. I had no fortune, you too I knew had none" (well £200 a year is not much to be sure, but still I think it need not be called nothing by a penniless

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adventurer). "Poverty would have seemed a light ill to me with you by my side, but I could not bear the idea of your having to contend with all its trials and difficulties. So I tore myself away in silence from the place which your presence made like a heaven to me. Of the following six months I will not speak, save to say that never for one moment has your image been absent from my thoughts. Ah! has my Mary in all that time I wonder ever thought of me?" (Very seldom, if the truth must be told). "At length, after disappointments numberless, and hopes deferred until my heart was sick, I yesterday received two letters. One was from an influential friend, and contained the information that he had succeeded in obtaining for me an honourable appointment, whereby a competent income was secured me. After a moment's pause of self-congratulation, I opened the second letter, and found myself most unexpectedly the inheritor of a considerable legacy by the will of an old friend of my father's, just deceased. Thus was my tongue loosed from its fetters. Mary, I love you with all the fond, deep, and true affection of which a man's heart is capable. Say not, dearest, that the feeling finds no response in your own, suffer me at least to come and plead my cause by word of mouth. You have no parents from whom I must seek to obtain such permission, I do not consider that your aunt has any right to withhold it. I wait, therefore, but your own word to hasten on wings of love and joy to your side. Mary, my own, deny me not. It shall ever be the one dearest aim of my life to make you happy. Adieu.

"Most devotedly yours,
"James Warrington."

I have already said once I could scarcely believe my eyes, and I must say it again. Yet the lines were bold and free, and fair to read. I had had a note from Mr. Warrington once before, when he was staying at C—— (a few brief lines of thanks accompanying a book I had lent him), and I remembered the handwriting well. So well that I rejected the idea, which came across me for a moment, that this ardent epistle must be a forgery. Besides, who would play me such an ungentlemanly hoax? I had always lived at peace and charity with all mankind; I knew nobody who bore me any ill will, and the matter could not be viewed as a simple joke. No, it must be true, Mr. Warrington must be really in love, or really fancy himself in love with me. Strange, very strange,—what could have inspired him with such a passion? Was it my brown, alias blue, eyes? There was a pier-glass over the chimney-piece. I got up to take a survey of my own image therein. What did I behold? A round face, shaded by dark brown hair; two brown eyes as aforesaid; a nondescript form of nose, neither Roman, Grecian, nor aquiline, not very obtrusive, nor yet exactly a snub; a rather wide mouth; a set of regular white teeth; a complexion pale, neither brown nor fair. Item, rather a neat little figure. It was not altogether an ugly picture, yet very far from one I should have expected Mr. Warrington to admire. He always struck me as a man who would inevitably select a beautiful woman for his wife. Since to beauty, however, I could make no pretension, it must be some other charm which had procured for me this conquest, and I was utterly at a loss to decide what this might be. Accomplishments I had few to boast, my music was far below the average of a boarding-school miss, and though the walls of my drawing-room were profusely decorated with the works of my pencil, Mr. Warrington had never seen these masterpieces, so I could not owe my triumphs to those Italian skies, purple mountains, silvery streams, and green trees with the nymphs reposing beneath them. I rather prided myself upon my powers of conversation, but these had never seemed to possess much attraction in the eyes, or *ears* I should rather say, of Mr. Warrington. He talked more to old Mrs. Hearnaught, who could only be talked to through a trumpet, and to Miss Thickskull, whom nobody could talk to through anything but the purest good nature, than he had ever done to me. Ever? No, once, and but once, I recollect my conversation did appear to interest him. It was when I was speaking of ferns. The book I lent him was on that subject. If I married Mr. W. I should certainly choose a bridal-wreath of ferns. Some species of the delicate *Adiantum* or *Maidenhair* seemed by its name peculiarly appropriate for such a destiny. If I married him did I say? Yes, that was the question. Here was I foolishly wasting time in idle guesses as to what could have induced him to ask me, and neglecting the great point whether I should say yes or no. I had no one to consult hereupon but myself. The course of love in my case "hung" not "upon the choice of friends." No, it might run on a smooth and rapid river without danger of meeting any obstacle to its current. Parents I had none. My Aunt Betsy, Mr. Warrington indeed but justly considered had small right to be consulted; so small that I wondered it had occurred to him to mention her. I recollected, however, that she was spending one of her longest weeks with me while he was at C——, so that he might very probably think she resided permanently with me, or I with her. No, I had no need to ask Aunt Betsy anything about the matter. But did I love Mr. Warrington? I could not say that I did, but I loved nobody else, and might it not be that I only did not love him because I had never regarded him in the light of a lover? Was not Mr. Warrington young, handsome, and everything that a girl's fancy could desire? Were not his circumstances, according to his own showing, unobjectionable? Was I not often very lonely in my solitary dwelling? Was I not frequently sighing for some sweet companionship? I had lost my mother in infancy, I was but just emancipated from school when my only sister married, and a few months later death suddenly deprived me of my dear father, who was all in all to me. I had then accepted the home Martha offered me, but though always treated with the utmost kindness both by her and her husband, I could not help feeling myself somehow a stranger and intermeddler in their domestic happiness. At the end of a year, I determined to have a home of my own, however lonely and joyless it might be. I

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came to C——. Friends I had found and kind ones, and the years of my life here had not been unhappy; still I was conscious of something wanting, of sympathies unclaimed, of—of—might it not be in Mr. Warrington's power to make my lot happier? I had been romantic, I had had my dreams of ideal bliss, I was conscious that in all this self-questioning, this hesitation, there was wonderfully little romance. It was not the love I had dreamt of. But time and youth were fleeting, and such dreams becoming more and more unlikely ever to be realised. Still I hesitated what answer to return Mr. Warrington. I was not prepared to write "Come, I await you with open arms," but was it necessary either to do this or to bid him avaunt? Might I not choose a middle course,—the *happy* medium?

My mind was made up. It wanted a good many hours to post-time, but that was no reason why I should not write my letter at once. I took out my writing-case and a sheet of note-paper from it. No, five quires for a shilling might do very well for making out washing bills upon, or even for the ordinary purposes of letter writing; but it was not worthy of bearing the transcript of an answer to an offer of marriage. I placed before me in its stead a sheet of superfine cream laid, and brought my pen to bear upon its smooth surface.

"My dear Sir,"—No, such a commencement was in too marked contrast to Mr. Warrington's passionate address. Those three words would of themselves suffice to give the death-blow to his hopes—he would dash my letter into the fire, having read no further. I took a second sheet, and wrote "My dear James." No, maidenly reserve would not permit to use such familiarity to a man whom until that very morning I had regarded quite as a stranger. With my third sheet I succeeded better.

"My dear Mr. Warrington,—Your letter, this morning received, has surprised me very much indeed. I am, however, deeply sensible of the honour you have done me, and although I cannot at present say that I return the sentiments you have been pleased to express for me, I do not feel that it is impossible I should ever be able to do so. I know you so little, and you, too, know so little of me, that I cannot feel certain that on further acquaintance you might not discover I was not at all what you thought me, that your sentiments for me and wishes might not change. Cannot we meet as friends, without further engagement on either side for the present? On these terms, I should be very happy to see you again at C——. Meanwhile believe me,

"My dear Mr. Warrington,

"Yours very sincerely,

"Mary Henderson."

Having read over this epistle, and found nothing to alter therein, I folded it in an envelope, sealed and directed it. Nothing further remained but to carry it to the post, which I purposed myself to do, while taking my usual morning walk before dinner. The next hour, however, put an end to this project. The sky had all the morning been threatening, it began to rain, and soon settled into a determined wet day. Well, no matter, I could stay in and finish little Fanny's frock, and Bridget could take the letter by-and-by. Talk or think of a certain person, and —— my maid's journey to the post was scarcely settled in my mind, when there came a tap at the door of the room in which I was sitting, immediately followed by the appearance of her round good-humoured face within it.

"Please, ma'am, I came to ask if you'd be so good as let me go home this afternoon. Cousin Richard's just come to say mother wants to see me very much."

And Cousin Richard doubtless wants to walk home with you very much, too, I thought to myself. I had for some time had a suspicion that Bridget had an admirer, and the deepening flush in the damsel's, at all times, rosy cheeks, as she named the name of Cousin Richard convinced me he was the man. I was never a hard mistress, and probably the having a love affair of my own on the way, made me look with a kindlier eye than usual on that of my domestic. So I said:

"Very well, Bridget, I have no objection to your going to see your mother. I am afraid though you'll have a very wet walk."

Bridget's home was something more than two miles off.

I did not hear the damsel's answer very distinctly, but I am almost sure Cousin Richard's name was uttered again, together with something about a "big umbrella."

"Very well, Bridget," I resumed, "I have only to say further that I shall expect you back by nine o'clock in the evening, and as you pass the post-office in going, don't forget to post this letter."

Bridget acquiesced with a pleased smile and a curtsey, took the letter from my hand and departed. I then settled myself industriously to work, now and then letting my thoughts follow the rustic lovers under their big umbrella, but more frequently centering them upon Mr. James Warrington and his extraordinary passion for myself. At two o'clock I dined. I had but just finished this meal when there came again a rap at my door, and cook entered (there was no one else to play the part of waiting-maid, now Bridget was gone), bearing a note in her hand.

"Please, ma'am, a servant's brought this from Miss Morton, and is to wait for an answer."

"Miss Morton," I mentally ejaculated, "I trust she's not going to give one of her stupid tea-parties." The note was as usual in her niece's handwriting, but I soon discovered its purport was quite different to that I had so hastily deprecated. Thus it ran:

"Dear Miss Henderson,—

The enclosed came by post this morning, in an envelope addressed to me, evidently by mistake. I hasten to forward it to you, and beg you, in case you should in like manner, as seems probable, have received a note intended for me, to be so kind as to send it by the bearer.

"Ever, dear Miss Henderson,

"Yours affectionately,

"Mary Morton."

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With a presentiment of what was to follow, I hastily glanced at the enclosure.

"Mr. Warrington presents his compliments to Miss Henderson, and would feel greatly obliged if she would kindly inform him of the name and publisher of the work on British Ferns she did him the favour to lend him on a former occasion. Mr. Warrington's uncertain recollection, and his wish to procure the book for a friend, must be his apology for troubling Miss Henderson."

Here was a pleasant mistake! What a simpleton I had made of myself! If it might have been but in my own eyes it would have been tolerable, though humiliating enough. But, alas! my letter to Mr. Warrington was already in the post. Both he and Mary Morton would laugh over my vain credulity. Where was his letter which had so deceived me? It was quickly found. I could have torn it to atoms in my impotent wrath, but the recollection that it belonged of right to Mary Morton, that she had sent to claim it, restrained me. Enclosing it in an envelope in which I scribbled a line to Mary, telling her I should call to see her the next morning, I gave the letter to the servant who waited for it, and was then at liberty to indulge my own reflections, which it will be imagined were anything but agreeable. I was not of an envious disposition, and could have given up the imaginary lover of some two or three hours without a grudge or a sigh. It was that idea of being laughed at I could not bear. Why had I not guessed the truth? Mary Morton was a very sweet, and moreover a very pretty girl, just the sort of girl I might have imagined Mr. Warrington would fall in love with. She had been a schoolfellow of my own, but was so much younger, that we had never been companions, and while she was Mary to me, I was always Miss Henderson to her. She was like myself an orphan, and a maiden aunt had taken her to live with her "out of charity." These were the words at least which the elder Miss Morton always used to everybody, although everybody had their own private opinion that never was soul less illumined by the divine light of charity than Miss Morton's, and that the home, food, and clothing Mary received were but poor payment for the labours which were daily and hourly imposed upon her, for the hard words and cruel taunts which were borne with such uncomplaining meekness. I had often thought how glad I should be if that pretty bird might be freed from its present cage, as now it would very probably be, but if these were the first steps towards such a deliverance, they were not at all such as I should have chosen.

Again I asked myself why I had not guessed the truth. But Mr. Warrington had, so far as my observation went, bestowed scarcely any more attention upon Mary Morton than he had upon Mary Henderson, and I could not blame myself for my want of penetration. No, Mr. Warrington was alone to blame. In a matter of such importance, why did he fail to assure himself he had put the letters into their right covers? Or why need he have written that note to me at all? He seemed pretty confident about the issue of his love suit, surely that matter of the ferns might have waited a verbal settlement on his arrival at C——. He had spoken of travelling hither on "wings," which agents of locomotion it might be presumed would at any rate be not less expeditious than the railroad. A short time ago I had been debating with myself whether I could *love* Mr. Warrington, and now the question was whether I could help *hating* him.

After a while this idea came into my head—might I not possibly arrest the progress of my letter? A friend of mine once told me she had effected such a purpose, but then that was in a small country village, where she was well known, and but few letters comparatively passed through the post-office. However, I could but try. It wanted yet nearly two hours to the time of closing. Regardless of the rain which continued to fall heavily, I donned hat and cloak, and soon reached the post-office, but it was a fruitless errand.

"A letter, madam," I was politely informed, "once posted becomes the property of the post-office, which is answerable for its being duly delivered as addressed."

"Well then," I thought to myself, "there is no help for it. I must resign myself to ridicule, and try to put the best face on the matter, when I go to see Mary Morton to-morrow." All the way home, all tea-time, and all the time after tea, I was revolving in my mind what I should say to her, unable to arrange my thoughts in any satisfactory manner.

As nine o'clock struck, Bridget entered the room to announce her punctual return.

"Well, Bridget," I said, "I hope you have had a pleasant day, and found all well at-home."

"Yes, thank you, ma'am," answered the damsel, smiling all over her round pleasant face.

"You put the letter I gave you into the post-office?" Bridget's memory was seldom or never in fault, and I put the question without any doubt of her reply. But, behold, the smile had fled from Bridget's countenance, and in its place was a look of confusion and dismay.

"Dear, ma'am, I am so sorry, but I quite forgot all about the letter."

"Bridget, I could have embraced thee on the spot. Cousin Richard, cousin Richard, I owe this to thee. Thou hast been a good friend to me this day, and in very gratitude of soul, I will henceforth do all I may to favour thy suit. Bridget shall be half an hour on her errand to the grocer's shop, which is but just over the way, and shall meet no reprimand from me on her return. And should I ever again chance to find the back door open, and imagine I behold the shadow of thy stalwart form behind it, I will hold my peace to the damsel on the subject of draughts as conducive to that neuralgia to which I am so often a martyr. And in due time (for I have heard thou bearest a good character, and art in receipt of good wages from thy master), I promise a wedding breakfast in this house, and that I will not let the bride depart without some suitable marriage gift." This jubilant apostrophe, I must remark, was in the way of self-communing, and was not uttered aloud in the ears of Bridget, whom after she had returned me the letter from her pocket, I suffered to depart

with nothing beyond a consolatory assurance that the letter was of no consequence, and that she need not distress herself about it. When she was gone I immediately threw it into the burning grate, and viewed its speedy reduction to ashes with no little exultation.

Next morning, directly after breakfast, I made my call on Mary Morton, having a motive for going early. I found her alone, and had never seen her look so beautiful. Her features, her form, and her complexion had always been faultless, but there was generally an air of depression and melancholy on her countenance (caused doubtless by the tyranny of her aunt), which was painful to look at. This had now given place to an expression of happiness which was perfectly radiant, and the beauty of her face was by no means lessened by the conscious blush which stole over it at my approach. I went up and kissed her.

"Mary, my dear," I said, "I hope you are not angry with me for having found out your secret. It was not my fault, you know."

"Oh! no, dear Miss Henderson," she returned in a voice which was music's self, "but you won't tell anybody else, will you?"

I vowed to be as silent as the grave. And then I added. "I need not ask, Mary, what the end of it will be, I see by your face that you have not told Mr. Warrington he must clip those "wings" on which he promised himself such a delightful journey to C——. Don't be angry at my nonsense," I went on, as I saw the blush deepening on her cheek, "I am *so* glad, and I hope you will both be *very* happy. But have you sent your letter to Mr. Warrington yet?"

"No," she replied, "it was too late when I got *his*;" (to hear her intonation of the pronoun was worth something). "Aunt wanted me to do something for her, and I had not time to write before the post went out."

"Then, Mary, I have a favour to ask of you. Don't tell him of the mistake he made. He might not like my having seen his letter to you, and I should very much prefer he should not know I had done so."

Mary readily promised. I saw, to my great satisfaction, it had never entered into her head to imagine I should have believed the letter really meant for myself.

"Didn't you guess," she asked, "as soon as you read it, that it was meant for me?"

I believe it was my turn to blush now, but had my cheeks, by nature pale, been like unto peonies, Mary would have had no suspicion what in truth I had "guessed." Perhaps she didn't remember that my own name was Mary. Doubtless also she would have deemed it an impossible thing to suppose that Mr. Warrington should be in love with *me*. After a moment's hesitation I answered:

"Why no, my dear, I can't say I did. I had never seen anything suspicious either in Mr. Warrington's behaviour or in yours. And you see there was no clue in the name, as I know a dozen Marys in this town, at least half of whom have blue eyes, and Mr. Warrington's acquaintance might very possibly have a wider range than mine. So it was the wisest thing to keep the letter until the proper person sent to claim it."

I shall not report our conversation further. On my return home that morning, I wrote a brief note to Mr. Warrington, giving him the desired information about the ferns. Two days later he appeared at C——. Not only Mary, but Mary's aunt smiled upon the lover, which was perhaps as well, though in Mr. Warrington's opinion it did not signify. That tantine smile made all the difference in Mary's trousseau, which was in consequence a very handsome one. The wedding took place within three months, I was one of the bridesmaids, and I believe I may truly end my story in the old-fashioned manner, by saying that the married pair lived happily ever afterwards. My own history has likewise since then been a happy one, but that has nothing to do with this "History of a Love Letter."

THE "OUTER BARBARIANS," FROM A CHINESE POINT OF VIEW.

Hardly a month passes without an intimation from some adventurous traveller, some long-resident missionary, or some aspiring son of the sword, that he is about to appear in print, and tell the world all he has seen, and heard, and done, in China, and everything he knows, or thinks he knows, about the Chinese. The public, on the other hand, may be so satiated with this material, that they may answer, "We don't care two straws about what you think of China, but we do want to know something of what the Chinese think of us!" A little vanity may be mixed up with this desire, but what is there in which vanity is not implicated? And, in the present instance, we are not quite sure that when the curiosity arising from it is gratified, the public will have reason to congratulate itself on the result.

It is not easy to obtain the insight into the Chinese mind, which will provide us with this information. Much cannot be gleaned from books; for literature in China stands upon its dignity, and he who would distinguish himself in its pursuit, must eschew such unworthy subjects as notices of barbarian races, whose very existence ought to be a matter of supreme indifference to a highly exalted "celestial" mind. Official documents may do somewhat more, if we go back to the time—the good old time, as it is probably called in China—when we were brought before the public in terms which, though anything but flattering to us, were doubtless highly gratifying to those whose prejudices had to be acted upon, and kept alive by their employment. In epistolary correspondence, little or nothing would be found. The first object of a Chinese, when writing a letter, is to present his friend with a favourable specimen of elegant composition. His sentences are formed according to rule, and it would be insupportably ill-bred for him to intersperse them with allusions to common-place and matters-of-fact subjects. "Shades of our ancestors! Shall the names of these miserable barbarians defile the pages which are illuminated by the brilliant, yet profound and unfathomable,

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thoughts, of the teacher and pattern of ten thousand ages?" The popular ideas which are entertained towards us at the present time are not indeed to be obtained from any of these sources. They must be sought for in the incidents of every-day life.

With all their professed contempt for foreigners, the Chinese seem never to have been quite free from a suspicion that they are rather dangerous fellows to have anything to do with. Take, for instance, the following story, from the "Recreations of the Study," from which it would almost appear that, under the allegory of a "magic carpet," an allusion is made to our peculiar propensity for territorial aggrandisement.

The story runs thus:—

"Once upon a time, the Red-haired nation received permission to trade with the Central-land. They arrived in such numbers that the naval commander-in-chief would not allow them to come on shore. Upon this, they besought him, as a favour, to grant them a piece of ground big enough to spread a carpet on. The admiral, thinking there could be no great harm in this, acceded to their request. He had no sooner done so than they landed with a carpet, which was barely large enough for two men to sit on; a few pulls, and it had space for twice the number; a little more stretching, for a few more men; and so on, until, at last, the carpet covered more than an acre, and several hundreds of men stood upon it. The admiral, seeing this, thought it was time to interfere, so he brought their schemes to an untimely end by ordering his men to draw their short-swords and drive them off."

Whether under the general designation of Hong-mao, Fanqui, or Ed (that is, of the Red-haired race, Foreign demons, or Barbarians), there can be no doubt that we were regarded by the Chinese through a long series of years as mere traders, so dependant upon the imperial favour, that without it our very existence became imperilled. This was the favourite theme of all the state papers in which we figured some twenty years ago; and there is every reason to believe that it was the honest conviction of many mandarins of the highest rank, until subsequent events placed us before their eyes in a somewhat different light. Indeed, we had been for so many years so humble and submissive, that we can hardly feel surprised at such an opinion having been entertained. When Lin, the governor-general of Hoo-kwong, and one of the presidents of the board of war, was appointed imperial commissioner to settle the "troubles" which had arisen at Canton respecting the opium question, he mentions, in one of his manifestoes, that he was specially selected from his having had, as a native of the maritime province of Fokien, peculiar opportunities for acquiring a thorough knowledge of the craftiness and ingenuity of the barbarians; and yet, with all this boasted knowledge, he is never weary of reminding us that it is to the universal benevolence of the great emperor we owe our lives. "Were it not for this, how could you obtain that tea and rhubarb—he lays a great stress upon the rhubarb—without which you outer barbarians are incapable of supporting life?" As a requital for all this, what did he ask? Simply gratitude, and that we would refrain from making a base return for so much favour, by poisoning with opium the liege subjects of the Celestial Emperor. Nothing can be more touching than the appeal which he makes to our better feelings. He admits that, barbarians as we are, we ought to have the power of discriminating between right and wrong; he hints, that perhaps our misconduct may arise from a partial misunderstanding of the law; and then, after reminding us that it is now so clearly defined that there can be no further room for misconstruction, he tells us that pity for us as strangers from a distant land, has alone preserved us from our just punishment, and that the laws will be inexorably enforced should we dare to transgress them for the future. It is sad to find that the "barbarians" do not seem to have profited by the imperial commissioner's paternal admonitions, for not many months after we find him obliged to promulgate the imperial will that the English trade with China is for ever at an end. These English barbarians, it seems, being actuated by the vilest motives, have dared to brave the imperial anger. They have acted in the meanest and most dastardly manner, not only laying unfathomable plots for carrying out their revengeful feelings, but daring—ay, absolutely daring—to open fire from immense guns, under the direction of that evil-hearted leader Smith. It is high time that something should be done. They have been admonished—they have been reprimanded—still the insolence of the barbarian English exceeds all bounds. The poor imperial commissioner is at his wits' end. What can now be done? A brilliant idea seizes him—He will write to the Queen of England, and make her thoroughly acquainted with the dilemma in which he is placed, through the misconduct of her subjects. After dilating on the widely-extended beneficence of his all-powerful master, he alludes in this letter to the dutiful obedience by which she and her ancestors have been hitherto distinguished. He refers to the acknowledgments which have been made of the justice and generosity with which her subjects have been treated; and he offers his congratulations that the sovereigns of her honourable country should have so correct an understanding of right principles, and so thorough an appreciation of the benefits which the Celestial will has deigned to confer. He presumes that she has the power as well as the will to restrain her barbarian people. He again refers to the impossibility of our lives being preserved for a single day should we be deprived of our tea and rhubarb, and he demonstrates in the clearest manner, that whilst trade with China has become a matter of life and death to us, it is a matter from which the Chinese, as a nation, derive little or no profit. This singular epistle, which was written by Lin as from one equal to another, was printed and largely distributed. It was probably written for a double purpose; but there can be little doubt that it clearly expressed the real estimation in which the English nation and its sovereign were held by the Chinese of even the highest rank.

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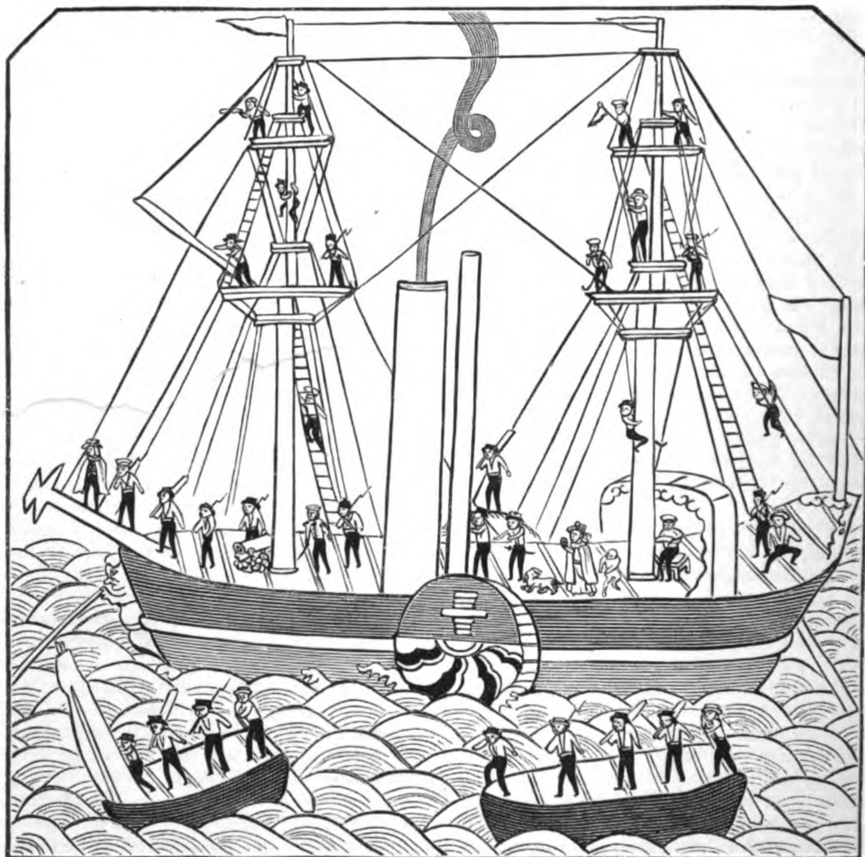
A few months after this was written, the conduct of the English barbarians had become so outrageous, that they had placed themselves beyond the pale of even Celestial benevolence. We now have proclamation after proclamation, offering rewards for their capture and destruction, and their detestable qualities have rendered it necessary that severer and stronger words than "barbarian" should be used, and we find them now spoken of as "black and white devils." Then there is much bombast respecting them: they are being perpetually "confused," "confounded," or "exterminated." We have such accounts of their doings as this, which we take from a despatch of the "rebel-quelling" general, Ye-San, who is describing the operations at Canton. "At this time," he says, "I was informed by the sentinels on the walls, that the barbarians without the city were making signs, as if they had something to communicate. I thereupon ordered Colonel Hung-Suy-Shing to see what they wanted. When he had mounted the wall, he saw several of the barbarian leaders making signs, first pointing to the heavens, and then pointing to the earth. Not being able to understand them, he sent for an interpreter, who informed him that they wished to



Chinese Sketch of an English War Steamer. (See p. 443.)

see the General-in-Chief. Major-General Tun-yung-fuh, who was present, told them that this was impossible; that the Imperial Commander-in-chief had received the Celestial commands, and that his only duty was to fight. Upon this, the barbarian leaders took off their hats, made a low bow, dismissed their attendants, and performed an obeisance towards the wall." This amiable conduct of course entitled them to a little relaxation of the rebel-quelling general's severity, and, by a somewhat roundabout process, in which the old story of "trade with China being the very life-blood by which the bodies of these barbarians is animated," is prominently put forward, the disagreeable fact is gently and gradually brought to the knowledge of his Imperial Majesty that it has been found advisable, as a temporary expedient, to concede to the presumptuous demands of these unscrupulous barbarians.

Wild rumours now begin to disturb the tranquillity of the flowery land. The "foreign devils" have dared to brave the anger of offended heaven by their continued disobedience to the sacred commands. They are not only heard of on the coast, but they have ascended the great river, and, overcoming all opposition, have established themselves before Nan-king. From this time a great change is found in the tone pursued towards

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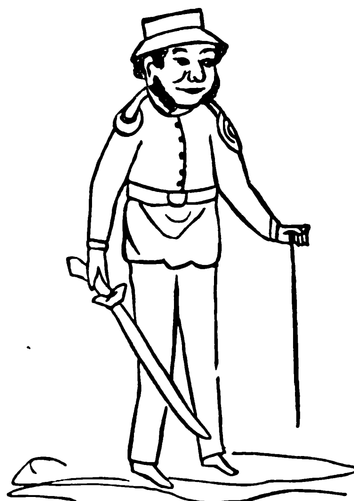
them. In edicts, and other state papers, the term "barbarian" begins to disappear, and the truth seems to dawn through the mists of prejudice by which the Chinese mind has been so long clouded, that these strangers from afar belong to

Chinese Sketch of English Soldier.

a nation whose power entitles them to some respect, even though they may be utterly ignorant of the Ritual of Chow, the Ceremonial Forms, and the Book of Rites. From this time, too, the existence of these foreigners becomes a notorious fact; they begin to excite a certain amount of

Chinese Sketch of Sepoy.

curiosity. Strange things are spoken about them, though those who know them best are forced to admit that they are, after all, not quite so black as they have been painted. We see this from the friendly manner in which they are received by the bulk of the people, when removed from local influences and the fear of the mandarins.



Chinese Sketch of Officer taking a Constitutional.

What are these Fanquis like? must have become a common question, judging from the immense number of pictures professing to give a most accurate delineation of the barbarian face

Chinese Sketch of Jack Tar.

and form, which are now spread over the country. What Ai-yahs! in every variety of key, from those who saw for the first time a true and correct likeness of those terrible "fire-wheel ships" of which they had heard so much. We, even, cannot look at these pictures without a considerable amount of astonishment. That wonderful war-steamer, in its stereotyped sea, with its solitary gun, and its armed white demons turning their sea-sick looking faces threateningly towards

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the flowery land, is full of enigmas which we cannot solve. Why should the smoke insist upon taking its departure from the funnel, with that provoking curl—that lanky-legged sailor prefer shinning up the mast, to climbing up in the more orthodox manner—and that aspiring youth in the garb of a marine, hang helplessly from a backstay, or rather from a couple of them, for he has too much sense to trust his weight to one? Why, indeed! I must refer these questions to the Chinese artist, who undoubtedly had good reasons for all he did.

Chinese Sketch of Officer on Horseback.

The canopy under which the admiral, or some other high official, is placed, seems a sensible invention; but we regret to see that the attentions of the fair lady, who walks the quarter-deck, should be divided between

Chinese Sketch of a Lady in Walking Costume.

a looking-glass and those atrocious-looking pets by which she is accompanied. The crew appear to be all ready for action, and to be distributed without any regard to those old-fashioned rules which prohibit soldiers and marines from being sent aloft. We have a placid-looking individual in a cloak, standing with an utter disregard of danger, on the outer end of the bowsprit. This is commonly supposed to be intended for the celebrated Doctor Gutzlaff, who had obtained such a complete mastery over the difficulties of the Chinese language, that he was very often looked upon as a "treacherous native."

Then we have pictures of soldiers; stout, grim, "parrot-nosed," soldiers; and in them we see the aptitude of the Chinese for seizing upon the salient points of individual character. Who would not recognise them in these rude sketches, even if no reference were made to one of our military weaknesses, by that firmly clutched bottle, containing our favourite "sam-shoo." But there are soldiers of a different stamp; those "Hak-qui," or black devils, for whom the Chinese still profess to entertain a profouud contempt. Here the Chinese artist luxuriates in depreciatory exaggeration; he doubles him up with cold, he makes him walk as if treading upon hot irons, he gives him a countenance of

Chinese Sketch of English Amazon.

more than ordinary hideousness, and he cannot be accused of having treated his officer with much

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more favour, when he placed him in that horrible position upon that singularly uncomfortable looking horse.

The officer who is indulging in a ramble with a drawn sword in his hand, is a particularly mild and inoffensive looking individual. His taste in uniform is peculiar, the colour of his coat (in the original) reminding one of that indescribable "rhubarby" grey, which has been patronised by some of our Volunteers; but we really think a hint might be taken from the hat; a green rim may perhaps be looked upon as somewhat bordering on eccentricity; but there is a degree of originality about its form, which ought to recommend it to those who are looking out for something new in this direction. There is no mistake about this picture, it plainly says, "Don't be afraid of him, he may carry a sword, but he won't hurt you, if you let him alone." We are not quite sure that a rather different idea was not intended to be conveyed by the sketch of our friend "Jack," who is a genuine man-of-war's-man, although green is a somewhat unusual colour for a sailor's frock. "Take care my good friends, and do not offend any one you may meet with, dressed like this; he is a dare-devil of a fellow, with a cane always ready for use, and he hits hard; but we like him, nevertheless, and so we have drawn him stout, active, and daring, and not vented our spleen upon him, as we did upon poor "Hak-qui."

When our artist came to depict the fair sex, he must indeed have been sorely tried. At first we thought he had given the reins to his imagination, and treated the subject with a certain degree of artistic licence, but a little study convinced us of the contrary, though we are compelled to admit that his accuracy is in some minor points of detail liable to be called into question. Thus, the lady in walking costume is drawn with a long sword by her side; but this may be merely emblematic of strength of character. In other respects, allowing for the absence of crinoline, and a something about the bonnet which we have not yet arrived at, her dress may be considered faultless. To those who are curious in such matters, we would observe that the cloak is a bright red, lined with white; whilst the skirt is a pale blue, with a golden zone. It seems doubtful whether what she holds in her left hand is a spy-glass, or a book. We must leave our readers to decide this important question. We rather like the way in which she wears her hair, and are half inclined to call her pretty, though we could wish that her chin had not terminated in such a decided point.

The lady with the flower in her hand is somewhat differently apparelled; and we cannot quite determine whether she ought to be regarded as a specimen of the "romantic," or the "fast" young lady. Her head-dress is decidedly quaint, and its bright scarlet forms a good contrast to the sombre green cloak with its yellow lining. The remainder of her toilette requires explanation, for there are certain incongruities connected with it, which are liable to misconstruction. We confess that pink pantaloons do strike us as being a little out of the common; but this is a mere matter of taste. Our seeing so much of them arises from a slight mistake on the part of the artist: it will be observed that the blue skirt of the dress is "triced up." So far our artist had mastered one of the deepest mysteries connected with the female toilette; but he seems to have overlooked the fact, that in dress, as in other matters, extremes are to be avoided. We can only hope that this erroneous notion has not been very widely disseminated.

Before we take leave of this subject, we would observe that there is a striking similitude between the English and Chinese character; and, oddly enough, whilst the Chinese are becoming more English, we are becoming more Chinese. We shall not attempt to prove this by argument, we are content to assert it on the strength of a few well-known facts. Fifty years ago, a man would have been looked upon as a madman who walked about in a Chinese hat, now we have Chinese hats and peacock's feathers for our every day wear. We go to Peking for our patterns, and a recent "razzia" against whiskers at Aldershot, proves that some of our generals have accepted the Chinese idea that "Long whiskers renders a person hateful!"

G. G. A.

KING OLAF.

In his high seat on the daïs,
  Round him many a mighty lord,
Lost in thought, in silence brooding,
  Sat King Olaf at his board.

With his unsheathed dagger playing
  In a half-unconscious mood,
Strikes and hews he off the splinters
  From a piece of faggot-wood.

As the lords around him sitting
  Mark the king's deep reverie,
"It is Monday, sire, to-morrow,"
  Says an old jarl, meaningly.

Sudden looks the king upon him:
  "Bring me here a burning brand!"
Sweeps the splinters from the table—
  Lights them on his naked hand.

Firm he holds it stretched before him,
  Never does it backward draw—
Till the wood was all consumèd,
  Till he the white ashes saw.

Thus King Olaf made atonement
  For his trespass on God's law.

Arthur Laurenson.

ANA.

Eugene Aram.—I one day startled Sir Lytton Bulwer when I told him I had seen his hero, Eugene Aram, but it was when I was a very young boy, travelling with my father in Yorkshire, and Mr. Aram had then been some years hanging in chains at Knaresborough. He was tried about 1759. I told Bulwer, also, that I heard at the time that Houseman, the accomplice and approver, was then living in the town, though no one communicated with him—as the weird sisters say:

"He lived a man forbid."

It was strange that he did not quit the scene.

M. J.

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LAST WEEK.

The most brilliant group of holiday-makers in Easter Week was undoubtedly the Volunteers: and all eyes were fixed upon them for a special reason. As the Volunteers represent the patriotic spirit of the country, they are bound to be generous and magnanimous in temper, and lofty in their style of manners, as well as of eminent and unquestionable courage. For the proof of their courage they may have to wait till an enemy appears on our shores: but incidents may occur any day to test the quality of their temper and manners. It has been so now; and the result is highly honourable to them, and very gratifying to all good citizens. When it appeared that some of the chief officers of the Volunteer force thought well, and that others thought ill of having a great field-day and sham fight on the downs near Brighton, and when it was considered that this was a point on which every Volunteer would have an opinion of his own, and could act as he pleased, the opportunity for mischief-making was thought too good to be lost, and there were meddlers enough to have made a serious quarrel, if the Volunteers had not been above quarrelling in such a case. In spite of all the pains taken, the officers refused to fancy themselves slighted or thwarted; and the men could not see why they and all their comrades should not do their duty and enjoy their pleasure in half-a-dozen different places, if they preferred different localities; nor why experiments should not be tried by those who liked, as to the conveyance and feeding of large numbers of Volunteer troops, fifty or a hundred miles from home.

The result was admirable, as regards the credit of the Volunteers. No one of them would have grumbled, probably, if every man who went to Brighton had been wet, hungry, weary, and houseless for the night, for there were plenty of doleful prophets about to prepare them for such a catastrophe: but, as all were carried there and back without confusion or delay, as all were fed and cared for, the enterprise has turned out a matter of congratulation and pleasant remembrance. The weather was fine, and all went well; and, as usual, the force surprised the military officers and the public by the excellence of their achievements. There were other thousands of Volunteers at Wimbledon, at Richmond, and elsewhere, less fortunate as to weather, but as staunch in endurance under hail, and wind, and deluges of rain as their comrades at Brighton were prepared to be under hunger and night watching, if evil bodings had come true.

Every movement of this national force yields some lessons. On occasion of this endeavour to make a controversy out of an Easter Monday holiday, the gossips may learn to let the Volunteers alone. They will not be easily stirred to jealousy and strife; and the meddlers may take a lesson in manners from them. Another thing which the general public ought to have learned by this time is, that bodies of soldiery under exercise must not be pressed upon by a crowd. Loud complaints have been made of the force at Brighton being carried out of sight of multitudes who expected to see all the evolutions: but, if the multitudes will so press upon the soldiers as to render their evolutions impossible, what can be done but to distance the crowd, in order to achieve the object of the day? At Wimbledon, as usual, ladies and children, as well as ill-mannered men, put themselves in the way of being marched over, or smoked, or set on fire, confident that their own countrymen would not act like cruel invaders, and altogether careless of the convenience of those gallant defenders of the country. All who have eyes must now see that if they wish to witness the exploits of the force on great days, they must get out of the line of march or fire. If they will intrude, they will hear the word of command, "Over the hills and far away."

On the whole, the manifestation of discipline was admirable. Nothing is more encouraging than the growing interest which is taken in the introduction of working men into the force. The company from the Working Men's College, which went to Richmond, made an excellent appearance; and, as time goes on, we hear more and more of this essential element of national defence. There are reasons of great weight and interest for rejoicing at every extension of the movement among that great body of stout-hearted and strong-limbed citizens, whose fathers were not trusted with arms in evil days, but who now have "a stake in the country" as precious as that of any other order of men. For the sake of the throne and the law; for the sake of the nation at large, and of every class in it; and for the sake of the working man himself, it is a matter of rejoicing when he enters the ranks of the generous and hardworking defenders of the country.

With the Easter week has begun, as usual, that dismal series of fatal accidents which attends upon holiday-making in England, like a fate, though it is certain that no evil is more avoidable. In winter, it is bad enough to hear of shepherds or wayfarers lost in some sudden snowdrift; but there are more deaths from rash venturing on ice, or foolish behaviour when on it. When Easter and Whitsuntide come, we know, almost to a certainty, that we shall hear of drownings, or crushings on railways; and when the tourist season follows, we are sure to hear of some benighted on mountains, and falling down precipices, or being lost in fogs or bogs; and of coroners' inquests on youths drowned in some lake or other fishing or bathing; and then there is the shooting season, when more or fewer eyes and right-hands are lost, and some man or other shoots his dearest friend, or sends a charge through his own heart, in getting over a hedge. The hunting season follows, bringing its proportion of dislocated limbs, fractured skulls, and injured spines. The commonest care would save all this.

The case of the upsetting of boats on the Hollingworth Lake, three miles from Rochdale, is a bad one, only too much to the purpose of what we have been saying. Among several thousand pleasure-seekers, two parties of young men got into two boats,—about half-a-dozen in each. They did not know how to row or steer, and drove their boats together, when one party jumped from their seats, attempted to get from one boat into the

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other, and upset both; and seven or eight of them were drowned. The owner of the boats says that his rash customers threw the buoys overboard on starting, and complained of being treated like children. Here we have a warning to begin the season with: but it will not prevent loss of life from similar folly for months to come. If it does, the novelty will be so memorable that we shall certainly record it.

Last Week disclosed to us the revenue accounts of the quarter, and, to a certain extent, the probable scope and character of the expected Budget. It is not often that such returns signify so much, or relate to so great a variety of interests.

There is a falling off of more than 800,000*l.* in the quarter's revenue. This is so much smaller a deficiency than was apprehended that we all cheered up directly, and observed to each other that Mr. Gladstone need not dread the day of the Budget, but might face friend or foe without shame or fear. Considering the unfavourable circumstances of the past year, and the various reductions proposed on the last occasion, we might have sat down satisfied, in a resigned sort of way, under greater deficiencies than parliament is to hear of. The bad harvest has cost us twenty millions. That is a weighty fact to begin with. Instead of having an expanding foreign commerce with which to pay for imported food and make profits, we have seen our great American market disturbed, suspended, and likely to be closed, till a new system of circulation of commodities can be organised. It is no wonder that the consumption of tea and tobacco has declined when thirty articles of export have decreased to ten that have increased. It is no wonder that the malt duty has fallen off after such a crop of bad barley as last year's. It is no wonder that householders of all ranks are drawing in their expenditure, while we have been paying in one month (last February) three millions for flour and wheat from abroad. The wonder is that we should keep up our spirits and our fortunes as we do; and it will be wise to consider how this is, and what we have now to expect and do.

The main reason why we are not discouraged, or at all alarmed, is that our losses are due not to a diseased system of trade, but chiefly to unavoidable calamity. Our commerce is not collapsing from an explosion of false credit; and there is therefore no panic. We find ourselves less wealthy by twenty millions than an average harvest would have left us: and we feel the pinch of having to pay away so much money for food, when we had hoped to grow the food ourselves, or at least to pay with our manufactured goods for what we had to buy. This is a misfortune; but it is not in itself a cause for alarm. The great question is what we are to expect next: and to this none but a very grave reply can be given.

The prospects of the country as to food are not good. A large proportion of our corn lands is returned as unsown; and much of the rest shows unpromising crops. The rot is carrying off the sheep by scores of thousands. The cattle are in poor condition from the small quantity and bad quality of their winter food. Provisions will be dear throughout the year. As to commerce, there is throughout Europe a disturbed state of expectation fatal to commercial confidence and enterprise: there is a revolution in America, involving impracticable tariffs, and a menace of a dearth of cotton; and there is a famine in India, which not only stops industry this year, but renders the soil and people incapable for a year to come. We might add to the list of mischiefs; but this is enough. In the present condition of the money market and the food and goods markets, it is impossible that work and wages should not decline at home. This is the most serious consideration, of course.

How are the people meeting their inevitable adversity?—meaning by "the people" the nation inhabiting the United Kingdom.

The opulent classes are retrenching, as a matter of course; and so are the middle classes. With them, as with all educated people, it is an undisputed point that respectable men must retrench in hard times, and that they must lay by in good times, as a resource against adversity. We wish we could say that this view is generally held by the working classes. It is not so; and great is the misfortune to themselves and others. Our rural labourers are more saving, we are told, than better paid men. They lay up their pennies and sixpences, when the operative or artisan thinks it not worth while to save his shillings and half-crowns. The failure of a harvest or two, a foreign revolution, or other accident, therefore, affects the better paid far more than the humbler order. We see an illustration of their self imposed difficulties at present, after one bad harvest, and in dread of another. The men who are out on strike in a dozen places in England asked for higher wages in prosperous days, and got them. When a merchant gets higher profits in good times he knows it is a temporary advantage, and expects a decline in due time, and probably a reduction below the average. The operative or artisan does not regard the matter in that light. If he does, he will not be suffering by and by as his fellows do. They have no idea of yielding up the increase when circumstances change; and, instead of co-operating with their employer, they fight with him for wages which cannot be given. This is the case at present. Last Week exhibited various instances of it—all dismal and dreary. It is a benefit to some employers to stop their manufacture just now, though they would have gone on with it for the sake of the poor fellows, who, however, will have high wages or none; but it is more common for the men to yield, their union treasuries being low in cash, and the high prices of provisions having pressed hard on work-people of all denominations. Fifty thousand looms were last week declared to be empty at Ashton and Glossop; and the operative class are in no condition to bear such a forfeiture of weekly pay as this implies. There is no need to describe the indignation and disgust with which the Nine Hours' strike of the builders in London is regarded at such a time. That men earning an easy competence, in their own rank of life, by ten hours' healthful labour, should refuse prosperity at the bidding of interested leaders, on hypocritical pretences, excites but one feeling everywhere. The misfortune of it is that their prosperity will turn to hunger and misery,

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and they will come upon the charity of the country, or have to learn to live on half their present wages, because they have opened the way for foreign workmen to come in and divide the work and the pay. Public opinion became, Last Week, more, and not less, pronounced against the servile victims of the Nine Hours' strike and their leaders; and it was no small relief to all real friends of the working classes to perceive signs that a large number of the men were disposed to resist the dictation of their self-appointed leaders, and to embrace the offer of their employers—earning by the hour so much in five days of the week as to be able to leave work at one o'clock on Saturdays. It is to be hoped that they will have the spirit to stand to this rational settlement.

On the whole, we must see that the time has gone by when a journeyman can spend 32*l*. on his pipe in fifteen years, or when a labourer can venture to spend two shillings a week in the same indulgence. Manufacturers and merchants do not spend their extra profits in personal indulgence and then cry out as injured men when those extra profits cease: and the working classes cannot do so and yet preserve the respect of society.

There are two good symptoms apparent in their case. Many of them are studying the affairs of the Rochdale co-operatives; a wise and prosperous set of men and women who have thus far taken up all the best points of co-operative economy without the bad, and whose virtuous and prudent conduct fits them for guiding the blind ambition of their less informed neighbours. This is one good sign. The other is an advertisement which our readers have probably seen. The Building Trades have issued a prospectus of a Penny Monthly, to be conducted by working men, and called "Weekly Wages." If the work answers to its description in the prospectus, it must do great good by enabling the men to arrive at the truth of their own case. If ill-managed, it will fail, and can hardly do much harm. If well conducted, honest, and fair, it may be of more service to its readers and contributors than anything that could be said to them from any other quarter. Meantime there lies before us all a prospect of more or less adversity; an occasion for the courage, spirit, endurance, resource, and public virtue which are always adequate to the occasion in our privileged country.

From abroad all accounts prepare us for changes of the gravest importance. Everywhere events are tending to revolution. In France, the struggle between Imperial and priestly power seems to be past all reconciliation. The bishops revile the Emperor; and the Emperor's government holds punishment over the bishops. From Count Cavour's frank avowals that the Roman question is virtually decided, following upon Prince Napoleon's celebrated speech, it is generally assumed that the French occupation of Rome is drawing to a close. The expectation seems to be that the Pope will be secured in a free spiritual dominion at Rome, and handsomely provided for externally, while the Italian parliament will hold its sittings on the other bank of the Tiber. If this is accomplished, it will be a great feature in the life of our generation that it has witnessed the close of the fight which Henry VIII. began, and been present at the overthrow of a power which, having once advanced the best interests of the human race, and led the march of civilisation, became corrupt and domineering, and brought on its own humiliation. Future generations will say that if it was a great thing to see the Papal power first called in question in the sixteenth century, it was a yet greater to see it extinguished in the nineteenth by a progress which it strove in vain to hinder. Catholicism will probably endure for generations to come; but it will never more lead the affairs of the world. It will be left in the peace and freedom which it never allowed to other faiths; but henceforth it must exercise its powers within its own limits.

Hungary, meantime, is steadily adhering to its purpose of re-establishing its national existence. It has proved that the present Emperor of Austria is not King of Hungary, because his uncle, the late emperor, has never abdicated that crown. The coronation, therefore, cannot take place till the old emperor comes forward to resign the Hungarian crown, with all the formalities. While such is the attitude of Hungary, the Czar is compelled to treat Poland with some deference. It seems improbable that the singular and noble self-restraint of the people of Warsaw can much longer secure patience from the people of the provinces; and either war, or great and permanent concessions, may be looked for from day to day. The Czar has his hands too full of good work and vehement opposition to it at home, to be able to crush Poland as his father did thirty years since; and a hope is arising in Europe that, hard pressed as he and his brother of Austria are, they and the King of Prussia will have to yield up their Polish provinces, and permit the restoration of a nation which had been supposed dispersed for ever. But for Hungary, there would be war in Italy at this moment; and the daily growing excitement on the Austrian frontier may become war at any hour. The world longs to know what passed between Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi in their late interview at Turin, and how much is true of the reports of preparations for invasion by way of the Adriatic. All these indications, and the obstinate encroachment of Prussia on the rights and dignities of Denmark, in the Schleswig-Holstein case, portend an outbreak of turmoil which may involve all Europe. We are evidently on the verge of that War of Opinion which Canning bade us look for as the grand incident of our century.

From America the week brought no decisive news. One encouraging circumstance is that a superior set of men have been appointed to the European Courts. Mr. Adams, who comes to London, bears a good old republican name, and will probably sustain it well. He was not quite adequate to his position in Congress during the last critical winter; but he may nevertheless conduct the diplomacy of his country here with a spirit, honesty, and fairness which will be heartily appreciated, after the experience we have had of a Buchanan and a Dallas. He will be well supported in a good policy by his colleague at Paris, Mr. Dayton, who is preceded by an honourable reputation.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER L.

On reaching Paris, Mr. Urquhart drove into the quarter where the official residence of M. —— was situated; and having arranged with Bertha that she should dispose of an hour as might suit her, and should meet him, at its expiration, at a certain shop, not far from the bureau in question, they separated.

Urquhart had been expected, and was at once ushered into the presence of M. ——.

The official was a very handsome man, scrupulously dressed to the last fashion, and might have been supposed to be the *entrepreneur* of one of the fashionable theatres, or a member of the Senate who took his responsibilities easily, or a speculative gentleman who, if he amused himself on the Bourse, did so chiefly because peripatetic gambling is a more healthy and elegant amusement than the shutting oneself up with cards. He was certainly a man of business, and was thought to carry the peculiar ethics of business almost to an extreme of freethinking; but, in revenge, he was said to hold quite as advanced views in reference to matters of pleasure. Supposed to be very rich, he certainly availed himself of the arts which, in a civilised community, enrich many who are enlightened enough not to oppose traditional scruples to the proffers of fortune; and he bore that fortune, whatever it might be, so gracefully, that every one liked him, except perhaps those whose interests had not been his own, and had suffered by his unhesitating devotion to the latter. His appearance was in his favour, until you had formed an unkind estimate of his character, and then perhaps a certain hardness and keenness about the somewhat Hebraic features forced itself upon your attention, and diminished the attraction of his friendly manner and pleasant voice. Some people hinted that he had the means of obtaining valuable political and other information a little earlier than some other people. But this was a harsh thing to say. M. —— was very particular about keeping his superb watch in exquisite order, and therefore was enabled to be admirably punctual in attending appointments with those whose confidences he valued—if the watch were even a

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trifle too fast, the fault was with Parisian chronometry, not with the wearer.

M. —— had reasons, as Mr. Urquhart has mentioned, for showing him every possible attention, and no one could justly charge the graceful official with ingratitude, at least while there existed any probability of increasing the debt he was so ready to acknowledge. His reception of Mr. Urquhart was warm; but if the Scotsman had been in the habit of noticing lights and shades of manner, he might have observed that M. —— was graver than usual. This circumstance, however, was not regarded by Urquhart, who proceeded to business with his usual promptitude.

"My time in Paris is short," said Robert Urquhart.

"So all your friends complain," said M. ——, who spoke English perfectly, and with a very slight accent. "But let it be spent where it may, it is too valuable to be wasted. You have seen M. Wolowski, and you are here to pursue an inquiry?"

"Just that. What can you tell me of the man whose name I sent you?"

"Much, of course. But there are some complications which it may be well to clear away before I offer you the information which you ask for. The subject is a very delicate one, and I approach it with some apprehension—with more pain."

"You need not," replied Urquhart. "I know a great deal, and it is needful that I should know more."

"I repeat that I approach the subject with very great pain," said M. ——, looking steadily at Urquhart.

"So do I. But neither of us, M. ——, is in the habit of letting our feelings be our masters. I am here for serious business, and I am ready for it."

M. —— still gazed at him steadily, and paused for some moments before he said:

"My dear Mr. Urquhart, if you were a Frenchman, I should make our preliminaries much easier to us, by asking a question—if indeed I needed to ask it—in a very straightforward way. We are neither better nor worse than yourselves, but we have different modes of dealing with certain subjects. My impulse is to place these memoranda before you"—he laid his hand upon a small portfolio—"and to retire, after which we should never recur to the unpleasant topic. But I am far from assured that I should be justified in this course."

"You mean to tell me all you know, I expect," said Robert Urquhart, bluntly.

"That you have no right to doubt."

"Then the sooner and the shorter the better."

"Of that I am not so certain. For I do not quite comprehend the attitude—so to speak—in which you appear to-day."

Urquhart looked at him inquiringly—impatiently.

"I think you had better give me yon papers, and then we need not talk."

"Give me credit for not wasting your time, my good friend. I am as much a man of business as yourself, but I do not forget that there are other things than business which have to be considered. Perhaps the best plan will be for you to permit me to ask you a question or two."

"A dozen, if you will."

"I will not delay by begging your pardon for introducing a name that demands every delicacy, but I will at once inquire whether Mrs. Urquhart still resides in your house?"

"Why, where the devil else should she reside?" answered Urquhart, promptly.

"And you reside there, also?"

"Of course I do."

"And, once more permit a question—your relations are those of friendship?"

"We are man and wife, M. ——, and what are you driving at?"

"I need hardly tell you, Mr. Urquhart, that certain disagreeable events which have just occurred in your family are not secrets to me, gladly as I would have avoided the knowledge."

"I don't suppose that they are. Nothing seems a secret from your police spies. This very man, about whom I have come, told me of things that I had long forgotten, but which I dare say are written down in some black book, duly indexed. Now, I want to avail myself of your system. You know all that has happened in my house. I suppose you imagine that yon affair has brought about a separation between me and my wife. That's not so, sir. We Scottish folk have our own notions of what marriage means, sir; and we don't quarrel and separate. There has been folly in my house, and wickedness somewhere else, but as far as myself and my wife are concerned, that's all done with. She came with me to Paris, and no doubt you could know by ringing this bell, if you did not know it before."

A puzzled look upon the handsome features of M. —— was followed by the very slightest smile, and then he answered as one who entirely comprehended the situation.

"My dear Mr. Urquhart, you take what I am sure is a very Christian view of matters; but now, though you relieve me from any difficulty, you create a puzzle. That, however, I have no right to ask you to solve. Else I should, perhaps, have been curious to know why, in the present state of affairs, you come to me. But I will infer that you have reasons of business for wishing to have all the circumstances before you, and I need delay no longer in giving you all the information you require."

M. —— gave another curious look at Urquhart, as if to study a new variety in human nature, and then opened the portfolio.

"The memoranda are in French," said M. ——, "for there was no time to translate them; but you speak French well enough to follow me—or, no, I will not give you that trouble. I will read to you in English. 'Ernest Adair,'" he continued, looking at his papers, "'he bore the name of Hardwique in England in 18—, when he was a teacher of writing at'—at—— Can you read the word?"

"'At Lipthwaite, in Surrey,'" said Urquhart, looking at the paper handed to him.

"You know the place?" asked the other, looking keenly at him.

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"Only by name. Go on," said Urquhart.

"His description—but with that I need not trouble you?"

"I'll never forget him."

"We have next an enumeration of his services since he entered upon employment here. You just said something which shows me you are aware how we have employed him."

"A spy—yes, he owned it to me."

"He gave considerable satisfaction up to a certain date, but he appears to have got into very bad company; here are the names of several of his companions, and the places he frequented—all this I will have transcribed for you if you desire it. He became a confirmed gambler, and played ill. But he was constantly in the possession of money, and has boasted to—other names—great scoundrels—that he had a never-failing bank. One of his friends also supposed that he forged, and very properly came in May, 18—, and intimated that belief."

"Not true to one another, even, the thieves."

"True to their country, Mr. Urquhart," said M. ——, with a smile. "But it appeared that this was not the case. On the 17th of August, 18—, he, being somewhat under the influence of drink, avowed that a lady supplied him with money."

Again M. —— looked up at Urquhart, who nodded.

"You understand that, then?" said the other, in a grave voice.

"Ay, ay. I understand. Poor wretch."

"He afterwards denied this, and challenged the friend who reminded him of his words, but they did not fight. It was then resolved to ascertain, if possible, whether he had boasted falsely, and he was carefully watched, until a chain of testimony was procured that left the matter beyond doubt."

"He was proved to have taken the money from her?"

"Yes, so clearly that the lady's name is at once given, without hesitation, and dates are added to show when he was in possession of certain sums."

"That he got by the post, of course?"

"No, certainly not. French money—most of it notes—but gold also."

"How could she get gold sent over," muttered Urquhart. "The notes she could get anywhere in London. He would tell her how to manage that."

"Some of the payments must have been received from the lady's own hand."

"That's just impossible."

"I rarely find our agents at fault when they state a fact positively. It is fatal to their ambition to be found so committing themselves," said M. ——. "But the other part of the money he received from her attendant and confidential lady's maid."

"They are all wrong—they are blundering."

"It will be worth their places, should it prove so," replied M——, "and we must test their report. This girl's name is Henderson."

He looked up once more, and ghastly was the change that these syllables had wrought.

The face of Robert Urquhart was distorted, and of a horrid whiteness. His head was bent forward, and the lips parted, while his eyes were set upon the line the Frenchman had been reading, as if Urquhart dreaded that the record should escape him, and with it the secret.

"Read the name again," said Urquhart, hoarsely. "No, give it me," he cried, springing up and snatching the papers from the other. "Where is it?—where is it?—I can't see it—there is no such name set down here."

The Frenchman rose, and slid his finger down the crabbed writing until he touched the word.

Urquhart fastened upon it, and sought to read on. But in the bewilderment of the sudden shock the power of deciphering the story, written in another language than his own, deserted him, and after glaring at the record for a few moments, he thrust it back into the hand of his companion.

"Read it to me, read it all to me, sir," he said, clutching at the corner of the strong table before M. ——, and strong as it was, it vibrated in that gripe. Large drops broke out upon his forehead, and a thin line of white appeared at each corner of his mouth, which worked convulsively.

"Read it all!" he stormed.

The Frenchman, not at heart an unkind man, averted his face as he obeyed.

"'This girl, Matilda Henderson (English), was in the confidence of her mistress, and frequently informed Ernest Adair when the—husband was on his journeys, which were frequent, from his occupation upon our railways and those of Belgium. It was observed that when Adair had visited the house—'"

"Visited *my* house," said Urquhart, in an undertone, like the growl of a wild animal.

"'He was always in funds, and when he had wasted these, it was his habit to importune the lady'" (M. —— used the name as little as he could —a vain humanity), "'and to threaten her with exposure. This plan frequently brought him money, but sometimes he received excuses only, which seemed to enrage him. Lately, the supplies had been very short, and he disappeared, it was supposed upon official business. When he returned, he re-appeared at Versailles at the same time with the lady's sister, from England, and he was again in possession of money, and seemed to expect more from the influence of the latter, Mrs. Lygon, the wife of—'"

"Stop, stop, be silent. There is justice yet, my God!" cried Urquhart, with a cry that from that huge frame was more terrible, in its shrillness, than the fiercest exclamation could have been. "Do not speak. All the treachery, all the falsehood—I can sweep it all away with a word—it was all for *her*—for her—for Laura Lygon—and I have been wicked enough—read on, read every word, sir."

And his breath came in gasps, as he trembled, and pointed to the writing.

"Had I foreseen this scene," said M. ——, "it should never have happened, Mr. Urquhart, but I believed you knew all. It is now possible to deceive you no longer."

Urquhart did not speak, but continued to gaze at the other.

"It became the business of one of those who

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were in our employ, to procure written evidence of what he stated. He did procure it, and it is here."

He laid a small written note near Urquhart, and turned away.

This was no French document.

It was in a handwriting that Robert Urquhart knew, and loved, and he could read it but too well.

And it told him all.

* * * *

"You look pre-occupied, my friend," said a stout, jovial-looking gentleman to M. ——, as an hour afterwards they met in the Bourse. "Is La Sylvana in a bad humour this morning, or has she broken her china? I know of some superb bits with which you can replace it. I have had them offered to me, but they are too pretty for the domestic altar."

"China—no, I am obliged. But I have something to say to you, Desgleaux."

"Good news I hope, though you do look rather gloomy."

"Your friend at Versailles is fully aware of his conjugal happiness."

"Ah!" said M. Desgleaux, "you have enlightened him. I was afraid you would not care to do it."

"It has cost me more than I care to say," replied M. ——, "but it is done. He is nearly mad."

"Poor man! He will need the reviving fogs of his island—or, at all events, we shall hear no more of *his* infernal contracts for public works, which ought, patriotically speaking, to be reserved for native hands."

"And native profits—which reminds you, M. Desgleaux —"

"Indeed it does not. I need no reminder, my dear friend, of the obligations I owe you, and I hope for the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow, at your own bureau, at this hour."

"So be it."

And M. Desgleaux went away, smilingly humming a tune, to which words were affixed, setting out that "Never shall the English reign in France."

"That brave Scot is worth a hundred of Desgleaux," said M. ——, as he watched the burly form of the French contractor disappearing; "and it is a misfortune that one cannot estimate a man's claims by a man's value; but I did not invent the table of social weights and measures. He deceived me completely in the early part of the interview, and I thought that he had made up his mind to take a philosophical view of the case, and not put himself out of the way because that insipid blonde had preferred somebody else. However, it is over, and he will be out of the way of my fat friend there—after whom I suspect I shall have to look one of these days, if he buys so many pictures. Ah, Adolphe! you here! How well Fuoco danced last night! I don't wonder at your infatuation."

CHAPTER LI.

Charles Hawkesley and his wife spoke long together after Mrs. Berry's departure from Gurdon Terrace. But when Beatrice had told her story, and her husband had asked all explanations that it seemed to him to require, the wife, who had spoken in frankness and loyalty, and the husband, who had listened in confidence and affection, were drawn together, even closer than before, by the influence of the sorrow that was coming. It is not necessary to record their conversation, as the narrative of events that followed it will disclose as much of it as had bearing upon the course of our tale. Towards its close Beatrice said:

"And now, dearest, let me hear you say you are not hurt that I have never found courage to tell you all this before."

"Hurt, my own one? No. But I could tell you some reasons why I earnestly wish you had told it me."

"Remember, I never *knew* anything, and I know nothing now."

"No, love. But I will not attempt to disguise from you that it is more than possible to give a very dark shade to the story as you have told it, and, without supposing that your love for Laura, and your faith in her, have induced you to pass lightly over things which would seem more important to a stranger, I am bound to say, dearest, that you have told me enough to—" he hesitated.

"Never pick a word for me, Charles, dear," she said, almost impetuously. "I never hesitate with you. Were you going to say that you believe Laura unworthy? You were *not* going to say that?"

"I was not, Beatrice."

"Nay, speak plainly to me. Who should, if you will not? I am sure I have deserved it from you."

"My dear wife, I am so desirous not to say more than I mean, lest I should wrong her and wound you, that I am still inclined to say—let us wait, and hear her own exculpation. I have told you, in the most earnest manner, that I believed she could offer the amplest vindication of this strange errand to France. But if we are to couple it with that other strange story of Lipthwaite, I don't know where we may be led. The one may have nothing to do with the other, and, therefore, let us suspend all judgment."

"I know you are speaking from your heart," said Beatrice, taking both his hands, and looking at him with the confidence of a true wife.

"I know that you know it," he answered. "So we must leave the matter exactly as it stands—and *hope*—and hope."

"And you treat all the malice of that woman who was here to-day with utter contempt."

"Let it be as if we had never seen her."

"And you still believe, darling, that Laura will clear herself. O, if you knew how we three poor girls, with no mother, and with a father who, kind as he was, could be no guide and friend —if you knew how we clung to one another in our poor days, you would not wonder that such a day as this is a dreadful one to me, even though I feel that Laura will be cleared of all."

"Do you excuse yourself to me for loving your sister?" said Charles Hawkesley, drawing her nearer to him. "Did not I love her?"

"And you *do*," said Beatrice through her tears. "Say you do."

"And I do," he repeated, "and will, until you

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yourself tell me that I should cease to love her."

An hour later, and Hawkesley was informed that Mr. Lygon was in the study, and wished to see *him* only.

"Arthur!" exclaimed Mrs. Hawkesley. "I will go to him."

"He sends for me—let me go first, dear, at all events."

"But the children—the children," said Beatrice, with a mother's instinct. "Let them know—I will tell them—they will go wild with delight."

"Do not send the children until I have spoken to Arthur," said Charles Hawkesley, laying his hand on his wife's shoulder as he passed her, and went out.

Beatrice looked wistfully after him, but she loved him too well not to know the tone in which he spoke, when to disobey his requests would be no proof of love. But she waited eagerly for the summons to the study.

Its hermetically sealing doors closed, and not a word reached her ears.

The interview lasted for some time, when a thought struck her, and she rang, and inquired whether the children were in the house, or out for their walk.

They were all at home.

Mrs. Hawkesley would not ask the question that she was thirsting to ask, and the servant withdrew.

"Another time," said Beatrice, "that girl would have flown up-stairs like a wild thing, to tell Clara that her papa was here. He has ordered that she shall not be told."

At last, the study doors opened again, and Beatrice, who had been watching them for the signal that should call her, saw her husband come forth. He was very pale.

Eagerly gazing in his face, she did not hear Arthur Lygon draw the bolt after Hawkesley—the father taking precautions that his children should not leap into his arms.

"Charles!"

"My own love, how am I to tell you this?"

"You have told me already."

She lay for some minutes in his arms, and each felt that words were idle.

But when her spasm of sobbing abated, and Hawkesley, after several ineffectual efforts to speak, found his voice return to him, he said:

"The judgment is taken out of our hands."

"She is not dead!" exclaimed Beatrice, starting up. "She is not dead!"

"Nay, nay,—it might be better if she were, poor girl. I mean that the pain of deciding as to the past is spared us. Robert Urquhart has such evidence, that he has not hesitated to write to Arthur that—that he must see her no more."

"I must see that letter, Charles," said Mrs. Hawkesley slowly.

"I have read it," he replied, sadly. "The truth is told in six words, the rest is kindness, and a summons to Arthur to join him."

"What are those words?"

"'Your wife is unworthy of you.'"

"No proof—no name—no more?"

"He has seen a series of letters in the handwriting of Laura which prove all."

"Charles—listen to me."

And as she spoke, upon her pleasant, kindly face there appeared an elevation of expression which, but once before, in all his life, Hawkesley remembered to have seen on his wife's features—some day, he may tell you when—and her usual energy of voice became a sweet earnestness.

"Listen to me, dearest," she repeated. "I ask you whether upon the judgment of Robert Urquhart, or of any other man living, you would believe *me* unworthy of *you?*"

"No," he answered, instantly, and if he added to his word a solemn appeal, it will not be set down as sin.

"Then is Laura to be refused the justice that would be shown to me? It is simply wicked to accept any judgment at all; and if Arthur Lygon is not strong enough to stand by his wife in her sorrow, Charles, dearest, you must stand by *him*. Is it true," she said, in an under-voice, "that he has refused to see the children?"

"Yes."

"And me?"

"We did not mention your name."

"Then I *will* see him. You will not forbid me, Charles?"

"Certainly not, but should you do so? How painful the scene will be you cannot conceive; but when I tell you that he has fastened the door, lest Clara—"

"It is too shocking, Charles. On another man's word! Stay, there is more for me to hear. He has been over to France. He saw Robert. Tell me what passed."

"In two words, dearest, he had reason to believe that he was being deceived."

"Robert told him so?"

"On the contrary, Robert believed fully in Laura's innocence, and sent Arthur back, assuring him that she would prove all that he believed her."

"And Robert has since changed his faith?"

"Having had letters laid before him in her writing."

"*What does he know of her writing, Charles?* Has he seen a dozen letters from her in the course of his life?"

"She has written to Bertha, of course?"

"Very little. I do not believe that he really knows her hand from mine. We were all taught by the same master. Charles, is it not horrible that a woman's honour and life are to be wrenched from her upon such evidence as this? Do let me see Arthur."

"If you will. But what will you say? Why increase his sorrow by giving him a spark of hope which must be trodden out again? You are speaking in all the excitement of the moment, and you do not see, as I do, that Robert Urquhart would have burned his hand off sooner than have written those six words, unless he had such proof of their truth as would condemn an angel."

"I am no angel, Charles, and you have just said that you could not condemn me on such testimony."

"There must be far more, my dearest, which

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Robert summons Arthur to come over and hear."

"Charles! You assume that there is more, because you are not satisfied with what you know; and see how you are struggling with yourself in defence of Robert Urquhart's justice, when you will not make one effort to believe in Laura's truth. I tell you again and again that she is innocent; and though a man will always take another man's judgment sooner than any woman's—Love, I don't speak of you—but I feel in my very heart that my woman's instinct is right now, and that Robert is deceived. Oh, my dear Charles, think of that unhappy woman whom we must be wronging; think of her children, laughing and playing up-stairs, and little knowing that only a floor separates them from the father they almost adore! For Heaven's sake let us refuse to believe anything so dreadful while there is a shadow of doubt—and let me tell Arthur that we will not believe it."

"You shall tell him that you do not believe it, Beatrice. But I fear that you will bring him but little comfort."

"Charles! Until I have had Laura face to face with me, I will never think that she has for one moment forgotten those children. Now take me in to Arthur."

CHAPTER LII.

Ernest Adair sat in a small, mean room on the second floor of a house in a little street in the neighbourhood of the Rue de la Paix. He was alone, and awaiting a summons.

"All things considered," he said to himself, "I shall have done enough in giving her this chance. If she had behaved with devotion, with courage, with intelligence, it might have been another affair. But I believe that she detests me, or nearly so, and brief would be her weeping if I had been blown to the devil by an explosion on that rail, or assassinated by a fellow-traveller who might have fancied my tobacco-pouch was a purse. Anything she will ever do for me again will be done grudgingly, and as a martyrdom, and we are, in fact, all but hostile. Clearly, I have done enough in saving her from outrage—more than she would do for me. I may have led her into embarrassments by my over-appreciation of her merits in other days, but I cannot permit that error to cloud all my future existence. *Jacta est alea.*"

His amiable musings were interrupted by the entrance of a pretty young girl, whose dark eyes and rich complexion denoted her southern birth. She seemed something superior to a servant of the house; but her dress was too smart to be that of a lady, and her brevity of petticoat, though disclosing the neatest of feet and ankles, was a misfortune to which no Frenchwoman who was her own mistress would have subjected herself—nor would the large gold ear-rings have been endurable in society. She came in with a hasty step, and with an arch smile at the gentleman, who, as she believed, was merely fulfilling the first duty of man—was engaged in a clandestine love-affair.

"What will Monsieur give me for good news?" she said.

Ernest's reply need not be set down, but though sufficiently explicit, it did not seem to give much offence to his pretty visitor.

"Indeed, sir," she answered, with a toss of her head. "I do not love a pre-occupied lover, and the heart of Monsieur would be in the shop of Madame Delorme, confectioner, Rue de * * *, corner house."

"O, that is the place!" said Adair, springing up. The girl thought that he intended to offer her a kiss by way of payment for her news of the rendezvous, and prepared a decorous resistance before surrender, but the distinguished-looking gentleman who was to afford this ephemeral amusement snatched at his hat, and darted from the room without a word.

The young person was not offended, though she had good cause to be. She was touched.

"Ah, that is a case of true love," she said.

And she looked at herself in a small dingy looking-glass, and re-assuring herself at a glance, that it was impossible that a gentleman could have been blind to the charms of such a pretty person, had he not been entirely wrapped up in the thoughts of the lady who awaited him, she sang herself a little verse of a little song, and we may leave her singing it.

Ernest Adair walked rapidly towards the shop that had been mentioned to him. It was a place which, unless it be wronged, had often witnessed such a meeting as the dark-eyed girl supposed was in hand. A large and handsome shop, and one in the construction of which the architect had remembered that ladies and gentlemen do not like to be stared at by the *canaille*, and he had so arranged his ground-glass that though the world without was freely permitted to gaze upon the tasteful array of coloured confections and flowers in the window, the world's vision was bounded, and could not penetrate into the shop itself. In other respects there was nothing to distinguish Madame Delorme's establishment from most places of the kind.

Adair entered. There were but two or three persons in the shop, in addition to the mistress, but at a small table, with some slight pretence of lunch before her, sat Mrs. Urquhart.

His entrance made her start—she compressed her lips—and then, affecting not to notice him, she pretended to be engaged with her lunch.

A single glance to satisfy himself that Urquhart was not there, and Ernest was by the side of Bertha.

"Come away with me this instant."

"Are you mad?" she said, in an undertone.

"This instant, I tell you, or you are lost." And with an admirable self-possession he placed a two-franc piece before Madame Delorme—"For what Madame has had. Bestow the change on some poor mendicant," he added, in order to avoid any exclamation that might attract notice in their way out.

Bertha hesitated.

"He knows all," said Ernest, in a fierce whisper.

There was no need for him to speak again—she clutched at his arm as a terrified child clings to its mother—and the gay parasol itself would have

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been left on that table but for Adair's self-possession.

"Must I always think of that parasol?" he said, in a playful voice, for the ear of Madame Delorme and the others.

And he even restrained Bertha's over-hasty step, and forced her to leave with as much lady-like composure of walk as if he were escorting her for a promenade.

And when well out of the shop, his arm still restrained her, until they came to a narrow court, down which they turned. Then he hurried her along in silence, she knew not in what direction; and, awed by his stern whisper, dared not to ask.

(To be continued.)

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

SCIENTIFIC EXPLORERS.

BURCKHARDT : BARTH : FRANKLIN.

It may be true that there is no new kind of man under the sun, whatever changes take place in human aims and pursuits. It may be true that whenever we fancy that our civilisation has really changed the course of our mind and life, somebody can show us that the very interests we suppose so new, existed thousands of years ago. It may be true that when we boast of our modern inventions, we are referred to the tombs and temples of Egypt for proof that there were steam or other self-moving boats, and printed calicoes, in use before the time of Abraham. It may be true that, of all difficult and doubtful things, the most difficult and doubtful is to obtain any reasonable certainty that anything that the human intellect can do has never been done before; and that anything that the human heart can care for has never been interesting before. But still, there may be changes so great as to make an old interest look like a new one, and the followers of an ancient order of men like a fresh creation. Some people think this is the case with the class of scientific travellers.

If there had not been ancient men who travelled for knowledge, we should now have known nothing of the world and the people in it, as they appeared thousands of years ago. Not only did men wander from one country to another for trading purposes, and for amusement, and from curiosity; but they went expressly to gain knowledge;—knowledge of nature as well as of men. There was Thales at Thebes, in a hurry to get home to Ionia, to warn his countrymen of an eclipse,—that eclipse which suspended a battle between the Medes and Persians. There was Solon, walking about in the cities of Egypt, and going up the Nile as an olive merchant, while studying the laws and ways of the great nation. Young men from rising countries were in the Lybian desert, measuring the Pyramids by their shadows, and using them as the gnomon of a great sundial to tell the time; and listening to the priests at Memphis or Thebes about the different races of men who had ever lived in any part of the world; and inquiring in the port and the markets of voyagers who could tell of a way round Africa by sea, and of land far out in the Atlantic, many times as far as the Pillars of Hercules. Of this sort of travelling for knowledge, and of exploration of territory and unknown seas, there may always have been examples: but modern scientific travelling is somewhat different from either of these, or from both together. The young men who went to Egypt were fetchers and carriers of knowledge, and not discoverers. They learned of the priests and merchants as pupils, to go home and teach as masters. The explorers of land and sea struggled on and on, in strange seas and wild lands, with a vivid curiosity to find out what they should see next, and a constant relish of the romance of a life in which no day was like any other, and adventures were perpetually befalling the bold wanderer. This was very useful to mankind, and always interesting to everybody, from their own day to ours; but it was something very unlike the scientific exploration of our day. We all enjoy Herodotus now; and everybody rejoices that he was so fond of travelling, and of picking up whatever the people of any country could tell him, and of telling his news to eager listeners at home. But there is the wide difference between him and our great modern travellers that he went about learning at hap-hazard what was told him, while they leave home with a clear notion what it is that they are to find out, and with all the means in their hand that can be devised for ascertaining what they want to know. There is always a wide margin left for the insertion of any knowledge which may offer on the spot; and most, or all, such adventurers have something of the poetical temperament, or the inquisitive propensity which has set men travelling in all ages: but the first consideration is to prepare the mind and the means for discovering new truth, which is to be added to the sum of human knowledge. In every nation there may be found several men of the class which Herodotus represents, however inferior to him: and there will never be an age, as there never has been one, when students will not repair to centres of knowledge, from any distance: but the going forth of a scientific man, provided with all preparatory knowledge, with a regular plan, and with implements for the prosecution of discovery, does appear to be as new as most things in the world. One feature in the case is, that the modern explorer has a much clearer idea than the ancient one could have of the dangers to be encountered, and the sufferings endured. Brave as the old-world traveller might be, he did not know that for so many months he should be struggling with scurvy and frost-bites, and never know what it was to be warm; or that he would certainly have the fever a dozen times, and pant for months or years under heat which would make his friends at home delirious in a day's time. Moreover our travelling heroes are ready to go twice, three times,—any number of times that may be required by their object. Before they have lost the impressions of their scurvy, damp, chills, or snow-blindness, or their fever, sun-blindness, and panting and gasping in the desert, they will leave their home comforts, and try again for new knowledge, amidst a world of disgusts.

I once stood on a hot sandy beach, where it seemed scarcely possible to breathe at mid-day,

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from stony mountains closing in behind making an oven of each recess of the shore. The sea lapped against the rocks and sands very quietly, gently casting up dead shells of marvellous variety and beauty. The lines and fields of colour on that sea were such as untravelled persons cannot at all imagine; any more than the lilac and rosy hues, and blue shadows of the hills behind the Gulf. Till sun-down there was no air or coolness from that sea; and the oppressiveness was great, through all the beauty, and when all the circumstances were favourable: such as a good camel to ride, friendly guides, and a view in the distance of the black line of palms, and the white castle at the head of the Gulf, where the tent would be found pitched for the night, and filled with comforts.

I have seldom felt stronger sympathy with disappointment than I did when standing there, thinking of Burckhardt. He had got that far through a host of dangers, after undergoing a course of studies of many years; after acquiring a whole group of languages to perfection, and training himself to Mussulman practices till he was qualified to mix with Arabs as an Arab. He had undergone the toil of sustaining a character which was not his own, while hourly fuming at the impossibility of recording the facts and observations which he went to collect. Even at night he rarely had an opportunity to make a note. He must conceal his pencil and paper, his compass, his sextant, and every sign of civilisation on his own person, which was always under the eyes of vigilant fellow-travellers or suspicious guides. The only possible way of making notes was by writing behind the folds of his Arab dress when riding. In the hot hours, these men of the desert are sometimes silent, and jog on, covered from crown to ankle from the sun. Then was Burckhardt's time for such memoranda as he could make, and for looking at his compass. But one day he was seen writing; and his life was in such danger that he had no choice but to get rid of his implements, and trust to his memory. In such plight he arrived at that spot on the shore, and saw the dark line of palms at Akaba, five miles off. Once there, he was on the straight road to Petra, and to other places which he had undergone so much to see; but hostile Arabs were between him and the head of the Gulf, and his guides refused to let him go further. He looked round, to fix the scene in his memory, tells us of one promontory that he saw and another that he heard of; and reports of an island which he somehow could not discern; but which lay clear enough before my eyes; and then, with a heavy heart, he turned back. He had energy enough to vary his route back to Mount Sinai, showing his usual tendency to make the best of his opportunities; but that which was perfectly easy to me, an Englishwoman, with my pencil in my hand, and my journal at my saddle-bow, was impracticable to such a man as Burckhardt, after his long years of study and practice, with this very object. He did see Petra in a way; but in what a way! My party and I were there in safety and comfort, living in tents, with the whole tribe of Petra Arabs as a guard; sketching, writing, and strolling at pleasure, day after day, with no restriction but that of not going about without an escort, for our own sake. There we were—now high up in some of the eagles' nests of the sons of Edom; and now down among the oleanders in the chasm through which the silks, and spices, and gems of Asia were brought, to be sold here for African and European use; and, again, sketching the façade, or enjoying the shade of the rock-temples which Burckhardt longed above everything to enter, but can hardly be said to have seen. It was only by pretending to want to sacrifice a goat to Aaron on Mount Hor that he could get here at all; and between the opposition of his guide and his own fatigue, he obtained only a glance of Petra, and climbed no higher on Mount Hor than the terrace below the real mountain. Instead of ascending to Aaron's tomb, as I did with ease, and overlooking the rock city at leisure, he had to slay his goat below, and make an apologetic prayer for its being so lean an one, and depart, irritated more than gratified by the little he had achieved. This bit of travel was a fair specimen of his whole experience.

He may be taken as a representative of the modern geographical explorer. He was a Swiss, educated in Germany; and his passion was for exploration of new or lapsed regions, and especially of Africa. He obtained an introduction to Sir Joseph Banks in 1806, and offered to go into the heart of Africa in search of Hornemann. This was to have been the great business of his life. For this he studied chemistry, astronomy, medicine, and surgery, and qualified himself to pass for an Arab: but the preparatory travel was all he got through. He learned much of Syria, Arabia, and Egypt, which would have facilitated his progress from Fezzan to Soudan: and he penetrated the secrets of the pilgrimage of Medina and Mecca. Only three accounts by Europeans had then reached us of the interior of these cities; and two of them were from Mussulman converts: and Burckhardt's narrative, though short and somewhat meagre from the necessities of his position, as well as from the state of his health, was exceedingly valuable. If our fathers, at the beginning of the peace which allowed them leisure for intellectual curiosity, were inquisitive about one city above all others in the world, it was perhaps Timbuctoo, where Burckhardt was preparing to go; and next to Timbuctoo came Mecca and Medina, on account of the mystery which the Moslems intended to be for ever impenetrable: and there Burckhardt actually lived for weeks together, undergoing all manner of dangers, in order to tell us all how and about what we were intended never to know. In obtaining that, however, we lost the rest. This residence in Arabia destroyed the traveller's health; and after eight years of faithful endeavour, and when he was a Hadji (had obtained the honours of a pilgrim), which would have been a great advantage to him in the furthest parts of Africa, he died of dysentery at Cairo. He had sent his journals to England; the caravan with which he was to travel to Western Africa was within a few weeks of starting; he was in high hope of achieving his great

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object; and all was over. He was only thirty-three. He is remembered as the Sheik Ibrahim, under which title he was honourably buried by his Mussulman comrades in October, 1817.

Burckhardt was, like all eminent travellers, apparently made for his work. His courage was of the sterling sort which professes nothing, and does and endures everything. We know now what his dangers and sufferings must have been; but, except in the way of business, we never hear of them from him. His fidelity equalled his courage. We have no slurring and no fiction ventured upon because detection was improbable. He tells us what he knows, and no more; and when the result of enormous efforts looks small, he never tries to magnify it. It was not required of him to be a popular writer; and if his journals seem dry to the general reader, it should be remembered that they were extremely interesting to the learned men who sent him out, and to whom he was responsible. There must have been some romantic element in the character of a man who so devoted and sacrificed his life; but he kept it secret to feed his life and nourish his purpose, instead of exposing it to get admiration, or even letting it betray itself so as to win him sympathy. When he gave his last directions (which were his last words) he was moved only at the thought of his mother. He had conquered his own disappointment. He is not among the brilliant class of travellers; but he was an explorer of eminent merit and the highest character. He had before his eyes the warning of Bruce, the Scotch gentleman who travelled in Abyssinia, and who suffered for life under the cruel misfortune of being disbelieved in regard to matters which could not be proved. Bruce was not scientifically prepared; and he went under no sanction but his own spirit of enterprise. It could never have entered any man's head that he would be considered an impostor at home for telling what he saw; yet such was Bruce's fate. I can answer for it that it is a remarkable sensation to read at home Horace Walpole's jokes and scoffs about particular experiences of Bruce's in Africa, after having one's self gone over his ground, with his narrative in hand, verifying those particulars, and finding them thoroughly accurate. But Bruce, though an accomplished, was not a scientific man; so that he does not come into the class I am considering. He was of an imaginative character of mind, and somewhat vain and ambitious, so that he might well serve as a warning to Burckhardt; and there is no saying how much of Burckhardt's somewhat dry accuracy and admirable and discreet modesty we owe to the pardonable foibles of Bruce.

An Englishman of our own day has emulated the diligence of Burckhardt for the same objects. Lieutenant Burton has made the pilgrimage to Medina, and has, at great personal risk, and at the cost of painful sacrifices of feelings and appearance, opened to us, much more fully than any predecessor, the secrets of the two sacred cities of the Mussulman. In this case, too, the pilgrimage was preparatory to African exploration; and Lieutenant Burton, in company with Lieutenant Speke, has reached Lake Taganyika. This is enough to say here, because Lieutenant Burton has excluded himself from the class of representative travellers by his animosity to his comrade in the exploration. Every allowance is to be made for the effects of the fever and other sufferings which attend mid-African travel; and the tone of universal discontent which runs through Lieutenant Burton's book points to some such cause of trouble; but, while magnanimity is the general characteristic of successful explorers, and generous friendship between comrades is almost as common as adventurous travel, it is impossible to adduce Lieutenant Burton, whatever his achievements, as a mirror of the spirit of the order to which he belongs.

The scene has thus far lain in the hot countries of the globe: and volumes might be filled with the deeds of modern men in the torrid zone. Now that Africa has been fairly penetrated, and nearly traversed, elderly persons like myself can perceive that the public curiosity about Timbuctoo and the Niger, and the supposed mountains of the Moon, is rather declining. We had such warm sympathy with Mungo Park, such admiration of Denham and Clapperton, and the Landers, and all who were always touching the Niger and never reaching Timbuctoo (which we must now call Timbuktú), that we could almost sympathise with the old passion for following up Prester John and far Cathay. Now that the Niger is traced beyond dispute, and that we have a great new discovery in the Bénuwé, and that we can clearly see with the mind's eye the whole city of Timbuktú, from Dr. Barth's housetop (to say nothing of Kanó and other great towns), the keen longing is nothing like what it was in my young days, when the fate of Mungo Park was still uncertain. Not the less for this must Dr. Barth be regarded as in the first rank of Representative Explorers. He seems to have all the characteristic qualities of enterprise, courage, patience, and endurance; and in addition an amount of preparation, in regard to learning and science, very rarely found. With the perseverance of his nation (he is a German) he pursued his aim of African discovery, through domestic difficulties at first, and through much toil and obstruction afterwards; and went out at length qualified to attain the dignity of the greatest of African explorers. My readers have probably followed him in his course, and felt with him amidst his dangers from the fierce and fanatical peoples of mid-Africa—so much more difficult to deal with than the negroes whom we have had concern with. We have all felt stifled with him in the heat, and fainted under the desert glare, and drooped under the fetid damps of the marshes; and looked on lake and river, and village and plain, with all the interest of discovery; and felt our hearts beat with his on entering that Timbuktú which we had been always hoping would be seen by somebody before we died; and none of us could go through this experience without a very high and constantly growing respect for Dr. Barth, by whom this great area of nature and humanity has been opened to the world. We may at times wish he had been a little less learned or conscientious, or a little more demonstrative in his enthusiasm, or more rapid in his narrative, even if somewhat shallower. We may have given regretful sighs once more to our dear Mungo Park:

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but the final conclusion has always been that Dr. Barth is a traveller of whom his day and generation may be proud—a specimen of modern civilisation and culture which may worthily find a place in comparison or contrast with the brilliant tales of adventure when the world itself was fresh and new in the eyes of men, and they took a fiery sunset, seen from the Portuguese coast, for the limit of the wide plain of the earth, where, beyond the verge, the flames and red smoke of hell shone up from the great gulf.

Men have been as great in encountering the terrors of the Pole as those of the Tropics: and not only in goodly companies of stout-hearted sailors, but in ways which seem to our modern ideas very forlorn. Sebastian Cabot and his son, with their handful of mariners, needed as much spirit and courage in probing the ice for a north-west passage, three centuries ago, as Park or Clapperton in cutting themselves off from the known world, and plunging into the fearful desert. If, at this day, we never tire of reading of the desolation of the polar regions, of the weird shows of nature there in the heavens and the earth, of the endless variety of danger and the constant pressure of bodily suffering, met by unremitting strength of soul, what must the spectacle and sensations themselves have been to men who knew nothing of what they were going to see! The long unbroken night of winter, with its circling stars; the magical lights in the north, mimicked all round the horizon; the snow-lights and ice-shadows; the gloom at noon; the strange echo of their own voices; the crack, clatter, or thunder of avalanches, falling on land or in the sea; these, with the cruel wind, the blinding sleet, and the snow, persistently burying every body or thing that dared to make a halt;—these things must have been enough for the boldest spirits. But the summer trials were even harder, from the danger being more urgent and various. How lonely half a dozen men must have felt in their incessant struggle with packs and bergs of ice, and unknown currents which carried them into peril, subject as they were to sudden disclosures of danger at any moment. When rowing in a little boat under a lofty arch of ice, so long as to be a tunnel, in fact, to look up, to feast on the prismatic hues brought out by the sun, and see the roof yawn, without a sound, and close again, was to have a hint that their lives were not worth an hour's purchase. Uncouth and hungry beasts came prowling about them and their little ship. If ever they had a bright morning, it soon went out in fog: if ever the sea looked alive and sparkling, and of the familiar green or blue, it presently skinned over with ice, or brought up a company of bergs to knock them about. Then there was, in those days, the chill, the languor, the depression of scurvy, the disgust at life, the apathy about death, caused by damp and cold, and unwholesome food. There was also constant failure,—comparative, if not complete. Every man expected results which were impossible; and when most was done, all were disappointed. Their turning back on this side of the Polar Sea was worse than Burckhardt's turning back within sight of the palms at Akaba. Men who could go again, and a third time, into scenes like these, may fairly be called representatives of one class of heroes.

In our century, the Polar Explorers have formed the link between the single adventurers who have plunged into unknown regions to see what they could find, and the organised companies of scientific men, now sent out by all the foremost governments of the world to improve and extend the domain of science. The heroism required was as great as if each man went singly; the enthusiasm in the work of discovery was as strong as possible in each case: while yet the precise aim of the enterprise was distinct and circumscribed, and means of scientific investigation were abundantly provided.

When an English or American expedition is sent out to sail round the globe, to visit the Antarctic circle, and coast round doubtful islands, and explore remote seas, and penetrate sequestered lands, the ships contain an organised society of scientific men, each of whom has his own business to do, and all of whom carry whatever is necessary for their work. This is the latest form of scientific exploration; and, though men may have occasion here, as in other enterprises, for courage and endurance, the case is widely different from that of which the Burckhardts and the Barths are representatives. It is heroism on behalf of science, when a naturalist subjects himself to four years of sea-sickness and the consequent overthrow of his health for life,—heroism as indisputable as going out to meet a lion in the path of the desert, or cannibals in savage countries. This is what one of our first naturalists has done. But the organisation, and the precision of the aim, and the social scale of the expedition, make it a new case, quite different from the old one. The link between them may be looked for within the recollection of living men,—from that year when young Edward Parry let us know that he did not see why Captain Ross need have turned back from Lancaster Sound, without trying further for a north-west passage. The Polar expeditions of the next forty years make the link.

As long as history lasts, Franklin will be the representative man of this phase of exploration,—half adventurous and half scientific. As in the old cases, there was a natural bent, too strong to permit any doubt of his avocation. When at school, he ran twelve miles, on a holiday, to spend the rest of his hours in gazing on the sea. He could not be disgusted by the discomforts of a small transport in the Bay of Biscay, which it was hoped would reconcile him to a life on land. Yet his turn for exploratory adventure is shown by his first great discovery having been made in a land expedition. When Parry started in 1819, as commander of the Polar voyage which succeeded Ross's abortive one, Franklin, with a few heroic companions, made his way by the great rivers of the North American continent to the Arctic Sea. It was a journey of between five and six thousand miles, through some of the most desolate parts of the earth. The discoveries made on the shores of the Arctic Sea were of great importance: but the expedition will be remembered better by the tremendous sufferings it involved, and the magnanimity with which they were borne. Franklin

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was next seen among the savans, as well as promoted in professional rank. He was Captain Franklin, and not only a member of the Royal Society, but of its Council. New honours at home and on the continent followed a second land expedition, in which he discovered more of the coast. He was then knighted, made D.C.L. at Oxford, and a member of the French Institute. He served in other parts of the world, and was a Colonial Governor for seven years; but science and Arctic Discovery were still his strongest interests. He was always making contributions to science, or aiding scientific men; and he was always ready for further service in the direction of his former exploits. When the Erebus and Terror were to go out in 1845, he went in command of them, to sacrifice his life in the cause. Those ships had just returned from the antipodes. They had been exploring the Antarctic circle, and had given their names to the two mighty volcanoes which stand for ever glaring in those dim regions, casting up their flames amidst the everlasting snows: and now those ships were to convey the old commander and his devoted company to the place where other snows were to be their winding-sheet. Franklin himself died on board his ship, in June, 1847. The rest died in their wanderings in search of food, or of a way out of the snow desert. By them and others the great fact of a north-west passage, and many other discoveries, have been established. Immortal honour invests the names of several leaders in this field of enterprise; and it is no diminution of their fame that Franklin will always be regarded as the representative man of the group. What he achieved showed his heroic quality, and his fitness to lead. The enthusiastic attachment of his mariners, who called his ship "Franklin's Paradise," testifies to his virtues as a commander. The touching story of his wife's devotion to his honour, when all hope of his life was gone, tells what he was at home. Whether science will ever enable men to resort to Arctic regions for use, knowledge, or pleasure, there is no saying; but we may safely foretell that it will always be, to the wise and the patriotic, a sort of holy ground, because Franklin is buried there.

There is a secondary kind of exploration always going on now, for historical purposes, which requires, in its way, some fine distinctive qualities. We have seen the American traveller, Mr. Stephens, routing out the old temples of Central America, as Belzoni and Lepsius have those of Egypt; but under more peril and difficulty. The ruins of Carthage are now in course of disclosure; and Asia Minor has been explored for relics of Greek occupation with great success. I need not say that the Assyrian discoveries rank first in this class, nor that Mr. Layard is the representative man of this order of explorers. So many wise men are pointing to fresh "diggings" of this kind, hoping to learn much of Roman remains, of the civilisation of Asia when its central table lands were studded with towns, of bygone races which once peopled India, Central Africa, and the American continents, that it seems probable that a rich harvest of knowledge of Man, in the form both of races and of nations, may some day be reaped. The Captains of such mining enterprises have noble toils and great honours before them: but they are of a different order from the explorers of the wild and obscure earth, when science was dawning, and all eyes were bent to see what the rising sun would show. There can be no perpetuating of the peculiar excitement of penetrating unknown territory, always ignorant of what scenes the day may present, and finding the curtain drawn up, step by step, till the blank becomes a living scene added to the realities of the world. There can be no renewal of the special and very keen interest with which society gazes after the travellers who venture forth on such a search in the wildernesses of the earth. But, when every mile of the globe has been surveyed and mapped, there will still be the same love of Herodotus that we entertain now; the names of Captain Cook and Mungo Park will stir the hearts of all Britons; and the Swiss Burckhardt, the German Barth, and the English Franklin, will group well together as illustrating one order of the world's benefactors.

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

A FOSSIL PIANO.

THOUGH the greatest of poets has declared that there are "sermons in stones," the most learned of geologists have failed to discover that there is music in fossils, a discovery which has nevertheless been made by an amateur brother of the craft, an ingenious and enthusiastic Frenchman, equally addicted to rhyming, music-making, sketching, and geologising, and the possessor of an hereditary estate in the Périgord, which rejoices at once in the euphonious and suggestive designation of "Le Petit Paradis," and in the richness and variety of the fossils found within its borders.

That the owner of even a "little" Paradise should be the first to reveal to the ears of later ages the existence of mysterious harmonies that have lain dormant ever since the flood, might almost be anticipated as the result of a pre-existent fitness in the nature and relationship of things; at all events, Monsieur Bordas, the ingenious Frenchman in question, after twelve years of incessant hammering on the thousands of "specimens" dug up by his people all over his estate, has at length succeeded in obtaining eighteen sonorous fossils, which, when struck with a piece of stone, give out a clear, defined, musical sound, in quality much resembling the tones of musical glasses, and constituting, to the extent of these eighteen "keys," a complete and perfect musical gamut of tones and semi-tones, following each other in regular order, and forming a sort of fossil piano. This instrument, unique in its way, has been taken to Paris by its maker, who is exhibiting it there for the edification of the curious, under the name of "The Lithophone, or Natural Piano." The Academy of Sciences has named a Commission to report upon this original instrument, and upon the many other curious fossils found by M. Bordas in his own grounds, and which he is showing with his "piano."

The construction of this instrument is exceedingly simple. It consists of a rough plank for the reception of the fossils, about five feet long and

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six inches broad, placed in a rustic frame, composed of moss-covered twigs; straight ones, roughly nailed together, forming the bottom of this frame, others bent into semicircles, and nailed upon them, forming the sides. In this frame, which is supported by rustic legs, and looks very much like a rude magnified *jardinière*, lies the afore-mentioned plank; and upon this plank are placed the fossils which constitute the keys of the Lithophone. These fossils, on which their owner performs by striking them with the pieces of stone that he holds in each hand, are not fastened down in any way, but are merely laid on the plank, side by side, one after the other. They are of various shapes and sizes; differences which seem, however, to have nothing to do with the differences of the tones they emit on being struck. The progression of the tones is the same as in an ordinary piano; the deepest being to the left of the performer, and the scale ascending in tones and semi-tones, to his right. The first and lowest key (Fossil No. 1), is a queer, thin, spreading, three-cornered piece of the root of a tree, which presents the appearance of having been sawn across in its wooden days; it is warped or bent, like the top of an overgrown mushroom, and each of its two principal ends gives out a distinct note, forming together a perfect fifth. Between the two notes furnished by this fossil there is a gap which is not filled by the notes of any of the other fossils; Fossil No. 2, forming the note next above the highest of the two notes given out by Fossil No. 1, and the sounds of the others following in the same order as the notes of a piano.

The sounds given out by these fossils, though clear, sweet, loud, or soft, according to the degree of force with which they are struck, and as truly musical as those of any other instrument, possess a peculiar wildness and freshness of tone that impart a very original character to the music of the Lithophone; and seem naturally to carry the hearer's fancies among woods, waters, winds, and mountains, calling up thoughts of country scenes and sounds. Bells, peasants' dances, the songs of birds and cries of insects seem to blend in the tones of this curious instrument, with the more orthodox developments of musical expression. The pieces played by M. Bordas on his fossil piano are, for the most part, his own compositions, and are equally original and charming.

The idea of forming a musical instrument made solely by Nature, seems to have suggested itself to the amateur geologist in this wise:—He had been engaged for several years in making a collection, in an empty greenhouse, of the fossils found on his estate; when, one day, happening to strike one of these with a stone, he was astonished to find that it emitted a pure musical sound, and hung it up by a string at the door of his "museum," with a piece of stone beside it, in order that visitors might amuse themselves by striking it, on arriving, instead of ringing the bell. A year or two afterwards, when going over a hilly part of his grounds, to attend a singing-meeting got up by him among the neighbouring peasants, he chanced to strike his foot against what he took to be a loose stone, and which, as it rolled down the side of the ravine, striking right and left against the stones in its descent, gave out, every time it struck against these, a musical sound as distinct as that of the one which was doing duty as a bell at the door of the "museum," but of a different pitch.

"When I heard that second tone," says Monsieur Bordas, "I paused in my rapid walk towards the singing-school; for the idea of forming, with the aid of a series of fossils, a musical instrument fashioned entirely by the hand of Nature, presented itself suddenly, and as if by inspiration, for the first time, to my mind. I struck my forehead with my finger, *thus*, (suiting the action to the word), and exclaimed, 'Eureka!'"

But though the idea of the future Lithophone had presented itself, in that luminous moment, fully formed, to the mind of the owner of "Le Petit Paradis," its realisation in "pure silex" has occupied the inventor, as already stated, for twelve long years. The search after fossils was immediately prosecuted with fresh vigour, exercising, one would suppose, a not very favourable effect on the beauty of the Perigourdin Eden; and on every fossil, and every bit of stone disinterred by his workmen, did the indefatigable seeker bestow an interrogatory tap. But in no instance has he been able to elicit a musical sound from any species of stone; fossils only, as far as his experience goes, possessing this property, and in the proportion of one to many thousands. Whenever he found a fossil possessed of sonority, he carried it home forthwith, and deposited it in triumph upon the plank which he had appropriated for the purpose, and which he now retains, in the completed instrument, as a *souvenir* of the hopes and fears, the despondencies and elations, of the long, patient search into which he seems to have put all the intense and unwearying enthusiasm peculiar to the votaries of Hobby-horses.

The sonorous fossils thus slowly and successively obtained were placed at once in the order they would occupy in the completed series of sounds, spaces being left between them for the intermediate notes, to be supplied by future waifs.

The two first "keys" of the Lithophone—which Monsieur Bordas has marked as the parents of his "idea"—were speedily followed by the finding of the two which now form the highest and lowest notes of the instrument, but the filling of the intervals between them has cost him so much time and trouble that, at times, he almost despaired of accomplishing his project. However, he still persevered in his self-imposed task, and at length had the satisfaction of seeing the interval between the upper and lower notes of his pet invention filled by the consecutive series of intermediate sounds necessary to constitute a perfect musical scale. Singularly enough, in his twelve years' search, though he has found duplicates of a few of the tones in his gamut, he has never found a fossil giving a note either higher than the highest, or lower than the lowest notes of the fossil-piano he has succeeded in forming.

The fossils forming the keys of the Lithophone have not been touched by saw or chisel, but are exactly as when taken out of the earth; nor can M. Bordas offer any explanation of the fact of their exceptional sonority. Among the other

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fossils he has taken to Paris are various fruits and vegetables still to be found in that region, with others not now known there. On one curious fossil vegetable, a cockle has fastened itself, and has since become a fossil in its turn. One of the figs shows the bite of some animal that has eaten away its top; proving, apparently, that the submersion to which the formation of these fossils is due must have occurred in the autumn, the fig being ripe; and very suddenly, as, though ripe and partly eaten, the form of the fruit is otherwise perfect, which could not be the case if it had remained exposed, after ripening, for any considerable time to the action of the air.

ANNA BLACKWELL.

THE SWALLOW.

"Welcome, sweet bird, thou still hast been
Companion of our summer scene,
Loved inmate of our meadows green,
And rural home:
The twitter of thy cheerful song
We've loved to hear; and all day long
See thee on pinion, fleet and strong,
About us roam."

FROM my early youth I have invariably felt pleasure at the sight of the first swallow in the spring. This, if the weather is genial, frequently takes place about the 20th of April. I love the swallow and its congeners, and indeed prefer it to any other bird, not excepting the nightingale. On a close examination of its plumage, it will be found very beautiful—its eyes are full of intelligence. If we look at its shape and formation we shall find it admirably adapted for the life it leads so many hours in the day, flying about in quest of food, and its interesting and melodious song and twitterings may always be listened to with pleasure. It also deserves our gratitude and protection for its persevering efforts in clearing the air of a redundancy of insects, which, without the aid of the swallow, would accumulate and annoy us.

I have pleasure also in witnessing the building of a martin's nest, and in hearing the notes of exulting satisfaction which the little artists utter reciprocally as the work progresses. It is a pretty picture. Sir Humphry Davy said of the swallow: "It is one of my favourite birds, and a rival of the nightingale; for he cheers my sense of seeing as much as the other does my sense of hearing. He is the glad prophet of the year—the harbinger of the best season—he lives a life of enjoyment amongst the loveliest forms of nature. Winter is unknown to him, and he leaves the green meadows of England in autumn for the myrtle and orange groves of Italy, and for the palms of Africa."

I have frequently observed that the window swallow, in building its nest, generally makes about an inch in breadth, each day, of the circle of it. This newly-erected portion has always a wet appearance for the first few hours. Some moisture must therefore be used. It is a question, then, from whence this is derived. It has occurred to me, that when swallows dip, as we see them do, on the surface of a pond or river, they may do it to moisten a piece of clay in their mouths; or do they, as Colonel Montagu suggests, employ some salivary fluid for the purpose?

Martins sometimes build their nests in extraordinary situations. A gentleman writes me word that when he was at Neufchâtel, in Switzerland, he saw an iron chain which passed through a hole from the centre of the ceiling, under a gateway leading into a messagerie. Within about three feet from the ceiling, a pair of martins had built their nest round the chain and hatched their young. The chain had evidently been used to unload carts or vans by machinery from above. The hook which was fastened to the end of the chain had been put into a link just under the nest to prevent the nest being disturbed. I have also seen a nest built on the knocker of a door which was constantly opened.

The migratory habits of the swallow tribe have been a subject of much discussion. That the main body of them assemble and take their flight about the end of October cannot be doubted; but there are many smaller flights of six or seven, and some occasional stragglers afterwards. An accurate observer of these birds assured me that he has seen swallows and martins on the wing in every month of the year, January excepted. Still, however, the question of periodical migration remains unshaken, notwithstanding so many instances of the appearance of these birds at unusual times are recorded. It has always been a source of pleasing contemplation to me to observe their arrival and disappearance.

Martins which had been congregating on a building for several mornings towards the end of September in prodigious numbers, the wind blowing cold from the north-east, took their departure at nine o'clock in the morning, flying due south. Nothing more was seen of them till the 16th of October, when an enormous number of them again congregated, but did not alight on the building, and in the evening all of them disappeared.

In the following year, on the 13th of October, the weather was cold, and some snow fell. At this time some swallows (about 500) flew about, and appeared desirous of entering the windows of a house. They clustered on the bars of a blank window like bees, and at length huddled together on the lower part of the roof. On the weather clearing up at four o'clock, they took their departure.

I once witnessed the arrival of a large flight of swallows when they all alighted on a grass field, and were so much exhausted, that they allowed me to ride amongst them, and showed but little disposition to get out of my way.

That swallows are possessed with extraordinary intelligence cannot be doubted. There is a peculiarity about the head and the eyes which is very striking. Whoever has watched them, as I have done, cannot fail of perceiving that they have a sort of language amongst themselves, or rather a power of communicating their wants and feelings to each other. This has been proved in many instances by swallows, at the instigation of the injured pair, hovering in numbers with bits of clay in their mouths to fill up the entrance of one of their nests when a sparrow has taken possession of it, or in assembling to pull a nest to pieces in which a sparrow had just hatched her young in a swallow's nest, as I once witnessed.

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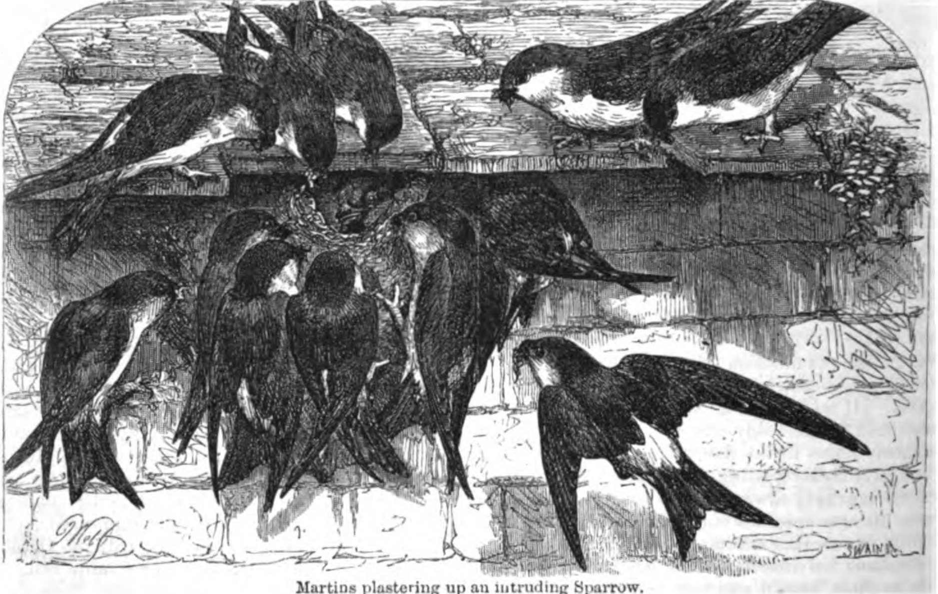
Nor is the swallow the only bird which possesses this means of communication. A neighbour of mine informs me that when he was Ambassador in Persia, a pair of storks had been in the habit, annually, of building their nests on the top of a low ruined tower opposite his window. Just before they returned from their usual migration, a couple of peacocks had taken possession of the tower, and were preparing to make use of the old nest of the storks. These birds, after a few days sparring, found that they had no chance with their stronger adversaries. They, therefore, fled away, and having *asked* and obtained assistance, they soon returned with several others, and, thus united, soon drove the peacocks away. Nor was this all, for several of the storks remained in attendance on trees close by, and did not quit the spot till they had seen their friends once more in quiet possession of their old quarters. This faculty in animals, of requiring and receiving assistance from each other, is not a little surprising. It is probable that this branch of intelligence is more or less extended according to their wants. Gestures and inarticulate sounds are probably the means of conveying their thoughts.

I may mention, on good authority, that swallows have been met with nine hundred and twenty miles from any land, a strong proof amongst others of their migration.

EDWARD JESSE.



Martins plastering up an intruding Sparrow.

THE JESTER'S PASSING BELL.

A LEGEND OF THE REIGN OF FRANCIS THE FIRST: DURING WHOSE REIGN THE "BLACK DEATH"—AN INFECTIOUS SPECIES OF PLAGUE—RAVAGED BOTH ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

NOON.

THE Jester with his crazy eye,
And the cat's soft velvet foot,
Comes slipping between the grey beech trunks
And over the green-moss'd root:
Now with a cuckoo's double note,
Now with the white owl's hoot.

The palace gardens, rich with flowers
Of Indian scent and lustre,
Are where, at dusk, the nightingales
Do most delight to muster.
But now the sunshine's golden darts
Do such shy creatures fluster.

The Jester, tolling his silver bell,
Comes where the fountain leaps,
Waving its snowy feather
O'er the shadow as it sleeps,
Where the elm its mount of whispering leaves
In summer richness heaps.

The palace gardens, sunshine-paved,
Are gay with lords and ladies;
The royal peacock struts i' the sun,
The blackbird sings where shade is;
The bloodhound, basking by the door,
Of page nor groom afraid is.

The Jester glides through every group,
Tolling his silver bell;
(None knew the meaning of the thing,
Or how it so befell,)
Nor think he does it bodingly,
Calling to Heaven or Hell.

Where bearded, anxious councillors
Are seated in divan,
With ladies tired in velvet,
Each with a silver fan.
The Jester tolls o'er the charts and maps
That cover the red-lined plan.

Where a duchess proud is fitting
For to-night the yellow mask,
The Jester's death-bell tolling
Frightens her from her task.
She fears to question Bobinel,
Nor his meaning dares to ask.

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Through every palace chamber
So trips the crazy creature,
With pale thin face, with frighten'd eye,
And death in every feature.
It was somehow ominous of ill,
And something above Nature.

EVENING.

Now as the Jester on the steps
Of the broad terrace lingers,
Touching the cord of his boding bell
With lean and shrunken fingers,
There comes from a distant tower the voice
Of the requiem's hooded singers.

He comes to where the damsels sit,
Each in her gold-net caul,
Working on tapestry, fit for a queen,
"The death of the Prophet Paul."
Quoth he: "This Jew, that you build of thread,
Will laugh at the world when they've buried
us all."

He creeps to the door of the steward's room;
The steward counts and reads;
Before him lie three open chests
Brimming with title-deeds.
Quoth he: "This parchment lasts for years,
And life-long mischief breeds."

Where gilded spears are breaking
In the merry tilting-ring;
Where frighten'd dames, half laughing,
Unto their lovers cling;
Where pages whisper messages
With low and bated breath,
Bobinel, with his silver bell,
Announces—the King—Death.

NIGHT.

That night, King Plague came knocking
At the royal palace gate;
There were groans in turret chambers,
Where all was pomp and state;
There were frozen faces on gilt beds—
That warning had come too late.

There were corpses borne away on biers
By men veil'd fold on fold;
The city was full of cries and moans,
There was nothing bought nor sold;
The graves were gaping everywhere—
Too late had the Jester toll'd.

WALTER THORNBURY.

MUNDIC AND BARYTES.

A TALE OF THE SQUASHMORE MINE.

It was a memorable day in the annals of my life when I, for the first time, saw my name printed on the outer-door posts of the chambers in which I hoped to realise an honest independence, if not a fortune. My start in life had not been undertaken without considerable forethought, as it involved the relinquishment of a certain salary as a managing-clerk, which had been sufficient to support me, and also the advance of a few hundred pounds from my friends. However, with many good resolutions to follow the straight and narrow path of duty, and to practise a rigid economy, I plucked up courage to cut myself adrift, and to trust my fortunes in my own ship.

Behold me, then, on a beautiful summer morning, in a certain street, and on a certain day of a certain year of the present century—(dates and localities have nothing to do with this narrative, and are best avoided)—sitting at a very business-like looking table with nothing on earth to do but to read the "Times,"—a luxury for which I had no leisure during the term of my legal slavery. There I sat—monarch of all I surveyed, and perhaps as a reminder that, "uneasy sits the head that wears the crown," I was conscious of a terrific headache, attributable not to the champagne and strong military port which had flowed freely at my inauguration dinner on the previous evening, but to the indiscretion of taking cheese, salad, and bottled Dublin stout on the top of large libations of sherry and champagne, and antecedent to the strong military port.

The only clients I could count on were two members of my own family, and as their papers were in my possession, I took the opportunity of ringing my bell—the sound of which gave me some pleasure as the sensation was novel—and with the hope of deluding Parchment, my new clerk, into the idea that I had something to do. I gave him two old deeds, which had served their turn as dummies on former occasions, with instructions to copy them carefully. Of course the man, who was a shrewd fellow, knew they were only dummies, but it was neither his interest nor mine to make any remark upon them, and consequently Mr. Parchment, with much promise of diligence and care, set to work on the dummy copies at such an alarming pace that I dreaded his getting through them before anything else, as Mr. Micawber would have said, turned up.

It was a weight off my mind that Parchment had something to do; so, with an easy conscience, under the impression that I had done some business, I took up the "Times" again. My eye suddenly lighted on an advertisement addressed to solicitors, on perusing which, I found, to my delight and surprise, that a gentleman of energy and talent, who could devote his time to some important business connected with a mining company, and who could give unexceptionable references, was required immediately. The applications were to be addressed to a house in the City. Breathless with excitement I took my pen up and applied for the appointment, and forgetful of the rigid economy to which I had vowed to adhere, I sent Parchment off in a Hansom cab with my letter, with instructions to give the cabman an extra shilling for speed.

The result of my letter was that the advertiser, Mr. Rook, appeared *in propriâ personâ* at four o'clock, and on comparing notes, it turned out that we had met before in business. Mr. Rook's antecedents, to the best of my recollection, were not altogether favourable to his character, and the impression on my mind was that he was a man of extravagant and dissipated habits, who had spent all his fortune excepting a property which he could not alienate. There was, however, an hiatus in his history, of some four or five years, which I could not supply, but remembering that no report of his dishonesty had ever reached me, I gave him the benefit of the doubt, and "reckoned him up"—to

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use a vulgar expression—as an extravagant but possibly an honest man. I had a lingering recollection of his having taken in a young man who had just come of age, in some mining transaction, but, *more juvenum*, I trusted to my own acuteness and knowledge of the world, and threw myself back in my chair with an air of the greatest indifference, as I supposed then, though I have now not the least doubt, that I offered myself to him as a ready dupe.

I must apologise for any occasional slang expressions which may be found here and there, but if the reader has patience to follow this narrative to its close, it will be found that I got into such rascally company, that the only wonder to myself is, that I have since spoken or written the language of Christian men.

Mr. Rook was not long in disclosing the nature of his business. He informed me that he had a large property in a certain county—the name of which is immaterial, as I hope we all agree on the policy of not mentioning names, dates, or places—which property was teeming with mineral wealth, and nothing but a little energy and money were required to introduce these hidden treasures to the notice of the mercantile world; "and," said Mr. Rook, "as soon as we have succeeded in getting a few capitalists to back us, our fortunes are made; for, believe me, my dear fellow, I am not the man to forget my friends. Suppose, now, we could lease three setts between this and Christmas, we ought to get at the least three or four thousand pounds for each lease. As to the law expenses, of course you rascals always get first pull; and, as regards the leases, I don't mind naming twenty-five per cent. on the premiums as your share, so that, in the event of your letting three setts, at a premium of four thousand pounds each, and a royalty on the lead, your share would be three thousand pounds."

Being naturally a sanguine and imaginative man, I honestly confess that, at the mention of these large sums, visions of a cottage at Hampton or Thames Ditton, with a boat on the Thames, and possibly a horse in my stables, flitted through my brain. I managed to keep myself tolerably cool in spite of the excitement, and requested some proof of the mineral wealth of the district.

"Proof!" answered my client. "Look at these whilst I read the 'Times.'" And he placed in my hands a bundle of papers carefully folded and endorsed. Squashmore Mine:—

No. 1. Report of Captain Thompson.

No. 2. Report of Captain Smith.

No. 3. Report of Captain Brown.

In vain I tried to discover a single paragraph which I could understand, or the value of which I could appreciate. The only result which I could arrive at was, that all the reports seemed to agree on three points, viz., that the district abounded in silver-lead, that a few thousand pounds only were required to improve the mines, and that barytes, carbonate of lime, and mundic were the principal feature in the lodes——. I felt doubly foolish as I read and re-read the reports, owing to a knowledge that Rook's eye was upon me, and that he must see that I was quite in the clouds in respect to the mines. At length a spirit of ridicule came to my relief, and, throwing down the papers, I exclaimed: "For heaven's sake, tell me what is the meaning of a lode, and what are the properties of barytes, carbonate of lime, and mundic?"

"Don't bother yourself about our technical terms, which are possibly as bad as your legal phraseology; as a man of the world you can see at a glance that the reports are from real men of business in the mining world, and if I was to take those reports into the City the money would be forthcoming instantly. But, don't you see," added Rook, "commercial men are very grasping, and they want *all* the plunder, whereas my object is to get the mines developed first, and then let the capitalists bid against one another. What say you to going into the district itself, and seeing, with your own eyes, these mysterious substances of barytes, carbonate of lime, and mundic? Of course the company will pay all the preliminary costs, and why should not you be in the middle of the mountains at the expense of the company, instead of waiting on Providence here? Young fellows like you must push their fortunes."

Now, good reader, pray be indulgent in passing sentence on my conduct when I honestly confess the reasons which prompted my going. The sun was shining brightly, the heat in London was tropical, and having been brought up in the country for the first twenty years of my life, I did not want much inducement to leave a steaming city for mountain air and babbling streams. I did not believe *much* in the mine, but I did believe in the fresh air and the change; so, with much importance, I drew my first cheque for travelling expenses, and charged the amount against the Squashmore Mining Company,—took the precaution to make sundry entries in my diary of my attendance on Mr. Rook, and by eight o'clock in the evening I was in the mail-train of a certain railway *en route* to the district of the Squashmore Mines, and about five o'clock on the following morning, the sun shining full on my face, caused me to rub my eyes and see where I was. The train was passing through a wild mountainous country not far from the sea, of which we had occasionally glimpses as we passed; but there is no time now to stop and describe scenery, suffice it to say that the train safely deposited me at a certain station from which I travelled some miles by road to a little inn high up in the mountains, where I was to introduce myself to the officials connected with the mines, and to await the arrival of Mr. Rook.

It was ten o'clock in the morning when I arrived, and I found a considerable party assembled in the common room of the inn, and from the number of empty soda-water bottles and small liqueur glasses on the table, I guessed that there had been hard drinking over night. From the conversation I soon gleaned that there were several directors and officials of some adjacent mine amongst the guests at the inn, so I had the comfort of knowing that some one else besides myself had visited the district on a mining errand.

On inquiry I had no difficulty in finding Captain Thompson, and communicated my business to him.

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"Do you really mean to say," asked the Captain—(by the bye the head of all the mines in the part of the United Kingdom of which I write is styled Captain)—throwing himself into an attitude, "that Mr. Rook is going to let you have the Squashmore sett? Look here, sir, at what I have in my pocket now," and he fished out a pocket-handkerchief of doubtful cleanliness, in which were contained a bundle of loose stones and rubbish. "As sure as you stand there I took these specimens from the Squashmore sett this morning, and you can see the lead cropping out all over her. There's barytes and mundic, and no mistake."

"By Jove, yes!" I exclaimed, inwardly rejoicing to have made the discovery that the mysterious names which puzzled me in the report were intended to represent philosopher's stones.

"Don't you talk before these gentlemen about your business, as some of them will be very wild to be shut out of the Squashmore; so you hold your tongue, sir, and if you want something to do till Mr. Rook comes down, you can come with the party to inspect another mine to-day."

I gladly acquiesced, as I had nothing else to do, and I wished much to see a mine. Picturing to myself the vivid description of the Cyclops' cave in Virgil, I came to the conclusion that the lead-mine would present much such an appearance as that depicted by the Mantuan Bard, with the exception that no thunderbolts would be manufactured on the premises.

My spirits rose at the prospect of seeing so much novelty, and at the idea that the mines really existed; and I secretly felt a respect for barytes, carbonate of lime, and mundic, and golden visions of business and wealth rose up before me as I smoked the calumet of peace outside the inn, and basked in the pure air and sunshine.

It took a long time and a large amount of bitter beer and stimulants of all kind to get the directors' party into travelling trim, and it was mid-day before we started for the Flatcatcher Mine. There were some jolly, honest, open-hearted fellows amongst the directors, and I was not long in discovering that the majority of them knew no more about mining than I did; but there were two or three shrewd men amongst the officials whose looks I did not much like: they were too anxious to laugh at all the directors' jokes, which were numerous and bad, emanating from a high pressure of wine and brandy-and-water; and, to my mind, they were flattering their employers to their faces and laughing at them in their sleeve.

After two hours we reached the mine, or rather the *adit*, and *if* my memory serves me right, the party were received with an attempt at a cheer by four or five workmen at the entrance. Obedient to the directions of the Captain we each took a candle stuck in a cleft stick and followed him, and after paddling through a sloppy passage cut in a hill-side, for the distance of some two hundred yards, which resembled an insolvent rifle-ground, we had exhausted the wonders of the Flatcatcher Mine, as we could go no further.

"She'll be a great mine," exclaimed the Captain, when we cut the lode, which we shall do in about two months; and if the directors will only give us leave to employ more labour, we shall get along sooner. Look here, and see what we are cutting in now," and, striking a blow with a pickaxe, he produced what at any rate passed current with those present for the mineral substances, the names of which must have already become tedious to the reader.

I always think that if there is one thing in which man and the monkey tribe resemble one another most it is the love of imitation. Had it not been for this failing of our nature, should I have stood in a puddle at the end of the insolvent rifle-ground, handling, with much apparent anxiety a substance resembling a cold wet pudding made with stones and wet clay, instead of real fruit, and shaking my head in a knowing way from side to side, and coinciding with all the Captain said? The remainder of the day was passed in visiting the different parts of the mountains through which the lodes were supposed to run, and collecting specimens of minerals for the directors to take back; and in the evening, on our return to the inn, I found that Rook had arrived; and I was, on his suggestion, voted one of the party at dinner, an understanding having been come to, that we were all for the future to mess together during our stay.

The company were in high spirits, and the wine was circulated without much delay. The conversation took a mining turn, and the words barytes, mundic, carbonate of lime, and killas, which we will hereafter call the "minerals,"—on the same principle as a primitive old country parson, for the benefit of his congregation, described the harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, as "the band,"—were frequently heard. Healths were proposed and songs were sung before the close of the feast, and not being much given to drinking, I began to find that the word "barytes" was somewhat difficult of pronunciation, and I was conscious of a haziness of vision, and was about to change the heated atmosphere for the cool mountain-air, when my progress was arrested by Mr. Rook, who told me that a health was about to be proposed, which could not be done in my absence, and, to my utter amazement—"success to the Squashmore Mine"—was proposed, and duly honoured by the Bacchanalian company, in connection with my name.

Although I do not profess to be an orator, I flatter myself that with a bottle of wine in me I can express my meaning with some fluency, and my recollection is that the reply was somewhat long, and that the audience were enthusiastic and willing listeners. The conclusion of the speech is very fresh in my memory at this distance of time; and I remember winding up my address with an earnest hope "that under Providence the wealth of this glorious mountain country will be fully developed, not only as a source of profit to the adventurers in the new mine, but as a permanent blessing to an industrious population." From that moment I began to believe in the reality of the mines, as a proof of which within a few days I took some shares from Mr. Rook in the insolvent rifle-gallery, "for the purpose of giving me an immediate interest in the neighbourhood." "To you, my dear fellow," confidentially remarked

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Mr. Rook, "the price shall be at par; I believe the shares *are* at a small premium in the City, but between friends, don't let us be too particular." The cheque for the shares at par was duly drawn and handed over by me, and this transaction, in the language of a sporting periodical, may be designated as "first blood for Mr. Rook."

The inspection of the site of the Squashmore Mine had yet to be made, and on the day succeeding my first display of oratory—on which, by the bye, I was much complimented by the captains and contractors—Mr. Rook and one or two officials accompanied me to the place where this hidden treasure lay. To make a long story short, we scrambled over rocks and up precipitous mountain sides to the place from which "the lode could be traced,"—if I remember the expression rightly—and there was much chipping about with pickaxes, and collecting of minerals, which occupations were diversified by a lively discussion

between two rival captains as to the place where the first adit should be driven; for, be it remembered, there was no captain appointed to Squashmore Mine as yet, and that piece of patronage rested with myself and the millionnaires whom I was to bring in as adventurers. The evening was passed in a manner much similar to the preceding, and songs, toasts, and discussions on "the minerals" were the principal features of the amusement.

There is one green spot on my memory now connected with the excursion into the district, which is the recollection of a quiet Sunday spent amidst the mountains. Mr. Rook, with the most serious expression of face, apologised to us at breakfast for the absence of a church, a *want which he hoped to supply as soon as the mines were well at work;* and nothing remained to be done but to walk about till dinner time. For all accounts of mountain scenery, I respectfully refer the reader to works of the Alpine Club and others; but a long ramble with one agreeable companion, whom I was fortunate enough to find, and the silence which we maintained on all matters affecting "the minerals," which topic was forbidden by mutual consent, enabled us to appreciate the beauties of the mountain scenery.

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On my return to London, I hurried off to one of the best authorities on mines and mining districts, and with a beating heart laid before him the box of minerals, which had been collected before my own eyes. Mr. Hawkeye, the gentleman to whom I confided my secret, turned them over, and inspected them with much care, and asking a few pertinent questions as he continued his inspection, was soon in possession of the facts of the case. "There's lead where these specimens came from," he remarked, as he closed the box. I could have hugged him in my delight, and I felt guilty in having suspected Rook, and in doubting the solvency of the rifle-ground.

"I suppose I am all right, then, in taking the mine?" was my anxious inquiry.

Mr. Hawkeye looked over his spectacles, and smiled good-humouredly.

"My young friend," he said, "you surely are new to this business; I tell you there is lead, but how do we know that a million of money might not be spent in finding it? Look at my strong-box in the corner; the lock cost me forty guineas, and if I had no key, would it be worth my while to break it open to get at a five-pound note which I fancied was inside? However, as you are so importunate, I will go with you to the place, as business will call me into that part of the world next week."

I accepted his offer, as it was made on *very* liberal terms (a fact which I gratefully record), and at the time appointed I found myself again at the little inn where Mr. Rook and two or three contractors and captains were assembled. There was a greater disposition to talk than to act amongst my former friends, and I was taken aside confidentially more than once by Rook and the others, and warned that strange men were jealous of a new district, and were often wrong, and that I had better not be guided by Hawkeye entirely. Hawkeye, however, was impatient of delay, and we started to the Squashmore sett, where the sides of the rocks were assaulted once more with pickaxes, and the "minerals" were picked out, and handled and inspected. All of a sudden, Hawkeye disappeared rather suddenly, and we saw him a moment after going down a precipitous kind of waterfall like a squirrel, and after descending a few hundred feet he signalled to us to come down to him. There was a manifest unwillingness to do so amongst some of the party, but they went after a little hesitation.

"This mine," said Hawkeye, "has been tried, and shut up again, for here is an old adit. What company had it?"

The question was put so deliberately that there was no escape from an answer, and although a thirteen-inch shell falling in the midst of us would not have more thoroughly paralysed Mr. Rook, the truth was, as it were, "jerked out of him," as Mr. Hawkeye had delivered such a home thrust with his simple remark, that Rook, for once in his life, committed himself instantly by saying what was uppermost in his mind, and that—*mirabile dictu*—happened to be the truth. The celebrated Dunup Company, as Rook unwillingly confessed, —celebrated for their misfortunes, and not for their wealth—were the previous tenants of this much-admired Squashmore sett, and as even I, in my ignorance, had read the accounts of the bankruptcy proceedings of the company, and was cognisant of the fact that the lease of the mine would not fetch sixpence, I was not surprised at Mr. Hawkeye asking, "Well, gentlemen, have you anything more to show me?" There *was* something more to show, and after traversing the side of the mountain, we came to another spot, and "the minerals" were again picked out and produced, and examined.

"*This* has not been tried, I suppose?" inquired Mr. Hawkeye, "as if it has, we may as well go home, as I can get at the facts from those who have had actual experience here. I think," he added, (after Rook's assurance that it was new ground) "there may be some good to be done here, though at a very large cost."

Rook plucked up courage at this first symptom of a favourable opinion, and with somewhat renewed spirit we went over the site of the mine, and heard all that was to be said about the adits and shafts, and various technicalities of which I knew nothing then, and of which I know nothing now; for be it distinctly understood, that at this moment, as I am writing this paper, I don't know the difference between any of "the minerals," nor am I aware which of them lies at the top of the ground and which lies many fathoms beneath the surface, my only recollection of them being the names, which I accurately copied from the real reports of the captains, which are lying before me. Our day's work at length was concluded, and I could not help feeling that we had lost the cordiality which had hitherto characterised all our proceedings; and nothing remained to be done but to get back to London. I was glad of an excuse to leave the district that night. Mr. Rook followed me next day, and was pretty constantly at my chambers, chatting over the mining incidents, but apparently in no hurry for business. He applauded my caution in refusing to sign anything, or do anything until Hawkeye's return to London, and expressed himself much satisfied with the candour and fair dealing of that gentleman.

Several days elapsed before Mr. Hawkeye came to town and made his report. The pith of it was to the effect that "there was undoubtedly much mineral wealth, but the great want of water-power, and the natural difficulties of the district, made it very doubtful whether mining could be carried on effectually with profit." Privately, I was advised by him to wipe my hands of the affair altogether; "but if," said Hawkeye, "you feel yourself committed to do something, it might be worth your while to risk a few hundred pounds in trying the sett we last looked at; but whatever you do, have yourself well protected against fraud."

Rook was not long in worming out of me the contents of Mr. Hawkeye's report; and, with many expressions of regard for him, he renewed his old argument about the jealousy of miners, and their possible mistakes. After much discussion, it was agreed that some steps should be taken towards trying the sett in favour of which

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Hawkeye had given a qualified opinion. The arrangements were made without any objections to my terms, which were as follows:—I was to advance a certain sum in instalments, on the security of the deposit of shares in a mine which was making a return, and was also to receive an agreement from Rook for the expenditure of the money on opening the mine. If the object was defeated, for which the money was advanced, I was to receive at the end of a certain time my money again, with interest at the rate of five per cent.; and in the event of the money being misapplied, I was to be at liberty to sell the deposited shares, and to re-imburse myself.

The terms were so easily settled on both sides, that the temporary estrangement, which occurred between Rook and myself after Hawkeye's visit, was at an end. Here, at any rate, is fair dealing, I thought; and with a light heart I entered up all my expenditures and costs—which, by the bye, were also to be paid in any event—and came to the conclusion that I had put myself in the way of getting a good business without any risk.

The summer slipped quietly away, and autumn was somewhat advanced, when I thought it time to remind Mr. Rook of our agreement, and to demand an account of money expended. The answer was somewhat vague, and the account very unsatisfactory; so I applied to Hawkeye, and sent him down again to look at the mine.

Never shall I forget my feelings on receiving Hawkeye's letter, and reading the startling news that not twenty pounds had been expended on the mine. I was determined to spare Rook no longer; so, pocketing all the securities to which I was entitled on breach of his agreement, I went into the city to realise them. The six hundred shares in the insolvent rifle ground, nominally worth as many pounds, were with much difficulty got rid of for thirty odd pounds; and the other shares, which really were supposed to be worth half their nominal value, as they were quoted in the daily list at a good price, proved to be *not* vouchers for the mine the name of which appeared on them, but cancelled scrip of an insolvent company which had borne the same name.

Then I arose in wrath, and said: "I will punish this vile Rook, if it costs me all I have." Accordingly, proceedings were commenced against him, and, although it was no difficult matter to get a judgment, catching him afterwards was quite another thing. Messrs. Lazarus and Melchisedec laughed when the writ was put into their hands, and asked with much dry humour *when did I expect them to catch him?* No doubt, the worthy Hebrews measured my anxiety to catch the defendant at its proper cost; for it was not until after a five-pound note was promised that my triumph was complete, and Mr. Rook was lodged in the county gaol.

Overtures of part payment were made by Rook's friends, and a ridiculously small per-centage was offered. Eventually, I got back about half my money, and let Mr. Rook out of prison, having bought my experience at a somewhat higher figure than the reader of this article has. I flatter myself that my shutting up Mr. Rook knocked up the swindle, as, one by one, the mines were all wound up in the Court of Chancery, and the seedy captains, needy contractors, and greedy jobbers, who had ruled supreme over the district of the Squashmore Mine for many years have no longer a name or a place in the civilised world.

Φ. Γ.

THE EPPING HUNT.

Once upon a time, when I was a good little boy some thirty years ago, I read in a book, called I think, "Scenes in England," an account of Epping Forest, and allusion was made therein to the Easter Monday hunt, the great gala-day for Cockney sportsmen. I remember that it was stated in my little book that the stag generally ran a little way into the forest, and returned in the space of a few minutes after the start to his accustomed stable at the inn. Let us see whether something like a reminiscence of old times cannot be seen in these days.

Seeing an advertisement in a daily paper that a stag would be uncarted at one o'clock on Easter Monday last, at Buckhurst Hill, a strong determination to see the sport seized me, and having inoculated the faithful Thomson—keen appreciator of fun—with my mania for "going a hunting," we, two, Thomson and the writer hereof, presented ourselves at the Fenchurch Street Station. To our dismay, we found that we had missed the train which would reach Buckhurst Hill in time for the hunt. Nothing daunted, we made direct for Bishopsgate Street, and were fortunate enough to find ourselves three-quarters of an hour too soon. Nor did the three-quarters of an hour pass slowly, as we had the opportunity of watching the arrival of the nobility and gentry of Whitechapel and Houndsditch, who assembled in goodly numbers for the last special train. A sudden idea seemed to have seized all Jewry that fried fish and cigar lights were indispensable to the gentlemen sportsmen, as a numerous and self-appointed commissariat somewhat urgently pressed those commodities on the travellers, and if the East-end markets are ever quoted, I should imagine that the entry for Monday must have been, "fish was flat and lights dull." To describe the hoops of the ladies, and fancy hats decorated with plumes of unknown birds, is not my business; but I will only say, if hoops are large in Belgravia they are small compared with Whitechapel fashion, and if Belgravia delights in plumes in the hats, Whitechapel loves a large bird of gaudy colours perched thereon.

Having arrived at Buckhurst Station we repaired instantly to The Roebuck, congratulating ourselves that we were ten minutes before the time, and should certainly see the hunt. An enormous crowd were assembled in and about The Roebuck, and the scene much resembled Epsom Downs on the Derby Day. Knock-'em-downs, shooting for nuts, pony-riding, swings, and such like diversions occupied the time before the hunt, and we now ascertained that our hot haste was unnecessary, as one of the primary objects of the day clearly was, drinking The Roebuck dry. By degrees we found some local inhabitants who had seen

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former hunts, and from them were enabled to get an insight into the day's programme. Pending the consumption of malt and spirituous liquors at The Roebuck, the stag was taken in a cart, preceded by a band of music round the neighbourhood; so we knew that, until the band came back, there would be no hunt. Time rolled on, and a little before three o'clock a cart full of musicians, who discoursed anything but sweet music—which I think must have depressed the spirits of the stag—appeared, and a few men on horseback were seen at intervals, and four or five dispirited looking hounds strayed amongst the crowd, and appeared much pleased with the caresses of sporting gents who patted them and said,

"Poor old fellow."

The constant blowing of horns by amateurs somewhat distracted their attention, but they took about the same notice of the "too-tooing" as a discharged soldier would do of a bugle-call.

"There's 'Mad 'Arry!'" exclaimed two or three of the cognoscenti; "and now something's up."

On inquiring who "Mad 'Arry" was, we found that "he was in all the 'unting games." So we made "Mad 'Arry" our rallying point, and wherever "Mad 'Arry" went, we went, too. "Mad 'Arry" had a decent horse under him, and really did look as if he could ride.

A rush from the public-house announced that the cart with the stag had started, and the crowd poured across the warren kicking up the mud and swamp until it became a goodly batter. There was one poor gent in pink, which he had either hired or borrowed from a more corpulent owner, and who evidently was in deadly fear of being "chaffed;" but the whole energies of the holiday folks being concentrated in seeing the stag, he escaped the ordeal.

At last the cart arrived at its destination, and "Mad 'Arry" and Policeman X made laudable attempts to clear a lane for the stag to run. Immediately the door of the cart was opened the crowd closed in, and the wretched stag was hustled into an adjoining wood, followed by the surging crowd, and a fair sprinkling of light carts, and even a Whitechapel van. Getting on a rising ground, the faithful Thomson and the writer hereof ensconced themselves safely behind a tree, the only danger being the possibility of a shower of roughs (who conversed animatedly in language interspersed with large oaths) from the creaking boughs overhead.

The wretched stag was driven by the crowd round and round the wood, whilst four melancholy-looking hounds trotted by his side. Occasionally one of the hounds would attempt a slight snap at him, much in the same way as a timid little junior at Winchester used to kick one's shins mildly at football, and apologise. The noble sportsmen on horseback looked remarkably foolish, and the only *sport* was thrashing the stag with sticks and umbrellas, which the roughs keenly enjoyed (I presume), from remarks which we heard in the crowd: "Lord, Bill, I had two cracks at 'im."—"Ay! and didn't I fetch 'im a topper on the nose?"

The stag escaped across the common to the inn, but the crowd were too many for him, and drove him into a field adjoining The Roebuck, where the poor brute laid down in a ditch. After exhausting the amusement of pushing one another into the ditch where the stag was, some men from the inn hauled him out by main force, by which process some portion of his coat was torn off, and the unfortunate animal, jaded to death, was re-conveyed to his stable much resembling a shabby old hair trunk without any nails. A second stag was taken into the forest away from the mob and turned out, and as we saw horsemen scattered about, and the desponding dogs were thrown into the wood, I suppose *something* was done.

So ended the Epping Hunt, 1861, and I recommend mine host of The Roebuck, on a future occasion, to have his stag uncarted in the forest away from the crowd. It will be quite amusement enough for all reasonable holiday folks to see the sporting gents and the melancholy hounds, without being accessories to cruelty quite as bad as bull-baiting. F. G.

ON THE CARDS.

What is "*on the Cards?*"

It is Christmas Eve at Wardleur Chace. The round table is swept of its nick-knacs, dragged out into the middle of the room, and around it are seated a merry party, playing "Commerce" for bon-bons. There is little Mary counting the dots upon the ten of spades, up one side and down another, with her chubby forefinger. There is Master Frank, in his first tail-coat, playing listlessly, "just to please the children, you know." There is our old friend Charley Davis, and by his side, Grace, the "*spirituelle.*" They are partners, and a most unprincipled firm is theirs. Charley is cheating in a most disgraceful and transparent manner. Why will he not allow his fair partner to receive and pay the counters? Is it because he mistrusts her, or that she is too honest for him, that he will insist upon intercepting the little shining "fish" as they are paid in? or is it that it is pleasant to struggle with those pretty hands, to open one by one the cool taper fingers, and to take from them the kindred pearl? Who shall say? Charley and Grace are going to be partners in something else than Commerce very soon. What is "*on the cards?*"

I am in a first-class carriage, jolting and swaying along, at forty miles an hour, upon the Great Southern Railway. My fellow-passengers are a clergyman of the Established Church; a substantial farmer, returning from market; a reserved young gentleman, with a courier's bag slung across his chest; a middle-aged bagman, and a personage wearing cord trousers, very tightly made, a cut-away coat, and a bird's eye scarf, who having made his railway rug into a sort of table upon his knees, takes out a pack of cards, and selecting the ten of diamonds and two queens, throws them down with a twist and a flourish, and suggests that we should enliven the monotony of the journey by betting him that we can find the red ten. The farmer stakes a sovereign and wins. The bagman stakes half-a-crown, and loses. The

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farmer tries his luck again, and "haw! haw! haw! finds it as asey as noothun at all." The reserved youth throws off his *ennui*, and becomes excited; he, too, begins to play, and wins, and loses—I gazing intently through the window the while. The clergyman of the Established Church, begs to draw my attention to the game, and "is it not a very curious one?" I agree with him that it is so, and inform him that I can conduct it myself, whereupon the play ceases instantly, and at the next station all my fellow-travellers, including his reverence, alight, and change their carriage. What is "*on the cards?*"

I revisit my Alma Mater. I pass through the well-remembered gateway, mount staircase letter Z, and enter a well-furnished room on the second floor. There is a heap of caps and gowns in one corner, a pile of empty bitter beer and soda-water bottles in another. The air is so pungent with tobacco smoke that it makes my eyes water. I find a dozen young men playing *Vingt-et-un*, in their shirt sleeves. They have been thus occupied for hours. It is now past midnight, but the play will not cease for some time to come. The players look heated and jaded. Some are in high spirits, laughing and singing merrily. Some sit very quiet, and play on in silence; others curse their bad luck, are morose and sulky. The table before them is begrimed with tobacco ashes, and covered with "heaps" of silver, little and big, half-smoked cigars, and glasses full and empty. A handsome lamp is burning brightly in the centre, but the daylight struggles in through the chinks in the closed shutters, and throws queer cross lights upon the faces of the company, making them look more hot, jaded, and dirty than before. A skye-terrier that has been fast asleep, coiled up on a boating-jacket on the sofa, jumps up as I enter, and barks at me furiously; whereupon the master of this domain flings a cigar-case at his head, as a hint to be quiet, which he takes, and then I am invoked to cut in, and have a hand at "Van John." What is "*on the cards?*"

It is mid-winter, a bitter, leaden, and keen morning. The hard east wind howls about the old house, and dashes rain and sleet spitefully at the windows. A woman who has been beautiful, and is—ah me!—still young, wanders from room to room, gazes anxiously from every casement, far as eye can reach, every way, across the bleak moorland, wrings her hands, starts at every footstep, and hopes, and weeps, and dreads. A lovely little child, poorly dressed, plays "Patience" on a gilded chair, by the grand fireplace; waiting, as is her mother, till the dark pool out yonder, by the distant willows, shall give up its dead, and her father, the gambler and suicide, shall come home. What is "*on the cards?*"

Not much that is good, I fear me, in any case; and, oh! what a magazine, piled up, and pressed down, and running over of the seeds of evil, of idleness, and heart-ache — of bitterness and death.

But a truce to moralising. "I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him." No—not exactly that either—I desire to show, in a material sense, what is "on the cards." To trace as nearly as I can, to its source, the flood of Diamonds and Clubs that has overflowed the land—to give you the birth, parentage, and education of the King of Trumps—to tell you something authentic about the Queen of Hearts, beyond that well-known incident of her manufacturing the tarts, which was followed by such untoward consequences to the Knave.

It is commonly supposed that playing-cards were invented for the amusement of Charles V. of France, who lost his reason by a *coup-de-soleil*, as asserted by some—from a fright, as stated by others—in the year 1392. Certain it is, that the subjoined entry is to be found in his treasurer's accounts for the following year:—"Given to Jacquemin Gringonneur, painter, for three packs of cards, gilt and coloured, and variously ornamented for the amusement of the king—fifty-six sols of Paris." If Gringonneur had been the inventor of cards, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have received more than fifty-six sous for his three packs—indeed, the language of the entry shows that they were in use at the time, and the price paid for them does not indicate that they were anything out of the common way. Forty years afterwards, when card-making had become a trade, and cards should have become cheaper, the Duke of Milan expended five hundred gold crowns in the purchase of a single pack.

The more received opinion is, that cards and chess are of the same origin. In both games there is the semblance of an army in battle array. In the oriental chess the principal pieces are the King, the Vizier, and the Horseman or Knight. In the ancient cards we have the King, the Knight, and the Knave or Attendant; knave signifying merely a youth. Thus Chaucer writes of the birth of a "knave childe." In chess, to resume our comparison, there were two of each piece, and a number of Pawns or common soldiers. In cards there were three, afterwards four, figures of each tint, and the Numerals, from one to ten, answering to the Pawns. When the days of chivalry had given woman a high position in society, the Queen was substituted for the Vizier and the Knight, in the two games respectively. This view is further strengthened by the name given by the Spaniards to their cards. They are still called *Naipes*, in Spain, from the Hebrew word *Naibes*, signifying sorcery; thus showing their Eastern origin. The Germans named theirs *Breife*, from the Latin. Previous to the invention of paper, they were made of thin tablets of wood or ivory, or of parchment, and the figures upon them painted by hand. Then, as they became in general request, stamps were made to impress the outline of the coat cards and numerals; and thus we find that the first idea of the grand art of *printing* was "on the cards."

The fact that we find traces of the game of cards soon after the return of the crusaders from the holy wars, and that the dates of its introduction into Italy, Spain, and France correspond pretty accurately with the return of the soldiers of the Cross into those countries, gives us every reason to conclude that they were its introducers. They were great gamblers—those crusaders—as we glean from a proclamation issued by the two

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kings, Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip Augustus, pursuant to which no person in the army was allowed to play at any sort of game for money, except knights and clergymen, who in one whole day and night shall not each lose more than 20s., on pain of forfeiting 100s. to the archbishop of the army. The two kings might play for what they pleased, but their attendants for not more than 20s., otherwise they were to be whipped naked through the army for three days.

What was "on the cards," pictorially speaking, of old? We have seen that the figure, or coat cards, as they were termed, were originally the King, the Knight, and the Knave, and that the Knight was changed into the Queen. Let it not be supposed that our modern Spades, Hearts, Clubs, and Diamonds are as old as the game we play with them. In Spain and Italy, the suits in ordinary use were swords, cups, money, and clubs. In France—lance-heads (pique), hearts, clover or trefoil, and arrow-heads (carreau) were used. In Germany they had bells, hearts, leaves, and acorns; and many fancy suits, such as rabbits, columbines, pinks, and roses; hares, parrots, suns, moons, crowns, and turbans; cushions, harps, letters, and swords are to be found "on the cards."

There is a theory—an ingenious one, to say the most of it—that the four suits were intended to represent the four orders of men. Thus in the Italian and Spanish packs, the "swords" represented the nobility; so also the French suit of "lance-heads." The "bells," again, stood as the symbol of the upper class, because they were such as were appended to the falcons, used by them for hawking. In the Spanish packs "cups" were the sign of the clergy, because they alone partook of the cup at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In the German, the suit of hearts was dedicated to them, for—says the theorist—"out of the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness." The money of the Italians and Spaniards, and the trefoil and leaves of the French and Germans, stood for the middle classes, the citizens, merchants, landed proprietors and farmers; whilst the lowest orders were suggested, either by the weapons with which they were usually armed in time of war, viz., clubs or arrow-heads, representing the bowmen of the armies, or the acorns, which as swineherds it was their duty to provide for their interesting charges. According to M. Leber, the French suits have this significance: cœur (heart), valour, greatness of soul; trèfle (clover), wisdom and gentleness united with power; carreau (the square-headed arrow), firmness, stability, constancy; pique (lance-head), physical force, or the power of the military.

Cards were well known in England in 1463 (temp. Edward IV.), for a law was passed in that year forbidding the importation of foreign "pairs," as packs of cards were anciently called. The suits first known were swords, cups, money, and clubs. We have retained the swords, altering slightly the shape, and corrupting their Spanish name "spada" into spades; for cups we substituted the hearts of the French, and took also the figures of the "trèfle" and "carreau," calling the former after the Spanish name of clubs, and placing the "carreau" (the primitive square arrow-head) lozenge-wise, as the square is often used in heraldry, and christening it afresh the "diamond."

Henry VII. was a great lover of cards, and played upon a very profitable system; for we find by his high treasurer's accounts, that the royal losses were drawn from the public purse, but no entry of his gains, as per contra, is to be found. It was Heads, I win—Tails, you lose! between this royal gamester and the nation. James VI. of Scotland, was likewise very fond of cards. So also were Queen Elizabeth and her amiable sister, Mary. Lord Burleigh, of head-shaking celebrity, was skilful at "Primero;" and James I. found pleasure in the game of "Mawe," playing it whilst slouching on two chairs, with his tongue lolling out, and having one courtier to hold his cards, whilst another pointed out which one to play.

Many fancy packs have been used in England, having on the cards the four suits already mentioned, and something more. In 1679, one was published and advertised as "A History of all the Popish plots that have been in England, beginning with those in Queen Elizabeth's time, and ending with the last damnable plot against his Majesty Charles II., with the manner of Sir Edmonbury Godfrey's murder," &c., &c. In this quaint pack, a painting of the "merry monarch" in council, being cheerfully duped by the agreeable plot of Dr. Titus Oates, represents the King of Hearts. Upon the Ace we find the Pope, with three Cardinals and a Bishop, at a table from underneath the cloth of which the devil is peeping out. The suit of Clubs relates entirely to the murder of Sir Edmonbury Godfrey. The King of Clubs finds a representative in Captain Bedlow, as examined by the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, and the Queen of Spades acts as barmaid at "ye plow ale-house," where was planned the assassination of good Sir Edmonbury—a subject which the whole suit of Clubs could not exhaust, but which overflows into odd cards of other suits.

The Rye House plot furnishes matter for another pack, and during the reigns of William and Mary, Anne, and George I., the cards paved a royal road to learning, upon all sorts of subjects. Grammar, rhetoric, heathen mythology, geography, history, heraldry, the principles of morals and politics, were all "on the cards." Humbler acquirements, however, were not forgotten. In the year 1692 the useful art of carving at table could be learned off the cards. Hearts were flesh and Diamonds were fowls; Clubs were fish and Spades baked meats. Satirical and humorous cards were also common at this time.

The oldest game at cards, of which any particulars are known, was of an Eastern origin, and called Trappola. It was played with a pack containing King, Knight or Horseman, Knave or Servant, and six numeral cards, viz., the 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10, making in all 36 cards. The suits were swords, cups, money, and clubs. Nothing is known of the rules of this game. It is of Arabic origin, and is supposed to have been brought, with the first cards, into England by Edward I., who resided for five years in Syria previous to ascending the throne.

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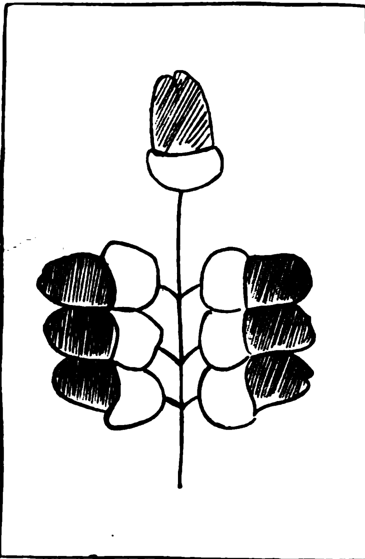
Next to this in point of antiquity, we find the Tarroco—a game still played in Italy, Spain, and Germany. The Tarroco pack is made up of two parts: the first consists of King, Queen, Knight, and Knave, with numeral cards from 1 to 10, in each of the four suits as above. The second consists of 21 cards, called Tarroci, and one known as "Il matto," the Fool, who is of all suits, never takes, but is never taken. When a better card is played upon him, his holder may select one from his tricks as ransom, and take him back into his hand.

The Tarroci were named as follows:—1. The Bateleur or Juggler; 2. Juno; 3. Emperor; 4. Empress; 5. Jupiter; 6. The Lovers; 7. The Chariot; 8. Justice; 9. The Capuchin, or sometimes the Hermit; 10. The Wheel of Fortune; 11. Fortitude; 12. The Suspended (a picture of a man hanging by one leg, head downward); 13. Death; 14. Temperance; 15. The Devil; 16. The Hospital; 17. The Stars; 18. The Moon; 19. The Sun; 20. The Last Judgment; 21. The End of the World.

In the game of Mivate the number of these Tarroci was increased to 40.



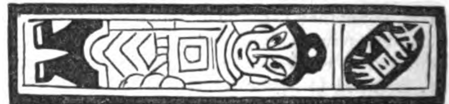
Seven of Acorns.

Primero was the most fashionable game in England during the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Elizabeth, Mary, and James I., and is played to this day. But who knows or cares to read of Mawe—King James's game—or of Loadum, Mont Sant, or Macke, at which the gamblers of our old dramatists lost and won? or of the more obscure Noddy, Gleck, and Rackabout? Even the once-favoured Ombre, Basset, and Quadrille are forgotten now. Lansquenet, that old German game, has its attractions for a few fast men, in a hurry to get rid of their money: but where—even in Kent, in which county it was invented—do people rejoice in All Fours? And although inquiries are sometimes made of the Editor of "Bell's Life," respecting the rules of French Put, are we not also favoured by that periodical with replies touching the mysteries of Nur and Spell? What is "Nur and Spell?" Is it not well known to be a phantom amongst amusements—an airy nothing—a game that never has been, and never will be played?

All the early games, and many of those of more modern date that we have just enumerated, were mere affairs of chance. If you had a good hand you won, if a bad one you lost. Even in Whist—or "Whisk," as it was originally called—that sublimest of mysteries "on the cards," the victory was not to the skilful. The original edition of "Hoyle on Whist," was published in the year 1737, and the game was first played upon fixed principles by a club of gentlemen (of which Lord Folkestone was a member) which met in the 'Crown' Coffee House, in Bedford Row, in the year 1756.

Hindoo Card.

Great improvements have been made in the colouring and fabric of playing cards, but little alteration has been effected in the designs upon them, beyond the modern plan of giving double heads to the court cards, so that their nature and suit can be seen at a glance, whichever way they may be uppermost in the hand; and a modification of the morose and repulsive expression which disfigured some of the Kings and Knaves—the Knave of Clubs especially—in old packs. The portrait of the last-mentioned dignitary in Mr. De la Rue's collection, represents a golden-



Chinese Court Card.

haired youth of a singularly ingenuous countenance, but we sadly miss that supernatural development of the calf of his leg, which so excited our youthful admiration. The French and Germans have elegantly dressed ladies and gentlemen figuring on their court cards, but your steady-going British whist-player scorns such trifling. Diamonds being

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trumps, the Queen would hardly seem like an honour unless she had a stiff neck, and was trying to sniff at a rose. A King of Clubs that was presented in profile could not be expected to win a trick, and a Knave of Spades that looked us full in the face would stand a chance of being scouted as an impostor.

For the elaborate device that forms the ace of spades we are indebted to the Stamp Office. It is printed there, the manufacturer supplying the paper, and the duty upon it is one shilling. A penalty of five pounds is the punishment for using a pack of cards that does not contain a "duty ace of spades."

Man, of all times and in all nations, is a gambling animal, and not a few edicts and proclamations have been directed by his rulers and law-givers against card-playing—not a few laws have been made "on the cards." In the year 1399, the Provost of Paris published an order forbidding working people to play at tennis, bowls, *cards*, dice, or nine-pins. Amadeus III., Duke of Savoy, thirty years afterwards, made all sorts of gaming for money within his dominions unlawful; but he permitted his subjects to gamble for meat and drink. Cards were especially forbidden, except to women, with whom, however, men might play, provided they only played for pins.* An Act of Parliament passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of Henry VIII. enacted that no artificer or his journeyman, nor husbandman, apprentice, labourer, servant at husbandry, fisherman, waterman, or serving-man, shall play at tables, tennis, dice, *cards*, bowls, closh (whatever that may be), coyting, logarting, or any other unlawful game, out of Christmas, or even then, out of their master's house or presence, on pain of a fine of twenty shillings.

A statute of Queen Anne provided, that any person who should, "by any fraud or shift, cosenage, circumvention, deceit, or unlawful device, or idle practice whatsoever, in playing at or with *cards*, dice, &c., win of any one or more persons, or persons whatsoever, above the sum or value of ten pounds, shall forfeit five times the value of the sum or sums of money, or other thing so won, as aforesaid, and in case of such ill practice, as aforesaid, shall be deemed infamous, and suffer such corporal punishment as in cases of wilful perjury."

In addition to this, the statute 18 George II. c. 34, made it an indictable offence to win or lose ten pounds at play within the space of twenty-four hours. These Acts were repealed by the 8th and 9th Victoria, which declares, "that every person who shall by any fraud, or unlawful device, or ill practice in playing it, or with *cards*, dice, tables, or other game, or in bearing part in the stakes, wagers, or adventures, or in betting on the sides or hands of them that do play, or in wagering on the event of any game, sport, pastime, or exercise, win from any other person to himself, or any other, or others, any sum of money or valuable thing, shall be deemed guilty of obtaining such money or valuable thing, from such other person, by a false pretence, with intent to cheat and defraud such person of the same, and, being convicted thereof, shall be punished accordingly." Obtaining money or goods by false pretences is a misdemeanour, punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour.

Money lost at play cannot be recovered at law. An eminent, but somewhat eccentric, special pleader—special pleaders can be lively upon occasion—once upon a time, before the passing of the last-mentioned law, fell amongst sharpers at Brighton; and having lost to them some thirty pounds, and not having so much money upon him, was compelled to give his promissory note for the amount. He drew it as follows:—

"Brighton, April —, 18—.

"At sight I promise to pay Mr. ——— thirty pounds, for money lost by me to him at cards at one sitting."

This he signed on stamped paper, and, having handed it to the fortunate gamesters, went his way, chuckling inwardly. They, being more at home in "shift, cosenage, circumvention, and deceit," than law, were delighted with their security. Why, it not only promised to pay the money, but acknowledged the manner in which the debt arose. There could be no dispute about it. It was as good as a Bank of England note any day. But when they took it to their lawyer—payment having been refused—they found, to their chagrin, that it was not only worthless, but might be made evidence against themselves, rendering them liable to the infamy, whipping, and forfeiture imposed by the statute of Anne.

Albany Fonblanque Jun.

* Dum ludus fiat tantum cum spinulis.

SHADE.

To-night, untasted be the cup,
My lips refuse the wooing wine,
Whose restless spirits bubble up,
Like laughter of its native Rhine.
I would not have young Bacchus tread,
With jocund feet and noisy glee,
Where pensive Memory rests her head,
Nor wake her from the reverie,
That roams the past with murmuring low,
And twines sere florets round her brow.

Sing me no lightly-worded song,
But tell me how, heart-sick and lone,
Some love-lorn maiden tarried long
In some old castle, lichen-grown,
To hear the massy drawbridge clank,
And mail'd retainers outward roll,
Until her heart's forebodings sank
Like rust into her weary soul—
While *he*, the theme of knightly story,
Lay couch'd in the ghostly arms of Glory.

Or, better, wake a sterner note,
How, on his own resources cast,
Some mental gladiator smote
With earnest hand, and won at last
A victory from the world. I would
Not feed my thoughts with trifling wiles,
For grief demands more solid food
Than airy Pleasure's simpering smiles,
To force the palsied heart through pain
And fill its veins with life again.

R. W.

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LAST WEEK.

The great event, not only of the week, nor of the month or the year, but of a tenth part of our century, took place at the opening of Last Week.

On the Sunday night everybody in the kingdom —everybody but infants and idiots—was aware that his or her presence was noted down as a fact in the national history; and all who are endowed with the ordinary share of imagination and sensibility must have been profoundly impressed by the occasion. We are apt to suppose, on ordinary nights, that everybody goes to bed and to sleep, and is in fact withdrawn from conscious existence till next morning: but on that Sunday night the sleepiest and most punctual goers to bed could hardly help remembering what varieties of persons would be included among the millions who were to be counted and reported, for the benefit of the State. Some years ago, when we were in the midst of the strange period of the falling stars—when showers of meteors rained down the heavens on certain nights of successive Augusts and Novembers, it was a surprise to some of us to be reminded of the number and variety of night-watchers. The best accounts given of the falling stars were not only from astronomers and the police, who were first asked, but from naval officers on watch, steamboat captains, fishermen, engine-drivers, sick-nurses, private watchmen, late students, gamblers, and some of those energetic children who like to jump up in their cribs and look out of the window at any hour. What we heard then might be some guidance to our thoughts on Sunday night of last week. Besides the mariner pacing the deck within sight of our own shores, there were British sailors in all parts of the world to be noted that night. On occasion of the last Census, in 1851 some of us thought of Franklin and his comrades, wondering whether they were watching the northern lights as they remembered the appointed night, and feeling themselves united with us in the national account, or whether their eyes had closed on all earthly scenes. They were set down in the great list; but we now know that they were dead. This time the State has reckoned up all its members that are far away, either in those polar regions, or in tropical seas, or in all the watery tracts that lie between. The colonists do not enter into the account; but the sailors of all services, the soldiers, and travellers whose home is England, Scotland, or Ireland have their place in it. Some were among the cane-brakes of African rivers, or waiting in ambush for lions or elephants. Some were sleeping at the base of the Pyramids, ready to climb them in the dawn. Some were dozing in palankeens, on the shoulders of bearers in the plains of India. Some were heaping up their fires amidst the snow and keen winds at Tientsin, wondering perhaps what was thought at home of their having got to Pekin. Some were watching the rush of the great American rivers by starlight, or listening for the break-up of the ice on the great lakes of Canada. Yet all these are a mere sample of the varieties at home, from the Queen in her palace to the tramp in the dry ditch. There was a considerable population of railway travellers, rushing hither and thither all night. There were thousands of luxurious persons in carpeted chambers and silken beds, with the gleam of the night-light and the glow of the fire in the room. There were tens of thousands of comfortable middle-class people, sleeping in darkness and security behind their barred doors. There were hundreds of thousands of cottagers, too, closely huddled together under the thatch, or in lofts under the tiles. There were larger multitudes of artisans and town-labourers squeezed into courts and alleys, where the enumerators would come to-morrow to inquire for every one of them. There were rookeries, where the foul birds of the national flock roost in squalor and coarse misery, which they prefer to decent comfort. There were convicts in the cells of the great stone hives, our prisons, some dreaming of crime, some groaning over their sin or its punishment, or plotting revenge. There were sick people sleepless in the hospitals; and widowed mothers toiling at the needle; and undertakers making coffins; and printers in the newspaper offices; and engineers using the quiet hours for planning great public works; and statesmen pondering on the interests of nations; and gamesters playing away their children's bread. There were quarrymen asleep in their sheds on the mountain side; and gipsies under their waggon-tilt in the lane. There was here and there a crowd of upturned faces, watching a great fire, and a whole neighbourhood roused by the roar of the flames, and the rumble and clatter of the engines; and in contrast with this, there were parks and woodlands, where the silent keepers were listening for the rustle of a poacher's foot on last year's leaves. Of all these multitudes, every one was set down in his place in the course of the next day.

It is an occasion on which all are equal. The greatest man only fills his line in the schedule, like the infant of a week old. The humble are not treated as a mass, and their number guessed at; but each individual has the same amount of description as all the rest.

It seems as if this impartiality was thoroughly appreciated, by the readiness of the people to do their part in the preparation of the Census. On the last occasion, there was not a single instance of opposition or neglect serious enough to require the imposition of the fine. We are already told that this time the general behaviour has been equally good; for there must be a multitude of citizens who understand now, better than they did ten years ago, the benefits which arise from a carefully managed Census. The information yielded by it is so large, so various, so inaccessible by other means, and of such clear practical value, that it must be more widely appreciated from term to term, and therefore more zealously assisted.

Some amusing incidents are sure to turn up every time that a Census is taken; and we have already witnessed a few such scenes in the police reports. On the whole, we may be well satisfied if we get the results of the Census before the opening of next year.

The Thames embankment seems to be now

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pretty secure. On the first night of the reassembling of Parliament after Easter the money was provided. The coal duty of ninepence is to be levied for the purpose within ten instead of twenty miles round the metropolis; and the amount will be amply sufficient, according to present calculation, for this great work. Some decision was necessary in order to determine the fate of the Strand, which must have been cut up, and the houses endangered, to admit the great sewer, unless room was made for the sewer under the embankment. The necessity bore down all opposition; and we are to have a new shore to our old river. We can imagine what the place was like when its name was a real description—when the Strand was a strand. We can see, by means of old pictures and maps, how the shore looked when the fields came down to the road, and the road followed the turns of the river; and when the walkers from London to Westminster could sit down and fish, or stand and play duck-and-drake from little promontories or the landing-places of the boatmen. We can fancy the inhabitants of the scattered mansions looking upon the river traffic from summer-houses on their garden walls; and the cottage children playing on the grass, to the very verge of the tide or the mud. But could one of those gentry in the summer-houses have imagined what should come to pass in a few centuries? first, the growth of the conventional Strand, with its inner tide of city life, and then the building up of a new shore, in the place of the mud—a substantial stone bank, which no tide can overflow, which will contain a great sewer, and bear a railway, and drives, and walks, and trees, besides affording wharves and warehouses, and all facilities for a vast metropolitan traffic. Considering the health, the beauty, the convenience, the true economy, the immediate employment of labour, and the ultimate development of commerce which must arise out of this scheme, that is a marked week in which Parliament provided the means of accomplishing it.

This brings up the image of the London Building trades, in their present position of quarrelling with their remarkably bright prospects. At the beginning of the week some hope remained that the leaders of the Nine Hours' movement would be compelled to yield, or would be altogether deserted by the men. This hope was soon excluded; but every day showed more and more plainly the desire of a great and increasing number of the men to accept the plan of payment by the hour,—with the view of working ten hours on five days, and stopping at one o'clock on Saturdays. It became known that there was no chance of the employers yielding; that their contracts guarded them against fines for delays by strikes; that they were provided with resources of foreign and provincial labour, in case of need; and, above all, that, by certain changes of plan in the construction of new works, the services of the builders could be to a great extent dispensed with. It is the old story over again. There are two ways in which the wages of certain classes of work-people have become permanently reduced, in consequence of strikes. One is the introduction of foreign labourers; and the other is the invention of labour-saving methods. The London builders should look into the sugar-houses and tailors'-shops, and cigar-manufactories, and piano-forte warehouses, and see how foreigners are thriving on employments which Englishmen have thrown away. Then they should inquire into the origin of the chief inventions in machinery, and improvements in methods, in all branches of industry; and they will find that such changes have almost invariably come about as resources in difficulty from an insufficient supply of labour. The remarkable variety and excellence of machinery in the United States is owing to the dearness of labour; and, as the Americans have learned to lift roots, and break up trunks of forest trees, and clear, and fence, and till their land by mechanical means, and to use one material when another is scarce, so do English employers learn through strikes to make machines do the work of men, and to substitute iron, and bricks, and terra-cotta for wood and stone, when joiners and masons refuse to work on reasonable terms. By the number of workmen who have gone over from the strike leaders to the employers, we may hope that these things are becoming better understood. The trade disputes in other parts of the country seem likely to be accommodated with less delay than usual; probably because no man with eyes in his head can fail to see that times are not favourable to ventures which exhaust capital, and afford excuse for the non-employment of labour.

The amount subscribed for the relief of the Hindoos in their famine was wonderfully large Last Week. The necessity for prompt action was evidently understood on all hands; and the sending out of 20,000*l.* by the first Wednesday's mail, and 25,000*l.* from London and other places by the next, showed the national sense of the urgency as well as the unquestionable character of the claim of our Indian fellow-subjects. There is no profit and no pleasure in dwelling on the dreadful details of a universal hunger. We will not, therefore, reproduce the description of it here. But there are two incidents which should be attended to and remembered. It appears that the carriage of the food costs more than the food itself, dear as the sudden and prodigious demand has made it. This may suggest improved methods of relief at once, and ought to secure the country against such a deficiency of organisation in future. The other fact is that wherever a cow dies within the stricken districts, the Hindoos eat that sacred animal as eagerly as the Mohammedans. This has gone so far that the native authorities in spiritual matters have declared the laws of Caste to be suspended during the famine. Everybody is to resume his place by-and-by, whatever he may have eaten. When we see a suspension of the laws as well as the observances of Caste, we see that the institution is doomed; and eye-witnesses write, in fact, that the famine has done more for the overthrow of Caste than all reasonings and preachings of missionaries, and all the influences of the governing race and their schools.

The general uneasiness about the state of prospects of Syria was deepened during the week by both facts and rumours. Any enmity between Turk and Christian is at its height in the month

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of Ramazan, because it is the effect of a too prolonged fasting to aggravate passions and confirm fixed ideas; and this seems to be the case in the present year. The month (determined by lunar phases) has travelled back from midsummer to April; and the fast, ending at sunset, is less trying to brain and temper than it was five years ago; but it is still sufficiently protracted, as the weeks go on, to render the passions of the Moslems very susceptible and fierce; and menaces and insults to the Christians are indulged in as a sort of piety, issuing from lips pallid with suffering, and quivering with the nervousness of exhaustion. At such a time even Abd-el-Kader is not safe; and accounts arrived during the week of his band of followers leaving Damascus, and of his own intention of retiring altogether from Syria, on account of the insults heaped upon him as the protector of the Christians. The Syrian Christians are not easy to protect, as they do not answer very well to the European, and not at all to the English idea of followers of Christ. When occasion serves, they show themselves as vindictive and cruel as the Moslems; and there is no evidence of any possibility of either race, as they now exist in Syria, being disposed to live in peace, or governable by other means than force. It is believed that agitators are always busy among them; and the universal report is that those agitators are French, or professing to be so. The great powers cannot agree about the term of the French occupation of Syria, while it seems impossible to withdraw the troops without incurring the responsibility of a renewal of the massacres. Rumours were afloat last week of great preparations for war in the Mediterranean, in the French ports and at Malta; and of an intention on the part of England to interpose a force between Syria and Egypt till the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria. At Constantinople there was an expectation of some great crisis; and throughout the dominions of the Porte there was more or less disturbance, watched over by a large Russian force on the frontier, and bitterly complained of by Austria in her hour of weakness and virtual revolution.

Revolutionary symptoms were indeed the great European feature of the week. On the 6th, the new constitutional Diets of Austria were opened. At the Cathedral of St. Stephen, at Vienna, high mass was celebrated with the utmost solemnity as the first act of a new era in the history of the empire; and the opening of the Austrian Diet followed. The Hungarian Diet was opened on the same day under memorable circumstances, involving great humiliation to the Emperor. He was compelled to tender to the Hungarians the abdication of his uncle and father, and the proclamation of his own accession; thereby admitting the illegality of the acts of his government for thirteen years. Thus only could he claim to be crowned King of Hungary, or hope to come to any terms with the people. He failed to induce the Diet to sit at Buda,—his fortress on one bank of the Danube; the Hungarians being resolved to hold their parliament in their city of Pesth on the other bank. By a compromise, the sitting was formally opened at Buda, the Diet immediately adjourning to Pesth. His ministry is divided between imperial and Hungarian counsels: his provinces are indomitable in their demands: he has yielded up the whole spirit and letter of the Concordat, having proclaimed the entire equality of Catholics and Protestants in all matters, political and civil. One singular circumstance confirms the doubt previously felt whether he is not yielding everything, in the style of the Bourbons and Hapsburgs, with the intention of resuming his grants, and recurring to an absolute policy on the first opportunity. That circumstance is that the suffrage is extended to women in the election to the Austrian Diets. The news arrived, coupled with that of the grace to the Protestants, for the Emperor has certainly been officially thanked: otherwise it could hardly have been credited for a moment. Amidst the throng and clash of wonderful rumours, the one certain fact is that the House of Hapsburg is entirely in the hands of the people, and powerless for its traditional views and purposes, unless by resorting to its soldiery.

One of its apprehensions is, no doubt, for its Polish province, after what has happened at Warsaw. In the middle of last week arrived the news of another massacre of the citizens of Warsaw, as little provoked as that of February, and far more perilous. The policy of the Czar seems inexplicable to all but those who have long studied the case of Russia. Since February he has promised great and beneficial changes in the constitution and government of Poland; but the language and manner of the concessions have been insulting and irritating in a high degree: and last week the governor announced in his name the sudden and reckless breaking up of the Agricultural Association,—the one bulwark between his authority and rebellion of the Poles. That Association was carrying on the redemption of the peasantry, and the organisation of a new system of society,—society there being based on the landed interest. It had received the Emperor's commission to preserve peace and order, and had well discharged the function: yet it was broken up without being allowed a final meeting to wind up its affairs, and dispose of its funds. The people naturally assembled to show their sympathy with their virtual rulers; but they were unarmed and peaceable. Yet they were fired upon by the Russian soldiery, without notice on one side, or resistance on the other.

The explanation of the Emperor's apparent caprice and cruelty may probably be found in the fact that in all his reforms he has omitted the necessary first step of reconstituting the official body which was to carry out his purposes. The Russian bureaucracy is the most corrupt—if that be possible outside the Papal States—and the most intolerable in Europe; and the Emperor's best friends have always insisted that his only chance of success as a reformer lay in replacing the old official body by a more hopeful set of servants. It may be that this is impracticable; but it seems clear that, without it, he will fail in his aims. Meantime, it may fairly be supposed that his servants have perverted his boons, if not his purposes, and that with them will rest the responsibility of the great European results of the wanton massacres of Warsaw.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LIII.

Adair had hurried his companion for some considerable distance, when he suddenly seemed to change his purpose, and slackened their pace. Partially retracing their walk, he made for the river, and a vehicle passing, he hailed it, and they entered. In a few minutes they had crossed one of the bridges, and a short ride brought them to the corner of a small square, in which was one of the noblest of the Parisian churches. Bertha had some recollection of having been once brought to see this edifice, but the district into which they next plunged was entirely unknown to her.

He stopped at the door of a very large, but mean-looking hotel, of no inviting appearance, but very dear to a class of sojourners in Paris, whose means are in the future, and who are obliged to be content with humble lodging, not very dainty fare, and exceeding joviality, while working up to a position in which they may live more sumptuously and dully.

As they entered a gloomy hall, Ernest Adair saw two or three young men hanging their keys upon the appointed and numbered hooks near the door. He quitted Bertha, and spoke to one of the men, who recognised him, but seemed not much pleased at the encounter. With some coldness of manner, and an evident desire to shorten the interview, he handed to Adair the key which the latter had asked for. In two or three minutes Bertha and Adair were in a small narrow room, strongly flavoured with the odour of the strongest tobacco, and as scantily furnished as could well be imagined. But the dingy little room had echoed to merry songs and hearty laughs, that had proceeded from many a gay party of struggling men, who reserved their gravity for the days when their professional reputation might demand it, and wasted none of it upon the period of light hearts and light pockets.

Bertha had little time or care to note the details of the uncongenial scene into which she had been brought, and at once addressed an appealing look to her companion.

"We are safe here, for a short time," he said, placing a chair for her; "but our time is very short."

"Why have you brought me here?" she asked, helplessly.

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"Because it is just the one place where I shall not be looked for. We are among very honest people, and you need not be more alarmed than is needful. The case itself is bad enough, and we must decide at once what is to be one."

"I am ruined, Ernest, is it so?" said Bertha, in a low, piteous voice.

"You have been sacrificed. I have not been able yet to discover by whom, but when I do, you shall be revenged. In the meantime there is but one question. Where will you go "

"Oh, Ernest, where *can* I go?"

"I have been trying to answer that," he said, as calmly as if he were discussing the business of some third person, unconnected with himself. "I have been considering all your chances, and it is very difficult to advise you. It is most unfortunate that circumstances have deprived us of the aid of your sister, as her calmness and resolution would have been invaluable to us now; but regret is folly, and we acted, as we supposed, for the best."

"Tell me," said Bertha, trembling; "how are you sure that he knows the truth?"

"He came to Paris to learn it. I hoped, when I saw you from the road, that I should be able to prevent his doing so; but since then I have been undeceived as to my power. He went to an interview, at which everything would be revealed to him, not for the sake of injuring you, but for some other purpose, I know not what; but those who had to inform him are too deeply interested in doing it, to leave a shadow of hope that the work will not be completely done. At this moment he is probably rushing into that shop in search of you."

"And you say it without a show of feeling," exclaimed Bertha, as bitterly as she could speak; "you, who have brought me to this!"

"There is no time for reproaches," he answered. "Every minute is precious. There will be ample time for reproach hereafter. Believe that your thought, now, must be how to keep out of the way of Mr. Urquhart, until his indignation shall have softened a little. Unless, indeed, you have a higher estimate of your own power, and would rather meet him."

"No, no, no," cried Bertha, shuddering. "But you must protect me, Ernest, and you will. I have now nobody in the world to help me but you."

"Unhappily," he said, with some compassion in his voice, "my help, at this time, would be fatal. I am a marked man, who can scarcely move without a spy at my heels. My natural course would be to provide some refuge for you, but I should hardly have taken you a lodging when my taking it would have been reported, and you would be met at the very door by a police-agent, who would probably be accompanied by Mr. Urquhart."

"O my God! what is to become of me?" sobbed the unhappy woman.

"You must have often contemplated the possibility of a day like this," replied Adair; "and surely you must have thought over some plan of your own. At least let me hear it."

"I have no plan. I always hoped that this day would never come,—that you would at least save me from utter shame and ruin."

"It *has* come, and I am powerless to save you longer."

"You cannot, Ernest, you cannot be so heartless and wicked as to say that you will abandon me in my great misery,—misery caused by you and you only. No, I will not believe that."

"Once more, I beg you not to waste time in words. I am in the hands of others, and it is they, not myself, whom you must reproach when you have leisure for reproach. Have you no course to propose?"

"None, none."

"I know that you have few acquaintances in Paris, and not one friend; yet does no name occur to you—no house where you might remain until your safety were assured?"

"No, none," said Bertha, piteously.

"It is strange that you should have failed to provide yourself with some such friend, knowing, as you did, that she would be so needful to you. But as it is, I see but one course to recommend."

"What is it?" she asked, with streaming eyes.

"You must go to England."

"To England! And alone?"

"I cannot be your escort, for the reasons I have given you, and I know of no other. The journey is nothing—your sister performed it for your sake—surely you may take it for your own."

"And where should I go? I have no friends in England now, except those who would not receive me. Where should I go?"

"How helplessly, how childishly you talk. Cannot even danger induce you to show a little courage and self-reliance? What does it matter where you go, provided that you are not traced, and I think that, once in England, you would be safe. I do not suppose that there would be any motive for endeavouring to discover you, and for a short time you might certainly breathe in peace."

"I have no money."

He glanced at her dress, and noticed that she had a few ornaments of value, and he mentally remarked that it was fortunate that her love of such things had induced her to put them on for a journey for which a Frenchwoman would have dressed herself with elaborate simplicity.

"How poor I am," he said, "you know better than most people in the world; but I have more than enough to furnish you with funds for the journey, and when you are in London, any jeweller will supply you if you show him that bracelet."

Perhaps these words grated more harshly upon the soul of Bertha than aught else that he had said—than the cruel coldness of his manner—than the bitterness of the destiny he had announced to her.

"And you leave me alone in the world!" she said, passionately.

"The world forbids our being companions," said Adair; "but you know full well that my heart bleeds for you."

"I do not know it," exclaimed Bertha, roused by her sorrow, and by his measured phrase. "I

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believe that you are utterly heartless and cruel, and that you see me driven from my home, and crushed to the earth, without one pang of feeling or pity. Oh, I have been mad, mad, to think better of you, and this is what I have brought myself to. I am to fly like a thief to England; I am to sell my jewellery, that I may be able to live; and when that money is gone, Ernest, I am to do—what? I am a fool to ask you—what do you care? You do not even tell me how I am to let you know where I am," she added, her energy exhausted with her protest, and her weakness returning full upon her.

"I will take care of that," he replied, without a syllable in answer to her impassioned appeal.

"When ought I to go?"

"To-night. In four hours."

"And where am I to spend those four hours? Here?"

"No; the owner of this room will want it. Is it so difficult for a woman to amuse herself in Paris for a short time on a fine day? Keep on this side the river until it is nearly the time of starting. It might not be well to linger too long at the terminus, as you might attract observation."

"I feel in a wild, miserable dream. Is it all true?—am I so wretched? Oh, if it were a dream, and I could wake!"

"We shall wake from all dreams too soon," said Ernest Adair, perhaps speaking from his heart.

She swayed herself on the chair, and sobbed violently. But no kind hand took hers, no voice whispered her to be of courage, that she was still loved, and that love should watch over her, unknown to herself, and that in all her trials she was to trust in a protector. Adair maintained a silence, which made her sobs distinctly audible.

"Farewell," she said, rising, and what little dignity of manner she possessed manifested itself under this cold and aggravated insult to her sorrow.

"You will need this," he said, promptly, as if desirous to terminate the interview. He placed some gold in her hand. "And you will also need this passport, which is not in your own name, but in one which you will take, for the journey. At the terminus, ask for the person whose name is on this card, and he will save you all trouble. I should have accompanied you there, but I dare not."

"A passport ready! Then you had intended me to leave France," exclaimed Bertha.

"Unless you had a better plan to propose. I therefore provided the necessary means. Is that, too, a matter of reproach?"

"I shall never reproach you again," said Bertha, in a low voice. "Some day, perhaps, when you hear that a woman whom you have ruined has died in her misery, you may reproach yourself that you did not spare her a little. Farewell, Ernest."

"Bertha!" he exclaimed.

But she had gone.

"It is better so," he said. "Ten words from me, and we should never have parted. Far better so. And thus ends a friendship that did not promise so long a life, or so violent a death. It was none of my seeking, that is true. And now for M. Wolowski once more."

CHAPTER LIV.

Adair left the hotel, and, with a furtive glance to assure himself that Mrs. Urquhart had really departed, hastened back to the house in which he had awaited news of her arrival in Paris. He rushed up to the small apartment, and found the Pole, who received him with a grim smile.

"You were justified in your demand, M. Adair," said Wolowski.

"Which demand?"

"For time to enable your friend, Mr. Urquhart, to recover his reason. Indeed, you were moderate, and I am not sure that the four days you wished for might not have been fairly granted."

"The revelation has been made?" asked Ernest, uneasily.

"Assuredly."

"He has nothing to learn?"

"It is not for me to pry into the secrets of affection," said Wolowski, "and what may still be concealed from him I do not ask. But, after his perusal of the letter, I suppose him to be quite sufficiently informed for all purposes of marital vengeance."

"The letter—what letter?"

"True, you would not remember. Gallant men should take better care of their papers than you seem to have done. A note which it was, to say the least, indiscreet to have preserved, formed part of the evidence which has been to-day laid before the Scotchman, and the production of that note rendered all further explanation superfluous."

"Some note to me which has been stolen from me?"

"Put the fact in that form, if it please you, M. Adair."

Ernest's look was an evil one. For there was room in his heart for some sensation of shame, and the information that a letter which had been written to him by a trusting woman, and which had been preserved by him for a selfish purpose, had been the instrument for the completion of her ruin, struck home with keenness. The interview with poor Bertha had not tended to render him more tolerant of Wolowski's sarcasms, and this last piece of news almost stirred him to rebellion. His glance, and the expression on his face, did not escape the eye of the Pole.

"As the revelation had your assent, M. Adair," he said, "the means were a secondary consideration; but you would have a right to reproach yourself had such evidence been voluntarily furnished by you."

"My assent!" said Ernest, bitterly. "But the work is done. Let us speak of business."

"Have you no curiosity to know how your friend received the news that must have placed you in such an amiable light in his eyes? Are you so entirely uninterested in his sentiments towards you?"

"I can imagine enough."

"Without disputing your imaginative powers, which have been cultivated in the service of your country, I may say, my dear Adair, that you are

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unequal to picture the mental condition of that colossal Scot."

"I suppose that he has vowed to kill me?"

"No; he is more dangerous than if he had done that. We know something of vows of vengeance, and how often they are kept. He made no vow at all. But, while he was recovering from the first prostration of the intelligence, he put his hand on a metallic ruler that lay near him, and then he took it into both hands, and during his meditation he snapped the stiff piece of brass in two as a child snaps a stick of barley-sugar. If the piece of metal happened to represent yourself, in the course of thought in which he was indulging, it may be as well that you should not come in his way at present."

"I am not terrified, M. Wolowski; but I shall observe all precaution."

"That is well. And what have you done with Madame?"

"She leaves for England to-night."

"Yes, you could hardly have done better for her. But I am afraid that her going to England can hardly be permitted at present."

"Surely, you will not intercept the poor woman's flight. You have achieved your object; let her go."

"It must be considered," said Wolowski; "but the more I think of it, the more I am disposed to reject the idea that she can be allowed to depart."

"If you choose to tell me why, I may meet the difficulty," said Ernest, submissively.

"To tell you why, would be to tell you a great deal more," replied his chief; "but as you seem inclined to adopt a discreet view of things, I do not know why I should conceal from you that it is Mr. and not Mrs. Urquhart's sojourn in England that is particularly desired at this time."

"Ah! you wish to drive Urquhart from Paris."

"Wishes to that effect exist. And it may occur to you that he is not the more likely to select England as his residence, because an unfaithful wife is there."

"Here you can help her, M. Wolowski, without in the least endangering your object."

"If you can show me that, I shall be happy to co-operate with you, my good Adair."

"She can live no-where but in England—I mean if she is alone. She has not had even force of character enough to induce her to learn French thoroughly, though her life was to be spent here. She is utterly unfit for continental struggle of any kind. In England she might manage to exist in obscurity. It is not a great deal to ask of your friendship, M. Wolowski, that you permit her to escape to England—making it clear to her husband that she has fled to Italy."

"The suggestion is business-like, and so far commends itself to me. But I am informed that having missed his wife, on his returning to the shop whence you took her, and having ascertained that she departed with a gentleman whose description was accurately given—the woman at the shop was so deceived by Mr. Urquhart's calmness that she forgot to lie, and depicted you faithfully, not dreaming that she was disobliging a customer—the Scotchman, I say, seemed instinctively to decide that his wife would go to England, and he is now at the terminus, waiting, no doubt, to pay for her railway ticket."

"And she, in foolish impatience, will go up there early, and he will pounce upon her," said Adair, starting up.

"Be seated, M. Adair, and show more confidence in your friends. I have taken care that should that very probable early visit occur, the lady shall be prevented from meeting her husband."

"But how?"

"Can you not trust such a very simple matter to my management? I tell you that, knowing perfectly well that you would advise the lady's flight, I have sent her a guardian angel."

"Then Urquhart will not know of her intention, and you can let her fly, as I propose, and make him believe her on the road to Italy."

"If I agree to this, Ernest Adair, accept my assent as the highest of compliments. For though, as a moralist, I have no sympathy for a bad lady who allows herself to be found out, I am inclined to help her, rather than lose your services. I should like you to resume your duties with a mind at ease; and if I put the sea between you and the person who has led you astray, I shall perhaps once more find you a credit to my training."

"I am sensible of your indulgence, M. Wolowski," replied Adair, with a very good imitation of earnestness, "and I am, as always, at your orders. But until this unfortunate person is fairly out of France, I confess to you that I shall not be worth much to you."

"Mrs. Urquhart shall take her next breakfast at Folkstone. Do you wish for proof when she has done so?—do you desire the bill at the hotel?"

"Proof, after your promise, M. Wolowski?"

"Thanks. And now, my dear Adair, let me avail myself of the privilege of a friend, to warn you against ever again being induced to mix up a serious passion with your business pursuits. We are not all constituted alike, no doubt, and some of us absolutely need the amusements of society,—I am not preaching to you. But, my dear Adair, if you cannot drink without getting tipsy, and if you cannot play without being cheated, and if you cannot quarrel without stabbing, and, above all, if you cannot accept a *bonne fortune* without becoming demoralised, I recommend you to try a course of piety. Suppose you adopt that, and continue a credit to the secret police of France."

"I am bound, after what you have done for me, to bear any quantity of good-natured badinage," said Adair.

"There is no badinage," said the Pole. "I shall soon have to propose to you a certain course of action, for which you would be very much better qualified than you are now, if you chose to avail yourself of some preliminary instructions from certain worthy priests to whom I could accredit you. Do you not see advantages in this?"

"I am at your orders, M. Wolowski."

"You are not certainly without acquaintance with religious matters, I know."

"You flatter me."

"Not at all. You had an intimate friend who

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was a Jesuit, and who died young, I think. He must have talked to you, very frequently, upon serious topics, M. Adair."

Ernest Adair had recovered all his self-possession, and now looked very steadily at his companion. The latter had suddenly disclosed the knowledge of a fact which Adair believed to be unknown to him, and which was only one of a series, the revelation of which would strangely complicate the position of Ernest. But he replied instantly:

"I had such a friend, and he is dead. But I do not recollect that we ever talked much about religion, or, if we did, I have forgotten his teaching, and you will have to recommence my education."

"Ah! you did not talk much about that sacred subject. It was natural, at your time of life, that you should not. And yet he must have had very serious views on some subjects. *When do you burn the letters on his tomb?*"

Adair started. He remembered, perfectly well, the words he had used to Robert Urquhart when promising the documents that had sealed the doom of Mrs. Lygon; but how had this come to the knowledge of his chief? There was no time for hesitating.

"You complimented me on my imagination. Class among its products that sentimental statement, which was intended only to enforce my demand that certain letters should be returned to me."

"But your lamented friend *is* dead, and buried, and you know where his tomb is?" demanded Wolowski.

"Certainly," said Ernest, "unless it has been removed during the years that have elapsed since I visited it last."

"In company with Miss Laura Vernon?"

"Ah," said Adair, visibly disconcerted, "I perceive that you have indeed been taking pains with my history."

"It is worth while to know all that can be known about a man like yourself, you comprehend."

Adair made no reply.

"The compliment is too much for you? You have no answer. Well, I will not press you, and you have a good deal upon your mind. Now go away and dine, as joyously as you can, for to-day marks, I hope, a new epoch in your life, and you should celebrate it with due honours. Have no fear for Mrs. Urquhart, and have as much fear of her husband as will keep you out of his way. And let me see you to-morrow at twelve, when I hope to hear that you have enjoyed your night."

Nothing could be more benevolent than the tone, but the smile upon the lip of the Pole was by no means so agreeable. Adair withdrew from the presence of his chief, and savage was the curse with which, as he closed the door, he repaid the kindly wish of the Pole.

As soon as Adair had departed, M. Wolowski rang his bell, and the pretty girl who had sent Ernest to his interview with Mrs. Urquhart came in.

"Is Chantal in the house, little one?"

"I shall not tell you," said the girl, saucily.

M. Wolowski looked at her with considerable astonishment.

"Are you out of your senses, my child?" he said, after a moment's pause.

"Not the least in the world, papa Wolowski. But I shall not tell you anything about poor Chantal, unless you tell me one thing."

"What's that, Madelon?"

"Are you going to send him to England again?"

"That's my affair."

"Indeed, papa Wolowski, it is mine and his," said Madelon. "I will not have him sent to England any more."

"Why, he is half an Englishman, child, and ought to like to visit his mother's country."

"Yes, but the other half of him, which is not English, papa Wolowski, likes to stay here with me, and I choose that it should."

"You great little fool, send him here. I am not going to dispatch him to England at present. Not at all, perhaps, until you want another pair of hideous earrings from the Burling Arcade."

M. Chantal presently appeared, a quiet-looking, clerkly young fellow, of gentlemanly bearing. His fair hair and blue eyes testified to the truth of M. Wolowski's report of his pedigree, as did his extremely composed and undemonstrative manner. Possibly these characteristics, so exactly opposed to the physical and moral attributes of the demoiselle Madelon, had given M. Chantal his fortunate place in her affections.

"Sit down there, Chantal," said the Pole, from whose manner there was at once dismissed all the reticence and oft-recurring sarcasm that marked his intercourse with Adair, and who spoke as to a favourite and trusted subordinate. "Your friend Madelon is sadly afraid of your being sent to England again. Have you been tormenting her with accounts of the blond beauty you saw there?"

"Not at all," said M. Chantal, smiling quietly.

"Then your silence has frightened her. One never knows whether to talk to a woman, or to hold one's tongue, as you will find out one of these days. Well, it is clear that you hit upon the right scent about our friend Ernest. But I had no time to ask you as to the detail of your visit. In what position in society is the lady you went to see?"

"Her husband is a wealthy lawyer retired from practice."

"And Madame his wife?"

"First I thought her a formal pietist."

"And secondly?"

"A she-devil."

"Second thoughts are always best where women are concerned. Well, you achieved a conquest over the saint and over the sinner?"

"Conquest!" said M. Chantal, with a slight grimace. "She had the distinguished honour of converting me to the Protestant faith?"

"From which other faith, if one might ask without indiscretion?" laughed M. Wolowski.

"And, of course," continued Chantal, smiling, "she could not withhold her confidence from a convert of her own making. She hates well, that good woman."

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"Whom?"

"Most people, I think, and dislikes the rest. But specially I perceive she hates Mrs. Lygon, the wife, you remember, of the man—"

"In the public office in the Strand. I know. Why does she hate that beautiful personage?"

"O, is she beautiful? I might have gathered that, from Mrs. Berry's account of her, which was not flattering. Why does she hate her? You have laughed once or twice at my solutions of problems which you have offered to me, yet I have not been proved wrong in the end."

"That means, my excellent Chantal, that you have something pre-eminently ridiculous to suggest, and you beg pardon beforehand."

"As you like, M. Wolowski."

"Now, do not begin to *bouder*, but let us hear your conjecture."

"My visit was a short one, but the letter of introduction which you were so good as to get me from the agent of the Missionary Society was invaluable, and made me quite at home. It was a master-stroke to have it written in French, because Mrs. Berry reads French very well, and her vanity and importance were flattered. She at once commenced the good work upon the young Frenchman, who was of a serious turn, but had grave doubts, and gave me a tract the very first evening. Not to fatigue you with detail, we became the best of friends, and as soon as I could easily introduce mention of M. Urquhart and his wife, the seed was sown in good ground. Mixed with her spiritual advice, I had all the scandal of Lipthwaite for the last twenty years."

"You have made full notes, of course, Chantal," said his chief, in a voice of paternal interest in the businesslike habits of a *protegé*.

"Even to a sketch or two of the localities."

"Excellent fellow. And now that you have taken such pains to show me that you had materials for a good guess at the hostility o these ladies, let me have it."

"Ernest Adair, as you knew, was once a teacher of writing in that beautiful Lipthwaite."

"Speak to me of Adam and Eve," quoted M. Wolowski.

"I ask you to recal the fact, and couple it with what I say. At some period of our elegant Ernest's residence in England, he permitted himself to inspire a passion in the heart of that woman Berry—not then Berry, of course—"

"Of course, Englishman," repeated Wolowski, mockingly.

"Whether he encouraged it or not, I am not able to say, but it is probable that as he was utterly poor and equally unhesitating, he tried upon her, in a small way, the same game of exaction which he has played in so distinguished a manner here, and it may have failed, or he may have abandoned it for another game. But I believe that he finished by discarding her, and that she believes—truly or falsely—that he would not have discarded her, but for the young beauty of Miss Vernon, now Mrs. Lygon."

"Bah, Chantal; this is a romance of Madelon's, not a serious suggestion of your own. Is this your gratitude for your conversion, monster?"

CHAPTER LV.

Lygon withdrew the bolt at the sound of Hawkesley's voice, and the latter entered the study. Arthur, nervous, agitated, kept his hold upon the door, prepared to fasten it again. The unhappy husband looked haggard and weary; his dress, ordinarily so careful, was neglected; he seemed to have snatched at the first articles that came to hand, that he might hurry off to Hawkesley—and yet it was not so. He had lingered and pondered long over the letter from Urquhart, had spent many a miserable hour in alternate sadness and anger, had wandered many an unreckoned mile, before he resolved on seeking out Hawkesley. The man of orderly mind had received a blow which not only prostrated but bewildered him.

"Do not fasten it," said Charles Hawkesley, "Beatrice begs that you will see her."

"I will not, I cannot," said Arthur Lygon. "Let me get out of the house."

"Arthur, you will do well to see my wife."

"Why do you say so?"

"Would I say so unless I felt that it were well?"

As he spoke Beatrice opened the door softly, glided in, and took Arthur's hand in her own.

"My dear, dear Arthur."

The unfortunate Lygon held her hand passively, for a moment or two, and slowly raised his eyes to her face. Far less beautiful than Laura, Beatrice nevertheless wore the same expression; and as she struggled to give him a compassionating smile, the likeness became more apparent. He dropped her hand, sank into the large chair beside him, and, throwing back his head, covered his face with his hands, and wept as perhaps he had never wept before.

Beatrice knew better than to interrupt the paroxysm of his sorrow, but she stood near him, and as he gradually calmed she placed a handkerchief to his eyes.

"Arthur," she said, bending down to his ear, and speaking in a calm low voice, "believe in our love."

He did not look at her, but thrust out his hand impulsively, and clasped that of Beatrice.

She made a sign to her husband, who hesitated. But the imploring look with which she seconded her appeal was not to be resisted. He left the room.

"Oh, Arthur!" she said, "if I could tell you how you have comforted me and Charles, by coming to *us* with your sorrow."

"Can *you* say this?" he answered, under his breath. "Her sister."

"Because I am her sister," replied Beatrice, firmly.

He looked up suddenly, and in the kindly look that met his own so unflinchingly, he saw what seemed a puzzle and a wonder to him, but he could not speak.

The next moment Clara sprang almost at a bound from the door to his neck, which she clasped tightly, kissing him with all the wild affec[illegible] childhood.

"One moment, my dear boy," said Hawkesle[illegible] restraining Walter, who had been with difficul[illegible] induced to let his sister make the first rush in[illegible]

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their father's arms. "Papa is not well, as I told you—he has been travelling a long way."

"Let him go, Charles dear," said the better judging mother, and Walter's head was upon his father's cheek.

Beatrice passed across to her husband, and led him from the room. But as they went out, she turned for a moment, and looking at the children, now locked in Arthur's arms, she said:

"There is one more wanting there, darling, and please God we will see her there yet."

And Beatrice ran up to her own nursery, and had a great cry over her own baby.

(To be continued.)

LIFE IN MASSACHUSETTS.

Life in Massachusetts is at this day as unlike what it was in my boyhood as it then was unlike the life of colonial times. I am not referring to the changes which are wrought by lapse of years in every rising country; the growth of villages into towns, and towns into great cities; the turning of log-houses into frame-houses, and of frame-houses into stone or brick dwellings; the increase of shipping in the bay, the blasting away of the rocks, and the disappearance of the woods. What I mean is, that our social tranquillity is not what it was; the commonwealth is agitated and troubled; the old brotherhood of the citizens is broken up. I will not speak of a golden age in regard to any Christian society; but our silver age of rural peace and prosperous activity in industry and enjoyment has given way to a brazen period of conflict—a strife of passions, trials of patriotism too severe for many of us, and alarm and sorrow among those who have preserved most of the valour and devotedness of the Forefathers in whom the region glories. A little of my own experience will show how this change has come about.

I grew up on the shores of the Bay, among people who considered that the days of romance were over for our country, and that we had only to mind our own business and worship the Union to be the most glorious nation ever heard of in the world's history. The traditions of our period of romance were zealously preserved, as a kind of interest which would never recur; and, when at school at Marblehead, I used to hear stories which did indeed show how life had changed its conditions in one or two generations. There were stories of the woe caused in the place by the British press-gangs, and of the murder of a British officer on this service by the owner of a sloop who gave timely notice that he meant mischief, if driven to it, and then kept his word. There were stories innumerable of the young men who took to privateering, or to the navy, in the revolutionary war, and of the strange variety of accidents and adventures in which most of them perished. In my time, the nine hundred widows of these men were probably all in their graves; but I heard how they suffered after the close of the war, and did not know which way to turn themselves to bring up their children in a place so ruined as Marblehead was by the war. All that distress was over in my time. As I lay on the rocks above the glorious Bay, looking over towards Nahant on the one hand, or Cape Ann on the other, or out towards the main, I could hear the hammers busy in the ship-yards, or the ox-teams bringing down the granite from the quarries for shipment, or the cry of the sailors at the capstans, or the hum of voices from the wharf; and I saw the smacks returning with their loads of cod or mackerel, and the boys in their boats putting off with cargoes of fish-heads and seaweed to sell as manure at the farms along the coast; and, far out, the merchantmen coming in from the main, not showing till they arrived in the middle of the Bay whether they were making for Boston port or bound our way—for Salem or Marblehead or Gloucester. Beyond the casualties of sea-life there was nothing to interfere with the tranquillity of existence. There were no poor, except a sot here and there; there was work and profit for everybody; and everybody worked and profited, and got on in the world. Like all such prosperous societies, that of Marblehead and every other well-to-do town and village got up some grievances and strifes. The Beverley people were despised by their neighbours of Marblehead for their quietness, which was called want of spirit; and, on the other hand, Beverley warned its rising generation against the restlessness, turbulence, and vulgar democratic spirit of Marblehead. Quiet Manchester, again, with its little lake and water-lilies, and its sweet woods, where pic-nic parties went for magnolia blossoms, which grew nowhere else in the State—quiet Manchester, with its population of cabinet-makers, busy all the year round with its seasoned woods, making furniture for all the great southern cities—never knew what agitation was, from one ten years to another, except when a cargo of furniture was lost on the way to New Orleans, or some heresy appeared to have sprung up in the society of the place. This has always been a great resource against stagnation in the settlements of New England. When there is nothing else to fidget about, it is generally possible that some Arminian heretic is living amongst Calvinists, or that some lax individual is on friendly terms with a Roman Catholic; or, at least, that some young pastor has said something questionable, in or out of the pulpit, or has not left the room quickly enough at some host's house when the music struck up for dancing. Theological breezes are always springing up, in town and country, and wherever men live. If I paid holiday visits near the quarries, where lone houses of rough granite were niched into precipices, and nothing grew but the grass at the threshold, and barberry bushes among the stones, and small orchards in corners where the rain-drip and little twisting streams had deposited soil enough for apple-trees to strike root, I was pretty sure to hear of some alarm of unsoundness of faith in some neighbour. The white school-house, with its green blinds, stood alone on the grassy knoll; and the dark powder-house, where the powder for blasting was kept, stood alone on its rock, apart from human dwellings; and it has now and then occurred to me to doubt under which of these solitary roofs there was most of an explosive commodity—seeing how the school teachers were watched as to their

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orthodoxy, by their neighbours or by each other, and how even the children afforded material for speculation and dispute. The virulence of the theological temper was a fair measure of the general tranquillity of the times. So it was all round the coast, whether one crossed to the glistering sandy region which formed the south of Massachusetts Bay, or turned to its northern point, towards Cape Ann, where the people are almost all fishermen, and strangers go to eat chowder—a stew of fish, milk, and potatoes—and where the lustre of sea, sky, and air is like that of Greece or Syria. Where the sunrises are like openings into heaven, and the sea and islands on summer evenings are like a melting vision, there were households weeping under the persecution of neighbours, and virtuous citizens quailing under the censures of church authorities. So it was in towns like Lynn, where the people spent half their time on their land, manuring it with fish-refuse and weed from the shore, and the other half in their little shoe-shops (a shop to almost every house), where parents and children worked together, again for export to the South. As the granite of the Bay shore went to build hotels or piers or churches on the Gulf of Mexico; and as our furniture went to adorn houses in all the cotton States, and our cod and herrings are wanted on plantations beside the great rivers, so do millions of pairs of shoes travel in the same direction, for the benefit of large populations who would otherwise go barefoot. In busier scenes than Lynn can show the spirit of society was the same; and so it was in the quietest of all. When the great mills had arisen, and hundreds of well-dressed and educated girls went to earn money for a time; and when they had built boarding-houses for their own use, and a church, and a lecture-room and library, the uniform prosperity of the time was shown by the resort to theological differences for the agitation which some people cannot live without. In the interior of the State, where the lone homestead, with its little fields about it and its wooded hill behind it, overlooks the windings of the brimming river in the wide valley—all green from the river-bank to the verge of the hanging woods—even there, where nothing can be seen that can jar on any human feeling, this theological bitterness floats, as on the air, into the most retired abodes. It is only as a sign of the absence of any engrossing public interest that I refer to this characteristic of New England life, and I shall not pursue it further than just to point to the dismal fact which the reader of epitaphs can learn for himself in some of our rural church-yards—that wherever there have been "revivals" (such as we learn took place in Ireland two or three years ago) there are graves of some young persons who have died convulsed or insane from the contagious frenzy of the hour. I know of certain graves in places among the hills, and in some of the loveliest valleys in the world, where lie the remains of some who might have lived to the verge of human life in innocence and peace, but for the cruelty of strangers who came to madden them with the terrors of superstition while professing to deal out to them the blessings of the Gospel. In the Slave States I have witnessed with disgust the religious frenzy excited among the negroes for the purpose of further enslaving them; but even that profaneness is less harrowing to one's feelings than the spectacle of intelligent and virtuous lads and lasses, healthful in mind and with hopeful lives before them, sinking under the coarse spiritual quackery of pretenders, who usurp the function of judging, and announcing salvation or damnation. I will say no more; there they lie—those victims; and I cannot but remember that, if they had lived up to this time, a genuine excitement, virtuous, safe, and equal to all their energies, would have given them enough to feel and to do and to hear for the salvation of the nation's soul.

Reverting for a moment to my school-days,—there was a bridge in our neighbourhood, to which visitors were taken to see where the first resistance was made to the British, in the War of Independence. I knew old people who had heard from their fathers of the landing at Marblehead of 150 soldiers from Boston, who were sent to seize some military stores laid up either in Danvers or Salem. It was an exciting thing to hear of the marching of this corps from one point to another, and of the gathering of the militia to watch and oppose them, and of the foes coming face to face at this bridge, between Salem and Danvers. Our militia had taken up the planks of the bridge; the British commander threatened bloodshed; but a compromise was effected by mutual acquaintance. The planks were replaced, and the officer with a few men passed over, so as to escape the imputation of having failed to cross, and immediately turned back empty-handed as regarded the stores. The compromise did no good. The conflict at Lexington and Concord presently followed. The strife was one which could not be averted.

It is not without reason that I refer to these traditional anecdotes. While I listened to them in childhood, I felt—as most boys do in such cases—a keen grief that such times were over and gone, so that my generation would have no opportunity for such displays of valour, and such civic heroism as our fathers gave forth to be treasured up in immortal tradition. Yet I have lived to witness a struggle at Concord, scarcely less portentous than that in which the first blood was shed in our Great Rebellion. I have lived to see, before my hair is grey, a second revolution which may require from the citizens as much public virtue as the first.

In the midst of our prosperity and quietude the occasion has been growing. I have shown that much of the industry of my State is employed by the South. Partly from this stake in the Union, and partly from the idolatry of the Union in which Americans are brought up, my fellow citizens have for many years pawned their country and their own liberties for immediate peace and decent appearance. Those who warned them of the encroachments of the South, of the guilt of their implication with slavery, and of the certain ruin of the Republic if its principles were not vindicated, were persecuted; and our liberties were given away as fast as the Southern political leaders asked for them. These disgraces must be imputed to the city population, almost

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entirely; to the political men, who aspired to greatness at Washington; to the merchants and their whole army of clerks, who were trammelled by their trade; to the manufacturers—great and small—who sold their wares at the South; and to the clergy and other professional men who desired that the Union should last their time, and considered it virtuous to assume that there was nothing the matter till the last moment. The country people were more like their forefathers, and truer sons of the Republic. The yeomanry of Massachusetts were always the sheet-anchor of liberty,—not only in their own State, but throughout the free States.

I am not writing history, but a picture; and I therefore pass over the course of events by which my native State lost her honour, and prepared for herself the penalty of retrieving it. I say nothing here of the efforts of governors and municipal officers to stifle free speech; of the mobbing of abolitionists; of the defeat, disgrace, and broken-hearted death of Daniel Webster,—an idol easily proved to be clay. I will not stop to show how our moral decline followed, though at wide distance, that of the South, through our participation in the great crime of that region. I will pass on at once to that day in 1854 which showed to all men of sense that we were to have more revolutions than one; and which proved, among other things, that there was a way out of guilt and humiliation for us, prepared by the handful of patriots in the midst of us whom we had been loading with contumely for twenty years.

On the night of Friday, May 26th, 1854, the city of Boston presented a truly revolutionary appearance. The alarm-bell was clanging, shaking men's hearts within them. As many of the citizens as Faneuil Hall would hold (the vast edifice in which much of the old revolutionary business was transacted) were in Faneuil Hall, listening to speeches which stirred to the depths the souls of those who had any. In the Court House was a negro, named Anthony Burns, who had been claimed as a run-away slave by two men from the South, one of whom called himself Burns's owner. On the steps of the Court House was a throng of men, relieving each other at working a battering-ram,—a heavy beam under which the doors must give way. Then there was the crash of wood, the jingle of falling glass, pistol-shots from within and without, and cries from the crowd, running through the whole scale of the passions. The clanging bell topped the din, and swung the news into the country. There was a want of concert among the citizens which was fatal to the reputation of the city.

By the old law of the State, no Massachusetts man could be made a slave-catcher. By the then recent Fugitive Slave-law, every man in the republic must be a slave-catcher, when called upon, or bear the consequences. Not only did several leading citizens insist on the observance of the new law, but those who held to the old one were undecided what course to take. Some were peacemen; and of those who were not, none had a plan ready for the emergency. Some hoped that the kidnappers themselves would offer terms: and, at one time, the terrified owner, Suttle, demanded only the value of his slave. The money was raised immediately; but in the short interval, Suttle had heard from Washington. The President told him to hold out, secure of support; and he then refused any money for his chattel. So passed Friday night. On Saturday morning, the whole military force of the district was seen to be concentrated on the Court House. It was surrounded by a chain (an almost incredible sight in free Massachusetts), and armed and guarded within and without; and the fugitive was handcuffed and surrounded by soldiers. His face, that day—wistful and sad in the extreme—will be remembered as one of the signs of the revolution. Time was obtained for preparing his defence; and Saturday was spent in committing the ringleaders of the battery on the Court House doors, and in holding an inquest on a special constable who fell in the medley of pistol-shots. On Sunday the prayers of all the congregations in the city were asked by and for the fugitive; and sermons were preached worthy of Lutheran times. Notices were sent to all parts of the State, desiring the yeomanry to come and see what was doing, but *this time* with only the arms that God gave them. On Monday they came pouring into the city,—some from a distance of eighty miles. Those who did not arrive were holding meetings in their own districts, to consider how to protect the old liberties of the commonwealth, now cast under the feet of kidnappers.

The proceedings were protracted nearly through the week; but everybody knew that argument was useless. A gross mistake of date in the claimant's affidavit was passed over, and the Federal Commissioner pronounced judgment as desired by his employers. Burns was to be delivered up.

How to get him away was the difficulty. No wharf in the city would allow any vessel to approach to fetch him. But a fellow took upon himself to let one without the proprietor's knowledge. He was dismissed from his employment, but immediately lodged in a comfortable government office. Thus did a steamer lie in readiness. Cannon were planted in the square; the military lined the streets down to the wharf; wherever there was a foothold besides, from chimney-tops and the yards of ships down to the kerbstones in the streets, there was a compact crowd. The State-flag was hung out in mourning; and women in black filled the balconies and windows. The shops were shut, the people were silent, till the slave appeared surrounded by an army of guards; and then the loud hiss and muttered curse rose and swelled as they proceeded. Burns was shipped off; and the merchants on 'Change declared their opinion that he was the last fugitive who would ever be delivered up, in opposition to the old law of the State. On all hands, however, we saw the free blacks, our neighbours, escaping to Canada; and they were not much consoled by hearing that Burns had been purchased, and set free, and was selling books in the lobby of the State House of Ohio.

Since that day, the citizens of many of the States must have been aware that they are living in revolutionary times. During the seven years

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that have passed from that day, life in Massachusetts has presented a new aspect.

The next commotion, after an interval of six years, during which there was a chronic agitation going on, concerned the rights and liberties of a white citizen. The liberties of the white citizens could hardly be more closely implicated than they were in Burns's case; for the question which so convulsed the public mind was less of the suffering of an individual negro, remanded to a bondage which some of the citizens regarded as legal and defensible, than of the humiliation of Massachusetts in being compelled to render up a fugitive, in contravention of the old laws of the commonwealth. The prostration of the freedom, character, and reputation of the leading State of the Union, was the galling affliction. Next time, the conflict was occasioned by an attack on a white citizen.

After John Brown's raid in Virginia, towards the end of 1859, the Federal Government took the opportunity to try to extend its rights over the States, and to narrow the field of State Rights—at least in the North. There was so much talk of what should be done to citizens of this, that, and the other State, who might be conjectured to have been implicated with John Brown, that several leading men in half a dozen States fled to Canada or to Europe. Others chose to remain at home, and there, among their neighbours, resist all unconstitutional demands, and take the consequences. The Senate at Washington, having a committee sitting on the John Brown affair, summoned several of the suspected Northern citizens to repair to Washington, to give evidence before the Committee. Some went, some refused to go, and some disappeared for a time. Of those who went to Washington, one (Thaddeus Hyatt, of New York) refused to answer questions which he was assured by high legal authority were unconstitutional. He underwent an imprisonment of some months, and was awkwardly dismissed by the Senate when the hot weather rendered his imprisonment dangerous to his life. Another obeyed the summons, keeping from everybody the secret that he knew nothing whatever of John Brown or his schemes, and when examined, told the Committee nothing of what they wanted, and so much of what they did not want that they would have been glad to get rid of him some time before he stopped his disclosures. Another, a schoolmaster at Concord, Massachusetts, being summoned, refused, on good legal advice, to go to Washington. I need not enter here on the grounds of the opinion that his course was a constitutionally sound one. It is rather a satire on our political and social condition that such a conflict should have happened at the town of Concord. Our forefathers named the place, as they named our grandparents Truth, Mercy, Patience,—not considering whether the child might not turn out a liar, or revengeful, or hasty and insubordinate. In England, Concord is perhaps best known as the place where Emerson lives; but among us, the prominent association with the name is that of two battles which have been fought there—not very grand as to the numbers engaged, but extremely important for other reasons. The first was at the opening of the war of Independence; the second skirmish was on the 3rd of April, 1860.

The schoolmaster, Mr. Sanborn, had been calling on a friend that evening, returned home about nine o'clock, put on his study gown and slippers, and sat down to his desk. After a time there was a knock at the house door; a stranger inquired for Mr. Sanborn, and engaged him on pretence of business, while several more entered the house. No one of them would tell his own name, or that of any of the others; but they professed to come on Federal authority, for the purpose of arresting him. Mr. Sanborn called for the warrant; and one of the party began to read from a paper; but before he had read many lines, the stoutest man of the party produced a pair of handcuffs. No resistance had been offered; but the handcuffs (which were too small) were put on by force; the stout officer gave a loud whistle, and more men rushed into the house, carrying off Sanborn, without hat or shoes, to a carriage which stood in the street. Their efforts to thrust him in were in vain, for he resisted with his feet (being unable to use his hands) so vigorously as to damage the vehicle, and set the horses moving. His shouts, and by this time, his sister's cries, brought the neighbours to their doors and windows. Sanborn's pupils ran up and down the street, knocking at the doors; and some of the women took possession of the carriage and horses in a thoroughly practical manner. One or two sat on the steps and in the inside; and another got hold of the whip, and started the horses. The team was unmanageable; and yet more unmanageable were the tradesmen who, in a few minutes, were gathered round the strangers. Sanborn held his hands above his head; and the gleam of the handcuffs in the light of the candles which were brought out was not a pacifying sight. A quick-witted citizen had run, on the first alarm, to the house of the well-known Judge Hoar, where he obtained a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, under which the Deputy-Sheriff took Sanborn from the hands of the strangers, at the end of half an hour from his being forced into the street. About the middle of that time, one of the Federal officers began to read a warrant, signed and endorsed by the Vice-President and the Sergeant-at-arms of the Senate at Washington, authorising one Silas Carlton to apprehend Sanborn. Silas Carlton was now obliged to declare himself; but the names of the strangers were obtained with extreme difficulty. Some of them lost temper; and this did not improve their case. One who used threats was quietly turned over upon a sand-bank, where the rest were presently sprawling on the top of him. When the town-bells began clanging, the old revolutionary time seemed to have come back. One lady raised the hat of one of the strangers, saying she must learn his face, that she might know it on a future occasion. Another seized a foe by the beard, to compel him to release Sanborn. A third hung upon a ruffian till her clothes were torn.

The object now was to detain the men till a warrant could be obtained from Justice Ball to arrest the strangers for assault and battery. Before it arrived they had made their way to

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their carriage, jumped in, and fled. The crowd followed to the outskirts of Lexington, but could not overtake them. That they got off unhurt was owing to the zeal and authority of leading citizens in the crowd, who promised that justice should be had in a legal way, and induced no small number to put away weapons, drop stones, and abstain from blows. One life was lost. A resident, predisposed to apoplexy, had a fatal fit in consequence of the excitement.

When the antecedent circumstances became known, the future course of the inhabitants seemed clear enough. Two Federal officials in Concord had arranged matters for kidnapping Sanborn. Silas Carlton had been playing the spy for some time, and had been the guest of one of these officials. On the critical evening, the party of strangers had left Lexington at half-past six, in two carriages; and, on their arrival at Concord, some of them hid themselves in a barn, within hail of Sanborn's house. All being ready, a fellow tried the schoolmaster's door, which was unfastened, entered, and encountered the servant to whom he said that he came with an important paper, which he wanted to show Mr. Sanborn,—an application for a situation in his service. On his return, Mr. Sanborn was told this; and he was therefore only too ready to go to the door, when a small young man, looking anything but formidable, tendered a letter, asking Mr. Sanborn's aid in obtaining a situation for him,—"worthy young man" as he was,—but in reality, a son of the United States Marshal. During the parley, the strong men rushed in.

The case was brought before the Supreme Court, and the arrest was pronounced illegal. Then followed public meetings, and various demonstrations by which the Federal Government was warned to attempt no more aggressions on the rights of the citizens. There were also private movements of at least equal importance. It was discovered that the date of the warrant was the 16th of February; so that the scheme had been some time maturing. There was reason to believe that evil-disposed or purchaseable people within the State were in the plot. If so, a repetition of such outrages was too probable: and no time was lost in guarding against the danger. Once warned, the men of Massachusetts, and the women too, can take very good care of their liberties; and arrangements were speedily made by which Mr. Sanborn and every other citizen was rendered secure from being kidnapped, or forced out of his own State.

The more conspicuous events which have taken place since last April have dispersed the perils and plots of a year ago: and we have now to determine how to release ourselves from all implication with the fatal institution of Slavery which has spoiled the aspect of life in all parts of the American Union. I am aware that European observers cannot fail to remark on the untruthfulness of the course by which evils, difficulties, strifes, a decline of public and private morality, and an utter corruption of the patriotism of our public bodies have been ascribed to every cause but the real one. That hypocrisy is over now; and a great relief it is to honest men. The great object of the commonwealth in which I dwell now is to uphold and establish the principles and methods of genuine republicanism. I cannot doubt that sister States enough will join us to sustain the work of our fathers and the honour of our country: but it must be long before we see times as quiet as those which are gone. Life in Massachusetts may be a life worth living for those who have strong hearts and pure hands, adequate to revolutionary times; but it will be something very unlike that scene of temporal prosperity and spiritual anxiety,—of mingled industry and cultivated leisure,—of natural beauty, and social delights,—of citizen-pride and Christian thankfulness, which it has till recently been to every one who is privileged to sign himself A Son of the Pilgrims.

CAPTAIN MACHEATH.

The Dean of St. Patrick's had suggested to Mr. Gay, that a Newgate pastoral would make "an odd pretty sort of thing." This was after the success of the poet's "Shepherd's Week," loudly applauded by the town as a just representation of country manners; it is rather, perhaps, an idyll of a Dresden china chimney-ornament pattern, pleasantly decked with humour and good-nature, little more life-like, though infinitely more attractive reading, than the tedious bucolics of Pope and Phillips. Gay, "a little round French abbé of a man—sleek, soft-handed and soft-hearted," as Mr. Thackeray describes him, eat and drank, and lounged, and smiled over the notion. Gradually it took root, the plant, however, appearing above the ground not quite as the sower of the seed had expected. The pastoral first became a comedy, then it put forth strange branches in the shape of songs—the author had almost unconsciously invented a new kind of entertainment. He had founded the English ballad opera, a compound of singing and speaking. Says the Beggar, who appears in the introduction and gives his name to the work, "I have not made my opera unnatural, like those in vogue, for I have no recitative; I have introduced the similes that are in all your celebrated operas,—the Swallow, the Moth, the Bee, the Ship, the Flower, &c.," and, "as I have consented to have neither prologue nor epilogue, it must be allowed an opera in all its forms." Still it was not until the last but one of the rehearsals that it was determined, at the suggestion of Rich the manager, that there should be musical accompaniments to the songs. The wits who had attended the rehearsals regularly had objected to this introduction, but on the Duchess of Queensberry (the poet's patroness) giving her voice in favour of the music, the manager's proposition was ultimately adopted.

Dr. Swift did not much fancy the changes that had come over the project. The poet's best friends were doubtful about the merits and the probable success of the work. Mr. Cibber had at once rejected it. Mr. Congreve read over the manuscript and declared oracularly that the thing "would either take greatly or be damned confoundedly." The Duke of Queensberry said, "This is a very odd thing, Gay; it is either a very good thing or a very bad thing." Meanwhile the manager was busy enough about the fitting pro-

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luction of the "Beggar's Opera." The manager mbalmed in Pope's *aqua fortis* verses as one of he ministers of dulness:

> Immortal Rich! how calm he sits at ease,
> Midst snows of paper and fierce hail of peas;
> And proud his mistress' order to perform,
> Rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm.

There was much doubt behind the scenes; there vas great difference of opinion concerning the new vork of Mr. Gay. The great Mr. Quin, "a stage Leviathan," as the Rosciad calls him, who knew he public taste pretty well, or was supposed to do o, made great question as to the success of the lay, and there were echoes enough of the eminent erformer's opinion. If Mr. Quin had his doubts about Mr. Gay, Mr. Gay had possibly his suspiions about Mr. Quin. He was cast for Captain Macheath. Was he light enough for the part? Writes Churchill:

> His eyes in gloomy sockets taught to roll,
> Proclaimed the sullen habit of his soul;
> Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
> Too proud for tenderness—too dull for rage.
> * * * * *
> In fancied scenes, as in life's real plan,
> He could not for a moment sink the man;
> In whate'er cast his character was laid,
> Self, still, like oil upon the surface played;
> Nature in spite of all his skill crept in:
> Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff,—still 'twas Quin.

Could he sing the songs? It was a convivial age, and every glass was preceded by a toast, a sentinent, or a song. Gentlemen grew very musical over their bottles. You were obliged to sing then, somehow, bacchanally or sentimentally. It was part of proper claret-drinking and the pleasure of the evening. Quin knew nothing of music, but he could comply tolerably with the requirements of his society. He could "tip a stave," as the phrase went, whenever his turn to be harmonious came round. So he was to get as well as he could through Macheath.

Gay himself had some musical knowledge; like Goldsmith, he played on the flute, and had been thereby enabled to adapt, very happily, some of the airs of his opera. Possibly he was afraid of Quin's singing, and Quin began to be afraid of it himself. It was the last rehearsal but one. Macheath stumbles through his airs. The business of the morning over, a bright ringing voice is heard trolling out the tunes at the back of the stage.

"There's some one, Mr. Gay," says Mr. Quin, "who can do you more justice than I can."

A tall sturdy gentleman comes forward with a brilliant eye, strong black brows, laughing mouth, and a gay swaggering devil-may-care manner. He goes through some of Macheath's part muscularly, humorously, dashingly.

"It's Tom Walker, Mr. Gay," Mr. Quin continues; "I'll resign Macheath to him if you please."

"Thank you," answers Gay, "Tom Walker shall be my hero."

He was born in 1698, in the parish of St. Ann's, Soho, and received some education at the private academy of a Mr. Medow, near the residence of his father, Francis Walker. A mere boy he was found by the great actor, Mr. Booth, the original Cato, playing the part of Paris in the droll of "The Siege of Troy." Hence came the jest that Booth found him a hero, and Gay dubbed him a highwayman. Booth recommended him to the manager of Drury Lane, where he appeared as Lorenzo, in the "Jew of Venice," in 1716, and in the following year played Charles in Colley Cibber's "Non-Juror," that is, Molière's "Tartuffe." In the season of 1727-8, as we have seen, he was a member of Mr. Rich's company at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn, and was entrusted with the chief character in Mr. Gay's opera.

The play began. The author's friends were about the house in strong force, and anxious enough as to the result. The audience were at first puzzled—gradually they grew pleased.

"It will do!—it must do!" cried the Duke of Argyle; "I see it in the eyes of them."

Pope, who was in the next box, overheard this, and felt more at ease in regard to his good friend Gay, for the Duke was reputed to have a "particular research in discovering the taste of the public." Still success was by no means certain, even after the close of the first act. Macklin, who was present, stated that it was not until after the chorus song in the second act—"Let us take to the Road"—that the applause became universal and unbounded. This air being "the grand march in Rinaldo with drums and trumpets," the audience took up and cheered lustily, while the highwaymen, according to the stage direction, "load their pistols, stick them in their girdles, walk round and go off singing." The stage was just as Hogarth represents it in his picture. Manly Tom Walker as Macheath, Lavinia Fenton (with pretty face and figure, and silvery plaintive voice, dressed with a Quaker's simplicity, afterwards to be Duchess of Bolton), as Polly; Hippisley as Peachum; Hall as Lockit. Noblemen in velvet coats, gold lace, and blue ribbons, sit at the sides of the stage listening to Polly's delicious singing of "O, ponder well." Fashionable gentlemen are in the sidebox; Sir Thomas Robinson, tall and lean, and Sir Robert Fagge, the famous horse-racer. "We hear a million of stories," writes Swift from Dublin, "about the opera—of the applause of the song '*that* was levelled at me' when the two great ministers were in a box together, and all the world staring at them. I am heartily glad your opera hath mended your purse, though perhaps it may spoil your court." The two ministers were, of course, Lord Townshend and Sir Robert Walpole. The audience *would* identify them with Peachum and Lockit, especially in the quarrel scene,—*would* see political allusions everywhere. Many of these the author had contemplated; others were probably accidental. In the first song the lines—

> The statesman, because he's so great,
> Thinks his trade as honest as mine—

were held to refer to Walpole, and when in the enumeration of the gang, Peachum comes to "Robin of Bagshot, alias Bluff Bob, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty," the theatre rung with laughter and applause. Macklin says that Sir Robert could never, with any satisfaction, be present at the representations, on account of the

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many points which the audience referred to him. But on the first night at the words—"When you censure the age"—all eyes were turned to his box and the song was loudly encored. Sir Robert, with a wise good humour on the completion of the song, encored it a second time himself, joining in the general applause; this so pleased the audience that they gave him a huzza from all parts of the house.

Mr. Gay's opera was a great success, and a success that did not weaken and expire, but grew and lived more and more every night. The author wrote to his friend, Dr. Swift, "To-night is the fifteenth time of acting the Beggar's Opera, and it is thought it will run a fortnight longer. I made no interest, either for approbation or money, nor hath any one been pressed to take tickets for my benefit; notwithstanding which, I shall make an addition to my fortune of between six and seven hundred pounds." But the fortnight passed, and another fortnight, and another; and still the Beggar's Opera drew crowded houses. On the *seventy-second* night, Tom Walker happened to be a little imperfect in his part. Rich observed this. He was not a very polite man—perhaps, as a rule, managers are not polite: he was not very refined; he always said *Mister*, in addressing anyone—never *Sir*. He attacked Tom Walker on his coming from the stage:

"Holloa, Mister," he said, "I think your memory ought to be pretty good by this time."

"So it is," said Walker, "but zounds, sir, you don't expect my memory to last for ever!"

Perhaps there were reasons for Mr. Walker's infirmity. A gay, pleasant, rattling fellow, he sang the songs of his part so much to the delight of the noblemen and gentlemen of fashion on the stage, that he was solicited to repeat them at convivial tables after the theatre. It became a recognised thing among the bloods and bucks of the time to entertain Captain Macheath at supper-parties. The claret circulated—the songs were rehearsed—the punch-bowl smoked upon the board—and Mr. Walker found himself with a bad headache on the morrow, unsteady in his gait and imperfect in his part. The poor fellow is ruining himself by sure degrees. It is even a chance, when he arrives at the theatre, whether he will be in a fit state to come upon the scene; dreadfully fuddled with his potations, he is often compelled, we are told, "to eat sandwiches (or, as they were then called, anchovy toasts) behind the scenes, to alleviate the fumes of the liquor."

Still the opera prospers, and Polly has her salary doubled—from the receipt of fifteen shillings per week, she is promoted to thirty shillings. The author was better paid then than the actor. A later Polly (Mrs. Billington, in 1801) was engaged at three thousand pounds for the season, and a clear benefit. The opera was produced at the chief towns in England, and in Wales, Scotland, Ireland, finding its way even to Minorca. Swift, at Dublin, writes:—"We are as full of it, *pro modulo nostro*, as London can be—continually acting and houses crammed, and the Lord Lieutenant several times there—laughing his heart out." "Get me Polly's *mezzo-tinto*. Lord! how the schoolboys and University lads adore you at this juncture. Have you made as many men laugh as ministers can make weep?" "The Beggar's Opera hath knocked down Gulliver. I hope to see Pope's Dulness (Dunciad) knock down the Beggar's Opera, but not till it hath fully done its job." It was said that the Dean had written Lockit's song of "When you censure the age:" that "Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre," was contributed by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams; "The modes of the Court" (Macheath's song to the tune of Lillibullero) by Lord Chesterfield; and "Gamesters and lawyers are jugglers alike," by Mr. Fortescue, the Master of the Rolls. The run of the play was something quite unprecedented at a time when a theatrical audience was not an ever-changing one, constantly recruited and renewed by visitors from the country, but consisted very much of the same people, night after night, returning to the theatre.

In addition to the picture by Hogarth already mentioned, in which Lucy and Polly are interceding with their fathers for the life of Macheath, the artist painted for Horace Walpole another scene—the highwayman going to execution, and made at least two copies of this for Rich. Further, he drew caricatures of it in one print, representing the actors with the heads of animals, and Apollo and the Muses fast asleep under the stage; and in another, Parnassus turned into a bear-garden, Pegasus drawing a dust-cart, and the Muses sifting cinders. And the ladies of fashion carried about with them the favourite songs of the opera on their fans; and houses were furnished with screens decorated with the words and music, or with portraits of the performers, or with scenes from the drama. For one season, Italian Opera was driven out of England, though it had been triumphant over every other entertainment for ten years. Portraits of Polly and Macheath adorned every print shop, and were in great demand. And a Life of Miss Fenton appeared—pamphlets were made of her sayings and jests, and books published of letters and verses to her.

The opera was played at private theatricals to enthusiastic drawing-rooms. "If you are getting up the Beggar's Opera," Mrs. Delany writes to her sister, "pray let me play Mrs. Slammerkin!" This is quite a subordinate character, but was probably made amusing by over-dressing and ultra-fashionable manners, and extravagant dancing, as the direction has it—"à la ronde, in the French manner," with song and chorus, "Youth's the season made for joys." "Bid the drawer bring us more wine," says the Captain. "If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it."

Then came a cry that the play was immoral, and of course, after that, the boxes filled more than ever. How could any one form an opinion on the subject until he had seen the performance in question several times? Sir John Fielding declared that "fresh cargoes of highwaymen" were brought before his magistrate's chair as a consequence of Mr. Gay's opera. Dr. Herring (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), "censured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero,

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and dismissing him at last unpunished." But Dean Swift, on the other hand, commended its morality "for placing all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light. To expose vice and make people laugh with innocence does more public service than all the ministers of state, from Adam to Walpole." He attributed its success to the "peculiar merit in the writing wherein what we call the point of humour is exactly hit." Gibbon thought that the opera had tended to the *refinement of highwaymen*. Johnson, perhaps, struck a fair balance in regard to the play, when he said that it "was plainly written only to divert without any moral purpose, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil." The explanation of the success of the play is not difficult, and may be found in the entire novelty of the design, the humour of the dialogue, the charm of the songs, many of which were set to the most popular old English tunes—for instance, "Green Sleeves," "Lumps of Pudding," "Britons strike home," "Packington's Pound," "A Cobbler there was," "Bonny Dundee," "A noble race was Shenkin," &c., and the excellence of the dancing, singing, and acting. Further than these, the audience did not criticise. They did not trouble themselves to look for the moral teacher in the player. A modern burlesque prospers on its funny lines, its eccentric dances, and from its stringing together the floating favourite airs of its day. The audiences of the past and the present have many points of similarity. And it is not wonderful that the "Beggar's Opera" was a hit in its day, though it has come to be rather a theatrical curiosity in ours, with yet the old charm still dwelling like an undying perfume in its tunes. There is no beating the vitality out of real melody.

The play has gone away from us now, because we have got so clean out of the highwaymen times. Compare their Newgate with our model prison! The gentlemen of the road are almost mythical creatures to the modern generation. The opera is still played now and then—particularly on benefit nights—because of its songs and in spite of its subject; just as one might wear an old jewelled ring, because of the diamond, and in spite of its obsolete setting—good at one time, but bygone now. Well, and we accept as our Macheath a delicate modern tenor, with pendent moustache and white kid gloves, or a shapely lady-singer, spruce in buckskins and lacquered riding-boots, with pretty *mouches* on her plump cheeks, and sparkling rings on her taper fingers, and a kerchief, all lace, in her hand. Tom Walker had a different—a more difficult audience. They who lived in the days of Sixteen String Jack, Mr. John Sheppard, and Mr. Jonathan Wild, had very definite ideas about highwaymen. Who knows how many gentlemen in the boxes and pit had been stopped at Hounslow or Blackheath? They required of Mr. Walker a *bonâ-fide* highwayman, not an exquisite. He might be dashing, and loving, and glorious, still *au fond* he must be a robber. "Suspect my honour, my courage,—suspect anything but my love. May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder, while I am pursued, if I ever forsake thee." He is the highwayman all the while he is the gallant. The actor satisfied in full all the requirements of his audience. Though he knew little of music scientifically, he had a charming voice, and sang in good ballad tune, while his rollicking, gay, manly manner was inimitable. And he was not an actor of one part only, it must be understood. "In Falconbridge," says Davies, Garrick's historian, "though Garrick, Sheridan, Delane, and Barry have attempted it, they all fell short of the merits of Tom Walker." Of the gay gallant gentlemen of either tragedy or comedy he was an admirable representative, "of Polydore in the 'Orphan,' and of Belmour in the 'Old Bachelor;' it was doubtful to say which he excelled in most." He was a successful Bajazet—a good Hotspur—and he had a desire to distinguish himself as an author, or at least as an adapter. He undertook to reduce to one play, and fit for performance two tragedies, by D'Urfey, on the subject of Massaniello. For this reason he shut himself up in the empty theatre during the vacation. A comic ballad, written by Leigh, the manager, actor, and also the author of a comedy called "Kensington Gardens," attributes to him other motives for his seclusion:

> Tom Walker, his creditors meaning to chouse,
> Like an honest, good-natured young fellow;
> Resolved all the summer to stay in the house,
> And rehearse by himself—Massaniello.

Further on, the song gives hints of Mr. Walker's life and manners, and tastes:

> "So tell my young lord," said the modest young man,
> "I beg he'll invite me to dinner;
> I'll be as diverting as ever I can—
> I will, by the faith of a sinner.
> I'll mimic all actors, the worst and the best,
> I'll sing him a song—I'll crack him a jest;
> I'll make him act better than Henley the Priest."
> "I'll tell him so, sir," says Will Thomas,
> Will Thomas, &c.

It should be stated in explanation that Walker had taught Mr. Orator Henley elocution; and that Will Thomas, whose name supplies the burthen of the song, was a well-known waiter at the coffee-house in Portugal Street, opposite the stage-door of the theatre.

He turned his success in Macheath to account, by producing an imitative work, the "Quaker's Opera," at Lee and Hooper's Booth, Bartholomew Fair, 1728, immediately after the run of Mr. Gay's opera. He played the chief character in his own piece, and obtained for it a temporary favour. Two years later he produced his tragedy of the "Fate of Villainy," at Goodman's Fields, but it was poorly received. Many years later, when his dissipation had procured his discharge from Covent Garden theatre, he carried his two plays to Dublin, and prevailed upon the manager there to bring out the tragedy under the new title of "Love and Loyalty." It was played for one night only, there not being money enough received to keep the theatre open for a second performance.

This disappointment came as a fatal blow to poor Captain Macheath. Hard drinking had been

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de rigueur in his day. He had complied only too thoroughly with the mode. His constitution was terribly shattered. He was no longer the gay, vigorous boon companion; though only forty-six years of age; he was old and trembling, debauched and degraded. He outlived the coldness of the Dublin public only three days, dying in deep distress, in 1744.

In 1730 Mr. Quin, on the occasion of his benefit, resumed the part he had resigned to poor Tom Walker, and played Captain Macheath to the fullest house that had then ever been known. He received upwards of two hundred pounds. His success prompted him to a further musical essay, and in 1732 he performed Lycomedes in Gay's posthumous opera of "Achilles" for eighteen nights. Lavinia Fenton left the stage after playing the part of Polly for one season—the most remarkable of her successors were Mrs. Arne, Mrs. Billington, and Madame Mara—the last lady rendering the part, of course, in broken English! More modern singers of the charming "O, ponder well," and "Cease your funning," it is not necessary to enumerate.

For his second part of the Newgate pastoral "Polly," (which, however, the Chamberlain refused to license), Gay received by a subscription nearly thrice as much as the profit of the Beggar's Opera. Soon after this he was taken into the house of the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, with whom he passed the remainder of his life. "Sure," as Fenton said of him, "of a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day." What poet could want more? DUTTON COOK.

AN HOUR WITH THE DEAD.

In silence of the starry night
  The long-lost came once more!
But came not with the soulless look
  Her coffin'd image wore.
For Life and Love were in her eyes—
  Their warmth upon her cheek;
And in the sweet familiar tones,
  Her lips a greeting speak!

Again her face to me is press'd
  In all its girlish charms,
And pent-up cares of troubled years
  Are wept within her arms!
And yet it seemeth, as we talk,
  The "old times" come not near;
But we have met, as meet we should,
  Could she indeed be here.

And how those parted hours have pass'd,
  I tell with strange relief;
And hear her gentle words console,
  Yet chide, such useless grief.
Half sad, half glad, that weary days,
  Which I must know again,
Her whisper'd "Hope! have Faith! and Love!"
  Shall wile of half their pain!

I wake, to watch across my couch
  The moon-rays faintly gleam,
And ask my soul,—Can this indeed
  Be nothing more than *dream?*
Or comes some pitying spirit by,
  Who, watching "them that weep,"
Speaks, in the soft tones of the loved,
  Sweet soothings while we sleep!

LOUISA CROW.

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"WANTED A SECRETARY!"

For no less a period than two years of my life, the above notice of a requirement was a source of the greatest anxiety to me. It lightened my purse, undermined my constitution, shattered my nerves, deprived me of sleep, and reduced me from a sleek, slightly obese, good-tempered member of society, to a thin, angular, irritable specimen of humanity. Doubtless this statement may astonish those ignorant persons who look upon advertisements for officials put forth by the directors or committees of institutions and public charities as offers of great and splendid prizes open to universal competition, and as protests against the close borough government system.

On the 16th of December, 1856, I first began reading the advertisement sheet of the leading journal, and the subsequent study that I have made of that remarkable daily addition to our literature, convinces me that however matter of fact the age may be, a large section of the community is still given to romancing, especially when they have their own services or wares to dispose of. It was not for the purpose of being asked whether I bruised my oats? or mangled my wurzel? or if I knew where I should dine? or to be told that no vent-pegs are required, and that there need be no more grey hairs, or to be requested to cough no more, or invited to make my fortune by sending thirty postage stamps to M. B., or to master the facts that plain cooks were in demand at seventeen, and accomplished governesses at twenty pounds a year, or to learn that Flo. is informed that the "Mystery is solved," and that the small steel purse, large old key, and shoe-horn, shall be no longer detained; or to read the intelligible question put to Box by Cox: "Esdo uryo emhotr owkn ryoeu otu ndasi ehtl enmga dslo?" that I looked over the advertisements on the memorable day in question.

No! it was not with the view of obtaining information of that kind. My object was to obtain something to do. I had just three hundred and seventy-nine pounds, seventeen shillings and two-pence, balance left at my banker's, the remains of a two thousand pounds legacy, the bulk of which had gone to the completion of an invention which an ungrateful government and an equally ungrateful country refused to believe would be of the slightest possible value to any one. As the aforesaid sum would not, even with strict economy, maintain myself, wife, and two remarkably healthy, and I may add, hungry pledges of affection with which matrimony had blessed me, for any length of time, it was absolutely necessary to perform that operation which is generally alluded to as "looking about you." I, therefore, proceeded to look about me, and surveyed first a situation offered by a friend, of eighty pounds a year, office hours from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. This prospect was not cheering, and once more I looked about me and discovered a partnership in a newly established concern, which only required an extra few hundreds of capital to make it a perfect mine of wealth, but a nearer view convinced me that there would be a very great deal of sinking required before the gold was forthcoming. Again it was necessary to look about me, and this time I was, as I then deemed, rewarded by the sight of a most gorgeous landscape.

"Why don't you try for a secretaryship? There are lots advertised in the papers," was the suggestion made by an acquaintance, and certainly the appointment was exactly suited to me. Easy work, good pay, and a position in society; it was the very thing, and I was admirably fitted for the post. My blandness was proverbial, my person portly enough to be imposing, and in face I was neither young-looking enough to create the impression of being too juvenile, nor old-looking enough to raise doubts as to my activity and energy. Decidedly I had looked about to some purpose, and it was with a certain feeling of nervousness that I took up the advertisement portion of the "Times," on the 16th December, 1856.

Three minutes sufficed. I read:

WANTED A SECRETARY.—The office of Secretary to the Gaffer Grey Institution is now vacant. Salary £250 a-year, with residence. Candidates are requested to send in their applications accompanied by testimonials, addressed to the Committee, at the office of the Institution, Great Gaffer Street, on or before the 1st of January next.

What the Gaffer Grey Institution might be, was a matter of little moment. To me it was simply a society representing two hundred and fifty pounds a year and a house to live in, and without even stopping to dispatch my second rasher of bacon, I peremptorily ordered the children up-stairs, and began the composition of my application for the appointment. Some of the letters I wrote were too short and dry, others too lengthy and not sufficiently explicit, and one I recollect was an auto-biographical sketch of my life, anything but brief, with a collateral episode upon my wife's family, the mention of whose high connections I innocently supposed would go far to establish my perfect competency. At length I succeeded in producing a satisfactory epistle. The next step was to procure the testimonials, an important matter, and one requiring consideration. First, I had to select from my acquaintances and friends the most influential. There was my wife's fifteenth cousin, a peer of the realm; then there was the M.P. who once undertook to bring my invention before the authorities of the Horse Guards; then there was an old school-fellow, now head of a large firm in the City; next my solicitors, long-established practitioners in Lincoln's Inn; then the family doctor; and, finally, my own cousin, who had just been inducted into a very comfortable incumbency, and who was esteemed a rising luminary of the High Church party. What could be better? The Church, the State, Law, Physic, and Commerce, all were pressed into my cause. Already I jingled the first instalment of the two hundred and fifty pounds salary in my pocket, and as I stood on the hearth-rug reading my application for the fiftieth and last time, a pleasing warmth was imparted to my back by the genial glow of the coals which were doubtless included with the residence. But the letters were not yet obtained, and to get them I wrote a

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cheque for ten pounds, as it was absolutely necessary that I should call upon every one indicated. Cabs were requisite for this; I never thought of omnibuses. I have always noticed that people who have schemes or inventions ride in cabs; at least, such is my experience. Accordingly, I sallied out, and having changed my cheque, reduced in that and the following day the balance of my legacy by exactly the odd seventeen shillings and two-pence, the shillings having gone into the pockets of cabmen, and the pence into the aprons of toll collectors in the suburbs. At the end of one week I had procured all my testimonials and sent them in.

Nothing more could be done until after the first of January. Calmly reliant on my own abilities and the strength of my testimonials, I waited, and in the meantime looked up Gaffer Grey in a biographical dictionary, and read a most interesting memoir of that illustrious individual. I also must own that when I met friends I rubbed my hands, laughed, and dropped mysterious allusions to important posts in important institutions. Determined to be prudent, and thinking that it would be as well to have two strings to my bow, in case the Gaffer Grey failed, which was not at all likely, I answered the advertisement for a Secretary to the Sanitarium Society, salary 150*l.*, with rooms in the institution, and as I had sent in my original testimonials to the Gaffer Grey, I made another pick from my circle of friends, at nearly a similar outlay of time and capital. Whose prospects could be brighter than mine? On the one hand the Gaffer Grey, with its higher salary and residence, situate in a decidedly fashionable quarter; on the other, the Sanitarium, with its lesser scale of remuneration compensated for by its delightful situation in one of the most salubrious districts near London. The first of January arrived, then the second, and it was with some trepidation that I opened the letters delivered by the postman on the morning of the latter day. There were four: two from tradesmen, with accounts; one, a lithographed circular, calling upon me to subscribe to a fund then being raised for providing New Zealand Chiefs with top-boots and life-preservers; and the fourth, a letter from the manager of the New Cut Advertiser, pointing out to me its advantages as a medium for making known my invention; but no letter from the Gaffers.

Four days, a week, ten days passed, and yet no tidings; the date of the election fixed by the Sanitarium had also gone by, and not even a line received. The possibility of the post miscarrying naturally enough suggested itself to me, and when another week was over, I took a cab, and in a short time entered the secretary's room of the Gaffer Grey Institution. The announcement that my name was George Reginald Dacey elicited no token of recognition from a young clerk beyond a bow of assent, and on my repeating it, that young man actually asked my business. Too much astonished to reply, I muttered the word "Secretary."

"I beg pardon," was the response; "yes, thank you. I believe you will find those right. The office was filled up last week. Good morning."

And before I could collect myself, I was standing in the hall, with not only my testimonials, but my letter of application in my hand, and the certainty that the 250*l.* a year and residence had vanished in one moment. I will not say that I was savage,—I felt injured; yet it was with a calm, dignified voice that I directed the cabman to the collector's office of the Sanitarium Society, located in one of the narrowest of the narrow lanes of the City. With a majestic tread, which caused the old stairs to creak under my feet, I ascended to the office on the first floor, and a shrill voice, in answer to my knock, requested me to come in. A diminutive lad was the sole occupant of the room. With a preparatory hem, I began to observe that "I believe the secretaryship of —" when the small youth stopped me short, "Filled up last week; want your testimonials back? Get 'em from the new secretary by writing," jerking out his words with the air of a young gentleman who had evidently made the gratifying announcement so often that he was tired of repeating it.

I returned home minus five shillings and sixpence expended in cab-hire; but being of a hopeful disposition—although at the time it did strike me as rather odd, that the new secretary of the Gaffer Grey Institution bore the same name as that of one of the committee-men, while the newly appointed officer of the Sanitarium was a son of its chief medical adviser—I soon recovered my cheerfulness.

More than a month passed before my guide to official life contained notice of any vacant situation adapted to my abilities. Towards the latter end of February, however, my eyes were gladdened by the sight of the following:

WANTED A SECRETARY.—The Committee of the Royal Bandoline Hospital are prepared to receive applications for the vacant office of Secretary to that institution. Yearly salary, £350, with an allowance for house-rent, or rooms in the hospital. Candidates must forward their applications and testimonials on or before the 1st proximo, addressed to the Committee. Any further information can be obtained by application at the hospital, between the hours of eleven and three. Jeremiah Cramp, *Chairman.*

If I entered with eagerness into competition when Gaffer Grey and 250*l.* a year were in question, it was but natural that I should evince three times as much energy when the Bandoline and its 350*l.* per annum were in prospective. I will venture to say that my letter of application was a model composition, terse and business-like, yet full and polite. As for testimonials, I resolved to overpower the committee by their number and importance. If I had been preparing a new edition of the "Complete Letter Writer," I could not have indited a greater number, or a more varied collection of epistles. I reminded people whom I had not seen for fifteen years of juvenile meetings and escapades, recalled unimportant business transactions, presumed upon casual introductions, congratulated others on their recent marriages, flattered their weaknesses, was a Conservative with the Conservatives, and a Liberal with the Liberals. But my labours had only commenced. The very first friend I called upon opened up a new and important field for action. On my

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informing him of the want of success which had attended former applications, he advised me to canvas the committee. At the time, I must declare that I thought this rather a surreptitious proceeding. Had I not been told at the hospital that "the best man could be elected, and that no private interest could be brought to bear?" In the face of so honest a declaration, it was with some qualms of conscience and a sneaky feeling that I set about following the advice, and no one who has not performed the task can conceive the Herculean labour entailed on the candidate. I contributed a moderate fortune to the revenues of the Post Office. For days there were cabmen in London who lived upon me. For a fortnight I not only shaved, but breakfasted by candlelight, in order to call upon committee men who left their homes early. I bought Dodd's Peerage, so that my spouse should not neglect to write to a single member of her aristocratic family. I learned that the chairman of the committee was a leader in a certain circle, and the manner in which I managed to form the acquaintance of two distinguished members of that circle was worthy of a Machiavel, and resulted in a recommendatory letter of the most flattering character. I travelled from east to west; was cordially shaken by the hand by one committee-man; coldly bowed out by another; insulted by over-hearing a flunkey announce me to a third as "the person who was come about *that* place at the hospital;" slapped on the back by a fourth; invited to a snug little dinner to meet an influential fifth; diplomatically received by a sixth; curtly informed by a seventh that "he never troubled himself in the matter;" gratified by an eighth with an hour's conversation, ending with the intimation that he had requested his name to be withdrawn from the list of the committee, and therefore had no influence in the election; told that "it was all right" by a ninth; and finally pompously assured by the chairman that "my application should receive his support, and he would himself lay it before the sub-committee." This was conclusive; the affair was a *fait accompli*. Already I saw "George Reginald Dacey, Secretary," printed in capital letters. I sincerely pitied the two hundred and eighty other candidates.

The last day for sending in applications arrived; on the following the sub-committee would make their selection, and I confess that I was nervous at receiving no summons from them. It can be readily divined how that nervousness increased when another four-and-twenty hours passed and brought no letter. When a week had elapsed, and I was informed that the nominee of a member of the sub-committee had received the appointment, my excitement culminated in a burst of passion, which partly vented itself in remarks of a decidedly personal nature upon the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Committee, and Sub-Committee of the Royal Bandoline Hospital.

My faith was shaken, but not annihilated, and I could not but feel guilty of having tried to destroy purity of election, and I resolved for the future to abstain from canvassing committees or boards of directors. Vain resolve! Three weeks after I was besieging the doors of the private houses of the directors of the Association for the Relief of Quidnuncs, regardless even of the good-humoured warnings of the assistant secretary, who frankly told me that he had been promised the post. He was right; and again I was the victim of the delusive advertisement.

The great Antipodean Granite Company put forth an announcement that a secretary was required. The salary was large, the work light; but I applied for it with little hope of success, sent in my stereotyped form of application, and my bundle of testimonials, which were getting considerably the worse for wear. A judicious application of bread-crumbs, however, by my wife, brightened them up a little, and my Lord Dufcot's, which was always tied at the top of the bundle, was, after some difficulty, made as fresh-looking as if it had just left his lordship's hands. Still I felt the appearance of the documents to be of little moment. What then was my surprise when a week later I received a missive requesting my attendance before the board on the following Monday! How much I had wronged the great bulk of managers of institutions and charities, by basing my judgment of them upon the conduct of a very small minority! What a splendid system was this of throwing open to public competition valuable appointments! With what fervour did I return the friendly greeting of the retiring secretary on the ensuing Monday, and even how graciously did I acknowledge the bows of the two other candidates who, with myself, had been selected from the three hundred and twenty-nine applicants!—though I will not say that the conversation carried on between us in the cheerless waiting-room was altogether of an inspiriting nature! The youngest of the party was called in first, and from a certain pertness in his manners, I must own, I watched his disappearance from the room with some feeling of pity; but he returned in a short time with a smile on his face, and, taking his hat, waved a slightly supercilious good morning to us, and hopped down stairs. My remaining companion was called next, and I was left the sole occupant of the apartment. I could not help being a little fidgetty, and frequently turned my head to the door, which at length was opened, and candidate number two re-entered. It was pleasant to notice that he also smiled, and though too dignified to hop down stairs, he certainly descended with an elastic step. In another moment I was in the board-room, and answering in the affirmative the chairman's bland—"Mr. Dacey, I believe." My testimonials were handed round, and read with several glances at myself. One stout gentleman seemed particularly struck with them, and after he had completed his scrutiny, observed in a hearty voice:

"I see, Mr. Dacey, Lord Dufcot is your cousin; I have had a great many days' shooting at his place."

This remark created a sensation, and deprived the questions which were put to me of every vestige of the dull formality of business, and when I left the room, after a pleasant chat which terminated in my being informed that if I called the next day I should receive an answer, I was conscious that I bore not merely a smile but a

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positive grin upon my face, and that my good-byes to the retiring secretary were of the most genial kind.

I read that night the third annual report of the directors of the Antipodean Granite Company with the liveliest satisfaction. A more flourishing concern was not in existence. I am not vain, but I do own to having sacrificed four white neck-handkerchiefs the next morning before I could tie a bow to my satisfaction, and I was certainly unusually sarcastic in my remarks upon shirt-buttons.

At half-past one I hailed a cab and drove to the offices of the company. The retiring secretary was in the outer-office, but instantly motioned me into his room. I regarded the appointments of the apartment with complacency; they were all that could be desired, only the moving of the writing-table a foot nearer the window was necessary. In a few moments the retiring officer followed smiling.

"Well, my dear sir," he remarked, "I am sorry to inform you that you have lost."

An infant might have knocked me off the chair.

"You see that in these matters the directors generally have some one they wish to bring forward, and but for a little difference in our board, you would not have been troubled to attend yesterday; but our chairman has gained the day, and his cousin, the younger of the two gentlemen I believe you saw, and who was nominated to the appointment long before I thought of retiring, was duly elected. For my own part I would much rather have seen you as my successor; you understand there is such a thing as being too young as well as too old for an important position like this; but needs must, my good sir, when the—you know the rest. By-the-bye, I might as well give you back your testimonials."

I don't know, to this day, how I got out of that office, but I do know that the exclamation I uttered when I regained my cab astonished even a London cabman. What my household suffered for the next two months is beyond belief, and even in the quiet of the country in the autumn, I startled provincial assemblies by denunciations of the "Wanted a Secretary" system. I was a changed man. My tailor told me I was rapidly diminishing in size, and my better half that I was fast losing my good temper.

It might have been thought that having been so often singed I should have avoided the fire thereafter. No! January, 1857, saw my wretched testimonials once more going their wearied rounds. Witness me again writing myriads of letters, and canvassing from Clapham to Clapton, from Bayswater to Bow. At one time I made sure of the secretaryship of the Deep Red Sandstone Company, at another I was equally sanguine of the Pterodactyle Association. Then I was certain of my appointment to the Boldero Club,—again there could be no doubt of my election to the Nutmeg-graters' Society, and afterwards I was absolutely to be *given*, as I then believed, the situation at the St. Ormolu Hospital; but they were all huge deceptions, snares, and shams. As in the former instances, there was always a nominee who invariably was congratulated by his nominator after the election. I sent my boys to school. I gave up smoking. I gave up our annual sea-side visit. I gave up contemplating the ever-lessening balance in my banker's book. I gave up my winter's whist-club. I gave myself up to despair.

Nevertheless, once more was I to be caught in the nets spread by directors and committee-men. This time the bait swallowed was the secretaryship of the Ptarmigan Society, salary four hundred a-year, and "no gentleman need apply unless an accomplished taxidermist." Here was indeed the very thing for me. Ornithology had been a passion with me, and five magnificent cases of stuffed birds attested my skill as a taxidermist. Besides every one could not be so gifted, and, moreover, was there not at the very head of the council my old friend Tomkyn Teale, whose interest I would forthwith obtain, and of whose good-will I had already received substantial proof. That very day I called upon him, and found the worthy man unpacking a splendid specimen of the *Rhea Americana*, upon the habits of which bird we had a most interesting discussion; and at its close my esteemed friend said, "Frankly, Dacey, I think you would be the very man for us at the Ptarmigan, and I will do all I can for you. By the way, you may as well look in at the society's museum, and make yourself acquainted with its contents. We have just had presented us one of the finest specimens of the *Vultur Kolbii* I ever saw. Let me know what you think about it." I went home, enjoyed that night the best sleep that I had had for nearly eighteen months. No nightmare disturbed my slumbers, and I rose "a giant refreshed." My application for the secretaryship was written, while my wife smilingly used the crumb of a French roll to furbish up the testimonials again, and suggested the advisability of touching up Lord Dufcot's signature, which the folds of the paper had nearly obliterated. In due time I was at the society's house, left my letter with the clerk, and entered the museum, where I found the secretary engaged in showing a gentleman over the collection, opening cases, and explaining the general arrangement. Feeling that such knowledge would be serviceable to me, I joined them. Long were the discussions that we had, and most delightful was the relation of our scientific experiences; and I parted with them after an hour's agreeable intercourse.

Every day during the following week I visited the museum, and on each occasion met the well-informed stranger, who appeared to be thoroughly investigating the contents of the cases, a work in which I most heartily co-operated. The day of election found us thus employed. The council had been some time assembled, and I was momentarily expecting to receive news of my appointment, when the stranger, with whom I had established the most friendly relations, closed the door of the case containing the fine specimen of the *Vultur Kolbii* with a bang, and suddenly remarked, "What a farce it is these societies advertising for secretaries! I am told that twenty have applied for this appointment, and yet for three weeks I have had the promise of this place in my pocket, and have been quietly

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initiating myself into the duties of the office, examining the books, and routing in every hole and corner of the museum." It was a mercy for the society that the stoutest plate glass was used for their cases, or I believe I should have fallen through one of the doors, and squashed and utterly ruined that magnificent *Vultur Kolbii*. As it was, I merely hurt my own elbow by staggering against the glass, but it could not be true! Tomkyn Teale was a man of his word, and an instant after he entered, accompanied by two or three members of the council and the retiring secretary. Could I believe my senses? They all shook hands with the stranger, and congratulated him! And what was my reward? An apology. Yes, Tomkyn Teale, shaking me by the hand, calmly and deliberately told me that it was a mistake on his part.

"You see, my dear Dacey, we take it in rotation to nominate for these things, and somehow I fancied that it was my turn, or I should not have encouraged you to go on. Next time, however, I *shall* be the nominator, then the berth shall be yours if you have nothing better to do. I can't think how I could have been so stupid. Well, well, better luck next time—good bye."

Next time!—there would be no next time for me. The Ptarmigan Society might blow up, fly away, or become utterly annihilated for aught I cared; and, as I left the place, I vowed never to believe in "Wanted a Secretary," again.

From that time to the end of 1857 I spent my days in morbidly contemplating the rapidly decreasing remains of my legacy, and in endeavouring to fix upon a colony for my future home where the requirement, "Wanted a Secretary," never appeared in the newspapers. This, however, was not to be: the new year wrought a change, and again I was a candidate for the office of secretary. How this came about is easily explained. On a certain morning one of those jovial friends who will persist in taking an interest in your fortunes, damaged my already deranged nervous system by bursting into the room, exclaiming—

"Here you are, old fellow,—snug berth—capital secretaryship—salary, four, two noughts, and a house to live in. Think of that, my boy!"

I rose, and, in a stern voice, said: "Mr. Basker Boville, I do not doubt your good intentions, but a joke may be carried too far. Do me the favour, sir, to look at these." I opened a large box. "This, sir, you perceive is filled with letters, all of which are promises of assistance in obtaining me secretaryships. This bundle, sir, contains my testimonials; you see they are torn and dirty, some even mounted on linen to prevent their falling to pieces; and what have I reaped from them? A secretaryship? No! My simple gain has been three testimonials that do not belong to me; and what compensation is it to me for my shattered health and ruined temper, to know that "Mr. John Brown is a respectable member of society;" that "Sir Hampton Jacks has known Mr. Thomas Smith for fourteen years;" or that "Abraham Jones is considered by the Reverend Theophilus Peacock to be eminently qualified for the office of secretary?"

I resumed my seat, and Basker Boville absolutely laughed; and I was on the point of ringing for the servant to show him out, when he explained in a very few words that his father was Chairman of the Institution, and his uncle was one of the leading members of the committee, that my appointment was a dead certainty, but, as he expressed it, I had better "look sharp, come over the governor, pour a broadside into uncle, send a few flying shot amongst the rest of the committee, then we could manage a little dinner to talk it over, keep them together with a few letters, and whiz! bang! and there you are, Secretary of the Royal Capillary Institution! So let us charter a Hansom, and off is the word."

We did go off, and I was cordially welcomed by my friend's father, courteously received by his uncle, and impressively greeted by the deputy chairman, who believed implicitly in his official chief. It was done: I was about to become a spectator of the farce "Wanted a Secretary," instead of playing one of the buffoons in the piece. No apparition of the notice that "the best man would be elected, and that no private interest would be brought to bear," haunted me. No bringing every kind of social artillery to play upon committee-men. No artfully contrived plots worked by female interest. No trouble beyond shaking hands with a dozen good fellows, and eating three of the best dinners I ever enjoyed. With what a benign smile did I receive the deputy chairman's remark, that "You know we must just advertise this thing, but it is a mere form." With what a shrug at the blind credulity of mankind did I read two mornings after—Wanted a Secretary, &c., &c., with the old humbug to follow. With what a friendly grasp of the hand did I part with the retiring secretary after leaving my application and testimonials. With what delight did I enter into the pleasure of a week at Brighton previous to the election; with what sincerity did I, on the 20th of January, return thanks to the committee, after the chairman had announced in the most flattering terms that I had been elected Secretary to the Royal Capillary Institution; and with what satisfaction did I commit to the flames the heaps of letters I received when induced to answer the often-repeated advertisement, "Wanted a Secretary."

I have now regained my good looks and rotundity of figure, and my blandness is once more proverbial. That I am appreciated in my office can be learned from the fact, that at the annual meeting on the 24th of December, last year, the sum of fifty pounds was voted to "the Secretary, George Reginald Dacey, Esq., as a testimonial of his unwearied exertions on behalf of the Society." I have said that my family consists of two boys; the elder is at present distinguishing himself at a public school, and as soon as he has completed his education will become my assistant, and I shall take care to initiate him into the duties of the situation I now occupy. I am not over fond of work, and it may happen that at no distant date I shall retire from official life, especially as owing to the lamented demise of my wife's fifteenth cousin, the before-mentioned Lord Dufcot, and one or two members of her distinguished family,

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she is likely to come into a very snug landed property in one of the home counties. When I do vacate, the public journals will contain the advertisement with the well-known heading, WANTED A SECRETARY; but as soon as those desirous of the office read that it is for the Royal Capillary Institution, let them remember that I am training my son to tread in his father's footsteps, and take the warning—NO ONE NEED APPLY.

AN OLD BOY'S TALE.

IN some people, and especially in those who live and die unmarried, there is a period before that of second childhood, frequent indeed in those who to the end of their days show no sign of childishness, which may be termed their second youth—a period at which they yearn to recall the loves and romances of former years, and dwell with a peculiar fondness on the beautiful or pathetic episodes of their early life. Happy is the boy, though snubbed by papa, and kept in jackets by mamma, whose bachelor uncle remembers his own 16th year, with its not trifling passions, ambitions, and sorrows. Happy is the maiden, though novels are forbidden and Byron a sealed book, who has some gentle friend in whom forty years of stern reality have not obliterated the image of some old ideal—an ideal of which the original might blush to know, so much have the colouring of love and the haze of time embellished and softened it. Happy I say, and happier far than tailcoats or Byron could make them; for from these worn weak hearts divine lessons of long suffering may be learnt, more than a mere love story, as we may many of us know by experience.

In his second youth died the man who left behind him the following simple autobiography. He was like most of these men in their second youth, brisk, mild, and precise, with an unobtrusive flow of uninteresting talk; a man whom no one would accept an invitation to meet, or refuse one to avoid, essentially a *stop-gap* in society, and in private life the faithful friend of schoolboys.

And when he died, "So poor A— is gone," said Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones, but Tom, Dick, and Harry, their sons, lamented the "Old Boy."

I have no compunction in offering his tale for perusal, as from internal evidence it must have been at least meant for that of his friends, and a perhaps too partial recollection of him makes me think that his readers will become his friends for the time. I feel sure that any pleasure they may find in reading it will be far inferior to that with which he noted down the sentimental remembrance of the past. It fell into my hands through circumstances which, as they are quite unimportant, I need not relate.

The most difficult task I ever set myself is that of realising that I am old. I measure my life by the public events I remember, and they carry me back to the last century; but Time and I have dawdled so quietly along, that I feel no fatigue. I look in the glass as I shave, and I try to find marks of age, but I do not see more wrinkles than I did last year, nor more grey hairs. Jones looks old, I know, and gets balder, but I cannot see that *I* do. Then I take out a coat I had made for a wedding near sixty years ago; I hang it on a chair, and contemplate its make; I do not wear a broad blue velvet collar now, nor brass buttons; just under my shoulders my coat is old—yes, certainly—but I cannot feel that *I* am. Then I look at my contemporaries: Halford, who played cricket with me in the year 1795, is a grandfather, and his wife, who was such a pretty girl, wears a wig; but I have no wife nor grandchildren. Where are the milestones on the road I have travelled? and I sigh—for tombstones mark the miles that I have trodden—but they cover the young, the fair; how should they make me feel old?

The events of my life have been of the most common-place character. I went to school as a child, to college as a boy, into a banking-house as a young man. I had a moderate fortune to start with, and have been moderately successful in my business. I have lived within my income, and never married. But, like many other ordinary people who have not talent or force of character to make events for themselves, the circumstances that gathered round my early years were in some respects peculiar, and appear to me worth relating.

I was not more than five years old when I lost both my parents by a singular and dreadful accident. The house we inhabited was situate in a lonely but stormy spot on the north-east coast. A hill sheltered it from the north winds, and it basked in the noon-day sun on the brink of the sea. A promontory bent its arm round our little bay, and breaking off abruptly reappeared at a mile from the shores a group of rocks and small islands.

Even now but little has faded of the mystery and romance with which my childish imagination invested those islands, and none of the terror with which I regarded them, for among those rocks, one angry sundown, my father and my young mother found their grave. The early evening was lovely and calm. They started in their pleasure-boat, waving their hands and blowing me kisses on the perfidious breeze. Not two hours after did the distracted household watch from the windows the short and frightful tragedy of their end.

A fresh air rose as the sun went down, favouring the rising tide. The sea rushed swiftly and suddenly through the tiny straits between the rocks in foaming rapids, which met in whirlpools each moment deeper and fiercer, and the unwary little skiff, her sails useless among the opposite gusts through the rocks, her oars and rudder unavailing against the contending currents, was tossed for a few minutes on the waves, and then disappeared behind a crag. Boats had long before this left the shore, but the wind rose rapidly; with the night, rain came on in torrents; to venture among the rocks was mere frantic risk, and the pleasure-boat with its freight was seen no more.

I relate this as I was afterwards told it, for sleep rested on my unweeping eyes as my father and mother struggled for their last breath—but such accidents, to fishing-boats, were not unfrequent on our treacherous shore. I remember with vividness the waking next morning, to find myself fatherless and motherless, almost uncared for in the midst of bewildered and masterless servants.

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We lived some miles from any town, and our nly neighbours were the fishermen of the village; but in a few hours a friend of my father's ıad been informed of the event, and came to fetch ne from the home to which I have never since eturned. I was too young to feel much besides xcessive terror and wonder; in fact, it seems to ne that I must have been to some extent stupified y the sudden changes, though I so far understood that I should never see my mother again, s to beg to have for my "very own" a portrait f her that had been done a year or two before— request that was kindly and wisely granted. I ried bitterly whenever I realised my loss, but hat, at five years, was but seldom after the first urst was over.

Of any details succeeding these events I have o recollection, nor of how long I staid with my ind friends; not long, I suppose, for I left them efore my sixth birthday. Nor do I remember ny preparation for my departure, beyond a leaveaking one evening, and falling asleep in my urse's arms to awake in a stage-coach.

Dear me, can it indeed be that I am old—that vaking seems but yesterday—or was it last night n my dreams?

Then came the delightful excitement of changng horses, dining off sandwiches, and flying from he trees as they circled past. I am quite sure no hought of sorrow dulled my gladness on that day; ll was unmixed delight.

I fell asleep again and woke on being handed ut of the coach and hearing confused talking, a ight poked into my face completely roused me, nd by the time I was wide awake and set on my eet the coach had driven off, and I was standing vith my nurse and two men with lanterns by the ide of a heap of luggage. This Roger and Harry, ubsequently my great allies, shouldered, and we ollowed them a short distance to a door which pened into a small hall. After a short bustle and olloquy with a maid, my nurse took off my hat, ushed back my hair, and saying, "Now you are oing to see your aunt," followed the servant into sitting-room.

Little I knew for how many years that room vould be dear to me—how sacred to my memory ill I remember no more.

It was rather a lofty room, though small, the valls were panelled with crimson and gold, the orders of carved wood painted a light grey; the hairs matched the walls, light carved and gilt vood with oval backs and crimson seats; there vere two arm-chairs and a cabinet, "sofas as yet vere not" in rooms of this style. Before an mbroidery frame, with candles on the table and maze of gay silks by her side, sat a lady, young, all, handsome,—the very image of my father. As ve entered, the draught from the door disturbed he silks, and she looked up; she bowed slightly to he nurse, and, smiling kindly, held out her hand o me. I advanced with confidence, probably from ıer strong resemblance to my father, and put my ıand in hers; she drew me to her and kissed me. stood for some minutes silent and wondering, oo young to feel embarrassed, too astonished to ry. Not a word broke the stillness; at last, with ınaccustomed boldness, I lightly touched with my finger the flowers of her exquisite embroidery (that very white satin, now yellow; those very roses, now faded, are on my sofa cushion still; one bud especially has quite lost its bloom, but how dear to me its pale remains—its colour evaporated in a tear shed by Phœbe).

She took my hand gently off, and, as if afraid of my being vexed, patted and kissed it; she put before me a book, and, opening it, pointed to the pictures, but I gazed at *her*.

What spell had fallen on us?

At last, scared by the silence, overpowered by her gentle melancholy face, I broke from her and ran to hide against my nurse's gown. Nor was it till I found myself in a bed-room, where my supper was prepared, that I ventured to speak.

The reader has probably guessed, what I did not, that my Aunt Mabel was deaf and dumb.

It was striking eleven that night as I was put to bed, and though, no doubt, I asked a number of childish questions, I have no recollection of them or of the answers. I understood that I was to live with my aunt, and that I had a cousin, her niece, for she was herself unmarried, of whom also she had the charge. The next morning, when dressed, I was taken down to the same room I had been in the night before, and as I had been used to do, I walked up to my aunt and said, in my best manner, "Good morning, Aunt Mabel."

She looked at me with a kind smile and a kiss, and nothing in the whole of my subsequent experience in the least resembles the sensation that then came over me. The utter uselessness of speaking, the weight of silence overpowered me. I felt perfectly helpless, and sat down to my bread and milk a melancholy child. This misery, however, was luckily soon to be relieved, for just as I had finished my breakfast and was doubting whether it might be right to get off my chair without asking leave—which it was useless to do—and indeed the silence was so profound that I dared not have spoken, the door opened and there entered Phœbe.

No words can tell the effect her appearance had on me; her young lovely face and form, her quick gestures, and, above all, her girlish voice, are before me now—a vision perfectly distinct from that which I can call up of her appearance at a later period. She came to me as the angel of resurrection from that tomb-like abyss of silence and oppression. It was not till long after that I grew into a comprehension and appreciation of her beauty. I was then too young, and indeed she herself was but a girl of twelve, and her charms were only in their bud; it was the *life* of her that I felt; the gay laugh and light grace with which she came into the room, a kitten scampering round her feet, and a spray of roses in her hand.

I was not a shy child, and when she knelt down by me and threw her arm round me, I willingly returned the caress, and said, though with a half terror of speaking, "May I get down?"

"To be sure," was the answer. And some telegraphic communication having passed between my aunt and cousin, I was carried off quite happy to romp in the garden.

My Aunt Mabel was my father's only sister; her other brother, who was the eldest of the three, had died some years before, leaving to her charge

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the orphan Phœbe, her mother being also dead, and now the occurrences I have related had added to her cares that of me.

She was in every way one of the most remarkable women I have ever met with; and a more judicious guardian could not have been found.

The only daughter of sensible parents, she had been instructed in every art that could enliven her solitary soul; and, her infirmity never having been made an excuse for ill-temper, her gentleness and affection made it appear an additional claim on the consideration of others.

My grandfather having left a good fortune, poverty never invaded her luxurious but unpretending retirement, and in Phœbe, who, having lived with my aunt from the age of two was far beyond her years, she had at once a companion and a friend. She was remarkably handsome, always dressed to perfection, and constantly occupied with some of the arts in which she excelled; she drew and embroidered exquisitely, knitted and netted with dexterity, and made the most delicate lace. Her library was well furnished, and her mind almost as well, for she read a great deal, and remembered all she read. Nay, besides teaching Phœbe all she knew, which included French and Italian grammar, I had no other teacher till I went to school, and did not find myself particularly backward in Latin, arithmetic, and the rudiments of Greek. Our lessons were all learnt by heart, and then written out while she looked over us. She, of course, held the

book, and we wrote in a sort of abbreviated language which would sadly have puzzled a stranger; more especially as, from the extraordinary quickness with which she discovered whether we were right, few of the sentences were ever completed.

By these means we did not learn quickly, perhaps, but we learnt correctly, and many of her spare hours were devoted to writing out questions, to which we found the answers for her correction. An old French gentleman, a refugee, no doubt, came once a fortnight from the neighbouring town, and after three hours spent in teaching Phœbe more or less well to play the piano, to dance, and to read and speak French, he put off the master, and, resuming the private gentleman, dined with us before returning home.

I recall with a sort of wonder the simple regularity of the household; how, day after day, and year after year, as if no note were taken of time, and no thought of change ever fell on that peaceful home, the same events recurred; and, to me, the same pleasures. One feeling I never did and never could get over; in the garden I could play, run, shout, and sing, but the house was to me a temple of silence—silence broken indeed often by the voices of Phœbe and myself, but never, I really believe, in all the years I lived there, by one hearty laugh on my part.

The first terror that my aunt's silence had occasioned me gave way to a feeling of tender reverence; there was something solemn to me in the grandeur of her handsome head and splendid expressive eyes that half revealed her mind,

shrouded, as it were, in a fatal silence; so, though as I grew older my childish wonder wore off, my respect for that mysterious veil constantly increased, and I felt that if one day my aunt were to find the power of language, a spell, sacred to my heart and dear to my imagination, would be for ever broken. When I, alone in the world to mourn for her, saw her eyes closed to this world's light, my first thought was "She is speaking now," and I felt a peculiar gladness that her first words should be in that heavenly tongue, which was doubtless as far beyond my comprehension as her deep-buried sorrows and unuttered joys had been.

Four years passed in happy monotony, and shortly before I was ten years old, I was sent to a public school. Of the effect that its discipline had upon my character I can hardly judge, for my heart clung always so closely to home, and the ambitions and strifes of school were so indifferent to me—for I was neither robust nor clever—that I believe my life and character were but little influenced by them. Phœbe constantly wrote to me, and the details of our home pets and village friends interested me far more than school escapades, or bedroom "chums." I always went home for the holidays; and, though Phœbe, as she grew older, paid occasional visits to distant friends, she always returned in time to welcome me, and remained during the whole of my vacation. I never missed her, and I never found her change, for with my growth she grew from a pretty girl to a lovely woman—ah! in my memory peerless! I became more and more capable of appreciating her, till at the age when boys are most susceptible, she was to me all in all. I followed her steps, I trod in her shadow: and, in short, was madly in love. Of this I am sure she was utterly unsuspicious; her simple heart was unconscious of itself, she never looked for admiration for she had never lacked it; that of her home circle was a matter of course; she was Queen of the Hearth, and she knew it, nor cared for more; but within a few months, doubtless, she found another life; for one day, just before the midsummer holidays, when I was sixteen, I received a letter dated from a friend's house, where she had been paying a long visit, to tell me she was going to be married.

An awful, blank, numb feeling came over me, relieved only by my indignant mortification as I felt that she had never even thought it possible that I, a child she had known almost from the cradle, could ever dream of loving her otherwise than as a brother; nay, perhaps if she had told the truth, Phœbe would have said as a slave—for she was somewhat imperious—but in her it was not a fault, only a beauty arising naturally from the unlimited sway she possessed over all who surrounded her.

I am blind? Well, yes, I *am* blind; she must have had faults, for she was mortal; but to this day they are to me but an additional charm. She was Phœbe, daughter of the sunbeams—a perfectly good-tempered waywardness, the arch petulance of a spoilt child, were only just a sufficient admixture of weakness to make her true womanly: and who could love an angel? We should soon tire of a being so perfect that it had no wants for us to gratify, or whims to humour.

It was not far from the midsummer holidays when I received this letter; and in her next she told me that Captain Howell was to pass part of them in our neighbourhood; that she should be at home for the six weeks; married before my return to school, and then leave for India. In those days, going to India was a thing for life and death. Phœbe in India was Phœbe lost for ever. My despair at this intelligence was not that of a boy. No fancy for drowning myself or devoting myself to celibacy entered my head, but I had lost all that I then lived for, and felt that I must begin a new chapter in existence. I took an opportunity of going to the neighbouring town and spending all my ready money, of which I had generally plenty, in buying the handsomest ring I could find for Phœbe, and when the holidays came I mounted the coach with very mixed feelings.

As I got to the garden gate, and was on the point of getting down, I saw from my elevated position a white figure walking up the terrace, —it was Phœbe. The terrace was very near the road, but screened from it by a thick laurel hedge, and it was only by being so high up that I could see it. I took all in at a glance; Phœbe, in an evening dress of white—then very fashionable—the folds of the narrow skirt blown round her by the evening breeze, which also disturbed her thick curls; her face bright and eager, one hand holding her hat, the other through the arm of a gentleman —Captain Howell, her lover.

I vented my excitement in a tremendous leap to the ground. She must have just caught sight of me, for I heard her quick step as she ran to the gate calling me, but I slipped round by a back path and flew into the house. I could not just then have faced Captain Howell. I put off the evil moment for an hour or so, but at last came tea-time, and the meeting was inevitable. Phœbe was just the same as ever,—lovely, affectionate, with her enchanting May-day manner and exacting caprice. Captain Howell I tried to ignore. I was, I believe, perfectly civil to him, and, to please Phœbe, gave him a full share of the obedience I yielded her; but of his position there and his rights I would not permit myself to think. He was a handsome, gentlemanly man, with a quiet tender air, and a cool manner that contrasted strongly with Phœbe's light vivacity. He drove me half crazy by his forethought. Phœbe's wishes were fulfilled before they were formed. In vain I watched for opportunities of pleasing her. He forestalled every want, and left me without occupation. I followed her like a dog, doubtless to the great disgust of Captain Howell, till he one day laughingly said he believed I was jealous, and I had no choice but to laugh too—as Phœbe did. At last the weary time passed, weary, though I dreaded the end; and the evening came before the marriage—the last, the very last evening with Phœbe.

Captain Howell had been hanging about all the morning. Not that he saw much of Phœbe, for she was too busy packing; and to-day for the first time she showed frankly any regret at leaving her early home. A stray sigh, or some hint of sorrow, had now and then escaped her; but either out of compliment to her future husband, or because she was

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really happy, they were very rarely heard. But at breakfast on this last morning her eyes were unmistakeably red, and for fully a quarter of an hour afterwards she sat on a stool at my aunt's feet, her head bent in that motherly lap, while Aunt Mabel's rare tears dropped on her shining hair. But there was business to be done, luckily for all. My aunt and Phœbe disappeared till dinner, and Captain Howell and I prowled about, too utterly désœuvrés to pretend to be company for each other. Shortly before dinner Phœbe came down; she went to the gate with Captain Howell, who took his last leave of her and rode off, she wandering back to the house, her eyes very full of her coming happiness.

Dinner was a melancholy meal; we could none of us eat, and yet we could not hurry it—it was the last. When it was over Phœbe went out into the garden, and I presently followed her, determined to offer my parting gift with as few words as possible, and so strangle my misery, We walked up and down for some time, talking by fits, but oftener silent, till at last she sat down on a bench. It was near evening, the sun threw ruddy flickering patches of light through the trees, but as yet no stars promised consolation for his departure—and to-morrow she was going—by next sunset would be gone.

"Phœbe," I said, cold and sick, "I have got you a wedding present, a ring; I hope you will like it—to keep—wear—remember."

My pulses choked me. I put it in her hand, and she looked at me, as I stood intending to fly as soon as I had given it; but tears were in her eyes, and I dropped on the seat by her side.

"Kiss me once—my love—love of my life. Phœbe, *I* would have married you."

"Poor boy!" she said, gave me one deep kiss, and ran into the house. I sat like one frozen till I heard a bell ring, which startled me, and I went in. As I passed the drawing-room window I saw Phœbe, who had thrown herself on a settee, and with her face buried in a cushion—that cushion—was sobbing violently. By the time I went into the room my aunt had joined her, and they were engaged in a last silent conversation by signs.

I did not go to the church next day, but I stood at the gate to see the last of Phœbe, as her husband carried her from the home of her youth, and an intense bitterness filled me as I rejoined my aunt, who had parted with her at the door.

That parting broke my Aunt Mabel's heart. No one who had not seen them together could imagine what Phœbe was to her. She had grown into such a comprehension of that entombed soul; there were so many impulses in my aunt, that finding no outlet in speech could only be known by one whose sympathies had been trained to read them, and that one a woman, that in losing Phœbe she lost as it were the complemental chord that made her life perfect, and she never was herself after. Ah, Phœbe! were you right to leave her so?

I went back to school at the end of the holidays, and when older I went to college, but my home was still with Aunt Mabel. Each time I came home I saw her more and more changed; as with a man in solitary confinement, solitude seemed closing on her: she would not engage a companion,—indeed at this I do not wonder,—and in spite of reading, gardening, and charity, she altered visibly, and, without any apparent disease, sunk into a state of apathy which brought her to the grave. I was not all I might have been to her, perhaps,—all I *could* be I was; but Phœbe had absorbed me wholly, and I had no strength of mind to rise above the occasion.

* * * * *

Twelve years after this Phœbe returned; Captain Howell was dead, and she came home with one little girl—a second Phœbe, just fit to be a May Queen. My Phœbe was altered in face, older, harder; in manner a shade harder too, perhaps, but with the same light vivacity as in her youth. Although we had at intervals corresponded—but letters took four months in going to India then—I think she had not realised that it was for the memory of my one first love that I had never loved again; perhaps she had never thought of it at all. Of course I never said so to her, but a passion that had so influenced my whole life could not fail sometimes to betray itself, and Phœbe's friendship after her return grew warmer and deeper.

I do not know whether she would have married me—I never asked her—I would not insult her by supposing she loved me more than her dead husband. I would not have her loving me less; nor would I marry the mother of his child—Phœbe must be all or none of mine.

And now for more than twenty years she has been lying by my Aunt Mabel. Her daughter married before her death, and went to live in Scotland, and I am ending my life alone.

My wedding coat, never worn, and my Aunt Mabel's cushion, my mother's picture, and the ring I gave to Phœbe are my household gods; and a plot, unshorn by the mower, with a tombstone on either side, marks the spot where I shall rejoin the two women I have loved.

* * * * *

This, kind reader, is the whole of my old friend's manuscript, a record of a gentle, weak intellect, subjugated by feeling. I cannot, however, conclude without relating an incident that occurred at the time when I first met the Old Boy, and which was never fully explained to me till I read the foregoing story.

We made acquaintance at the dinner-table of a mutual friend, who had lived for many years in India, and whose wife, as I afterwards heard, had been the intimate friend of Captain Howell's lovely wife: it was some years after Phœbe's death, and I had never, of course, even heard her name. In the evening, Mrs. D—— happened to want something from another room, and, turning to her daughter, she said:

"Will you fetch it, Phœbe?"

The Old Boy looked up.

"What, is there a Phœbe here, too?" said he.

"What else could I have called her?" was the answer.

Thenceforth the young lady had a devoted friend. He was always at her beck for a walk or a drive; her room was stocked with his little presents, and at his death none had more cause to mourn than the namesake of his only love.

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LAST WEEK.

There is for all respectable and prudent people one night of the year which is eminently interesting, if not agitating;—that evening which discloses to them the precise condition of their pecuniary affairs. It is not the same evening for everybody. The great majority of householders choose one of the last nights of the old year, or one of the first of the new;—as soon as may be after ascertaining the amount of their Christmas bills. Some traders take stock at Midsummer, and cast up their domestic accounts at the same time. Farmers choose the autumn, when the crops are all got in, and before the preparations for the next year's tillage begin. Professional men send out their bills at Christmas, and can pretty well satisfy themselves by study of their books how they stand with the world. In all these cases there is deep interest prevailing in the family circle,—always supposing that integrity and family confidence exist as we are wont to assume that they do. Father and mother are sitting that night in the office, or the counting-house, or the study, or, in the farmhouse, as the case may be: everybody present in the sitting room is still and quiet till the result is obtained. The young people are full of anxious expectation: and at last, just before bedtime, the parents join them, sheet of paper in hand, and tell the upshot. They tell how much they have spent in the last, as compared with former years; and if they have spent more, they can explain how and why. The effect of a good or bad season for trade or tillage is estimated and allowed for. The young people are shown why they must give up certain advantages and pleasures, or whether they may enjoy them still, or indulge in more. A son may have been in suspense as to whether he could look forward to a partnership with his father, or whether he might follow his liking in the choice of an occupation. A daughter may have been awaiting her sentence about returning to the school where she is just beginning to appreciate the benefit she is getting. The most zealous are stirred with an ambition to do something to help, if advantages are wanted for some promising member. If all is prosperous, that evening hour is a happy one, and the "good-night" is gay and affectionate. If the result is discouraging, the family mood may be even higher:—the temper may be one of courage and cheerful self-denial. However this may be, the night is a marked one in the domestic year; and those parents are to be pitied who deny it to their children, leaving them in the dark as to what it deeply concerns their respectability and happiness to know.

The family is, in this particular, and in our own country, the representative of the nation. The interesting night to the great household of which the sovereign and the ministry are the trustees falls neither at the end of the natural year nor at midsummer, nor when the crops are in the barn, but about Easter; and this year, it fell Last Week. Monday was the evening appointed for the Budget; and no young people talking in whispers round the fire, or listening for the opening of the office-door could well be more eager for the disclosure than the holders of members' orders for the strangers' gallery, who sat waiting from ten or eleven in the forenoon in hope of getting places for hearing Mr. Gladstone. Hour after hour they sat outside, provided with sandwiches and beer; but no doubt they would have borne hunger and thirst, sooner than miss the disclosure. Within the House the attendance at prayers was very large with the object of securing seats. So intent were the members on the interest to come that they seemed unobservant of Mr. Gladstone when he entered and quietly took his seat. He had plenty of attention afterwards. For above three hours his voice ruled a silent assembly, where all eyes were fixed on him, and scarcely a whisper drew any one's attention away from him. When he sat down, the sudden break-up showed what the tension had been. Members rushed from the House,—few strangers cared to hear more; and everybody was eager to carry away and publish the secret which nobody had been able to penetrate.

It was a proud night for Mr. Gladstone. From the corresponding night of last year there had been evil bodings of the results of his measures. Since that date everything seems to have been against him; and the least that rational people expected was that either one more penny would be added to the Income-tax, or some new burden would be imposed instead.

Our readers are all aware what the result was. At the end of the disastrous year which must many a time have tried the spirit and courage of our great national book-keeper, he is able to show that we have paid our way, and have something left over. There is a surplus of nearly two millions, after all: and the tenth penny is to be taken off the Income-tax, and the paper-duty is to be extinguished. On such occasions there are always a dozen opinions as to what taxes should be got rid of first; and some time has been spent, and will be spent, in arguing for the reduction of tea and sugar, instead of the release of paper. It should be remembered that the paper-duty has been more emphatically condemned and doomed than any other tax on our list: that there will always be a troublesome and dangerous restlessness till it is abolished, if not further collision between the two Houses of Parliament: and also that the industrial classes are directly interested in the repeal of the duty, from the obstruction it causes in many departments of manufacture and commerce. Some who regard it only as one of the "taxes on knowledge," plead for the poor man's tea-table; but the paper-duty is a tax on manufacture from end to end of the kingdom. We must remember the complaints from Coventry of the cost of the strips of paper used in rolling ribbons: and we must not forget that there are large markets, over whole continents, where British goods cannot compete with those of America and other countries, simply because the paper in which the goods are wrapped absorbs just the amount of profit on the sale. It is a serious thing (leaving the interests of literature out of view), that articles made of paper are rendered dear and bad—whether papier-mâché trays, or books; but it is of yet more consequence to the industrial class at large that almost everything that

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is made at Birmingham, Sheffield, Coventry, Manchester, Northampton, Paisley, Nottingham, Leeds, &c., is placed at a disadvantage in the market by the paper-duty.

There was a proposal in Mr. Gladstone's speech more important than even that of an immediate removal of burdens. He said plainly that our main burdens cannot be lightened unless we resolve to spend less. We knew this before; and there has been a good deal of talk about how to set about retrenching. But Mr. Gladstone's speech has fixed attention particularly on the increase of expenditure attendant on our increase in numbers and the progress of civilisation; and we must all have noticed that some people are complaining of that kind of increase. Now, therefore, is the time for all who have the best interests of the great national family at heart to proclaim where retrenchment is a virtue, and where it would be a moral and political mistake. The parents of a large and growing family should not begin to retrench in the servants' wages, or in their food and kitchen light and warmth; nor in the education of the children; nor in the repair of the premises; nor by buying on credit. If they can consolidate the work of half-employed servants, or reorganise their professional business, so as to save time and labour,—these are the true directions for economy to take, as well as abstinence from costly pleasures, or quarrels, or random speculations. So it is in the national economy. We must cheerfully pay for good service from our soldiers and sailors, our civil servants and police: we must pay for good treatment of them, in their food, dress, and habitations; and for their mental and moral health in providing them with libaries, reading-rooms, and manly sports. All this is good economy, as well as clear duty: and it is nonsense to complain of an increasing expenditure which checks disease, crime, death,—or desertion, as a way of escape from them. Our costly force in China, which did what was wanted, and came away in sound condition for future service, was incalculably less expensive than an equal number sent half-clad, and kept half-fed, in the Crimea, and left there under the sod. We must pay for an improving quality in public servants and in the nation at large; and we ought to pay joyfully. The way to economise lies in a different direction.

Saving time is saving money, in the public service at least, as truly as in private affairs. The Dockyard Inquiry Commission has shown us something of this source of waste in our naval administration; and we knew before how much there was of it in the War Office. Hitherto everybody in the War Office had a finger in the pie when anything whatever was to be done. Everything was laid before everybody in writing; and everybody had to opine in writing, or to copy somebody else's opinion; so that, after an inconceivable waste of time and stationery, it was more difficult than ever to arrive at a decision, and get it executed at last. In the War Office, it is understood, a substantial reform is taking place. Each department is to do its own work, under its proper head, who is to be responsible to the Minister alone. This is very much what Sir J. Elphinstone desires for the Admiralty, and what we may hope the nation will insist on, through Parliament. In this way we may reduce the two enormous heads of expenditure—the military and naval—without impairing our strength or our reputation for it. The savings from such an administration of those departments as sensible men practise in their private affairs, would give us means for doing many things that we should be glad to do in the way of public works that would save life and property all round our shores, in repealing taxes which press on industry or forethought, and in providing for the intellectual and moral solace and benefit of the nation at large. Whether or not we choose to check an increasing expenditure for the blessings of a rising civilisation, we ought not to lose a day in stopping a course of mismanagement which rewards idleness, inefficiency, or useless labour, and which strews temptations thickly over the whole path of departmental administration. We must economise by reforming the procedure of our public offices; and in the first place by completely renovating our naval administration. For this everybody seems now prepared, and on this everybody ought now to be determined. Here we may best begin taking Mr. Gladstone's advice, offered in an hour when he was, above all men, entitled to advise us.

Of the foreign news of the week none could be more touching than that of the peril of St. Domingo. Young people, at the first hearing, might ask—"What have we to do with St. Domingo?" But when Hayti is mentioned, and the elder generation are heard talking over the news, the grave import of it will be understood.

For a long course of years Spain has professed, that she regretted and wished to stop the Cuban slave-trade; it being generally known, all the time, that the rich incomes of several noble and some royal personages at the Court of Spain are directly derived from the negro traffic in Cuba. Long ago, we made a present of 400,000*l.* to Spain, in return for her promise to aid in the abolition of the slave-trade; but she not only failed to perform her engagement, but has been the one insuperable obstacle in the way of its abolition. The trade has been carried on for the Cuban market alone, by American vessels chiefly; and one great hope of the American republican party, in view of the dissolution of the Union, was that the regenerated government at Washington, in concert with England, would soon control Spanish aggressions, and compel the observance of old engagements. At the first move towards a break-up of the American Union—at the first indication of the Washington government being weakened and preoccupied—the Spanish government makes haste to perpetrate further aggression. After receiving sympathy from all the world under the insult of being herself invaded by filibusters, Spain now loses no time in invading St. Domingo—the invaders setting up the Spanish flag, and announcing the approach of ships of war to accomplish the theft of this new colony. There can be no doubt of the intention to make this island another Cuba, and to obtain new tribute from the slave-trade with which to enrich great people at Madrid.

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This would be bad enough, if the people of St. Domingo were all of Spanish descent,—whites, or ranking with whites. But Hayti occupies nearly half the area of the island, with a much larger population. Most people know that the Haytians were once negro slaves, under French masters, and that they went through political disorders of the most discouraging kind after their emancipation: but it is less known than it ought to be how their emancipation took place, how much of the disorder they were answerable for, and what their recent condition has been. It is enough to say here that the negroes of Hayti did not obtain freedom by insurrection. In the course of an internecine warfare between the whites and the free mulattoes, the negroes were set free to decide the conflict. This was seventy years ago. The horrible cruelties with which the world rang at the time were devised by the whites,—the most corrupt set of slaveholders in the world. All parties practised them till the heroic negro chief, —Toussaint l'Ouverture,—taking the morality of his favourite Epictetus, and the commands of the gospel to be something real,—enforced upon his race his principle of "No retaliation." He fought, and led them to fight, in defence of their new liberties: but he permitted no aggression. In the early days of their liberties, they became industrious, prosperous, orderly, and just in their dealings, under his rule. But the First Consul was studying them from Paris, and had no idea of letting them alone with their liberties. From the promontory of Samana, where the Spanish flag has now been raised, Toussaint l'Ouverture saw the approach of the great French fleet which came to reduce his people to slavery again. The climate favoured the negroes, and aided them in humiliating their enemy. A fever-stricken remnant of the French force sailed away, and left the blacks to their own devices. But their wise ruler was gone. He had been treacherously arrested, and sent to France. He long hoped to enlist the sympathy of his brother-general and ruler, as he simply considered Napoleon to be, in the new destinies of the negroes of Hayti: but he disappeared from the eyes of the world. There are few English hearts among us which have not been thrilled by Wordsworth's address to the vanished hero. That sonnet to Toussaint l'Ouverture has been like a trumpet-call to the friends of Hayti for sixty years. Toussaint was then hidden in a stone cell in the fortress of Joux, among the snows and damps of the Jura. There he soon died,—starved, it is feared, by hunger. His fate was long unknown; but by due pains it was ascertained; and some of the existing generation have been in his cell and stood at his grave, and heard the official story, told by order on the spot.

There was no second Toussaint to govern Hayti, and it went through half a century of revolutions, during which, however, the people advanced on the whole in capacity for that free social existence which they had not, in the first instance, demanded for themselves. Under their President (for they have returned to the republican form of government) they have been living tranquilly and prosperously, learning to wield their political powers, and extending their industry.

The expulsion of free negroes from many of the American States, since the panic about insurrection, four years ago, has opened new views to the Haytians; and since the secession of the Cotton-States, arrangements have been made for an extensive cultivation of cotton in Hayti by American immigrants, as well as natives. England might reasonably look to Hayti for a considerable supply of the best cotton. Just at this moment Spain rushes upon the scene to ruin everything. A mere frontier line divides the Haytians from the Spanish creoles; and any reasonable man can foresee what must happen if there is any attempt to hold negroes as slaves on one side of the line while their race are living a free republican life on the other side. The general impression is that Spain is not alone in the transaction, and that the Spanish creoles are not the only party threatened with annexation. The disguised French slave-trade, in which the French Emperor persisted for so many years at the risk of the goodwill of England and other countries, justifies the question whether he has not designs upon Hayti. The idea is abhorrent to everybody, if the newspapers, American and other, give a true view of what is passing. The wrath and disgust at Washington are extreme; and the tone of correspondence with the Spanish minister is abundantly indignant. In Europe many painful and tender associations cannot but be aroused by tidings of danger to Hayti; and if the alarm should prove to be well founded, we must hope that our feelings will have been aroused to some purpose. We are in alliance with the state of Hayti: American and Haytian ambassadors have met at royal tables and public banquets, in spite of their mutual prejudice of colour: and we may trust that there is no alliance to which we are less likely to prove faithless than that of a people who have raised themselves from an enslaved condition to one of freedom, dignity, and honour.

From Warsaw, and indeed from the whole of Poland, the tidings of the week were mournful and fearful to the last degree. If the Czar did sanction the murderous fire of the soldiery upon an unarmed crowd, there is no more hope for Poland under him than under his father. If his vicegerents did it without his sanction, what hope is there of his good intentions being carried out by such officials?

Three significant incidents were announced from that quarter. One of the military officers ordered to fire on the people retired, and blew out his brains. The province of Volhynia refused to send soldiers to Warsaw, for the repression of the citizens. A tumult had occurred at Kiev, the holiest city of "Holy Mother Russia," next to Moscow—if second to Moscow. The people of Kiev desired to perform funeral rites for the citizens slain at Warsaw; and, being forbidden, were treated like the Poles. This incident, if true, casts grave doubt on the fate of the Czar's Russian reforms. A conflict in the Ukraine between the authorities and the people leaves little hope of such a reform as serf-emancipation being carried through by the existing bureaucracy. The prospect is very dark.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE miserable Bertha, on leaving the hotel, wandered for some time in a state of recklessness and bewilderment that left her alike uncertain and careless as to the route that she was taking. Her torpid nature had been shaken to its depths by the heartlessness of Adair, and whatever remains of affection for him had been left in her heart, had been rudely stirred up by the passionate interview she had undergone, and had then become extinct for ever. At once wounded and terrified, Bertha strayed away from the quarter to which Adair had conducted her, and perhaps, among all the strange outcasts who sojourned in that part of the mighty city, none was more to be pitied that day than Bertha Urquhart.

It was not until she had wandered for nearly an hour, hither and thither, that she perceived that she had reached a district in which an elegantly dressed woman became an object of general remark among those by whose squalid dwellings she passed. She became alarmed, and after one or two efforts to find her way back to a better-looking neighbourhood, she looked helplessly round for direction. Her almost purposeless inquiries, however, made in not the very easiest and most intelligible French, procured her no information, and she began to feel more utterly wretched than ever, when a well-dressed man, in a military undress frock coat and cap, and with some military stiffness in his manner, accosted her respectfully, and in more courteous language than his appearance seemed to promise, expressed his supposition that Madame had lost her way, and his willingness to direct her into it. The stranger was of middle age, and he spoke with a certain gravity, and without the smile and bow of society, and Bertha supposed him to be what she would have known in England as a non-commissioned officer. His grey moustache, and the grizzled hair slightly curling from under the cap, gave him so respectable an appearance, that Mrs. Urquhart felt relief at being addressed by him.

O yes, she had lost her way, and wished to be directed to the side of the river.

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"The river is rather a wide direction, Madame," said the stranger.

"Anywhere near it," said Bertha, "and then I know my own way."

"But would not Madame Urquhart prefer to have a carriage?"

At hearing her name, Bertha looked the astonishment which she naturally felt.

"I had some time ago the honour of being employed by M. Urquhart on one of the railways he was constructing, and had more than one opportunity of seeing Madame, whom it is not easy to forget," he added, but without the indiscretion of the smile which would have made the compliment an impertinence.

But, for once, Bertha had no ear for a compliment. She had encountered an employé of her husband, and might be conducted into the very presence of the latter. What was she to say to him?

It seemed as if the stranger had read her thoughts. At all events he continued:

"A difference, I might say a quarrel, between M. Urquhart and myself made us hostile, and I should be sorry to meet him; but if Madame would permit me to direct her, or assist her—"

That was better, and Bertha managed to explain that in the course of two hours she wished to be near the *embarcadère* of the northern railway, and that, having desired to walk about until that time, she had missed her way.

"Did Madame still desire to walk?"

Yes, Bertha did wish it, if she could be guided to a better part of Paris, whence she could easily reach the station.

Two hours was rather a prolonged walk, and if Madame would prefer reposing in a perfectly secluded and respectable restaurant, near the terminus, he would be happy to show it to her.

His manner and appearance disarmed mistrust, and she felt relieved at the idea of a resting place.

He conducted her through a series of mean streets, apparently familiar to him, at rather a rapid pace, for which he once or twice made a brief apology, but when they emerged into a better quarter he slackened his speed, and said:

"At the next corner is an omnibus waiting. I would suggest to Madame to enter it. I shall follow, but of course am unknown to Madame until we alight. The hind wheels can be seen from where we stand."

He placed in her hand the coins for the fare, and fell behind her and stopped at a shop window.

Bertha almost mechanically obeyed, took her seat in the vehicle, and soon afterwards, though not so soon as she expected, it was stopped, and the stranger entered. His seat was at a distance from her own, and he was absorbed in the *Siècle*, until, after a long and circuitous route, the omnibus drew up at the *embarcadère* itself.

"Follow quickly," he said, rather imperatively, in an under tone, as he drew near her amid the group of descending passengers.

Bertha followed him, in some wonderment at his tone, but she was in no mood to do aught but be guided by one who seemed her friend. He led the way into the station, but avoiding the portion appropriated to the public, he suddenly opened a small door in a wooden partition, the upper part of which was glass, and motioned to her to enter. As soon as she had done so, he closed and locked the door.

"Madame is now safe, and would be safe nowhere else in this city of Paris."

It was apparently a waiting-room for passengers of the humbler kind, was spacious, and contained simply a large table, and a wooden seat that ran round the walls, and the sole ornament was a framed copy of some printed regulations of the railway. There was plenty of light, but it was admitted only through glass that was whitened up to a considerable height, so that no one from without could look into the room.

The stranger approached Bertha, and said—

"There is an English proverb that it is best to be near to the fire when the chimney smokes."

"I do not understand," said Bertha, looking round at the cheerless apartment.

"Madame Urquhart shall understand in a few minutes," he said, quite respectfully. He then mounted upon the seat, and looked out through the clear portion of one of the windows. So he stood watching for some minutes, during which Bertha remembered the caution of Adair not to show herself too long at the terminus.

He sprang hastily down.

"To explain the English proverb, Madame, deign to come this way. Stand for a moment near the window, but not close to it, if Madame pleases."

He waited for a moment or two, and then slowly slid the lower portion of the window, which opened sideways on rollers, a few inches open.

A few inches. To Bertha it seemed as if he had thrown down the side of the room, and the avenger was upon her. For, approaching with hasty steps, and, as it seemed to the guilty wife, with his eyes fixed upon the opening in the window, came Robert Urquhart.

His face was strangely pallid, and she imagined for a moment that she could see the mark of blood upon his lower lip.

But she had but a moment or two for the glance. She uttered a very faint cry like that of a child.

"He can see nothing, Madame," said the stranger, who was a little in front of her.

But the speech was addressed to unheeding ears. She had fainted.

CHAPTER LVII.

When Bertha returned to consciousness, she found herself in the same apartment, but with a different companion. A middle-aged, decently attired woman, of the humbler class, was with her; had brought her water and other restoratives, and had placed her in a chair, which must have been added to the scant furniture of the place during Mrs. Urquhart's faintness. The woman spoke but little, and in a low voice, and her conversation was restricted to the begging Madame to be calm and tranquil, and to the assurance that she had nothing to apprehend.

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Nor had she anything to apprehend, at that moment, from him whose pallid face she had seen as he approached the window.

Urquhart had, as was natural, believed that his wife would take the road to England, and he had made his way to the terminus, resolved to intercept her flight. What might have been the result of the meeting need not now be surmised. It was prevented by the precautions of M. Wolowski, whose emissary, speedily receiving an order from his chief, left Bertha in the charge of the attendant, and placed himself in the way of Robert Urquhart, as he returned from the interior of the station, after once more satisfying himself that as yet Bertha had not arrived.

He had the honour of addressing M. Urquhart.

"Yes."

He was sent to him by M. ——, whose bureau M. Urquhart had visited that day.

"Well?"

M. —— had some additional information which it might be desirable for M. Urquhart to possess.

"What is it?"

The other produced a letter, folded largely, and resembling a despatch, and handed it to Urquhart. It was unsealed; had some apparently official stamp upon it; but Urquhart was in no condition to note its nature. He seemed to read the letter, and after gazing at it vacantly two or three times, he handed it back without a remark. It was evident to the stranger that Robert Urquhart had not mastered the meaning of the words.

"We are therefore at the wrong place," said the former.

"Yes, at the wrong place," repeated Urquhart, mechanically.

"Madame will be met at the terminus of the Orleans line."

"Madame? Yes."

"Mrs. Urquhart, the wife of Monsieur," said the other, and it was a brave thing to say it. For, at the word, the eyes of the Scot gleamed with rage, and he looked savagely at his companion, as if including him in the fierce hate which had seized upon Robert Urquhart, and which bade him regard all around him with an indiscriminate vindictiveness.

"Hold your tongue about my wife," he said, and snatched the paper from the hand of the stranger. Then, his faculties once more aroused, he read the letter again, and fully grasped its information.

"South—south," he said. "I wonder if this is a lie."

"Monsieur!"

"How am I to know that this is true?"

"I have no concern with its truth or falsehood, Monsieur. I am simply charged by M. —— to convey the message to M. Urquhart, who knows better than myself whether M. —— is likely to be deceived."

"You talk a great deal."

"I have discharged my duty, Monsieur," said the other, retiring.

"Stop. Don't I know you?"

"I had once the honour of being entrusted by you, Monsieur, with the examination of some accounts."

"We quarrelled. I forget why, but I remember that you were not to be trusted."

"I am not here to justify my character to M. Urquhart, but only to inform him where he will discover his wife," replied the stranger, impassively.

"You are in the employ of M. ——?"

"I am, Monsieur."

"What made you follow me here?"

"Information reached M. ——, that Madame was preparing for flight, and he has despatched messengers to all the points of departure. It was my first business to see that they were at their posts, and my second to find M. Urquhart as soon as I had any tidings."

"That is business," said Robert Urquhart, to himself.

"Monsieur continues to think that this will be the line taken by Madame. If he pleases to remain here, and watch, I will go to the Orleans terminus, and if our information be incorrect, which I am bound to say it seldom or never is, I will venture to act in the name of M. Urquhart.

"You," said Urquhart, his eyes again shining with anger. "You offer to go and arrest my wife, and drag her from her carriage."

"In what other way would M. Urquhart stop a fugitive?"

Robert flung a curse at him, and rushed from the station.

"He is a magnificent man," said the other, looking after Urquhart, and speaking without the slightest excitement. "His strength must be colossal. Had he closed with me in his rage I must have used steel. I am truly glad to have been spared that pain. Now, we are safe. That train leaves at the same moment with this, and he will watch to the last instant."

He returned to the room where Bertha was, and a peculiar scratch which he made, after knocking, caused the attendant to open the door.

"You have recovered, Madame?" he said. "That is well."

"Ah, he is watching for me," cried Bertha, with every sign of prostration.

"No, Madame, he is gone. But you will be unequal to the journey if you excite yourself so unduly."

"He will come back."

"He is gone to Versailles, with the intention of remaining there until a certain M. Lygon—if I have the name rightly—can come over from England to confer with him on certain grave matters."

The falsehood was well selected, and probability was in its favour. Bertha was somewhat reassured, and was able to speak calmly of the hour of departure.

"I will obtain Madame's billet—she has her passport, I know, and two minutes before the hour I will conduct her to the carriage."

He went out.

But ten minutes before the hour he reappeared, looking graver than usual.

Robert Urquhart had been unable to relinquish the conviction that it was to England that Bertha would betake herself, and the conviction increased in strength as he left the *embarcadère* of the

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north. He knew that she had no friends in the provinces, and that she was almost childishly averse to finding herself among strangers. He could perceive no reason for her attempting to fly in any other direction than that of her own country, except, of course, her desire to elude him by resorting to the most unlikely means of concealment, and he knew her nature sufficiently well to disbelieve that she would have nerve and endurance enough to persevere in any protracted scheme of escape. The nearer came the hour for the departure of the train, the stronger came his original conviction upon him, and before he had reached the Orleans terminus, he turned, and hurried back to his former post. The stranger caught one glimpse of the tall figure, and hastened to Bertha.

"Is it time?" she said, with more composure than he had expected.

Without reply, he whispered to the woman, who left the room.

"There is no danger," he said, "but Madame must consent to adopt certain precautions."

"Precautions!"

"They will not be troublesome, and it will be for a short time only."

The woman came back, bringing with her a cloak, such as is worn by the humblest class of travellers, and a bonnet so coarse that Bertha instinctively shuddered at it. The Frenchman noted the feeling, and perhaps sympathised with what an Englishman would, under the circumstances, have regarded with fierce contempt.

"They are new, though poor," said the woman.

"For two stages of the journey only," said the man. "At the end of that time, Madame will be invited from the third-class carriage to her proper place, and will find her own property restored to her."

As he spoke, the female attendant, at his gesture, removed Bertha's elegant bonnet, substituted the other, threw the cloak upon her, and then the stranger led her out, through another door from that which she had entered, and along a dark passage. She was very near the carriages, for she heard the fierce hiss of the steam almost close upon her ears, and, all unimaginative as she was, it seemed to have a menace in its gusty voice. Her guide left her for a moment, and then, returning, hurried her out upon the platform, and the next instant handed her into one of the third-class compartments. There were several persons in the carriage, and she dropped into a seat between a large German, who was already making preparations for kindling a huge pipe, and a jovial looking female bound for Amiens, who had tied a yellow silk handkerchief over her head, and had radishes in her lap, for her refreshment during the journey. Bertha, ever sensitive to externals, felt an increase of wretchedness at being placed in such companionship, and her indignant look was not lost on her protector.

"He is on the platform," he whispered; "keep close."

There was no need, after that, to bid the unhappy wife shrink guiltily from view. She bent her head, and sought to hide her face in the coarse cloak.

"Screen her from view, my friend," said her companion, in German, to the man by her side. "She is parting from an only child, and if it sees her it will scream—you know what a child's cry is to a mother's heart."

"*Mein Gott!*" said the kind-hearted German; "I do not like it myself, so I make my wife whip them. The child shall not see through me."

And he sat forward.

Then came the minutes that seem hours. The carriage door was opened three or four times, and Bertha, with closed eyes, sat awaiting the touch of the husband hand that might the next moment drag her forth from her hiding place. Travellers poured upon the platform, and among all their voices Bertha listened, with a fast-beating heart, for the tone of one voice that should demand whether an English lady named Urquhart were in the carriage. But the minutes passed, and the hour of starting arrived, and the signal was given. The train glided away, and Bertha, when she perceived the motion, felt irresistibly compelled to look up for a last glance at him whom she had so bitterly wronged.

It was not yet dark, and though it was almost impossible for the eyes of those who were on the platform to penetrate the gloom of the carriage, their faces could be clearly discerned by the departing travellers. And the train glided on, and for one moment the gaze of Bertha rested upon the now flushed features of her husband. His tall form rose high among the group on the platform, and it was an almost vacant glance that fell upon carriage after carriage as they passed him. She thought—it may have been only thought—that his lips muttered something, as she went by him.

"And I have deserved his curse," was the wife's bitter thought, as she sped on her road to England.

CHAPTER LVIII.

When the train was out of sight, the military-looking man, with the grizzled hair, made his way towards Mr. Urquhart, and waited, as one who expects to be addressed.

"Have you stayed here on my business?" was the demand of Urquhart.

"No, Monsieur, but by the order of M. ——."

"Is he at his office now?"

"He has gone into the country, to his father's. He will, no doubt, be at the bureau early to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" repeated Urquhart, angrily. Then, after a pause, he said, "You told me that he had sent persons to the stations."

"I told Monsieur the truth."

"There is one at the Orleans terminus?" asked Urquhart.

"There was, three minutes ago. But as that train has now started, the person in question is on his way here, to inform me of the result of his watch. I would suggest that Monsieur should await his report."

Urquhart nodded a grim assent, and strode about the terminus, with impatient steps, until he saw the stranger accosted by another person, when Robert walked up to them.

"Is this the person?"

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It was M. Chantal, who made no reply.

"The lady has not departed by the Orleans train, Monsieur," said the other.

"I have a belief that some treachery is being practised on me," said Urquhart, in a low but angry voice. "I am not speaking of you, who are but tools in the hand of your employer, but to him. I know right well that he has it in his power to lay his hand upon any person in Paris at a couple of hours' notice."

"You do not over-rate the resources of the department, Monsieur," said M. Chantal; "but is it the case that you have required those resources to be put in play?"

"No, sir, I have not. But you," he said, turning to the other, "endeavoured to lead me to the Orleans station. I am now told that I should have gone on a fool's errand. How do you answer that?"

"We can but act on information, Monsieur. Your own presence here has been, as you will admit, as useless as it would have been at the other line. It may be that Madame Urquhart has changed her plans, and resolved to remain in Paris. That can be ascertained to-morrow."

"It must be ascertained to-night," replied Urquhart.

"Monsieur is too much of a disciplinarian not to know that we are limited by our instructions," said Chantal. "I am desired to watch one train, and report to my friend here, who may have ampler discretion."

"I am ready to pay for any service I require," returned Urquhart, who supposed that a couple of police spies, held by him in extreme contempt, were simply endeavouring to obtain money from him.

"Monsieur does not comprehend the usages of the service," said the military-looking man, unruffled. "But he asks what is impossible."

"Where does your employer's father live?"

"I do not know, Monsieur."

"Nor you, sir?"

Chantal merely bowed, in sign of his ignorance.

"Of course you both know, and are afraid to tell me, lest I should follow him. I must learn elsewhere."

He was walking away without another word, when M. Chantal said—

"M. Urquhart, misfortune is an apology for a certain kind of conduct, and I make no other remark upon what would, at another time, be an intolerable insult. Also, M. Urquhart is a man whose character demands admiration, and whom one would be honoured in serving, were it possible."

By a marvellous effort, prompted less by his own feeling than by an impression that the speaker had more to tell him, Urquhart restrained his indignation at a tribute of homage and sympathy from a police spy, and merely said—

"You know what I want to know, and what I must know immediately."

"M. Urquhart desires to discover a lady. There is no person in Paris who can help him to that discovery to-night."

His emphasis on the name of the city indicated a second meaning."

"Who can?"

"A person who is not in Paris (I am not alluding to M. ——) has no doubt the clue, but I may be committing an indiscretion in naming that person."

"Do you mean the scoundrel Adair?"

"I do not speak of M. Ernest Adair," replied Chantal, quietly.

"This discussion is apart from my duty," said the other Frenchman," and I prefer to withdraw from it. M. Urquhart," he added, "has an unfavourable opinion of me, and therefore I do not venture to say more than this, namely, that whatever he may hear from M. Chantal—" indicating his companion—"he may rely upon as implicitly as if it came from M. —— himself."

And he walked away, and quite out of earshot.

"Who is the person you speak of?" said Urquhart, quickly.

"May I ask you to recall to your mind who it is that has been most in the secrets of the lady you wish to discover, M. Urquhart?"

"You said this instant that you did not mean that villain, who will be saved all future villany from the next moment he comes in my way," said Urquhart.

"He has probably been warned," said Chantal, with a slight smile. "I meant to suggest a very different person—M. Urquhart's sister-in-law."

"Mrs. Lygon!" exclaimed Urquhart. "She is in London."

"We, on the contrary, believe that she has never left Versailles."

"I know not," said Urquhart, with an oath. "I know not what devil's plottings may be going on, or may not, but I believe yon woman to be in London, I tell you."

"She was certainly in Versailles yesterday, M. Urquhart. And although I have not knowledge of her residence there, you will obtain the address from a person who is known to you—M. Silvain, a perfumer."

"He in *her* confidence," muttered Urquhart, astonished. For he thought of the proud Laura, and her look as she had left his drawing-room when last they parted—Laura have a secret in the keeping of a petty shopkeeper at Versailles!

"As far as I understand the case, Monsieur, Silvain's services have been limited to the hiring a lodging for Mrs. Lygon, but of that I know nothing."

"And you are in the employ of M. ——?"

"I am, Monsieur."

"I wish you a better trade, for you seem to have the makings of a decent man, and it's a pity you have sold yourself to the Devil. But you have a right to your hire."

He forced a napoleon into the hand of Chantal, who was taken too much by surprise to repel the present, and then Urquhart went off with his usual rapid step.

M. Chantal rejoined his acquaintance.

"You have fired a new train, apparently," said the latter, pointing to the retreating figure of Urquhart.

"And have been paid for firing it," said Chantal, smiling, and holding up the coin. "We will drink, at supper, to the success of the brave Scot, and I will pay for the supper."

"I see no objection to either proposition," said

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the other. "You have not, however, sent him to the Father's?"

"Why should I not have sent him there?"

"Wolowski will tell you that. But you know better. Do you think that he will get any clue to his wife's hiding-place?"

Chantal looked up, at the last word, and smiled.

"I suppose that she *will* leave Paris as soon as we permit it," said Chantal.

"I suppose that she will show that bad taste," said his friend, quietly.

"It is bad taste; but the poor woman does what she can. She takes over the last new bonnet. I hope you took care to urge that it was not to be crushed, or when she descends from that third-class carriage she will endure a new pang."

They looked at each other for a moment, and then, dropping the subject altogether, left the *embarcadère*.

"I should like to ask Ernest to our supper," said Chantal.

"That proposition, unlike your former two, I utterly repudiate," said the other. "He does not amuse me."

"You are selfish. I wished to amuse him. Besides the napoleon is in part his earning."

"Eh? You have something pleasant for him."

"Only that Urquhart has resolved on destroying our poor friend."

"Ah, well, do not let us tell him. The anticipation of misfortune is very painful,—worse than the reality. We will not be inhuman, and we shall have all the more wine to reward our philanthropy."

It was late when Mr. Urquhart returned to Versailles, whence he had driven that day with a wife smiling by his side, and to which he came back alone, disgraced, enraged. But it was not in his nature, as in that of Arthur Lygon, to sit down stunned under his sorrow, or to ponder over it, and work it hither and thither, until it grew to him and became a part of himself. Robert Urquhart met it as an enemy, and one with whom he would make no terms. His trust had been met with treachery; his honour had been stained; and he was conscious of having done no wrong that could call down on him such a judgment. There was no second thought in his mind—punishment was the thought that reigned there, the first and the last.

He had scarcely arrived when he went off in quest of Silvain. The house was closed, but light was visible, and the sound of voices could be heard. Urquhart's knocking silenced them.

To the demand from within, he replied:

"Mr. Urquhart, and I must see you this moment."

Silvain opened the door, though with misgivings, for Henderson had not concealed from him the angry language which Mr. Urquhart had used when discharging the girl, and Silvain had apprehensions that Urquhart might be coming to carry some of his threats of chastisement into execution. However, he confronted his visitor courageously, the rather that Henderson herself was at the little supper-table in the bower, and looked aghast at the appearance of her late master.

"Don't be alarmed," said Urquhart, in a calm voice. He walked through the shop into the parlour, and sat down, Henderson instinctively springing to her feet, though she was no longer in his service; and, as prospective mistress of all around her, had as good right as himself to be seated.

"It is late, Monsieur," said Silvain.

"I know that," said Urquhart, "but, late as it is, I will thank you to put on your hat, and conduct me to the lodgings of Mrs. Lygon."

The girl flushed crimson, compressed her lips tightly, and looked at her lover to see how he would meet the demand.

"I will not do so, Monsieur," said Silvain, resolutely.

"You will do so, and that directly," replied Mr. Urquhart, looking at him much as a schoolmaster might survey a contumacious urchin who declined to perform a task.

"I know that he will not!" exclaimed the girl. "And, if I might take the liberty to speak, it is not for the honour of a gentleman like Mr. Urquhart to ask such a thing."

"I don't talk of honour, and I don't talk of asking, girl," replied Urquhart; "but unless this man instantly obeys me, I shall take him by the scruff of the neck and walk him about Versailles until he either drops down dead or shows me the house."

And, rising as he spoke, he looked so capable of performing his threat that Henderson shuddered at the idea of seeing her lover in the grasp of such an enemy.

"Yet, I will not do it," replied the brave little man.

"I love you, Silvain," exclaimed the girl involuntarily.

"Are you mad, to disobey me, my man?" said Urquhart. "I think you know why I wish to see that woman, and if you know that, you may judge how likely I am to be stopped in my way. Put on your hat, and do not be a fool."

Silvain did not stir.

"Let me speak, sir," said Henderson, terrified at the look which now came upon the face of Urquhart. "Please to let me speak."

"Quick!"

"He has said that he will not do it, sir, and he shall not go from his word. But I will show you the house, if you will only hear me first."

"Well?"

"You said this moment, sir, that we knew why you wanted to see Mrs. Lygon. I am only a servant—leastways, I was one just now—and he is a tradesman. We have no right to ask questions; but when you put it, sir, on the ground that we do know, and we do not know, it is not overbold to ask the reason."

This was just, and Robert Urquhart felt it to be so. Stern and wrathful as he was, the Scot's nature asserted itself in the hour of anger, and he would not refuse justice.

"The reason is, that I have discovered sin and shame in my household, and Mrs. Lygon is able to give me information which I must have."

"You are not speaking, sir," said Henderson, colouring to the roots of her hair, and scarcely able to utter for agitation, "you are not speaking of anything wrong done by Mrs. Lygon?"

"She has known of wrong, and so, girl, have you," replied Urquhart, very sternly.

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"Never mind me, let the worst come on me," said Henderson, crying violently, "I only want to know one thing, and on my knees I beg you to answer me, sir. You said 'sin and shame.' You were not speaking of Mrs. Lygon?"

"No," replied Urquhart, fiercely.

"That is enough, sir,—more than enough," said the girl, hastily snatching her bonnet and shawl. "If you will allow me to show you the way it will be much better, because it is late, and the poor lady may be gone to bed. Do not look angry, Silvain. I saw this must come, and come it has."

(*To be continued.*)

TUSCAN NOOKS AND BYE-PATHS.—II.

THERE is a Tuscan city, which every foreign visitor in Tuscany sees, but which none visits;—none, or, at all events, not one in ten thousand. It may be, too, that equally exceptionally strangers may have avoided *seeing* it. For they *may* have slept in the railroad carriage, which carried them from Leghorn to Florence. In no other way could the city in question have escaped their observation; for it forms a remarkable object on a hill by the side of the railway, about half-way between Pisa and Florence. Its name is San Miniato; and its surname "Al Tedesco," to distinguish it from the church and convent named after the same saint in the immediate neighbourhood of Florence. Nobody, as has been said, ever thinks of going up to San Miniato. Yet the queer little old city well deserves a visit;—not certainly from those, who are hastening on to do "Florence in eight days," as per guide-book; but from any nook-and-byeway lover, who has a day at his disposal, not imperatively dedicated to the regular and recognised lions. Should any such be inclined to "attempt the adventure," he must cause himself to be put down by the railroad at the little roadside station of San Pierino, the next to that of Empoli on the Leghorn side. Thence a walk of two miles, the last of them being a steep ascent, will bring the traveller to the gateway of the city;—that same gateway, the keys of which were stolen by the Empoli girls, as narrated in a previous paper. If the "adventurer" should object to even the short walk, he will find the San Miniato mail waiting at the arrival of the morning train from Florence; and the two miserable but willing little steeds, and the shaky old berline, which perform this duty, will for a small consideration drag him in process of time to the top. If he be an Englishman, however, he will hardly endure to sit behind the panting little beasts as they breast the very steep ascent. An Italian or a Frenchman feels no mercy upon such occasions; and has no idea of being "*dupé*," to such a degree as to be led into using his own legs, when he has paid his money for being carried. On the bright September morning, on which we,—the writer and an English friend,—"made the ascent," we left four able-bodied men being slowly and painfully dragged up the hill.

We came from Florence by the first train; and, of course, could not travel the five-and-twenty miles or so, which brought us to San Pierino, without hearing and seeing symptoms of the doings on which every man's mind is more or less occupied throughout the country. Our train carried a company of "bersaglieri," or riflemen, on their way to join in the good work of liberating Umbria from the intolerable curse of priestly government. And the station-master at Empoli came to the door of our carriage with a tale, eagerly listened to by all present, of a convoy of prisoners, which had passed through on its way from Siena to Leghorn during the night:

"*Certi mus c' erano*," "certain phizzes there were among them!" said the station-master, completing his meaning with one of those infinitely expressive grimaces and shrugs, with which a Tuscan can convey so significant a description. I fear that the faces which had so unfavourably impressed the Empoli station-master belonged to some of the Pope's bad Irish bargains.

The position of the city of San Miniato is a peculiar one. It is built on the narrow ridge of the mountain, extending for somewhat more than a mile in a semicircular sweep. Towards the centre of this curved back-bone an excrescence juts out from it, and rises a hundred feet or so above the level of the rest of the ridge. A small, irregular-shaped platform occupies the summit of this; and was the site of a strong castle, now utterly destroyed and even effaced, with the exception of a tall, slender, ragged, red-brick tower, standing at the extreme edge of the level space, and looking as if a gust of wind would cause it to fall over upon the city below it. It is this lofty and isolated tower with its ragged summit, visible far and wide over the lower Valdarno, which attracts the eyes of all travellers along the line of rail below. It is one of those sites evidently predestined to have a castle upon it; and in all probability, there was some building of the sort here before the castle, of which this tower is the sole remnant, was built by the Emperor Frederick the Second. That great emperor and ferocious barbarian resided for a while at San Miniato during his visits to Italy; and dated thence many documents still existing. His son, Henry the Sixth also resided for some time at San Miniato; as did likewise the Emperor Otho the Fourth in the year 1209. This also was the residence of the Imperial Vicars for Tuscany, who seem to have been sometimes Vicars with authority over all Italy. There was, therefore, abundant reason for calling the place *German's* San Miniato.

Few royal or imperial castles are unfurnished with reminiscences of deeds of the truly imperial stamp. The old red-brick tower at San Miniato has a notable tradition of the kind. Here it was that the celebrated chancellor of Frederick the Second, Pietro delle Vigne—Peter of the Vineyards — came to his miserable end. His eyes had been destroyed, as is well known, by his "august sovereign and master," for some real or imagined offence. He had at all events served Frederick faithfully during all the years of his life; and, therefore, in all probability, deserved, richly enough, that or any other punishment; but not from the hand of his "royal master." Local tradition tells, that the miserable man put an end to his life by beating his head against the wall of his prison, and points out even the spot

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in the wall at which the catastrophe took place. With regard to such traditions it is to be observed, that the fictitious manufacture of them may be generally expected to occur under the same conditions which give rise to other manufactures,—a demand for them. In places which have become celebrated for their connection with any interesting passage of ancient story, which are visited by crowds of sightseers, and where the prosperity of guides and hotels depends on the excitement and satisfaction of the curiosity of the public, particular details of this sort may be expected to be invented. But where none of these conditions occur, and where an unexpected stranger receives the testimony of an immemorial tradition, handed down from one generation to another among a people little subject to removals or changes, and remarkably addicted to thinking and speaking of the facts and memories of their own local histories, such testimony may be accepted as very strong evidence of the truth.

We were fortunate enough to fall in, at San Miniato, with one of those humble votaries of Mnemosyne, whose culture of the learned muse, like their patriotism, limits itself within the horizon commanded by the church tower top of their native town—no very narrow area in the case of San Miniato—and who are so invaluable to a stranger when met with in the genuine unsophisticated state; and become so abominable when they have degenerated into professional *ciceroni.* Our San Miniato friend had a true Old Mortality reverence for every sculptured stone and storied wall in his native city, and a really extensive and accurate knowledge of its history. He could point out, as we stood on the platform once occupied by the castle, every tower and townlet that crowned the neighbouring hills, or studded the far-stretching vale of Arno, and he could tell when its men had been in feud with those of San Miniato, and how chatelains had been submitted to its jurisdiction, and distant churches placed under its ecclesiastical supremacy. San Miniato and its citizens are mortal: and must have had therefore, it must be supposed, reverses and misfortunes. But the patriotic memory of worthy Gaetano Banni was so constructed as to retain none such. And an unfortunate allusion by me to the story of the taking of the town-keys above alluded to was met by him not only with the most unqualified contradiction of the whole story, but with a torrent of proofs that it did not, and could not have happened. According to him, the legend originated solely in the invention of a burlesque poetaster of Empoli, who wrote little more than a hundred years ago. But the flight of the ass, I objected; that unquestionably may be witnessed any year on the feast of Corpus Domini? Yes, indeed; and was a signal proof of the brutality of the Empolani, but no proof at all of anything else.

This little mountain city of San Miniato is singularly remarkable for the constellation of great historic names of which it has been the cradle. And our Sanminiatese Old Mortality, Gaetano Banni, was perfectly well up in the family history and genealogical lore of his native place. He could run over a list of names well known in Italian story, telling how this family had become extinct in such a year; how that had migrated and was still extant in such and such a city: how some last scion of another well-known name was yet to be found in some humble position among the citizens. He pointed out the old ancestral mansions which still remained, and the sites of those which had been destroyed. Some of these were names known not only to Italy but to the world. And it must be admitted that it is not a little singular to find such a triad of names as Sforza, Borrommeo, and Buonaparte among the stars of the same obscure little Tuscan hill-city. The first of these, indeed, was of no Sanminiatese lineage, his father, Muzio Attendolo, being of Cutignola; being an illegitimate child, the great warrior was indeed of no lineage; but he was born at San Miniato of a mother belonging to the city, and the San Miniato chroniclers eagerly insist on this fact, and on the legal maxim, *partus sequitur ventrem*, as entitling them to consider the illegitimate founder of so illustrious a line as a fellow citizen of their own.

The Borrommei family was of genuine San Miniato origin, and became extinct in that city only in 1672. The old family mansion is still to be seen there, with its long row of massive and gloomy-looking arched windows encased in heavy Tuscan "rustic" stone-work. The huge door stood open to the street, and gave glimpses of an interior more compatible with the residence of a saint than with that of an archbishop.

The Buonaparte family were as unquestionably citizens of San Miniato, and the existence of a long series of generations of them in the little city is attested by numerous memorials. But worthy Gaetano Banni was not altogether correct in representing them as of Sanminiatese origin. They existed in San Miniato early in the twelfth century. But the family may be traced to a still higher antiquity in Florence. Florence is undoubtedly the cradle of the Buonaparte race; and the earliest facts known of the family are to be found in the oldest Florentine chroniclers. A few miles from Florence, on the then bridle-path leading to Rome, there was a very strong castle and is still a little hamlet called Monteboni. In that castle lived a race of barons, who infested that important road and levied contributions on travellers. Their deeds were such as made it necessary for them, and at the same time enabled them, to be generous to the Church; and we accordingly find still extant deeds of gift of lands to different monasteries bearing date 1041, 1083, and 1100, executed by these pious highwaymen in their castle of "Mons Boni." But, thirty-five years after the last of these dates, the predatory habits of the noble barons of Monteboni became so great a nuisance to the increasing commerce and traffic of the rising republic of Florence, that the citizens went out against the castle and razed it to the ground. After that, the lords of Monteboni became themselves citizens. But, on changing their lives, they changed also their name, and at the same time dividing into two branches became—one branch Buondelmonti, a name very celebrated in Florentine story, and the other branch Buonaparte. This second division of the

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family has left a record of its existence in Florence in the family burying-vault in the church of San Pancrazio; but it does not seem to have remained long settled in that city. Subdividing itself again, one branch established itself at San Miniato, and the other at Sarzana, a little town near the coast, about half-way from Florence to Genoa. And I am afraid that it is clear—though San Miniato and Gaetano Banni won't hear of such a thing for an instant—that from this latter sprung the Corsican family, to which that descendant of the old Monteboni reiving barons who practised the ancient family maxims on an imperial scale belonged. For more than five hundred years, at all events, the family existed at San Miniato, for "Jacobus de Bonapartibus, Nobilis Miles et Prætor," is recorded to have died in 1294, by the inscription on a very modest little stone about a foot square in the north wall of the cathedral, near the door and close down to the ground. And in 1799 Napoleon of that ilk visited, at San Miniato, an aged canon of the name, then the last remaining scion of that branch of the race. Three ancient family mansions are pointed out as having all belonged to the family. One of them is, perhaps, the largest palace in the city, and another is indicated as that in which the old canon received for three days his great relative. The annals of the little city are full of notices of members of the family. There were no less than twenty-seven canons of the name, of one of whom there is a portrait in the sacristy. I cannot say that I was able to trace the slightest resemblance in the silly, smirking, vacant features to the well-known imperial lineaments.

It is impossible to quit San Miniato without descending one or other side of the steep hill, on which the city is built. We determined to do so on the opposite side to that by which we had climbed the hill, with a view of exploring a little of the country lying back from the railway, and separated from the Valdarno by the range of high grounds, on one culminating point of which San Miniato stands. The entire district is one of hill and valley, the former in no case so high as not to be entirely under cultivation, and the latter giving very evident signs of exceeding fertility. Olives and vines on the hill-sides, corn,—Indian corn chiefly,—and vines in the valleys, complete the old biblical picture of prosperity,—a land rich with "corn, wine, and oil." Yet with all this wealth of vegetation, the country is not a *green* country. The browns predominate to a degree, which gives a quite peculiar aspect to the landscape; the prevalence of this tint not being due as in so many localities to the scorching up of the vegetation by immoderate heat, but to the large amount of naked soil visible to the eye. And this peculiarity arises from a cause, the agencies of which are wide-spreading, various, and of infinite importance to the future prosperity and development of the resources of the country.

This predominance of brown tints in the face of the country suggests the idea of aridity. But to an eye accustomed to similar observations, one glance will suffice to show that the peculiar appearance and configuration of the district is due to the agency of water. The hill-sides are in many places bare, not because the sun has burned up the vegetation, but because water has carried away the soil in such sort as to leave precipitous rifts and ravines incapable of cultivation, not on account of their sterility, but of their vertical position. The multitude of depressions in the earth's surface, from little rifts and gullies to the leading valleys have all evidently been excavated by water. All, or almost all valleys, it may be said, are so. But the peculiarity here is the rapidity with which water is doing its work. And yet the little streams at the bottoms of the larger valleys in these early autumnal days are creeping along mildly, and even lazily enough. And in the smaller ravines not a drop of water is to be seen. A single day's heavy rain, however, is sufficient to change the face of all this. The torpid little streams become in a few hours raging and mischievous torrents; each gully in the seamed and rifted sides of the hills is turned into a tumbling stream of turbid water charged heavily with earth. The peculiar character of this part of the Apennine range, even of the higher ridge of the mountains, is its extreme friability. Thousands of tons of the soil are carried by each passing summer shower, and millions of tons by each heavy winter rain, into the lowlands and into the streamlets, and by them into the Arno, still busily labouring to extend the vast flat plain, which it has within the last three or four hundred years deposited between Pisa and the sea. The Apennines are being rapidly cut down and spread out in the Mediterranean. Very rapidly; and in that consists the misfortune;—for a very serious misfortune it is. "Yes, the soil is fertile enough," said a *contadino* of the district, to whom I spoke on the subject; "the soil is rich; but who can tell whether he shall sow next year, where he has sown this; or even whether he shall ever reap at all, where he has sown! A little hard rain is enough to carry away a field." The Pisan plain is magnificently fertile; and though the construction of it causes marshes and malaria in the process, vast tracts are being prepared to feed the added millions of a not very remote posterity. But meantime the misfortune is a very serious one; and as usual, when the operations of nature are such, it has been caused by unwise and inconsiderate interference with her course of action. The *rapidity* with which this transformation is taking place is the misfortune. And this has been caused by the improvident denuding of the hills of their forests. The earth, which was brought away gradually by rains that fell on extensive forests, and were retained awhile by their leaves, is now swept down wholesale by the water which falls on the unprotected sides of the hills.

The country we were rambling over to the south-west of San Miniato illustrated the whole of this process in a very marked manner; and the style of scenery produced by it is very peculiar. In some places, where a deep and precipitous ravine had been hollowed out, and where subsequently human labour, or chance sowing had clothed the sides of it with trees, cypresses or chesnuts mixed with acacia (excellent for such a purpose by reason of the wonderfully rapid spreading and wide ramifications of its abundant roots),

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he process of demolition had been stayed; and uch nooks of dark greenery clothing the sides of he fantastically cut hollows, occurring like oases ı the midst of this brown yet fertile landscape, ave a picturesque character and effect entirely heir own. Especially this was the case where uch oases of verdure are combined with buildings f those picturesque forms and colours, which are o universally allied in Tuscan hill villages to ntire absence of all adaptation to the needs of omfortable modern life, as to suggest the idea hat the philanthropic and artistic constructors of hese habitations must have planned and raised hem wholly with a view to the production of the icturesque for the benefit of others, rather than 'ith any reference to their own comfort.

Immediately beneath Palaia, a little hill-town bout nine miles to the south-west of San Miniato, he scenery is strikingly pretty from the causes bove mentioned. As usual, with all the smaller owns which were built at a period when the prin- ipal business of men's lives was to defend them- elves against their neighbours, Palaia is placed on he top of a hill as high or higher than that of an Miniato. And the steep sides of this otherwise rown hill are deeply seamed by three ravines, 'hich cut so sharply into it as to seem to have opped themselves suddenly just in time to void swallowing up the town walls which stand t the edge of the precipices thus formed. And hese ravines are well and richly clothed with an bundant growth of trees and underwood. Were ney not so indeed, it is evident that Palaia would ot much longer remain on the hill-top she has ccupied for so many centuries.

Town walls, in truth, Palaia can hardly be said o possess, if by such a phrase is understood some- hing separated from the dwellings they surround. 'he backs of the houses constitute the town wall. ın ancient document remaining from the times 'hen little Palaia, too, made laws for itself, exacts, hat every house-owner using a portion of the town 'all for the back of his house shall be bound to eep such portion in repair at his own cost.

Almost every householder seems to have availed imself of this advantage, and incurred this esponsibility, insomuch that my companion ob- erved that the principle of defence adopted was mply that of a flock of sheep, who, at the ap- roach of danger, put all their heads together in ne middle, and turn the circumference, com- osed of their hinder quarters, to the foe.

Notwithstanding the additional consistency im- arted to the mixed sand and marl, which form he material of the hill, by the growth of trees nd brushwood, there are parts of the little town- t which appear to be by no means safe from the onsequences of a further advance of the ravines t the head of which they stand. Doubtless the habitants comfort themselves with the reflection, hat the stones which have remained in their laces, one on the other, for so many centuries, 'ill be likely to "last their time." But they night be warned that such consolation is sometimes lusory by what is even now taking place in the ity of Volterra some twenty miles to the south of nem. There the mountain on which the city tands is much higher, and the landslips, which have occurred there on a very much larger scale than those which have happened near Palaia,—offer the most remarkable instance existing of phenomena of this class. A colossal gully is there slowly but surely advancing into the heart of the mountain; several buildings have been swallowed up within the last half century; and at this day a large convent, with its church, has been abandoned by its inmates, and stands desolate at the brink of the crumbling precipice, awaiting its doom.

The large and handsome church of St. Martin, standing a little out of the town of Palaia, appeared to me to be far from secure from a similar fate. True, the ravine, at the head of which it is most picturesquely placed, is wooded; while the "balze" at Volterra (as the fatal devouring landslip is there called), present a surface of material of scarcely more stable consistency than mud heaped up in a vertical precipice of many hundred feet in height. And for this reason St. Martin's Church at Palaia is only in danger, whereas the convent at Volterra is condemned to certain destruction at no distant day. But there are portions of the hill-side beneath the former church, where the exposed water-seamed surface of bare friable sand presents an appearance anything but reassuring.

St. Martin keeps his fine old church inhospitably locked, it is to be presumed, for lack of visitors. A *contadino* at a farm-house close by, we were told, had the key, which was very readily produced on application. But it was the key of a small side-door, and St. Martin's worthy janitor would by no means hear of our entering the temple entrusted to his keeping by any such undignified approach. He begged us to wait an instant, while he entered, and from within opened the great western doors for our illustrious excellencies. The huge doors were dragged wide open, and we and the streaming sunshine entered the great desolate-looking and damp-feeling nave together. The whole appearance of the inside of the building seemed to indicate that men and sunbeams were equally rare visitors. And if it *should* happen that on some rainy day St. Martin should see his church, with its huge timbered roof, its fine range of columns, its half-defaced and desolate-looking tombs, and its mildewed Madonnas, all slip away into the valley beneath, it may be believed that the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants of Palaia would not be much injured by the catastrophe. But a fine old monument of the architecture of the thirteenth century would be lost, and with it a notable instance of the use of the vulgar tongue in an inscription of that period. For around the capital of the second column on the left hand of our entering the church, may still be deciphered, "Andrea fu que mi fece . . . . anno MCCLX." "It was Andrew who built me, in the year 1260." This ingenuous Andrew fondly imagined that no further designation would be needed to identify him to posterity. But he has sunk into the limbo which holds the "brave men before Agamemnon." For the supposition which has been put forward, that this fine building is the work of no less a man than Andrea Pisano, who made the first of the bronze gates of the baptistery at Florence, is effectually contradicted by a comparison of the date above

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given with that of the casting of the Florence gates, which was in the year 1330.

The catastrophe contemplated would also deprive the world of another very curious and perhaps unique monument of the customs and manners of the centuries immediately following the tenth. At the principal entrance of the church is, as usual, a marble vase for holy water. But the form of that at Palaia is peculiar, being something between a mortar and a bushel measure. In fact, the venerable stone vessel was destined to a double use, mixing up functions of a spiritual and profane nature in a strange way, highly characteristic of those "ages of faith." Around the massive rim of the vessel, deeply cut in large gothic letters, may be read this inscription, "Hæc est mensura vini de Palaia, quæ debet impleri usque huc, facta tempore Domini Hubaldi." "This is the wine measure of Palaia, which must be filled up to here, —made in the time of the Lord Hubald." And it may be read among the ancient statutes of the municipality of Palaia still extant, that the inhabitants of that commune were bound to measure their wine in that measure, and pay a fee to the church on each measure for the use of it. The temporal power of the venerable stone has long since departed from it: but it is still discharging its spiritual functions to the very few who come near it, now that its mere mundane uses are at an end.

In the interior of the town there is another small church in which we found a work of art, the existence of which is worth recording inasmuch as I cannot find that it has been recorded elsewhere. On the principal altar behind, and in part concealed by modern woodwork, is a range of figures by Luca della Robbia, in his best style and manner. They are thirteen in number, each occupying a separate slab about two feet and a-half by about a foot wide. As in almost all the works of Luca himself, distinguished from those of his nephews, no colour is used save blue. The figures are white on a fine deep blue ground. They are admirable for grace and expression. As there is a book professing to give a complete catalogue of the extant works of Luca, whose author has failed to discover this one lurking in the obscurity of this remote little church, it is as well to supplement the list by this note.

From Palaia a walk of about six miles through a country similarly characterised to that which we had before traversed, but in which the character described becomes less strongly marked as the main valley of the Arno is approached, brought us to the railway again at the station of San Romano, and once more the iron horse combined for us a ramble through districts rarely visited with the comfort of supper and beds in Florence.

T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE.

A MODEL STRIKE.

It is satisfactory to think that there are ambitions of various sizes, adapted to all sorts of minds, just as there are gloves, from the baby proportions of the Liliputian warehouse, to the colossal form known to undertakers providing costume at funerals, to fit all kinds of hands. Everybody can, if they will, be suited. Some are satisfied to be quite at the tail of a crowd, no matter who may be in the foreground, or what may be the good fortune to be struggled for, or the spectacle to be witnessed. While Paul, hot and grimy, is in the front line of battle, carving his way to glory, Peter, full length on his back, basks in the sunshine out of the reach and the roar of the cannon. And if each is contented and happy, Paul with his laurels, and Peter without, who can complain? And is it not quite as well that their ambitions are not identical? and that all danger of collision is thereby avoided?

My friend Smythers commenced life promisingly enough. A boy of artistic cleverness, he possessed a dexterous hand, an accurate eye, temper, skill, and taste. Further upon my friend's abilities it is not necessary that I should hold inquest. He was a student of the Royal Academy of Great Britain. In that capacity he won handsomely bound books, with flattering inscriptions gold-lettered on the covers; and bronze medals and silver medals. He was on the high road to academic art immortality. He drew with a beautiful correctness—though he *did* consume a good deal of bread-crumb over his outline—and the stippling of his chalk studies from the antique was the delight and pride of the keeper and visitors superintending the plaster-cast school of drawing in Trafalgar Square. He would do—would Smythers—so everyone said. There might be a doubt about poor little Smith, who had been toiling such an awful time over his profile study of the Clyte, but there was none whatever about Smythers. *He* was all right. Now in a certain game with cards we always find the successful player going on something like this: "the ace of spades is a stop—the nine of diamonds is a stop—the ace of hearts is a stop—the king of clubs is a stop—and I'm out." Well, some years ago, when the council of the Academy decreed that "Hercules strangling Antæus" should be the subject to be painted in competition for the biennial gold medal, Smythers set to work, and his "Hercules" won for him the prize—and *that* was his stop, and he was out! He never did anything more after that—he had accomplished his mission —no further ambition remained to him. He had won the gold medal. Thenceforward he lived how or why none knew exactly. There was a rumour about at one time that he earned a dangerous subsistence by smoking meerschaum pipes into a colour appreciated by connoisseurs for a large tobacconist in Holborn. Certainly that seemed to be the only form of colour in which he now indulged. For painting, he did nothing or next to nothing. He occupied a studio, of course, for he could not have lived in any other sort of room, and it was in quite as untidy a state as though he were always very hard at work indeed in it. There is a saying, not to be too much relied on, that a workman can be judged by the number of his chips—it seems to me that a good many chips can be made, and yet very little work done. Certainly there were more chips than works in Smythers' studio. He simply pottered. I did not see it then so clearly as I see it now. He stared at his Hercules, contemplated his gold medal, was very happy, and *au reste* pottered. He drew feeble nothings on small millboards, then

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tired of them, and turned them with their faces to the wall like so many naughty children. He carried at all times a sketch-book in his pocket—he never abandoned indeed the outward shows of his profession—but only a very few immature designs were to be found in it, with many blank pages intervening. More, he never did. His career as an artist closed with his "Hercules strangling Antæus" and the gaining of the gold medal when he was about twenty-three years of age. Now, a pale, bald-headed, pleasant fellow of forty, he did nothing but smoke in his own studio, and in the studio of others, a strong smelling pocket-pipe, its colour varying in graduation from warm straw to rich red bituminous brown—talk upon art interests, discuss the works of other men, and pronounce oracularly upon the proceedings of the Academy student class.

Of course he was entitled to this line of conduct, and more especially as far as the younger men were concerned, who had not yet reached the gold medal stage of career. And it was amongst these that he chiefly associated, much liked and respected as so much more advanced a student and a man was sure to be. He had belonged to quite a former race of students, and by no means clashed with those of the time about which I am writing. There were no competitive considerations, therefore, to prevent the freest confidence with Smythers. So that when my other friend, Firkin, with whom I was joint tenant of confined apartments in Chepstone Street, in which the culture of the Fine Arts was zealously carried on—when Firkin announced his intention to compete for the medal to be awarded for the finest painting of the subject, "The Death of Epaminondas"—this was many years, of course, after the "Hercules and Antæus" prize—it was reasonable enough that we should have a long conversation upon the whole business with Smythers.

"Well, I tell you what it is," said Smythers, after much self-communing, and many puffs of dense tobacco smoke. "You take my advice. Go in for *muscle*. That's what the Academy wants. That's what I went in for when I painted my 'Hercules,' and that, as you know, was a hit. They don't care so much, you know, about colour and that, or composition and that, it's *muscle* they like—give them plenty of it, I did. High art means anatomy. That's the Academy view of the thing. Go in and win, Firkin, old boy, I wish you luck. Make a good anatomical drawing of 'Epaminondas,' and the medal's yours."

Of course Firkin said he was very much obliged to Smythers for his advice. Perhaps he would have been even more obliged to Smythers if that painter had forborne to give to the half-a-dozen other competitors counsel to the same effect. But as he lounged also in the studios of the other young men, it was perhaps only natural that they should seek his opinion, and that he should give it precisely as it had been already pronounced to Firkin. Now in those days, when anybody told you to paint a muscular figure, it was only saying in other ways, "Copy Manfred the model!" and as Smythers had sown broadcast recommendations to paint muscular figures, great copying of Manfred the model ensued.

It is one of the evils of the competitive system, as applied to art, that it brings into the world a perfect litter of designs, all of one subject, and as with other litters, one only of the number is saved and petted, and the rest are huddled away for ignominious destruction. Of course they are quite unsaleable—at least they used to be in my time, perhaps things are altered now there have been so many reforms in the Academy! It is not everyone who would care to decorate his drawing-room with a picture by Brown of the "Strangling of Antæus"—being the picture—full of flesh, painting, and attitude, for which Brown did *not* obtain the medal. So these sort of works generally remain in the artist's room—the frame taken for another picture—till he grows ashamed of them, and covers them with other canvasses; or they find their way into furniture brokers' ware-rooms, or cheap-frame shops. I saw one such work in Wardour Street, only the other day. I wonder whether anyone will ever buy it, and having bought it, what he will do with it? How I should laugh to find myself eating my dinner opposite to it in the parlour of a respectable household. But that's not possible.

"Yes, Manfred will be the model for you, of course," said Smythers, "in my time it was Binks, and a deuced good model he was. I painted my 'Hercules' from him. No, he is out of condition now, and wears a wig, and has grown very corpulent. He wouldn't do for you. He makes a very good Prospero, though, still; or King Lear, if you put plenty of tow on his head."

Manfred resided in a small street turning out of Cumberland Market. After disturbing a congress of small children on the steps of the house, you pulled the second bell, counting from the top, or the fourth, counting from the bottom, and if Manfred happened to be at home he came down from the second floor, and opened the door in answer to your summons; otherwise, Mrs. Manfred appeared, armed with a baby which stared and waved its arms at you in a manner that was half-cheerful, half-defiant. There are not wanting people to assert that the Manfreds were of the Jewish nation. A certain safety dwells in the assertion, from the fact that in every calling which is—well! open to the comments of the severe, traces of that gifted but scattered people are to be found. Another piece of evidence, valuable perhaps to the curious, consisted in the great partiality of the Manfreds for fried-fish, a dainty I believe to be peculiarly grateful to the Hebrew palate. But Manfred was a model *pur et simple*. I mean by that that he combined no other object with his calling. He was not a hair-dresser—did not keep a sweet-shop—was not a tailor, nor a harlequin, nor a cobbler, nor a contortionist, nor a dresser at the theatre. He did not even clean windows, or whitewash ceilings, or beat carpets, or engage in any handiwork of that kind. He had been a model all his life. From his mother's arms he had been transferred to canvas. A Cupid, an Infant Samuel, in his youth, he was content to appear as a Belisarius, or an Eli, in his age. Modelship was his *métier*. He had married Miss Shab, a model. (Madder, A.R.A., painted his diploma picture of Ariadne from her; but times

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are changed with her now, and she is better known for her sorrowful matrons and forlorn widows, and is indeed a great favourite with the sham-sentimental school of art.) His children are all models. He supplies them, from the child in arms (an expensive model, because you must have the mother with it, and Manfred charges for the two) to the spare young gentleman of fourteen, a great assistance to the painters who thrive upon attenuation. For himself, Manfred had a large *clientèle*. I am ashamed to think how often that man's face has appeared on the walls of exhibitions, but quite as many times as the head of the gentleman whose name is not given in the catalogue. Look at what picture you would there was no certainty but that Manfred lurked somewhere in it. He appeared in as many different characters as those comic entertainment givers behind a table, two candles, and a glass of water, who always talk of the strange people they have met, then suddenly cry "Ah! here he comes!" bob down their heads, and re-appear in eccentric wigs and hats, and as it seems, an entirely new set of features. I have seen Manfred in every conceivable station of life—from the king on his throne, in crimson velvet and ermine, glossy beard, and superb frown, to the beggar crouching against the wall—drawing his tattered rags round him. He has been ornamental and useful in each—and I am not at all sure whether, considering the important services he has rendered to the art of this country, he ought not to be made an academician, or at least receive some such flattering acknowledgment as a statue on one of the vacant pedestals in Trafalgar Square.

I may mention that there were curious explanations current touching his name of Manfred; for it was the fashion to regard that as purely fictitious and fanciful. I will give one of these only, which, if not correct, was at least ingenious. This story had it, that the real name of this eminent model was Mann—Frederick Mann; but that, what with being constantly called Fred Mann and Man Fred, and further from having posed for the principal figure in Pinkerton, R.A.'s great picture from Lord Byron's phantomatic tragedy, he had gradually drifted into the title of Manfred; and, finally, assumed it as the definite appellation of himself and his family. The only inconvenience of this fusion of the Frederick and the Mann was in the fact that it left him without any first name at all; he was now Manfred, without any prefix whatever; but as he seldom had occasion to sign his name, and perhaps if he had had the occasion—from circumstances to which I need not further advert—he would have been obliged to pretermit that proceeding—the matter was not really of any great consequence to him. He remedied this defect so far as his children were concerned, treating Manfred as their family name, and bestowing upon them additional titles, such as Jack, Jill, &c.—very necessary, certainly, as a measure of distinction, for the children were numerous, and confusion would have been inevitable had this precaution not been observed.

Smythers and I watched our friend Firkin's work with interest. We repeated constantly, as the text of his toil, the advice contained in the word "muscle." We were perpetually at his elbow whispering the monition "muscle," and he was proceeding in a way to merit our most earnest applause. Epaminondas, clothed in a glittering brass Roman casque, I am not sure that it had not once pertained to a Horse Guard Blue—but let that pass—Firkin hired it from the masquerade shop near Covent Garden—Epaminondas, thus gorgeously attired, strode across the canvas something in the superlative attitude of the late Mr. Ducrow, as the Courier of St. Petersburg, riding six horses abreast in the circus at Astley's. It was a wonderful pose for flinging out the muscles into the most protuberant relief.

"Put a little more calf on to that left leg, Firkin, old boy! That's one of the finest studies I've ever seen, and I know something about these things. It does you credit, and it's a credit to the Academy. I'll just have one more pipe, and then I'll go round and have a look at what some of the other fellows are doing."

"It will cost me a horrid lot of money, this picture," said Firkin, a look of sadness mingling with the triumphant blush that Smythers' congratulations had called into his face, "and it's not half done yet. I need get the medal: the money I've paid Manfred, it's really awful to think of: and I shall have to write down home again for more."

For Manfred had sat not merely for Epaminondas, but for nearly every other figure in the composition, which perhaps presented, on the whole, rather a notion of the model having been put into a kaleidoscope, and shifted into a number of wonderfully different attitudes.

We had news from the rival studios. Various treatments of the subject were in progress. The great warrior was thrust into divers unaccustomed positions. The composition of Mr. Blithers' work, for instance, was remarkable. He depicted the hero recumbent, with the soles of his feet full and prominent in the foreground, and his body foreshortened, till his nose protruded on the horizontal line like the spire of a church seen in the distance. In Mr. Mogbury's picture, Epaminondas was drawn in the act of falling, and his figure slanted across the canvas in a way that was vigorous perhaps, but unquestionably eccentric. Manfred was posing day and night, and making an excellent thing out of the gold medal.

"There's a harm," he would say, thrusting before you a bossy limb, "there's drawing there for you, and no mistake, and all nat'ral dewelopment. No dumb-bells, nor nonsense. Simple nater's done it all."

The limb detached, and gilt, and projecting, from the first-floor, would have made an admirable sign for a gold-beater.

He was an excellent model, was Manfred, though he knew the value of his time, and liked very much to rest and rub himself as though the *pose* fatigued him. He was fond of giving as little as he conveniently could for the money. Coming after his time, and going away before it, and being a long while in assuming the costume required of him—the robes of Cæsar or the club of Hercules—and addicted to having a cold in his head, so that he might have the opportunity of disturbing the

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sitting as often as possible to use his handkerchief. Still he was a good and reliable model, as models went, and very important to the workers for the gold medal, whose pictures were fast advancing, and who, one and all, depended on Manfred's muscles to complete them.

Suddenly there was intense consternation in the art-camp.

Manfred came one morning to our studio very nearly punctual to his appointment. But there was an inflamed swollen look about his face. He was not steady in his gait, and his manner was generally defiant and offensive.

"Look 'ere," he cried, in a husky angry voice. "I've stood this 'ere long enough—I won't stand it any longer."

He wore a white felt hat, very limp and weak from use. He removed this head-dress, and flung it up fiercely in the air. It struck the ceiling, and then fell on the floor, broken and shapeless, and collapsed, like a very bad *gibus*, or as though it had been run over.

"What *is* the matter, Manfred?"

"Yah! Don't talk to me. I won't have it. I resign. I go in for another line of business." And with a sudden lurch he was nearly upsetting Firkin's great work. Fortunately, Smythers and I were at hand to save the canvas.

"What do you mean by coming here in this state, sir?" asked Firkin, loudly, though I believe he was really frightened.

"Go 'long with you. Go 'long," cried Manfred, with tipsy playfulness, waving his hands.

"Have you come to sit, sir?"

"NO," screamed the model, angrily. "I won't sit any more—there—never—never. I give it up. So does Mrs. M.; so does the children; ALL the whole kit. I aint your model—there; and I aint come to sit—there; though," and he glared round upon us ferociously, and commenced to tug at his wristbands, "I wouldn't mind fighting any one of you—or the lot of you—if it comes to that," and he threw himself into a favourite pose of the prize-ring.

"How dare you conduct yourself in this way?"

"I've retired from business—that's what I've done. I aint at no one's beck and call no more. It aint going to be 'sit here,' and 'sit there,' nor 'stand like that,' nor 'that,' straining every blessed nerve in one's precious body, and going through all sorts of hag'nies, and end*oo*ring what not, any moor—I aint!"

"Why not?" we asked. It was impossible not to be amused at Manfred's violence; and his attitudes kept pace with his words. As he spoke, he flung himself into all the favourite postures of the studios. Now he was Ajax defying the lightning; now he was Solomon judging between the disputant women; now he was King Canute bidding the waves retire; and anon, by a sudden slip down on the floor, he was the dead body of Harold, as it has been so often found in pictures. Soon he was representing the dying gladiator; then up again on his feet, in a new pose, as a sort of intoxicated Discobulus.

"Why not?" he cried. "Because I aint done justice to—because I aint done near justice to." He pointed with fierce contempt to Firkin's picture. "Is *that* my figger? After all the stretching I went through, am I to be a drawn like that? Is *that* my arm? Pinch it, if you like. You can't 'urt it—it's just like iron. Have I got a brown mark under my nose like that? I as never snuffs—nor never will! Do I ever get my *doo?* Aint yer all undervalying of me? Aint one gent a-painting of me a sort of a peagreen instead of my own natral color? Can a feller stand that all his life? No. He can't—and he won't—leastwise *I* aint agoing to."

"And how are you going to get your living?"

"I'll go on the stage—that's what I'll do. The public shall see me, and judge for themselves. No more painted heffigies. The real thing for the futer," and he slapped his calves with a vehemence that must have been painful, and with a cry of "Good bye, gents," with a cheery, beery irony in its tones, he made for the door, and staggered from the house.

For some time our full amazement prevented our comprehension of the extent of the calamity that had fallen upon us. The damage inflicted upon British art by this desertion of Manfred's, was not to be realised immediately. Of course, as more nearly concerned, Firkin was first conscious of the plight to which he was reduced. He turned quite pale, and his hair seemed to bristle up on his head, so great was his alarm.

"But," he stammered, "what—what am I to do? How's my picture to be finished? What's to become of the medal? Look at my Epaminondas —only half finished—not half-finished. O, it's cruel!"

And poor Firkin shed tears.

"You must get another model," said Smythers.

"Another model? Don't talk like that. *What* other model? Who is there has got any muscle? —the rest are all bone."

Firkin was in great distress.

"There's Brisket," suggested Smythers, after a pause.

"He'd do—well;" and Firkin spoke with a savage bitterness I did not think he was capable of. "He'd do, well, if I was painting a skeleton. I'm a ruined man—beaten and disgraced. I've spent a lot of money, and I shan't get the medal, after all."

"One thing is certain," I observed, trying to console him, "that Blithers, Mogbury, and the rest of them, are all in the same boat—they've all depended, as we have, upon Manfred."

"It will ruin the lot of us, then," cried Firkin, with a fierce chuckle. Disappointment was mining his principles.

"When Reynolds was giving his farewell lecture at the Academy, a loud crash was heard, and there was great panic—the floor had sunk. Soon, however, it was supported, and the company resumed their seats. The lecturer observed afterwards, that if the floor had fallen, the whole company must have been killed, and British art would have been thrown back two hundred years. That was what Sir Joshua said." Smythers was speaking with a sententious gravity that was really tiresome.

"Oh, bother Sir Joshua!" cried Firkin, angrily. "That does not help me, does it, what he said?"

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"I was only going to observe, that this sudden conduct of Manfred's affects British art in much the same way."

Like emotion prevailed in the other studios. The gold medal pictures were all at a stand-still. A paralysis had fallen upon the competitors, and fearful rumours abounded. Blithers was said to have gone clean out of his mind, and Mogbury had been seen brandishing his razors in quite a suicidal manner. Firkin was clearly lapsing into the most hopeless idiotcy. Of course it was the duty of his friends to rally round him in his hour of trouble; so we sat with him in his studio, gazing at the unfinished Epaminondas. At last, as a relief to his mind, we proposed that inquiry should be made at Manfred's lodgings as to his fate. For five days nothing more had been heard of him. No other model could be found. Time went on, and the case grew really desperate.

Mrs. Manfred appeared in the doorway. In the hurry of her responding to the bell (the second

from the top) she had evidently come down-stairs with her green merino dress unhooked at the back. This occasioned her much nervousness, and constant change of position to prevent our discovery of this deficiency in her toilet. She had a black eye, and in her arms the inevitable baby which, from constant habit, was now beginning to pose itself artistically, and gave promise of becoming, in process of time, a valuable model. There was a tone of distress in Mrs. Manfred's voice as she answered our inquiries.

"Yes, sir, M.'s been away now these four days, and I'm sure I don't know what's become of him. He *did* talk of giving up sitting, and coming out at the theayter. And, O Sir, the life he leads me, when he gets on the drink!"

"Is he often taken in that way?" some one asked.

"Not often, sir, except sometimes in the hoff season, when artistes has gone to Brittany or North Devon. Yes, sir, I'll be sure to tell him you called."

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"There is, then, no hope," cried Firkin, in the accents of despair, as we turned from Cumberland Market towards Chepstone Street.

"Suppose we have some beer?" said Smythers, rather irrelevantly.

The next day we sat again round the picture of Epaminondas. Still sympathising with the painter's sorrows, we had a little exhausted the subject. We sat speechless, therefore, looking now and then at poor Firkin's white face, as he bit his nails or tumbled his hair about.

Suddenly we started: a figure stood before us—a well-known figure in the pose of the fighting gladiator. Then he changed to Caractacus before Claudius (he was fine in that—with plenty of chest—you could almost see the fetters on his muscular arms). Presently he subsided into an attitude of greater humility—with an aspect of heart-rending penitence: he was now the Prodigal returned

"You've come back?" we all inquired, absurdly enough.

"Yes, I've come back," Manfred answered, with solemnity. He looked paler and dirtier, and the cold in his head was genuine on this occasion.

"Have you been on the stage?"

"I have. I appeared at Clerkenwell."

"Did you like it?"

"Well, I didn't—fancy playing a Roman citizen in a toga—the stage awful draughty, and the cold weather coming on—and all for seven shillings a week! No—sitting's better than that. Yes, Mr. Firkin, I'll go in for Hepammy what's his name, as soon as you like."

"And you won't disappoint me again?"

"Never, sir. Gents, I begs your pardon all round."

Manfred had returned to his allegiance. Firkin was immensely relieved. The gold medal pictures could be completed. British art was saved!

Firkin's Epaminondas was a great success. It might be called, perhaps, the triumph of muscle over mind; but for all that, it was a grand work.

The competitive pictures were sent in to receive the sentence of the council. They decided that the medal should be awarded to Mr. Thomas Firkin, student of the Academy, for the best historical painting in oil of the "Death of Epaminondas."

And Firkin, with becoming modesty, received the congratulations of his friends, and the medal.

Perhaps he subsequently found that he was not altogether suited to the profession of the Fine Arts. However that may be, I have now to state that he is now, and has been for some years, a wine merchant, doing a very creditable amount of business in the heart of the city. I last heard of Blithers as a photographer, and Mogbury as distinguishing himself in Italy—he is still fond of colour, and wears a red shirt, and has fought valiantly under General Garibaldi.

Smythers still haunts studios, and smokes pipes, But he has done nothing since the Hercules and Antæus year, and I don't think he ever will.

Dutton Cook.

OUR NICKNAMES AT PLAYINGFIELD COLLEGE.

"Everything must have a beginning." So runs the old saw. In what mode, then, can we better introduce our subject than by quoting the oft-repeated and, mayhap, somewhat sarcastic inquiry of "What's in a name?" Verily, in many respects, much, is our unhesitating reply. As a nation, we may, it is true, boast of great Smiths, illustrious Browns, renowned Joneses, but—and the pertinent question will arise—why should Smith seek to alter the orthography of his name? Why should Brown be apt to lengthen his humble monosyllable by the second vowel of our alphabet? And for what reason should Jones be prone to prefix the apparently aristocratic Ap, or append to his simple denomination the locality of which he boasts his ancestors were born there? Thus it is that my good friend—a simple-minded, unaffected Jones, hospitable, and a proprietor through his own honest exertions—loves, *ex officio*, to be styled as "Jones-ap-Penlimmon." Thus does my late college companion, having inherited property, take pride to himself that he can leave a card on which is inscribed "The Jones of Gwynnlass."

The Jones of old days was a quiet fellow enough, a man who held scarce any opinion, but deferred to his neighbour's; one who was at peace with all mankind, and who, without preferring kicks to halfpence, received, perchance, a preponderance of the former with a placid indifference.

Now the "Jones of Gwynnlass" is much courted by high and low. The former are agreeably condescending, the latter affectionately courteous, while all men speak well of him. His manners are by no means haughty, yet are we aware that *The* Jones exists, while homely Jones is to be merged in oblivion. Such are the vicissitudes of life! Such is the power of a little wealth! Such is a name! Be at peace, ye humble ones of the earth, we question not your rights.

Then, again, does not Smith consider himself well-favoured by gods and men if, after years of penury and hard labour, his works are recognised as good? Smith tosses uneasy on his couch—his temples throb with gigantic conceptions—spectres, creations of his troubled brain, flit before his closed eyelids. Smith cannot sleep.

With what supreme happiness, unalloyed by any misbecoming pride, does he hear an announcement that his book will be received under the sole stipulation that the author's name be suppressed. Whereas, my Lord of Mountlebanon enjoys placid slumbers, and dreams of future greatness. My lord sleeps peacefully to awaken famous. Has not the self-same publisher avowed to his partner, that "the book is stupid, to be sure, but the name will carry it through?" So his lordship leans over the Park rails, flattered by himself and all the world beside.

Taken in one signification, however, we confess that the above question may admit of a different reply.

From this point of view we acknowledge that, in these days of increasing liberalism, names, and especially Christian names, are of little worth.

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Our position will be better illustrated as we proceed. Granting that they survive the early vicissitudes of childhood, it is not often that they pass through the ordeal of school existence uncontaminated. Even those of the fair sex, associated as they may be with rank and beauty, nurtured as are the owners in the parental hot-house of education, escape not always unscathed.

Witness the case of the Lady Geraldine Montjoie. Not without a pang do we quote the following terse remarks regarding a matrimonial notification in the "Matutinal Letterbag":

Quoth first ribald youth, "So the Lady Geraldine is spliced at last."

Quoth second, "And, pray, who may be the Lady Geraldine?"

Returns first youth, in a tone of surprise, "The fair Jerry! they call her Jerrydidler—don't you know her?"

Alas! Jerrydidler is but too well known, although the Lady Geraldine may be but a dubious personage save in the peerage. Thus, indeed, have the noble fallen!

Boys are, for the most part, rechristened at school according to any peculiarity manifested in their appearance, manners, disposition, or habits; this being, indeed, merely a recurrence to an ancient custom, in accordance with which both Jew and Gentile children received names appropriate with the parts they might be intended to perform in after-life. Not infrequently are these distinguishing titles retained through life, entirely usurping the places of those by which the possessors are described in the baptismal registers.

To instance this, we may be allowed, in the first place, to quote the case of "Emerald Marston," with whom many of us are, no doubt, acquainted. He is, for the most part, addressed as simple "Emerald," and referred to as "The Green One." We are credibly informed that scarcely any save his nearest relations are cognizant of the name or names under which his baptismal vows were solemnised.

We are not aware that he is possessed of a peculiarly credulous disposition entitling him to an epithet of a verdant signification, neither is he Irish or of Hibernian extraction. Mr. Marston, as far as we can learn, is a highly respectable member of society, a rising man at the bar for so young a practitioner.

It is true that he is an adept at the manly sport of cricket, and we are told that his skill at billiards is above the average. We are, however, wholly unable to trace the origin of his *sobriquet* to a connection with these manly pastimes. Nay; he was "Emerald," or "The Green One," at the Playingfield College, where it is ascertained that his abilities distinguished him as a wetbob, and where, as we believe, he was never guilty of carrying his mathematical studies into practice on the green cloth.

We remember him, indeed, at the Playingfield College as a little pale boy with brown hair, to the uninitiated possessing no signal peculiarity. We can call to mind that he was eager to enter the boats, and on that account early appeared as a candidate in the swimming examination held at "Beginner's Creek."

It was a gloomy day after twelve; heavy clouds drifted swiftly across the face of the heavens before the east wind, which blew chill and bitter on humid skins.

A group of boys, some plump, some puny, stood quaking and trembling around Dr. Cooksford, the passing master for the nonce, as if awaiting the choice of a fastidious Ogre.

Each little candidate separately essayed to swim the distance, and separately, with secret self-congratulation, crawled up the ladder to *terra firma*, —blue, purple, red, ghastly,—shivering. At length appeared Marston, neither blue, purple, or red, but *green*.

"Good gracious!" cried the Doctor, bringing his double eye-glass to bear on the object, "why, the child is as green as an emerald! Yes, indeed, shivering and *green* from head to foot."

We are not aware that Mr. Marston is green all over still, indeed we have no means of arriving at any conclusion on the subject. Nevertheless, the remarks of those in authority are long remembered, and Dr. Cooksford's sapient exclamation will probably be transmitted through the medium of Mr. Marston's own person, and the persons of his children and children's children, through all time. Let us rather seek a prophetic interpretation to the words, and hope that each and all will attain a green old age.

Again, there is a highly respectable—nay, let us rather say noble family, whose pleasure it is to reside in town during the season, and at the well-known family-mansion in Blinkoushire during the autumn and winter months, the scions of whose house are familiarly and universally recognised as "The Dogs."

There are four of this canine species resident in town at the present time, following the various avocations allotted to them. The eldest has the honour to hold a commission in the North British Battalion of her gracious Majesty's Body Guard.

Speaking of him for the nonce as appertaining to the genus *homo*, we would mention that he is a tall man—a large moustached and whiskered man. We have invariably found him to be a man of gentlemanly feeling and agreeable address; we would even go further and say, one calculated to inspire a certain amount of respect. On the ancestral property of his sire he is much honoured and held in high esteem by the tenantry.

The subject of our present remarks moves in the first society, and may be seen at the very best balls in town, not only at those of Mrs. Granby Smithson and her set, which we know full well are allowed only to be second-rate, although she would be much chagrined at the suggestion. You may read his name at full length in the "Letterbag."

What! his name, do we say? From whence has it sprung? Has the editor indeed paid a flying visit to the old moss-grown church in Blinkoushire? Has he induced the weazened deaf clerk to hark back through the autumnal-looking leaves of the parish register? We wot not. To us he is one of "The Dogs"—"The Big Dog."

"Pray, who is that handsome man?" inquires a country squire strolling down the side of Rotten Row as Ascot week approaches.

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"That big fellow," quoth his friend. "That is one of the Dogs." To us the reply is conclusive.

Not so to the first speaker. Being from rural districts he is ignorant of the puppets so well known on the stage of town-life.

"Surely," continues he, with an accent of surprise, "that cannot be his real name?"

"Well, not exactly," is the reply, "you see he is one of the Smygths—Dog Smygths, you know, from Blinkoushire, first-rate shooting, hunting, and all that sort of thing,—will come into a fine property some of these days. Hallo, Doggey, old boy, how are you—how are the Pups, cheery, eh?"

It is right to mention, with regard to this allusion, that "The Pups" have no reference to the Honourable Dog Smygth's heirs, the Honourable Dog not having as yet taken unto himself a helpmate; but to his younger brethren, pups as compared to himself in age and magnitude.

Peering into the regions of the past, we fancy we can again see the Honourable Smygth as he makes his *début* at the Playingfield College, a chubby, good-humoured little fellow, with shaggy flaxen hair.

Not long, however, was he to remain in the obscure position of a new boy.

In not a few *affaires d'honneur* did he act the part of principal at the widely celebrated spot, bearing, however, the somewhat humble title of "Fourpenny,"* from which meetings he invariably returned in triumph to his tutors, not, however, always free from tokens of the conflict—scars honourably begotten in front.

In casting our eyes back on these former years, we must recount that the Honourable Smygth was impertinent to a degree hitherto unconceived by lower boys.

In following the bent of an impetuous nature and prolific imagination, he was guilty of many a delinquency practised on masters and upper boys, amongst which we remember the fact of his dazzling the eyes of a sixth form of another house residing in a chamber opposite his window, with the sun's rays reflected from a hand-mirror. (The extent of such an insult, perhaps, can scarcely be appreciated by any but one who has received his education at the P. C.)

When up to short-sighted Tomson he furtively withdrew that reverend gentleman's spectacles, thereby occasioning two boys in his form to experience that mysterious process named "switching," other two being the real delinquents.

"It's all that brute Smygth," said they with glowing cheeks, subsequent to the operation. (We think it well to quote this remark as indicative of a tendency to the supposition that Smygth might belong to the unreasoning portion of the animal species in contradistinction to the human.) "It's all that *brute* Smygth," quoth they, and forthwith challenged him to Fourpenny, where he thrashed them both consecutively.

This affair at the time created a considerable degree of interest at the P. C., and it is even recounted that some of his backers went about extolling the deeds of "that dog Smygth."

(This is also especially worthy of note, as exhibiting the above idea in a more definite form, and actually pointing in a direct manner to the species of the subject of our remarks.)

In spite of the many fracas to which we have casually alluded, Smygth was highly popular in his house, and therein was soon vested with the honourable title of "Cock of the Lower Boys."

Nevertheless, the natural elasticity of his spirits, combined with a peculiar ingenuity in the fulfilment of his not always innocent designs, led him to take such extreme liberties with the upper class of society in his house,—to place (as is credibly asserted of him) a live lobster in Emerald's bed (the Green One was at this time a big fellow), though, to say the truth, this was never clearly proved against him—to employ his master's (the master to whom he fagged) milk for his own benefit, substituting a decoction composed of much chalk and little water,—to uplift a hat from the head of the captain of the house by the agency of a fish-hook attached to a string suspended from an upper window,—that they, the big fellows, the great men of the house, the upper ten thousand, were driven to the verge of desperation.

Thus it was that they held solemn conclave, concluding with an unanimous determination to make an example of *that dog Smygth*.

It was then that little Pickle Haubey, being on his way to breakfast with Smygth, and bearing in his hand his allotment of rolls and butter for the occasion, by instinct placed his ear to the keyhole, and having gathered the result of the big fellows' council of war, ran speedily with the tidings to his host, at the same time with admirable presence of mind bringing to bear on the subject sundry copy-books of derivations and wise maxims which he crammed beneath Smygth's waistcoat and inferior garments, "that they might," as he justly observed, "be of some use for once in their lives."

So Smygth was licked with a cane, bearing the infliction by reason of the learning in which he had clothed himself, or rather with which he had been judiciously crammed by Pickle, with Spartan equanimity.

The ceremony over, the panoply was produced, so that the big fellows, whose wrath was but transient, could not but laugh, and the captain of the house curtly ejaculated "The Dog!" as if a sudden flash of light had revealed to his understanding the genus of the animal before him.

Subsequent to the episode above related we may fairly suppose it to have been an established fact throughout the Playingfield College that the Honourable Smygth bore at least a near connection to the canine species.

Should, however, this supposition require additional confirmation, we may mention that on the occasion of his tutor, Mr. Hatherstone, observing the advent of a large hole through the pupil-room ceiling, which on near inspection proved to have been bored by the agency of a heated poker from above, remarked with some energy, "It's that dog Smygth again!"

* N.B. Any one who has ever had any connection with the P.C. must needs be aware that differences of this nature are almost invariably adjusted in a summary manner in a corner of the fields known by such a name.

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This admission of his knowledge as to the nature of his pupil produced, as may well be conceived, universal merriment, save to the Dog (we may now fairly adopt the term), who was despatched on a mission of a delicate and somewhat painful nature to Dr. Hiptree, for the second time in the course of the then current week, being, as he observed, sore on the point still.

In time the Dog grew to be a big dog, and a very big dog he was and is. Three other Dogs, now about town, also received an education at the Playingfield College—Dog Major, Minor, and Minimus—though, as was stated above, they were familiarly and as a collective body denominated "The Pups."

One, from his light fluffy hair, was and is still distinguished by the *sobriquet* of "Poodle."

The second, from a certain hastiness of temper evinced during the course of his educational career, obtained the time-honoured title of "Pepper."

The youngest, being of a weaker temperament than his brethren, and of smaller stature to boot, was usually addressed in the third person, as "The little Dog, how is he?" Or a big fellow, stroking his face down the right way, and up the wrong—an operation even more unpleasant than a similar experiment practised on the back of one of his four-footed namesakes—would say, endearingly, "My Doggums! perhaps he would like to run to Turnover's, and fetch me an extra allowance of milk, and have it put down to my name—I tick there."

Doggums did not like, being on the point of enjoying his morning cup of coffee, accompanied by a hot buttered bun at Joey Heather's; nevertheless, he went.

The Big Dog, when a little one, would have had his bun, and made some private arrangement regarding the milk from a recipe of his own.*

The Dogs form at the present time a popular quartette in town. They may frequently be seen both at "Pooxy's" and "Prattle's," where the youth of the present day are wont to congregate of an evening for the sake of recreation. But, of the two, the Big Dog is rather an *habitué* of the latter house.

Little Pickle Haubey is now thoroughly skilled in the noble science of billiards, being able, as it is currently reported, to give Doggums two points in a game of fifty up, though the latter is acknowledged to be far superior to the average run of players.

Pickle, as he is usually termed, has been already casually mentioned. In old days he was a great ally of Dog Smygth's at the P. C., aiding and abetting him in many of his unprincipled schemes and undertakings. It is pretty freely conjectured that the name covertly implies that Dr. Hiptree's rod of office was retained in a perpetual condition of *pickle* (a word used allegorically to signify *readiness* or *fitness*) for his benefit.

At the present date the Big Dog is a quiet, sedate being, far more so than the Pups. He is given to sitting on a chair in the park with a single companion, or, perchance, with two, one on either side, acting as aides-de-camp to his canine highness, and is not often to be seen amongst the group of young ensigns who are wont to sustain a perpetual buzz of light conversation and a running fire of jokes beneath the third tree in Rotten Row.

Hark to the merriment which ensues as little Jack Crowquill passes, not entirely comfortable as to his seat on a jibbing chesnut.

Jack has joined the corps but lately—indeed, he is junior ensign—but all declare him to be a thorough good little fellow, though, perhaps, not over bright. The joyousness of these young officers of her Majesty's Body Guard, thorough high spirited, good-hearted young gentlemen as they are, though some have but lately escaped from Dr. Hiptree's august supervision, is truly refreshing.

The Big Dog smiles benignly *en passant*, and one may almost fancy he gives a couple of flaps with a large heavy tail, as is the nature of big dogs so to do. Bipeds of his own standing address him as "Doggey, old boy," or "Well, old Dog." Ensigns respect him in a good-natured fashion, if, indeed, ensigns may ever be said to yield to such a mental debility. They quote his remarks as "The Big Dog said so and so," &c. The Big Dog's opinion indeed has weight, for his words are few and simple. He is occasionally seen to join in the practice at Laud's Cricket-ground; but usually prefers to sit on a green bench approximate to the players, placidly enjoying a weed.

Emerald is constantly at Laud's during the summer; he used to fag the Big Dog at the P. C. He remembers the chalk and water, making wry faces at it still, but is impotent to exact retribution were he so minded. The Big Dog could thrash him easily now—he could crush him! but they are close chums, and the Green One walks round the Big Dog at some little distance, pretending to be afraid of a snap, or barks suddenly and furtively behind his back—once succeeding in causing the overthrow of a pot of shandy-gaff. This, as may be supposed, was intense fun.

The Big Dog occasionally sits in "Black's" bay window, but more frequently at "Our Own" Club, established exclusively for such as have the privilege of holding a commission in her Majesty's Body Guard. Here he usually dines. His dinners are plain and inexpensive. Broiled marrow-bones constitute a favourite dish of his—the marrow on toast, of course, and a pint of sherry, frequently half a pint, serves to quench his thirst. Subsequently he smokes a cigar, usually in the billiard-room, where he occasionally stakes half-a-crown on the game, and generally loses it.

It is useless to proceed. Such is the Big Dog! We are now fully acquainted with his habits. We recognise the fact that he *is* a Big Dog, and that the discovery was first made at the dear old Playingfield College Vale!

Again, there is "Dandy Dryval," concerning

* N.B. As a slight palliation for such a line of conduct, we would observe from experience that a hot bun and butter, previous to 8.30 school, constitutes a temptation scarcely to be resisted by the frail nature of mortal youth. The following is a recipe:—Slice in two halves a plum bun, burning hot from the oven: place a penny pat of butter on the lower half, quickly clap on the upper slice, and, after a few seconds of blissful expectation, bite. My mouth is yet guilty of watering as memory recalls to my mind the halcyon days of morning hot buns and butter at Joey Heather's.

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whom we deem it not inexpedient to say a few words.

By turning to the peerage we learn that his baptismal name is "David." The Honourable David, or more often "Dandy" Dryval, is the eldest—in fact, we believe the only—son of the Viscount Pushemon, who resides, as we know, at the corner of Clown's Square, rides an old flea-bitten grey hunter, which, as he says, has been a good horse in his day, and is one of the few adherents still extant of the Old Whig party.

Dandy is decidedly a lady's man; he is a thorough ball-going man; not one who stands idly in the doorways, gossips to chaperons, a supper eater, a political disputant, a quadrille walker, but a *bonâ fide* dancer.

Dandy waltzes well, and loves to commence while others are consuming ices. A young lady seldom accepts her cavalier's offer of refreshment when engaged to Dandy for the ensuing waltz.

He is an adept at forming pleasant sets of Lancers. Quadrilles he is pleased to liken to semibreves—we may pause awhile—and it is not seldom that he deserts his *vis-à-vis*, retiring with his partner through the folding windows to the balcony, where the out-siders, the butcher-boy, the baker and his wife, the vendor of oranges, the velveteened artizan, the *ex officio* postman, *cum multis aliis*, view the handsome couple, and secretly marvel at the palace of delight so far beyond their reach. Dandy is possessed of a goodly fund of small talk, a useful and ornamental material, suitable to old and young ladies. Being also heir to a comfortable fortune, and a fine old place in the county of Wessex, it is no matter of marvel that he is a highly popular man.

He is a good-looking fellow, too; fair, with blue eyes, and a well-turned moustache: he has the reputation of being a flirt.

"What so contemptible as a male flirt!" cries Miss Haversay, who boasts of a feminine moustache, eyes awry, lives in the country, and wears grey worsted stockings.

But all fair charmers of your generation, my dear miss, think not thus of the Honourable Dandy Dryval. Not a few have whispered to their particular friends, who, of course, pass it on to us, that they are dying in love for him; and my dear Lady Cutadash, who drives a high stepping pair of bays, with out-riders, and would be considered rather slang, only she is the Marquis of Rydemarde's daughter, "and they are such strange creatures, the whole family so exceedingly eccentric, my dear," murmurs Mrs. Worldlywise—my Lady Cutadash has been frequently heard to speak of him in her amusing clever way as her "dear Dandy." We may mention that Dandy belongs to Her Majesty's Body Guard, though not to the same battalion as the Big Dog. Legitimately he enjoys the title of Lieut.-Colonel the Honourable David Dryval, having purchased his step about a year since, when Handsome Bill retired on marrying (to the astonishment of all) one of the ugliest women in England.

Little Jack Crowquill, to whom a previous allusion has been made in connection with a jibbing chesnut, who has but lately joined the regiment and who, as is generally inferred, will come into an extensive and lucrative property, consisting of slate quarries in the west of England (when he obtains leave of absence, men invariably say he retires to his quarry), marvels much at Dandy, and to be even as Dandy may perhaps form the summit of his youthful ambition.

"I say, Dryval," says he, looking up in his queer simple way (it must be remembered that Crowquill is but an ensign of short standing, whereas Dandy is a lieut.-colonel). "I say, Dryval. What do you say now when you are introduced? I wish you'd tell a feller."

"Say!" exclaims Dandy, with good-natured and comical surprise. "Why, really I never thought about it. Now what do I say, I wonder! Let me see. I rather think I first put forward an assertion as to the present state of the weather or temperature, then hazard a conjecture as to the future."

"That's all very well for you," returns Jack, dejectedly; "but when I've said it's a fine day, or it's a wet one—and it can't be both, you see—why, I'm done."

"Well, that's awkward, to be sure," replies Dandy, turning round to address Miss Henrietta Spykenard, one of those pretty little blonde girls, who, having just escaped from their governess and gardens in the country, send quite a refreshing thrill through our dusty natures here in town with their bright happy glances of surprise and *naïve* remarks. So Dandy thinks, at any rate, and he commences sure enough with the old preface of "What a lovely evening!"

Some such allusion to the weather forms so natural and general a preface to our conversation, that we, fallen creatures that we are, can scarcely realise but that our first parent, Adam, made a similar remark on that sunny morning when his eye first fell on his newly created spouse, the purest flower in all that happy land where no rain was. I have known a traveller on the Nile address an Arab servitor to the same effect, although Herodotus has recorded as a prodigy that rain fell at Thebes.

Dandy, however, halts not at the lame assertion, but proceeds to asseverate boldly, "and it will be fine, it must be fine on Wednesday, you know, for we are going to have the most charming pic-nic at the Isle of Apes, above the Playing-field College. It is our intention to go down by rail to Royal Town, and then to take ship upwards, *i. e.*, a four-oared wherry—a tub, as we used to say at the P.C., fitted to the gentle sensibilities of you ladies. You will come of course. I have the arrangement of the whole party, and have expressly kept a place for you, so you see there is no escape. I am sure you will bring your daughter, Lady Spykenard, and will make Sir Rogér give up his Committee at the House for once."

Little "Harry Spykenard,"—so is she known amongst her lady friends—quite longs to go, and her lady mother, or "Old Ointment," as she is somewhat irreverently denominated, enjoys not a little secret satisfaction at being asked to join Colonel Dryval's set. Perchance her illustrious name and title may figure in the "Letterbag," and at least she will have the pleasure of narrating her adventures to Mrs. Granby Smithson, who sent her only a card for *one* of her balls.

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Dandy, however, has concocted the whole scheme on the spur of the moment, trusting in his powers of diplomacy to fulfil the terms of his programme on the following day (Sunday), when he will dine with my Lady Gadabout, and induce her to take the lead of the party, being bent on a pleasant and harmless flirtation with little Harry.

From the above-mentioned instance you may gather that Dandy is an adept at promulgating pic-nics, water-parties, rural breakfasts, fancy-fairs, and such like innocent amusements, much affected by the fair sex. Nevertheless, he bears a character throughout the regiment for being the laziest fellow in existence; indeed, at a water-party it will be his endeavour to entice the ladies to try their skill at the oar, which affords him an opportunity of doing the *dolce-far-niente* in the stern, occasionally emitting words of gentle advice and pleasant import, savoured by a thin curl of smoke from his well-flavoured cigar.

Dandy's attire is not so gay as his name would seem to imply (though perhaps a trifle smart); indeed he is as well-dressed a man as you may meet on a summer's day in town, not a thread out of place, although he never bears the appearance of being "got up for the occasion," to speak in popular phraseology.

It would cause us infinite and (we fear) undisguised surprise to meet Dandy returning hot and footsore from a tedious pedestrian expedition. Such an exhibition would outrage our most sensitive feelings; but it is a pleasure to behold him, linked arm in arm with some brother officer, slowly sauntering along the shady side of the Mall, halting for a few words on the steps of "Our Own" Club, or, by a scarcely perceptible sign, intimating to an ever watchful Hansom driver that he wishes to be conveyed to the Corner.

Not infrequently of an afternoon we may observe his own cab waiting at the portals of the club. Dandy drives about the neatest cab in London, and it is gratifying to behold his hands encased in the most neatly fitting gloves of the palest lilac tint, hanging so negligently just over the apron. His gloves are acknowledged to be unrivalled. Mark well the servant, also, who bounds up and down on the footboard behind. Is he not the most exquisite little man in boots it was ever your lot to behold? No boy is he, but a real live little man, able (whether willing or no, we know not) to wash the carriage and groom the horse, if necessary. That man is worth his weight in gold!

Dandy drives round to leave a few cards which the little man, nought abashed, delivers to pompous footmen with powdered heads, and then trots briskly to the top of Rotten Row, where, delivering the reins to Paragon, he strolls leisurely down through the quality—anon stopping to have a word with our old friend, the Dog, or a little chaff with the group of light-hearted ensigns, who profess to be annihilated at his extensive "get up," finally to settle down to a chair in the second row, where he espies a party of grandiloquent dames, with whom he holds converse for a brief space. Dandy is indeed one to be admired!

I remember him also well at the Playingfield College. When quite a little boy he was slim in figure and of an aristocratic bearing; how perfect was his appearance on his first arrival! (he was at my tutor's), and what a real pity it seemed when his little hat was rudely crushed by Tomboy, a great red-fisted, full-moon-faced son of a country squire, who had won the sculling of his house the previous half. Nevertheless, little Dryval, with a crushed hat, looked every inch a gentleman; never could he, by any possibility, in any of the casualties of life, appear otherwise. After the first half his hat was respected.

It was amongst the lower boys that Dryval first obtained the appellation of "Dandy." Soon, however, his right to the title was acknowledged by all, both above and below him. Indeed, soon after he entered the fifth form, being tall and well-grown, he led the fashion at the P. C. amongst those who gave their attention to such matters.

There were rumours afloat amongst the lower boys that he possessed a separate waistcoat for every day in the year, and that he wore kid gloves when he slept, to enhance the whiteness of his hands.

Such like lower-boy rumours are treated by the upper classes of society in the P. C. with as little respect as are the shaves of ensigns by their superior officers. The imagination of youth is indeed superabundant!

Looking back to old times when Dandy was a little fellow, it was indeed a pleasure to see him at Laud's Cricket-ground, at the time when the Playingfield College played the All Hallows' Boys.

The members of the P.C. in those days were accustomed to troop up to the ground full of confidence and honest pride in their own superiority. Perchance at times they were slightly arrogant and haughty in their address. We will let that pass. Prosperity is hard to bear. Alas! that times should be so changed! Small excuse have they in these days for aught but humility.

It was a pleasure in those days (as I was about to observe) to watch little Dandy Dryval ride his black pony on to the ground—it was a famous black pony—he has it still, and sometimes the Paragon may be seen following his master thereon with silver spurs fastened to the perfect heels of his dainty lacquered boots, followed by his groom (old Lord Pushemon liked to let the lad have his fling) who led the pony backwards and forwards, the admired of all spectators, while Dandy himself would ascend into the Palladium, and dangling one leg over the iron rail, tap one of those perfect boots with his silver-handled riding-whip, quaffing meanwhile from a pot of shandy-gaff.

It was amusing to trace the latent scorn for the A. H. Boys, concealed under the true Grand Seigneur politeness of his demeanour. The P. C. was justly proud of her protegé; and in those days, when yet a little fellow, he became the pet of the whole college. A subject of wonder also was it to the small boys, his fellows, how he, even in those days, doffed his hat to the ladies who came in their carriages to view and patronise the sports, and inquired after the members of Sir Gilbert Anchovie's family and his gouty foot.

Sir Gilbert was a crony of old Lord Pushemon's. They were at the P. C. and Oxenford together years ago. Sir Gilbert was always fond of good living, and is by no means averse to his old friend's '32 bin of port. My Lord has been a

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widower for many years, so they can sit together in the snug dining-room in Clown's Square, talking over old times, with nothing to come between them and the bottle—for Dandy (the name has reached Sir Gilbert)—has accompanied some big fellows his patrons (we believe Emerald offered to take charge of him) to the theatre. "And you should have seen the boy, sir," cries my Lord to his old friend, "with his white kids and spy-glass; by Jove, sir, that boy'll create a sensation some day, shouldn't wonder." To which Sir Gilbert nods and laughs—the lad is a favourite of his,—and asserts that he'll not be amiss in the old regiment—for Sir Gilbert was once, many years ago, in her Majesty's Body Guard, till he married an heiress—devilish lucky fellow—and retired to his acres. Nevertheless, he still converses much on regimental affairs at the "High Tory" Club, in which both he and my Lord Pushemon are now looked upon as old fogies.

Though Dandy seldom took part in violent sports at the P. C., he was by no means considered a muff. When a little fellow, being a light weight, he essayed to become a steerer, and such was his success, that for a considerable period he filled that honourable post to "The Eight;" and it is recounted to his merit that he succeeded in procuring old Sir Gilbert, who had no son of his own, as a sitter to his boat one 4th of June.

Now, Sir Gilbert was a mortal heavy weight, but he paid liberally for his footing,—not only giving the usual dozen of champagne, but asking all the boat's crew subsequently to dine with him at "The Spotted Doe," in Royal Town, Dandy ordering the dinner, which you may be sure was not amiss.

At that time old Sir Gilbert made himself very popular at the P. C. in many little ways, coming down to look at the cricket match against the Horse Brigade, standing ices to small boys, &c., &c., all for the sake of his old friend's son. For these things he was voted a brick, and almost chaired through the college.

When Dandy grew too heavy to occupy the post of steerer any longer, he took to lounging about in a little tub (for little tubs were suffered to exist in those days), occasionally hoisting a table-cloth on the blade of a scull to serve as a sail, or smoking a cigar (forbidden fruit) under the trees which cast their long arms over the creek running up to Cluir.

We are not aware that Dandy ever took part in an interview of a delicate nature with Dr. Hiptree during the whole course of his educational career at the P. C. It is, however, an established fact that the Doctor entertained (whether wittingly or not, who shall say), the plea of "first fault" more than once, and a rumour at the time gained ground amongst the lower boys that his countenance assumed a radiant expression of thankfulness when the plea was put in for—let us say only the second time.

But this is idle talk of days long past and gone. Dandy is now a lieutenant-colonel in her Majesty's Body Guard, and a very fine gentleman to boot. There is no doubt that he acquitted himself with right good English bravery, and bore the hardship of his situation, not only with British sturdiness, but with sterling and perpetual good-humour in the Crimea. He will tell you now, with almost a tear in his eye, how poor little Johnny Claybrooke—"the little Scotchman"—was shot down by his side: "A good little fellow as ever stepped," says he, "and the last words he ever said, were, 'I think we've licked 'em, Dandy.' God bless him!"

Yes, Dandy, with all his frivolities, has a good heart—the heart of a gentleman and a Christian, though ladies call him a wicked man, and inwardly long to stroke his flowing whiskers. He lives in a perpetual ferment of flirtations. When quartered at the small cathedral town of C——, he and a young lady, the daughter of the Archdeacon, Dean, or some such ecclesiastical functionary, became on such good terms that the affair was talked about in town, quite as if something would come of it, and the old Dowager Lady Gadabout said as much to the Big Dog, in her good-natured way, at one of her hebdomadal "at homes" in the winter.

"Why, Colonel Smygth," said she, dropping the canine epithet, "you officers of the Body Guard are not such great men as you suppose. There's Colonel Dryval, as I am told, going to take up with some country wench after all."

"Oh, no!" replies the Big Dog in his slow, sedate fashion, "I think you must be mistaken. You allude to Miss ——. I can assure you there is nothing in it. Dandy, as we call him, is only keeping his hand in for the London season."

And so it proved.

Dandy's last feat astonished all who knew him, for when the battalion was quartered at Alderscotch, a foot-race was declared open to the whole of H.M.'s Body Guard, in which Dandy, at the last moment, without any training, announced himself as a starter; and, what is more, he won it, beating "Jolter Asterleigh"—previously considered by far the swiftest runner in the brigade—by a head. If Dandy was famous before, he awoke the next morning to find himself illustrious. The only method of solving the problem was in the supposition that he had *danced* himself into condition.

I could quote numbers upon numbers of illustrations of my theory, but enough has been said to prove that our names are waning, even as many other old conservative privileges in these days of increasing liberalism; nevertheless, we have good men and true amongst us yet, and though Dandy may be an arrant flirt—a species of human butterfly, bent on sipping a little honey from every flower that grows by the way-side of life, which men of sterner calibre love to designate a weary waste—yet is there a spot of earth where his wings ever rest awhile.

Yes, in the far north is an old mansion, moss-grown and ivy-clad. The garden is laid out with terraces and formal walks leading to the dark fir wood beyond, where is a bubbling brook, a dashing sparkling waterfall, and a rustic summer-house, wherein sits a maiden reading, fair to look upon, and this, if we mistake not, is Dandy's jewel, enclosed in a rustic casket. For, in the old mansion, dwells poor little Johnny Claybrooke's lady-mother and her only daughter. To them did Dandy with a full heart bring the tidings sad to tell, still more sad to hear, accompanied by

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many little anecdotes of the noble young heart now lying so cold beneath the barren Russian shore. He it was who brought to the bereaved parent a lock of her dear boy's long fair hair which she had stroked so often when he was a merry loving child, and who narrated those little trifling sayings which grow so dear when the mouth which gave them utterance is closed for ever,—those merry rosy lips his blue-eyed sister loved so well. The poor mother says, with tears in her eyes, that Colonel Dryval is like a second son to her, and Clara loves him as a brother; but this will not satisfy Dandy or her either, if we mistake not. There will be a festive day once more in the old moss-clad mansion! and this will be a happy day for all, for Dandy is popular in those parts, and the pheasants know him full well already.

Suffer me egotistically to conclude with an anecdote of my own experience:

I was dining out at a country-house in a particularly secluded and rural locality: the room was somewhat dusky.

We were standing around the fire, each wrapped in that cheerless taciturnity and reserve so natural to Englishmen before they feed, when a figure approaching cautiously from an obscure recess addressed me with this mysterious but pointed question, "I say, ain't you Polar Bear?"

Startled out of all presence of mind, I rashly admitted the fact; how could I do otherwise? Was it not a truism?

"But, but," I advanced in trembling accents, fearing to reveal some specially ursine feature, "how did you discover it?"

"Oh!" replied my inquisitor promptly, "don't you remember me? I was in your division at the Playingfield College, and we were switched together." P. S. F.

SPRING IN DEVONSHIRE.

PUBLIC opinion has greatly changed since the time when spleenful Herrick could sing in his country parsonage of "this dull Devonshire." All are now unanimous in praising the climate, scenery, and flowers of Devon. And, indeed, nowhere else round our island is the sea so clear, as where it runs up into its retired coves, or breaks in silvery curves under its bold cliffs. During many hours of its glorious summer the lover of cloud-splendour detects that peculiar azure in its skies which constantly hangs over Naples, which is always associated with sea, and mountains, and sunshine, and which is so seldom seen elsewhere in England. and then its delicious atmosphere—zephyr breaths that might inspire Tithonus on his saffron couch with new youth, an air which fills you with the pleasure of living—surely, taken all in all, its swelling pastures, wooded heights, and heathy moorlands, crown Devon as the Queen of English counties.

It will easily be seen from this beginning that I am enthusiastically fond of Devon. It was my intention to have traced the change in public opinion, with regard to Devonshire, from the time of the Commonwealth to the high estimation in which it is now held. But as soon as I commenced, my hobby ran away with me; so I shall e'en let it go. After all, such an inquiry would be very dry. Macaulay has done it already for Scotland; everybody knows that inquiry; and, *mutatis mutandis*, the same results hold good with regard to Devon. Her loveliness has ever been the same, the gift of bounteous nature, but it is only lately that people have opened their eyes to it. The Lake School of poets extracted the dust of last century's artificial formalism from our sights; and Keats, Tennyson, and Kingsley, have led us out to the open air to gaze our fill on nature, and especially nature in Devonshire:—

For here are mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep,
And down the stream the long-leaved flowers weep.

And what is more exhilarating than to do so in this first burst of spring? Wherever we turn, we find the same—I was going to say, *trim* orchards, but that is just what they are not—ungainly sprawling old trees for the most part, thickly covered with lichen, while here and there amongst them one is seen bursting into blossom, looking like the snows on some dark mountain, or the white beard of a handsome old man among his compeers. To catch the full beauty of these orchards, however, you must fancy the deep lanes running round them, seldom or ever trimmed hedges almost meeting overhead, while underneath a thick growth of ferns, meadow-sweet hedge, garlic, &c., is just springing up to wave in luxuriant tropical masses a few months later. Then they are seldom on level ground, very frequently placed on the steep banks of a brook, and almost always broken up into hillocks. To these irregularities they owe much of their beauty; and much is due to the Lent lilies which find their favourite abode by the roots of the apple trees. Here they bloom in thick clusters of yellow flowers, almost putting to shame the modest knots of primroses, which on the contrary prefer to seclude themselves on the banks from which grow the hedges. These are thickly starred with them at this time. If you care to examine still closer with curious Præ-Raphaelite gaze, you may see the tender wood sorrel and its pale green leaves, looking as delicate and fragile as the consumptive patients who seek the soft breezes of Torquay. Gemming the moss and grass, too, with their blue petals, violets nestle, almost all the blue ones without perfume, but their large white relatives make up for the omission. They are amongst the very earliest blooms of spring. Here and there, too, are drifts of anemonies, but they most love moist thick woods, which may now be found carpeted with their drooping stems and tender rose-streaked bell-flowers. If you fancy a few chaffinches twittering their love-notes overhead, a startled blackbird flying between the boles of the fruit-trees, and set this in an atmosphere of warmth, just beginning to resound with the hum of insects, the distant caw of rooks, and the ripplings of the brook, you get a true picture of that most lovely scene, a Devonshire cider-orchard in April. If it is too bright, cloud it over somewhat, and then variegate it with flying sun-gleams chasing themselves across it to your liking.

This, then, is the present aspect of Devon from

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the Start to Linton and Clovelly. Wherever there are villages with clear flowing brooks and rising trout, these orchards close in around them. They seem to me the characteristic of Devon spring; later on in the year the *combes* (or valleys) are most attractive, and in autumn the purple heaths enter upon their reign. Besides totally different families of flowers will soon appear; the division between which and their spring sisters, I take to be the full flowering of the orchards; marking off, as it were, spring and summer with a running band of white blossom over the hills of the country. This is especially noticeable round Tiverton in the valley of the Exe. Let us gird Devon with the sea, "the spousal ring of the land," now taking its spring tints of blue and not yet deepening to the green of summer, resting for another six months from the fearful storms of last winter, yet still swirling round the Morte Stone, or angrily glooming round the chalk barriers of Beer Head, and what a charming corner of England is not this? I cannot bear to put the mountains and cold, dull lakes (in spring) of Westmoreland and Cumberland in comparison with it; and, as for Derbyshire, with its keen winds sweeping down upon you from mountain tops, and cutting you off round every wall and house, it is the bleakest part of England in spring. Other counties, too, have their orchards, but no county is so diversified, no county so cunningly-painted and adorned by spring, as Devon.

More than most counties, too, it seems to awake in spring. There are so many watering-places, so many visitors, so many tourists eagerly scanning every nook and corner here, that the palingenesia of the year is nowhere else so apparent. Nature and animated life revive, and everywhere is there activity amongst the rational inhabitants. Lodgings are furbished up, waiters look out for customers, boats and the old coaches which did duty before railroads now emerge from their winter slumbers. Cottages are whitewashed so that the red pyrus japonica flames out brighter than ever to meet the sun's eye, as it covers the irregular windows let into the *cob-made* walls. The fuchsia hedges of Salterton, or the camellias of the extreme south gather green, to appear in all their beauty to their summer visitants. Luckily, too, farming is not yet carried on by the high-pressure principles of progress in Devon, so that in many cases, the hedges and trees escape the shears. The great object of the Devon farmer's ambition is to make his elms as much like bottle-brushes as possible. He is determined to show visitors that at least he sharpens his pruning-hook on Mechi's magic strop.

There is one large village, or small town (I know not which to call it), especially, which always strikes me as the very centre of spring. If "departing Astræa left her last footsteps here," as I used to learn in its royally-founded grammar-school, surely Flora most speedily makes her way hither in spring. First a few fitful glimpses of the sun break out, attended, I am bound to say with plenty of rain, doubtless the last lamentations of winter as he yields to the smiles of sunny April. Soon the rosy love-light of setting suns tempts the larch to hang out her delicate clusters of verdure on the hills. The jay dips in and out of them, and the summer visitants of the woods appear. Saucy magpies hop under the hedges, by snakes and blind-worms enjoying the warmth. A grateful hymn of spring proceeds earliest in that lonely valley up to heaven; the skylark there loses himself in the clear blue, long before his later brethren in the inland counties leave their clay furrows for a flight. The first swallow who had dashed under the stone bridge dedicated to our Saviour (for all that village is sanctified with the remains of mediæval piety), only to provoke the passers-by to repeat Aristotle's proverb, "one swallow does not make a summer," is speedily followed by troops of active martens, like "delicate Ariels" flitting by, or showing their white feathers against the steel-coloured river, just as seagulls show like white specks before a storm cloud. If you walk down beside the winding Otter (for so is the stream called, not so much from those animals, though a few are occasionally caught in it, as from its old Norman name, meaning "swift"), passing a few anglers whom spring tempts out to take the celebrated trout from the gravel "stickles" of the river and mounting between firs and gorse along a sinuous path, you come to a small cavern surrounded by spring verdure. Probably two or three sheep are lying by the entrance, and overhead are carved, amongst many other initials, S. T. C. (Samuel Taylor Coleridge), showing that this is the "Pixies' Parlour" celebrated by that poet. It is not by any means the romantic spot a person would fancy the fairies or "little folk" would choose wherein to hold their nightly revels. Oberon and Titania might find many a lonelier nook amongst the hills around it where they might quarrel about the "little changeling boy" of fairy-land. As you advance along Pig Street (query Pyx Street?) and Paternoster Row, you pass the abode of the Queen of the Pixies, in whose honour Coleridge wrote, and who is still alive.

But let us leave the town itself for the present. Spring (nor indeed any other season) never makes a difference in these little country towns.

To see the influences of spring in the fairest light here, we should ascend to the hills around. On a singular long range running inland from Sidmouth, quite contrary to a Spanish sierra, for it is as straight as an ivory-handled dinner-knife, with the sea on the left, you can discern the whole of East Devon. Hembury Fort and the mountainous ridge of scythe-stone quarries bound the view on one side, to the other the eye ranges over Exeter and the valley of the Exe, past the birthplace of the "judicious Hooker," over Hayes Farm, where Rawleigh first saw light, over Salterton and Exmouth, to where Berry Head glooms, almost lost in the distance. Behind, the view terminates in Portland, which is generally lighted up by a sunbeam, and shines through mists, as some point emerges from the midst of Turner's canvas, almost smothered in colour. In the centre of this immense landscape and sea-view stands the little village of which I speak, all white-washed walls, red roofs, and chimneys surmounted by light curling smoke, while in the centre stands the noble parish church of St. Mary Ottery, built

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on the same model as Exeter Cathedral, with its forty painted windows, its Lady Chapel, fair white columns and coloured ceilings. No wonder that the worshippers are proud of it. Elms bursting into light green foliage close it in, lanes converge seemingly towards it, all the fields, and roads, and houses look to it as their centre. Great names are around us on the hills: Isabella de Fortibus leaves her memory here; Bodley and Barclay, and Browne of "Britannia's Pastorals," are connected with such and such spots. But with the church we at once go back to the Henries and Edwards; to Bishops Grandison and Bronescombe; to times before them when it was made over to Rouen, to the time when it was again brought back to the religious house which flourished by its side, and to the praises which have for so many hundred years ascended thence to heaven. Truly the grey stones never look so well as when the blue sky and the sun of April are overhead, and the jackdaws and doves build harmoniously on its towers. Too bright a haze will cover it in June; vegetation will have choked much of the symmetry of the prospect even in May. And so we again arrive at the point where we started—that there is no time like spring in which to see Devon to perfection. Spring's sun invites the painter and photographer to resume their work; I, too, have sought to present you with a few bright sketches from the life in Devon.

G.

THE FINISHING TOUCH.

He did not see me, baby, or know that I was there,—
Didn't know that I was watching him, and close beside his chair;
His soul was in his work, dear, or it would never be such,
Such as the world will find it, after the finishing touch.

So spake the youthful mother, beside her infant's bed;
So toiled the artist father, for glory and for bread:
Oh, World, be just but generous, for in each work of art
May hang a household's destiny, or bleed a human heart.

A. F.

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LAST WEEK.

THE great domestic topic of LAST WEEK was the weather. It was the third week of fine weather, but it took a fortnight to make us believe in the fact. After nearly two years of vexation, disappointment, and loss from the clouding of the sun, the perseverance of the rain, and the violence of the storms of every season, we have been cautious about beginning to hope, and afraid to put ourselves in the way of new discouragement. A third week of sunshine, however,—for such it was on the whole, in spite of a little snow—melted our distrust. The farmers had lost no time. Whether grumblers or sanguine men, they had been at work from sunrise to dusk, getting in their seed, and pushing forward all their operations, so that our prospects of food and comfort are better than, a month ago, we dared to anticipate. It is still declared by the highest authorities that at best the harvest cannot be more than an average one. The loss by the bad autumn and winter cannot now be altogether repaired; but an ordinary harvest, with an exemption from daily anxiety, perplexity, and vexation in the interval, will be enough to make 1861 a fair year to the farmers, and to all who are interested in the farmers' prosperity. The weather was not the same everywhere LAST WEEK, nor was it welcome to everybody; but we have had nothing so good for many months past. In London and the eastern counties invalids complained of east winds: in Ireland the soil was said to be baked—not one April shower having fallen: and we heard of heavy rain and thunderstorms in one part of England, and of the blessing of drying pastures in another. Amidst these differences, the general fact was that every man, horse, and seasonable implement was put to full use; that the pastures were at their greenest, and lively with ewes and their lambs, and with kine growing sleeker every day; that every farmer was too busy to be spoken to, and everybody struck with the fresh animation which has succeeded the mournful gravity of last year's mood in the rural districts; that the season is declared to be, in some places, three weeks earlier than the last; that the larches, sycamores, and thorns were last week in full dress, and the birches lightly veiled with a yellow green, and even the oaks showing red buds, and shaking off the last brown leaves which had stuck on through the winter. The cherry and pear orchards in the fruit-countries were laden with blossom; and the young broods of the poultry-yards seemed to be as secure as in ordinary seasons, instead of dying off as they did last spring and the one before. Without being too sanguine, we may now hope for a lowering of the price of food. It will require many months, and perhaps some years, to repair the ravages made by disease and hunger among the cattle, sheep, and poultry of the kingdom; but when we saw last week the vivid greenness of the meadows in the steady sunshine, and heard that man and beast could go dryfoot over the whole face of the country, we began to think of beef and mutton as possibly coming once more within the reach of society in general, instead of being the expensive luxury they have been for the last two years.

When that time comes, we must remember that the dearness of food and the farmer's losses have taught us some lessons. There has been a close study of the economy of feeding stock; and far more is known of the way of giving roots, and of the value of straw, and of the relative value of various kinds of food, than we might have learned for a long while without some such pressure. It may be a matter of rejoicing hereafter that the attention of government and society has been strongly called to the failure of the salmon which used to supply so large a proportion of the food of our fathers. The subject was brought up in parliament, and will be renewed there, that a stop may be put to the destruction of the fish, which might be as great a blessing to us as mackerel and herrings in their seasons. The salmon thrive nobly wherever a chance of living is allowed them: there would be an unlimited demand for them now, if they were in the market at *2d.* or *3d.* per lb.; and there is no reason why they should not abound at that price. If by legislation their destruction can be stopped, we may have, in a few seasons, a supply of animal food which will make the occasional dearness of beef and mutton less of a national calamity than it has been for the last two seasons.

The French people will have even more reason than ourselves to remember the bad weather of 1860 by the lesson it has taught. What 1845 was to us, 1860 has been to them: for they are rid of their sliding scale. There is still a duty on the importation of corn; but it is a fixed one; and the people will now be able to buy and sell their corn in comparative freedom. If it does not answer to the corn-growing districts of the north of France to send their wheat to the wine-growing provinces in the south, so well as to sell it to England, Belgium, or other neighbouring countries, they can now choose their own market. And if, on the other hand, the wine-growers in the south of France can get corn cheaper from various Mediterranean ports than from their own countrymen on the Channel, who must send their produce overland, or a long way round by sea, they can now suit themselves. The respective parties can buy and sell where they please. There is one serious mistake, however, mixed up with the new scheme. A bit of "protection" comes in to spoil the new free trade. There is an enormous difference in the duty to be paid on corn brought by French and foreign ships, and there is to be a higher duty on corn brought from an entrepôt, than on cargoes brought from the country where it is grown. As French merchant ships are inferior in quality to English and others, and not fit for long voyages, there will be a heavy duty, in fact, wherever corn is scarce enough to be wanted from any considerable distance, because foreign ships must be employed to bring it. And the short trips which French vessels are qualified to undertake will be in a great measure precluded by the heavy duty on corn fetched from an entrepôt. If these two mistakes can be rectified, the French people will have attained the blessing of a nearly free-trade in the most essential article of commerce; and this change may possibly lead to other ame-

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liorations of the disadvantageous lot of the French farmer.

Any mention of free trade, or restrictions, carries all minds over to America, where the new tariff concocted at Washington in the winter has come into operation. We heard the first particulars of its working last week. Nobody here supposed that it could put on a good appearance for a single day; but the vexation on all hands is greater than could have been imagined. The President is most unwilling to call an extra session of Congress, for reasons of great political weight, and nobody but Congress can repeal or suspend the new tariff; and thus it is declared to be a necessary evil, to be borne as it best may till next December. We must hope that the citizens of the Free States generally will take some pains to understand the matter by that time. At present they have almost everything to learn about the great natural laws which govern social economy. They evidently have no idea that they have their sectional vice as well as the South. There is certainly a long interval between the iniquity of holding persons in slavery, and that of defrauding them of the fruits of their toil by vicious taxation: but both are iniquities. The South prides itself on having a system of enslaved labour and free trade; and the North has its own pride in a system of free labour and fettered trade. The South is well aware of the world's opinion of her policy. The North has yet to learn what the wickedness and folly of a protectionist policy is, and what the world thinks of it. The remotest settler in the West, the most isolated farmer in the New England mountains, the most prejudiced manufacturing companies in the northern towns, and the most smutty worker at any furnace in Pennsylvania will soon hear the outcry sent up from all Europe about their new tariff; and then they will inquire what the uproar is about. At present it does not appear that even the Abolitionists, who are the best social philosophers in the whole country, the most practical men, the most sensible men of the world, have given any attention to this atrocious act of the Republican party in the Congress. If the Abolitionists saw that the tariff robs the labouring man to enrich certain manufacturers, in a way expensive to the whole community, they would direct upon it some of the indignation which they invoke for the practice of making negroes work without wages. The working men themselves will, however, set the matter right, when their attention is once fixed upon it: and the merchants will call upon them quickly and loudly enough. By this new tariff, Mr. Buchanan's chief supporters, the iron-masters of Pennsylvania, have the monopoly of the sale of their commodity; and other manufacturers have a similar privilege. Under this scheme, every purchaser of an iron vessel or steel tool, or of common articles of dress and convenience—every working man, in short—pays high for an inferior article, that the manufacturer may be enriched. On the other hand, commerce is turned from its natural course, and much diminished, to the injury at once of the merchants and the public. The public would partly supply its wants through the smuggler, if the system continued long enough to bring the smugglers into action; and this would still further depress the merchant interest. As soon as these things are understood, the usual remedy will act speedily. The people will denounce the injury, and put an end to it through the elections. But it will remain on record, as one of the strange incidents of the time, that the people of the Free States, while reprobating the crime of making the negro work without wages, should have been insensible of the sin of their own representatives in mulcting all white labourers' earnings, for the benefit of a small class of manufacturers.

As for the great controversy of secession, the news of the commencement of hostilities arrived towards the end of the week. Though the tidings had been long expected, they were very sad. We had almost hoped, from the long delay, that the collision might be avoided: and the secessionists have shown no eagerness to hasten it. During last week we learned something of the reason why. It appears that the leading secessionists are not planters, or even slaveholders; and that they know the planters to be averse to secession. It appears that the effect of a severe censorship of the press, and of repression of speech in society, is to induce conspiracy. Secret societies are known to exist in towns and on plantations, and even in the army. When to this it is added that the soldiers are hungry, half clad and unpaid, and that the artisan class—whites settled in the towns—are starving, and that food and money are fearfully scarce throughout the South, it is no wonder that the cause has not been precipitately committed to the fearful chance of a battle.

As the weeks pass on, public opinion in the Free States grows clearer and more pure. As reconciliation is seen to be impossible, it is more clearly perceived to be undesirable, because it must be a mere hypocrisy. That the Slave States should secede, and cease to implicate others in their own sin and peril, is more and more seen to be the best thing that can happen.

When the separation is finally arranged, it will remain for the Slave States to look to their means of subsistence; and for the Free States to consider how they can so amend their constitution as to guard against a further split on any occasion that may arise. The Border Slave States are the puzzle of the case: and they are torn by political conflict while their suspense lasts. All indications seem to show that, if they do not decide on remaining in the Union,—which would certainly be best for them, in every way,—they will split up into further divisions: Virginia especially being clearly destined to break asunder at the foot of the mountains. Nothing will induce the agricultural population of Western Virginia to turn away from all prospect of a *régime* of free labour, and plunge into destruction with the South, after having for nearly thirty years brought forward a series of proposals for emancipating the negroes, and admitting free white labour without restriction.

The week brought its heart-aches to the friends of freedom and order. There was no improve-

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ment in the news from Poland. The repression by military force was aggravated; the provocations to the citizens were more exasperating; the number of killed and wounded was found to be far greater than had been supposed at first: the excitement of the people was growing more fierce in the provinces: the agitation was spreading to Prussian and Austrian Poland; and the latest conduct of the Czar had an air of frenzy. Count Zamoyski was understood to be in Paris, after having paid a short visit to London.

The *Moniteur* put forth a feeling and sensible paragraph which spoke the impressions not only of the French government, but of the friends of Poland everywhere:—deep grief at the incidents at Warsaw, and earnest solicitude that the Poles should have patience to work out their liberties by such means as time and patriotism must afford. Nothing now can restore the fame of the Czar, as it was two months, and even one month ago. He has classed himself with his ancestors by his late conduct, and shown that he is not above the preference of barbarism to civilisation manifested by his race on all really trying occasions.

The scene in the parliament at Turin cannot be compared, in regard to painfulness, with the slaughters and oppressions at Warsaw; but it may be doubted whether the friends of national liberty and progress could suffer more exquisitely than they did last week by the self-inflicted disgrace of Garibaldi. One of the keenest longings that good men have for impossible things is to be able to pluck out the one weakness by which the hero, the saint, or the martyr is rendered infirm, or even mischievous; and we all probably feel that we had rather be rid of Garibaldi's one defect than of the worst sin of the greatest scoundrel known to the world. It is a misfortune to the world, and in more than one way, that Garibaldi's judgment and temper can be warped by the influence of flatterers, so that he is prevented seeing that dissension and rivalry must ruin the country, and that Cavour is the one man qualified to establish a united Italy. Wrought upon by evil counsels, the great deliverer gave way to passion in the Turin parliament, insulted the government, broke away from all party organisation, disconcerting his own best friends, and throwing everything into confusion, and compelling a suspension of the sitting. His next impulse, after hearing the replies and appeals of Count Cavour and Bixio, was to throw himself into their arms. He attempted to cross the Chamber, and publicly offer his hand to the minister, but he was withheld by his bad advisers; and for many hours Turin, and all the chief cities of Italy, were in high excitement, till it became plain that the government was prodigiously strengthened by the attempt, of which Garibaldi was made the tool, to dislodge it. Before the end of the week we had heard of Garibaldi's self-retrieval. He had had interviews with Count Cavour and General Cialdini; and the reconciliation was said to be complete.

The passing weeks seem, on the whole, to confirm the establishment of the new Italy, and lessen its dangers, though any hour may reverse the lights and shades of the picture. The formidable reactionary conspiracies in Naples and in some of the provinces have been discovered in time, and put down without difficulty. The Government at Turin is stronger than it has ever been. Count Cavour has explained his policy at the best time and in the best way; and it is plain to all minds that no rash assault on Austria is intended yet. Some decisive change must very soon occur at Rome: but it is probable that the responsibility, whatever it may be, will rest with the Emperor of the French. The impression seems to be gaining ground that the alarms of war are so universal in Europe, and the conflict once begun must be so general, so prodigious, and so protracted, that by tacit consent war may be avoided. The responsibility here also rests mainly with the French Emperor, or, as he would say, with the armies of France. If they can be induced to forego the excitement of war and glory, the peace of Europe may yet be preserved for a time, while its politics are being settled.

At home, we made some little progress in public business. Mr. Gladstone's financial proposals were discussed in Parliament, and duly objected to by the Opposition, without any motion being brought forward to test opinions by a formal vote, and the Budget was regarded as an accepted fact. A meeting in support of it, at Manchester, on the Wednesday, deserves notice for the useful disclosures made of the operation of the paper-duty on various manufactures and commercial enterprises, whereas it is commonly spoken of only in its connection with literature. The good news was told in Parliament that a Commission will be issued to inquire into the whole condition and working of our Public Schools. We may hope that this will bring after it a reform in the administration of our great schools, and a purer appropriation of their large endowments; and that this reform will extend to all the schools committed to the care of the Charity Commissioners; so that the vast funds known to exist for purposes of education may be rendered really available to the people of England. Mr. Dillwyn's Bill for securing the trusts of endowed schools from sectarian appropriation has again been lost: but the promised Commission, if properly constituted, will no doubt gain it for him and the public. One of the misfortunes of the week was the throwing out of Sir M. Peto's Burial Bill. The disposition of men of all religious opinions to remove a cause of unseemly quarrel was abundantly evident; and the formation of some arrangement is only a matter of time and detail. Various recent instances of refusal to bury, and of insulting conduct to the mourners at funerals have shown that mere recommendations to clergymen not to inquire into certain facts about the deceased person cannot avail against a consuming zeal. Dissenters, who have an undisputed right to the use of the churchyards, must be secured against oppression from the clergyman; and it seems as if a liberty to use their own rites would be the simplest method of consulting the feelings of all parties. The proposal is thrown out for this session: but the temper of most of the speakers seems to show that the question is not far from a liberal settlement.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE resolution of the brothers-in-law was speedily taken, and it may be easily surmised. A message to Mr. Urquhart announced that they would be with him at Versailles as quickly as the journey could be performed, and he was desired to await their arrival before taking any step whatever. Meantime, but little conversation passed between Mrs. Hawkesley and Arthur, the former deeming that what soothing, what consolation, could find its way to Lygon's heart while the mystery of his sorrow remained unexplained, must come from others than herself, from those whose young arms were incessantly around their father's neck, and whose cheeks were constantly against his own. Arthur was left as much as possible with his children. But when Beatrice spoke to him, her voice spoke of hope, and her manner, even more than her voice, assured him that she regarded him, not as a friend about to be separated for ever from her household, but as one whose part was to endure, and to believe that re-union was at hand.

Hawkesley and Arthur would depart that evening, and the former had gone into town to make some arrangements for charge of his literary duties during his absence. He was to have returned to dinner, after which the friends were to leave by the night train. But the hour passed, and another followed it, and Charles Hawkesley did not come back.

He had called at the theatre to leave a message for the manager, and found a note for himself. It had been left, the hall-porter said, by a person who was certainly a lady, although poorly dressed, and she had said that she knew Mr. Hawkesley had a play in rehearsal, and therefore that he would be frequently at the theatre.

"Some lady who wants me to help her to an engagement, I suppose," said Hawkesley, reserving the note for a leisurely reading, and pro-

ceeding to his own business. This occupied him until late, and he was driving hastily towards Maida Hill, when it occurred to him to look at the letter.

Five minutes later, and the horse's head was in another direction, and Hawkesley was hurrying to one of the hotels near the London Bridge terminus.

The waiter who conducted him to the apartment occupied by Mrs. Urquhart seemed relieved by his appearance, and surveyed the gentlemanly looking man with a certain satisfaction, which might indicate that a different sentiment might previously have pervaded the faithful bosom of the domestic. But Hawkesley, ordinarily keensighted and observant of such signs and tokens, had little attention for them now.

He found Bertha alone, in a large and gloomy room, rendered more dreary, at that hour by the sunlight without, which was streaming on the varied crowds hurrying away from the great city into the country, after the business of the day. The unhappy and solitary woman was seated away from the window, and had been trying to read a gaily covered novel; but the book had fallen from her hand, and she appeared to be utterly listless and prostrated. On the table, which was covered with a dingy checked cover, stood a full bottle of some red wine, and a glass, and a few large hard biscuits—a less delicate looking dessert had seldom been set before a woman accustomed to the graces of life.

The servant merely announced "a gentleman," and withdrew, eager, probably, to inform his employer that a mistake had *not* been made in receiving the lady in No. 26.

"I hoped that you would have come before, Charles," said Mrs. Urquhart, almost peevishly.

"I had not read your note three minutes when I was hurrying here as fast as a horse could bring me, Mrs. Urquhart."

"You might call me Bertha?" she answered, fretfully. "I have done you no harm, at least."

"Who spoke of harm, Bertha?" he said, taking her hand, kindly. "We will hope that no harm has been done to any one. But why are you here?"

"O, I was too wearied out to care where I went, and somebody told me that this was a respectable place. I do not know whether they think that *I* am respectable, for they are a long time answering the bell, and they keep me waiting a great while, until I have been quite faint with hunger. So I ordered that great bottle of wine to put them in good humour—do not suppose that I have tasted it."

"We will manage better for you than that," said Hawkesley, who was touched at her helplessness, and who, it may be said, was more easily moved by the sight of a woman in minor distresses than by her greater griefs, a not very uncommon characteristic of men who have lived a good deal in the world. "Is there anything that you would like now?"

"If you think they would bring me some tea, and at once, I should be very glad."

So he ordered tea, and at once, for the wife who was in flight from her husband, and his heart was quite softened as he watched the thankfulness with which it was received from the now prompt and courteous attendant.

"And now, Bertha, why have you sent for me? Let me say that I am going to Paris tonight."

"Do not name Paris. Why are you going there, Charles? Do not go until I know what is to become of me. I shall die if I am left in London by myself."

"But why should you be in London by yourself? You will come on, of course, to Gurdon Terrace."

Bertha looked at him wonderingly, for a moment or two, and asked,

"Why are you going to Paris?"

"I am going to meet your husband," he said. "It must be needless to tell you why, or who will accompany me."

"But you will not tell him that I am here, that you have seen me. For the love of heaven, do not do that, Charles. We have not been friends, you and myself, it is true, but that has not been my fault; I have been obliged to live in France, though I hate it, and always shall; but you will not be cruel to me, now that I have not a friend in the world. You will not help him to hunt me down?"

"To hunt you down?" repeated Hawkesley.

"Yes, yes. But what would be the use of his tracing me, poor wretch. I will give up everything, I will do everything, only do not let me be hurt, and let me live in quiet for the little time I have to live. I am sure that I shall not trouble any one long."

"We are strangely misunderstanding one another, Bertha," said Hawkesley. "I can only suppose that, out of the painful events of which Robert has written to England, a quarrel has arisen between yourself and him."

"A quarrel—yes—indeed," said Bertha, slowly.

"He has connected you with the misdeeds of—of another," said Hawkesley, "and is making you suffer for your relationship—no, that is not like Robert Urquhart."

"You do not know Robert Urquhart," replied Bertha. It was not that at the moment she was seeking to deceive—it was the feebleness of a nature that ever shrank from the point before it.

"What?" said Hawkesley. "Perhaps you have been carrying your sisterly love too far, and have offended your husband by your defence of Laura. But that must not be allowed to make a quarrel between you. I will take upon myself to interfere and prevent that."

"You cannot interfere, now," said Bertha. "It is too late. Only arrange that I may be left to myself, and not be allowed to starve to death. That is all, and it is not much to ask, Charles."

A suspicion crossed Hawkesley's mind that the mind of Bertha must be affected. What else could explain such flightiness, such wildness of talk? He could but conjecture that the strong excitement connected with the discovery of Laura's wrong, and possibly some terrible scene with

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Robert Urquhart, had been too much for the feeble Bertha.

"My minutes are numbered," he said, "and Arthur Lygon is expecting me. You must come on at once with me to Beatrice."

And he rang the bell, and ordered the bill for Bertha's lodging and other expenses. It was brought with unusual quickness, and was at once discharged by Hawkesley, who made a severe remark upon the neglect of which Mrs. Urquhart had complained. The rebuke was received in silence; but the attendant, as he went out, said, in a low voice, that his master would be glad to speak a word to the gentleman before he left.

"I will send for your trunks, Bertha," said Hawkesley. "We have not a moment to lose."

"Where are you going to take me?"

"Where but to my own house, to your sister's?"

"What is the use?" said Bertha, piteously, and throwing herself into a large old black chair, —the chair looked funereal, and the pale, fragile creature seemed lost in the coffin-like embrace.

"The use? Come, Bertha!"

"Yes, what is the use? I may as well be turned into the street from this house as from yours, and it must come to that. So you had better spare your wife's feelings, if she has any for me, and get rid of me at once. I can go out of the hotel, now, I know. They would not let me this afternoon, when I only wanted to get a little air from the river."

"I must not hear you talk any more," he said, firmly. "You are very ill, and the sooner you are under Beatrice's care the better. You are frightfully feverish."

And he took her hand, as if to lead her from the room.

Bertha looked at him with an expression of childish misery, and then withdrew her hand.

"Promise one thing, Charles,—promise it, solemnly, on your honour, on your soul. I will not move unless you promise it."

"I am sure I may. It is promised."

"That, no matter what may happen, you will not let me be turned out of your house to-night. I will go to-morrow as soon as you and Beatrice like; but you will let me stay to-night?"

"To-night, and many a night; and you shall stay, or go, as you choose," said Hawkesley, desirous to humour her.

"Then I will go with you."

"I will get a conveyance while you put on your bonnet. Pray lose no time, but follow me down."

At the door of the hotel stood its proprietor, who, on receiving a sign from the waiter that this was the gentleman who had visited Mrs. Urquhart, addressed him respectfully:

"The waiter tells me, sir, that you have made a complaint about the attendance on the lady in No. 26."

"The lady seems to have had such good cause for complaint," replied Hawkesley, sharply, "that it shall not be my fault if any acquaintance of mine has to complain of your house again."

"We do not often give cause for such remarks as yours, sir," replied the hotel-keeper; "but there is something very strange in this lady's case, and my servants have been frightened out of their senses. She has begged and entreated of them to get her poison, and at last I thought she had better not go out until some one had seen her."

"You might have seen that she was a lady, said Hawkesley, "and have treated her with kindness."

"I would ask you, sir, if that is a lady's appearance?" replied the other; "and we can only go by appearances."

And at this moment Bertha appeared in the coarse cloak and bonnet in which she had made her escape at the Paris station, and Hawkesley could not help admitting to himself that the landlord had a justification for his doubts.

"A family affliction compelled her to arrive in town hastily, and she had lost my address," he said, doing his best for Bertha, and offering her his arm with marked attention.

"I've seen that gentleman's face before," said the hotel-keeper, as they drove off. "I think he is an actor, or something in that line, and I'm not sorry to see their backs. What's No. 11 ringing like that for?"

"He ordered a bottle of twenty-six port, sir," said the waiter.

"Isn't that the young gentleman who has the brandy in bed in the morning?"

"Yes, sir; and he is very particular about what he calls his twenty-six port."

"Then take him the bottle out of No. 25, which they didn't touch. That's near enough for him, I'm sure."

CHAPTER LX.

"My dearest Charles, you will not save the train," exclaimed Mrs. Hawkesley, hurrying from the drawing-room, as her husband, opening the door with his latch-key, entered the hall. "I have made poor Arthur try to go on with his dinner, but you—"

"A word, dear. If we miss it, we must take the next. You want no preparation for news—Bertha is in the cab—and she is miserably ill."

"Bertha! Poor child!"

And the next moment Beatrice was at the door of the vehicle, and bringing Bertha out of it, with their hands locked together.

"Has he told you his promise?" said Bertha, stopping on the door-stone.

"Promise, darling! no," said her sister, endeavouring to lead her in.

"You must agree to it, Beatrice."

"Come in! come in! I agree to everything. Why, you are in a burning fever."

And she forced her sister into the hall.

"I am not to be turned out to-night," said Bertha, earnestly. "That is promised?"

"I fear it will be many a night before you are fit to go out," replied her sister. "I think you shall come up-stairs at once. She had better not meet Arthur now, Charles," she added to her husband, closing the door of the parlour.

"Is Arthur Lygon here?" said Bertha, trembling.

"Yes, dear; but do not meet him now."

"No, indeed," said Bertha, under her breath,

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and hastening up the stairs with her sister. "Do not let him know that I am here. But I have your promise—your promise—you know that."

The sisters entered Mrs. Hawkesley's room, and then Bertha, suddenly kneeling down at a couch, began to sob as if her heart were breaking.

Better, perhaps, that it had broken, than that a wife, leaning on the knees of her sister, should have had to tell out such a story as that which Bertha Urquhart told.

First, Beatrice had soothed her as a mother might sooth a weeping child. Then came words and broken sentences of strange doubt and terror, and, at length, Beatrice Hawkesley, herself well-nigh as agitated as the woman beside her, had drawn from Bertha the full confession that she had purchased a brief reprieve from exposure by her wicked and cowardly confirmation of the charge of Adair and the error of Urquhart.

Beatrice rose hastily from the couch, and Bertha, displaced from her sister's knees, sank on the ground beside her.

"I have your promise," she cried. "Not to-night."

Mrs. Hawkesley went down, and found Lygon and her husband in the hall.

"We can just do it, Beatrice," said Charles Hawkesley, "and that is all."

"Give up the journey to-night," said Beatrice.

Arthur Lygon looked at her with some surprise, as she had hitherto been urgent in advising their immediate departure; but Hawkesley at once surmised that Bertha had given his wife information of importance.

"If Beatrice advises the delay, Arthur—"

"It is but for twelve hours," said Mrs. Hawkesley.

"You have heard something. She is coming!" exclaimed Arthur Lygon.

"I have heard something, dear Arthur; and though she is not coming, it must prevent your journey,"—and she spoke in the utmost agitation,—"at least until—Charles!" she cried, bursting out into a passion of tears, "it is true! it is true!"

"My own love!" said her husband, leading her into the room. "Come in, Arthur," and he closed the door. "What is true? What Arthur would give his life to hear?"

"Yes, yes; Robert has been deceived," said Beatrice. But where was the radiant smile that should have announced the innocence of Laura?

"Ha! Arthur." And Charles Hawkesley laid hearty clutch on his friend's hand and shoulder. But Arthur's gaze was upon the face of Beatrice, and he read strange things there.

"Robert has been deceived?" repeated Lygon.

"Yes," said Beatrice, pale as ashes.

"You have more to tell," exclaimed Hawkesley, eagerly.

"If I must tell it," she said, sadly. "Charles, one sister is saved to me; but the other, the other—"

Her husband drew her to his heart.

"Poor Bertha!" he said. "That was the meaning of her words to me."

"Bertha is in this house?" said Arthur Lygon, calmly.

"I had not meant to keep that from you," said Hawkesley, "but her own condition was so miserable—"

"She deserves that it should be so," replied Arthur. "And Robert Urquhart has discovered all. I wish I had known this earlier, for nothing should have prevented my hastening to meet him."

"Arthur, you speak without gladness—without surprise," said Charles Hawkesley.

"I have no right to either. Dear Beatrice, that miserable woman upstairs has told you the truth about herself."

"You knew it, Arthur?" exclaimed she.

"Yes, and she knew that I knew it. Ask her, if you will, what took place between us in her own house at Versailles; ask her who fell on her knees, and with clasped hands begged that her wicked secret might be kept from a husband whose personal violence she declared that she dreaded. I kept her secret, though my doing so compelled me to sit face to face with that good and noble man, and hear him talk of his love for her, and of his plans for her happiness, until my very heart turned sick at the silent treachery I was doing. So, she has confessed. Now I must indeed face Robert Urquhart, and own my treason to him; and in return he will tell me that I am as much to be pitied as he is—perhaps there is no such bravery in my going, after all. But I will go."

The settled, stern melancholy of Lygon's voice came strangely upon the ears of the listeners. Hawkesley remained silent. But Beatrice, after a short pause, replied almost as calmly:

"Arthur, I do not know what a man calls friendship, or how far it compels him to hasten the destruction of a woman whose fate has come into his hands. But you spared my sister at a time when you were yourself in the deepest anguish of heart, and I love you for having had a thought for her salvation when most men would have flung everything to the winds but their own sorrow. God will reward you for that nobleness."

"But," said Hawkesley, anxiously, "you have other than sorrowful news to tell him. You have something to say—I feel you have, of another, dearest of all."

"My wife, you mean," said Arthur Lygon. "I do not wish to ask you what strange tales poor Bertha may have invented, or been taught—do not let us speak of what can be but a painful tampering with a subject too sad to be so treated. Dear Beatrice, you have also been kindness itself to me, and I have no words to tell you how deeply I feel this blow to you. I hoped against hope that in some way the revelation might be spared. Take if you can the comfort you have sought to give to me under a still more fearful shock. You have a husband who loves and trusts you, children who need not blush when they hear the name of their mother. You must forget, dear woman, that you have had sisters, and you must forget their unhappy husbands. I leave you to comfort your wife, Charles—but let me see you the last thing to-night."

He pressed her hand affectionately, and was leaving the room.

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"Do not let him go, Charles," said Mrs. Hawkesley, faintly. "I must speak to him."

"To-morrow, dear Beatrice," said Arthur.

"To-night!" she replied. "Arthur, for the sake of your children, for the love of those darling children, whose voices have brought more tears into my eyes than I have ever shed in my life, do not continue to set yourself against a belief that would bring back joy and comfort to you and them. I know what is going on in your heart—I know that you would give all you have in the world to feel as I do at this moment—to feel that Laura is as worthy of you as she was the first time you led her into this room, the evening you came home after your bridal trip. Do you remember that evening, Arthur?"

"Beatrice!"

"Yes, I will recal it, and I would recal a thousand happy memories, if I could, that they might fight with the cruel pride and the fierce judgments that are filling your heart."

"Beatrice," said her husband, "I refused to hear more from Bertha, on our way here, than that she was in great trouble, and was very ill. I told her that she must give you her confidence, and that you would be her best counsellor. I little thought that this was to be the confession."

"Right," said Arthur, "you did not think it, or you would not have brought her over the threshold of your house, and let her hand touch that of Beatrice."

Beatrice gazed on her husband with swimming eyes.

"You do not hear Charles say *that*," was her gentle answer.

"Nor did I mean it, Arthur," said Hawkesley. "Right or wrong, I have my own belief of duty, and that belief forbids my judging less mercifully than I trust to be judged. I would not have brought this miserable woman here, but assuredly I would not have required my wife, her sister, to abandon her utterly. Shall I add, my dear Arthur, that while I am speaking of one about whose guilt we have no doubt, your mind is with one around whose innocence some mysterious doubts have come—are your thoughts doing the commonest justice to her, and to yourself?"

"You are in league with your wife," said Arthur Lygon, with a sigh, "but I struggle in vain to accept your comfort. Let us be silent. I love you too well, Beatrice, to speak any more on this."

"And if we loved you less, Arthur," replied Mrs. Hawkesley, "should we be striving to persuade you to believe in the goodness of my sister. If we did not know how truly you have loved and still love her, would we battle for her with you? Dear Arthur, the happiness of two lives is too solemn a thing to be played with, and for me to keep back a word or a plea now would be to do a sin that I might repent to my dying hour. I am sacrificing no dignity, Arthur—I understand you—in begging you to be just to my sister."

"The justest man whom I know," replied Lygon, "has deliberately written to me—you know what he has written, Charles. Is it not madness, after that letter from Urquhart, to talk of the future?"

"And in the very hour," said Beatrice, eagerly, "when you were about to hurry over to his presence, comes this poor, wretched girl, with a fresh key to the mystery that has wrung all our hearts—she comes to tell us that the wise and just man, upon whose sentence, you, Arthur, are ready to renounce the woman who gave herself heart and soul to you, the mother of your children, the best creature that ever rewarded a husband's love—is she *not* all that?—" exclaimed Beatrice with wet cheeks.

"I believed it," said Arthur, turning away to hide his face.

"You believe it now, and thank God that you do, and thank him that at this very hour comes the news we have had—terrible as it is for us, Arthur, it comes in mercy to you, and tells you not to throw away Laura from your heart at the bidding of a man who has been unable to see the sin that was going on in his own household. I say nothing against Robert's justice, Charles," she added, "but you, who, like Arthur, were so ready to accept his judgment, you must feel that we should be cruelly wrong to trust in it now."

"Beatrice," said Hawkesley, "is she in a state to answer questions?"

"She must answer," said Mrs. Hawkesley, with firmness.

"It is useless to ask the truth from *her*," said Lygon, moodily. "She is a practised and an accomplished deceiver, Beatrice—painful as it is to use such language to you—it is right that I should caution you against giving belief to what she may say. She is not what you knew her—she has learned to think of woman's honour and man's constancy as those things are thought of abroad, and she has also learned how to screen herself from discovery, and even from suspicion. I give no credence to her tale, be it what it may."

"Arthur," said Hawkesley, "you may be right as to this poor creature's frailty, but you are contradicted as to her worldly tact by the fact that she is up-stairs in this house, hiding from those whom she was unable to deceive."

"That is her story, is it?" said Arthur.

Beatrice looked at him steadfastly with her earnest eyes.

"What!" she said, "are you doubting that? Doubting that when a fugitive wife sobs out a confession of sin she is speaking other truth? Nay, do not retract, for I see hope for Laura."

"For Laura!" repeated Lygon.

"Yes," answered Beatrice, "yes, indeed. Yes, Arthur, you have no conviction of any kind. You are trying to deceive yourself into the belief that you have judged and condemned Laura—you would fall down on your knees in thankfulness for any witness to her goodness. Do not answer me, dear Arthur, or do as you will, for you cannot deceive me again."

He made no reply.

"Stay with him, Charles dear," said Beatrice, leaving the room.

CHAPTER LXI.

It was a lovely moonlit night, and Versailles lay in silence. For one who had thought for the memories of the place, that was a night on which the Genius Loci would have arisen, almost unbidden. But there was no place for such fancies and recollections in the minds of the two who at

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that late hour set out on their errand. With a quick step, and in silence, Robert Urquhart and Henderson made their way towards the dwelling of Mrs. Lygon, and Silvain, who had said that he should follow, was permitted to do so without comment — his mistress accepting the attention as her due, Urquhart scarcely heeding it.

They arrived at the house. A light was burning in the foliaged window, and Henderson pointed that window out to Mr. Urquhart.

"I do not wish to alarm her," he said. "Say that I must speak to her." And as Henderson was stepping forward towards the house, he added, "It may be better to say, also, that I know all."

"She would have told her so without orders," he said to himself, as the girl went off, "and it will shorten the affair."

Urquhart waited at some distance, while Henderson sought to rouse the proprietor of the house. But she knocked and called in vain until Laura, recognising the voice, spoke to the girl from the window, and in a few minutes admitted her to the room down-stairs, which served for hall, kitchen, and the day apartment of the owner. Laura had not retired to bed, but was in a *deshabille,* and had been writing. Her hair flowed amply over her shoulders, and in the simplicity of her dress she looked an image of melancholy beauty.

"What brings you at this hour, Henderson? And I thought I heard a man's voice. What has happened?"

"Nothing, m'm, that should frighten you, though what has happened must be frightful to some others. It was what I expected all along. Mr. Urquhart knows the real truth now; and, m'm, he has come to tell you so."

"He knows the real truth," repeated Laura, slowly. "What truth?"

"If there was time to talk, m'm, I would beg your pardon on my knees for daring to speak of it, but he is waiting outside, and has allowed me to come in and prepare you to see him. He has been to Paris with Madame, and he came back just now, having learned that you were here, and *he knows all.*"

"Henderson," said Laura, faintly, and supporting herself against the chimney-piece, "I have heard so many mysterious messages—"

"There is no mystery now, dear Mrs. Lygon," said the girl, in a low voice, and very respectfully. "He knows that he is a wronged husband."

"And—and he wishes to see me."

She was answered by a knock at the door.

"He is there, m'm."

"Say that I will come down to him," said Mrs. Lygon, calmly. And she went up to her room.

Some little re-arrangement of dress occupied a few minutes, during which Mr. Urquhart waited in stern silence outside the door, and then Laura came to him.

"You have sent me a strange message, Robert," she said.

"Ay," he answered, "there are strange doings in this world. I must speak to you."

"We can never meet under one roof, Robert," she replied, "until—until *that* happens which is not likely to happen now. And if it were not for the sake of others, I would not have met you again. Do not suppose that I am speaking vainly. I could have left this house, and avoided you, had I chosen to do so—there is another entrance, and by this time I could have been beyond your reach. But I have come, at your wish. What do you want with me?"

He took her hand, but with perfect gentleness, and drew her a step or two over the threshold.

"Come under God's roof, Laura," he said, in a grave voice, "and when we have sin and shame to speak of, let us not talk in the world's way. Come out to me here, will you not?" he said, relinquishing her hand, and drawing back a little, as if to leave her perfect freedom of action.

Henderson heard the words, and in another second had darted to Laura's room, and brought her a light hat, which she placed, without a word, in Mrs. Lygon's hand.

"I will stay here, m'm, until you return."

Laura stepped out into the moonlight, and on a lovelier form and face it had never streamed even in that city of the fair women of days gone by. Even Urquhart, as he gazed upon her with a sterner glance than has often been cast on such an object, felt a thrill of admiration, and scorned himself for owning that he felt it.

There was a somewhat broad road, a short distance from the house, and over this road the branches met, and the moonlight broke through them, but with difficulty. The two turned under the trees, and Urquhart said:—

"Stand here. I have but a little to say, and I have been thinking how to say it in the fewest words. Your sister Bertha is a guilty woman, who has dishonoured her husband."

"Why do you say this to me?"

"Why, indeed, do I tell you that which you know too well? That you may know from my own lips that I am deluded no longer—that you may know that I have seen in her own handwriting the proof of her shame, and that I have no longer a wife."

"Robert!" she exclaimed, white with terror at his last words, which might bear a fearful meaning. "Robert—Bertha is—is well?"

"I know nothing of her," he said. "By some devilish device it was managed that she should know that I was made aware of her sin, and she has fled."

"Thank Heaven!" gasped Laura, scarce knowing that she spoke.

"You knew this," he continued, "and why do you affect surprise? Is it to prepare me for your refusing to answer my questions?"

"I will answer you no questions, Robert," replied Mrs. Lygon.

"You will not?"

"At least I will answer none until I am holding the hand of my own husband, and receiving his permission to speak to you. When you have settled with him the fearful account which you have raised between you, it will be time for you to ask help from me."

"Laura, are you in your senses? Do you dare even to name your husband to me?"

"To name him, Robert! When your messenger

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knocked at my door I was on my knees naming him to One who will yet deliver him, and me, from the consequences of your madness and foolishness."

"Mine!"

"Yours, Robert Urquhart, as you will live to know, and as you will some day own, and will beg for pardon. In the meantime, the less we speak together the better for both. Why have you asked to see me to-night?"

"Why? Because you have all Bertha's secrets, and you know where she has taken refuge."

"I do not know. And if I did know, I would not, without my husband's permission, dare to tell you. Do not attempt to see me again, unless you bring Arthur with you to say that he has forgiven you, and permits me to forgive you for your crime against us both."

Without another word she left him, and went back to the house, and Robert Urquhart, bewildered, did not attempt to stay her.

(To be continued.)

A FORGOTTEN POET.

Forty years ago the literary world was thrown into a ferment by the appearance of an article in the "Quarterly Review," in which the poetical productions of a young and humble farm-labourer were noticed with a degree of favour somewhat unusual in the pages of the Giant of Criticism; and well did the poor poet sustain the reputation thus unexpectedly thrust on him, for seldom has an individual been more blameless in his private character, or more deserving in his public capacity, than John Clare, whose mild disposition furnishes such a genial and pleasing commentary on his vivid and ofttimes exquisitely beautiful delineation of rustic life and manners.

John Clare was born in July, 1793, at Helpstone, a little village in the easternmost part of Northamptonshire; so that, at the present time, he is about sixty-seven years of age. His parents were paupers, and consequently his education was of a very meagre description, while his extremely weak and delicate constitution naturally rendered the rearing of him through childhood a source of great trouble and anxiety to his mother and father.

Many of the incidents of his infancy and early life are described with unaffected pathos in his poem of "The Village Minstrel," and several minor pieces.

While yet an infant he was placed in the village "dame-school," more for the sake of being kept out of "harm's way" than from any hope of his learning to read; but even here his natural genius early displayed itself, for he managed to acquire the art of placing two syllables together, and thenceforth made such rapid progress, that before he was six years old he could read a chapter from the Bible.

But he had no sooner achieved this infantine triumph, than he was taken away from the school to be employed, even at his tender age, in the harvest-field, and for awhile his studies were ended.

"At the age of twelve he assisted in the laborious employment of threshing: the boy, in his father's own words, was weak but willing, and the good old man made a flail for him somewhat suitable to his strength. When his share of the day's toil was over he eagerly ran to the village-school under the belfry, and, in this desultory and casual manner, gathered his imperfect knowledge of language and skill in writing. At the early period of which we speak, Clare felt the poetic *œstrum*.

"He relates that twice or thrice in the winter-weeks it was his office to fetch a bag of flour from the village of Maxey, and darkness often came on before he could return. The state of his nerves corresponded with his slender frame. The tales of terror with which his mother's memory shortened the long nights returned freshly to his fancy the next day, and to beguile the way and dissipate his fears, he used to walk back with his eyes fixed immovably on the ground, revolving in his mind some adventure 'without a ghost in it,' which he turned into verse." *

He has alluded to the latter fact in his "Village Minstrel:"—

He had his dreads and fears, and scarce could pass
 A churchyard's dreary mounds at silent night;
But footsteps trampled through the rustling grass,
 And ghosts 'hind gravestones stood in sheets of white;
Dread monsters fancy moulded on his sight;
 Soft would he step lest they his tread should hear,
And creep and creep till past his wild affright;
 Then on wind's wings would rally as it were,
So swift the wild retreat of childhood's fancied fear.

It may be that these frequent occasions of imaginary terror had a tendency to develop the seeds of the fearful malady which has so unfortunately clouded the later years of his existence; and this circumstance should operate as a warning to those who have the care of the young. When Clare was about fifteen years of age, he experienced the universal poetic mania by scribbling his poetical compositions on stray pieces of paper, which he gave to his mother, but the worthy dame did not place so high a value on them as did her son, for she used them to light the fire, a process which might prove of some service in preserving the reputations of many of our modern would-be poets.

The poor lad's condition at this period of his life was truly a sad one, for he had neither the strength nor inclination to join in the rough boisterous sports and pastimes of his neighbours, and none of his fellow labourers possessed intellectual abilities sufficient to share John's poetical tastes, therefore he was compelled to roam about in silent and desponding loneliness:—

A more uncouthly lad was hardly seen
 Beneath the shroud of ignorance than he:
The sport of all the village he has been,
 Who with his simple looks oft jested free;
And gossips, gabbling o'er their cakes and tea,
 Time after time did prophecies repeat,
How half a ninny he was like to be,
 To go so "soodling" † up and down the street,
And shun the playing boys whene'er they chanc'd to meet.

* "The Quarterly Review;" May, 1820.

† *Soodling.* Sauntering lazily along. "Baker's Glossary."

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Nothing tends so much to dishearten the humble self-educated toiler as the terrible state of solitariness in which he is placed by reason of the low intellectual standard of the majority of those amongst whom he is—by reason of his social position—compelled to live; because they are so apt to ridicule or persecute those of their class whose tastes and opinions do not harmonise with their own. This was felt most acutely by poor Clare, who could—even with all his good-nature—ill conceal his contempt and aversion for the boorish customs and rude pleasures of his village neighbours. As he advanced towards manhood the clouds of trouble and disaster began to gather yet more densely around him, for his father became too infirm to labour for the scanty pittance which he had hitherto earned, and his mother was compelled to pass all her time in tending her feeble partner; so that the unfortunate poet had to support all three by his own labour, and this too, by submitting to a degree of physical exertion which his delicate organisation was incapable of sustaining for any length of time without injury. But he bravely and manfully fought his way through, although his wages were only *thirty pounds per annum!*

Yet even this cheerless and dispiriting state of affairs would have been supportable, had Clare not felt so painfully the loneliness which his genius and his poverty occasioned him, and to which he has so touchingly alluded in several of his poems; but the poet was born under an adverse star, and excepting on a few rare occasions, misfortune never appeared weary of his companionship.

At length he determined to attempt the publication of his poems, but he did not possess sixpence in the world, and what was he to do?

He had no friends, no money; in fact, nothing but his talents and his poverty, the latter of which he would but too gladly have dispensed with. The printing of circulars, franking them, canvassing for subscribers, and other preliminaries, cost far more, forty years since, than in these days of penny-postage and cheap railway fares, and so our poet found, but he was determined not to give up his pet project, and accordingly he managed, by dint of great—we fear excessive—self-denial, to save a sovereign, with which he caused three hundred prospectuses to be printed, and these he undertook to distribute himself. But his evil fortune still pursued him, for, not being able to pass them into other hands than those of the villagers, his efforts were entirely thrown away; as Clare himself humorously confesses, for he never obtained more than *seven* subscribers, and despite all his appeals and exertions, these persisted in repeating with Wordsworth's Child, "Nay, we are Seven." However, one of these circulars was the means of introducing him to the notice of a then flourishing London bookselling firm—Messrs. Taylor and Hessey—who gave him 20*l.* for the MSS. of his poems, and undertook the responsibility of publishing them on their own account. The venture was successful, for in those days a literary handicraftsman was somewhat more rare than in these times of Mechanics' Institutions, Athenæum *soirées*, and Mutual Improvement Associations; and Clare speedily became the "rage" of the town, who invited him to all the fashionable balls, routs, and other assemblages.

Our fathers ran after the poet with the same display of eagerness and excitement evinced at a more recent period, when hippopotami and Nepaulese princes divided the smiles of wealth and fashion. But amid the crowd, there were many who could appreciate the real worth of John Clare, and—to their honour, be it spoken—they displayed their feelings in deeds, not words.

The Marquis of Exeter sent for John to "Burghley House, by Stamford town," and settled an annuity of 15*l.* on him, while Earl Spencer, Earl Fitzwilliam, Lord John Russell, and other noblemen and gentlemen, contributed largely to a fund for the permanent provision of the poet, and which still forms his main support. It seemed as if Fortune had tired of frowning on the poor fellow, and in a fit of repentance, was lavishing all her favours on him; but, ah! love came—the witching rogue—in the shape of "Patty of the Vale," and after singing—

> What are riches?—not worth naming,
> Though with some they may prevail;
> Theirs be choice of wealth proclaiming,
> Mine be Patty of the Vale,

he married, and thenceforth the sunshine began to vanish, and the grim, dark clouds slowly arose in its place. Not that his wife was an unfit helpmate for him; but that the connubial state and the expenses of his frequent jaunts told heavily on his finances, and he began to grow gloomy and desponding. However, he set about the task of improving his neglected education, and in 1821 he published "The Village Minstrel," which has already been alluded to; in 1827, "The Shepherd's Calendar;" and in 1835, "The Rural Muse," his last and most finished work. So intent had Clare been on rectifying his educational deficiencies, that his "Rural Muse" displayed an amount of grace and polish totally unexpected by his admirers, but, alas! in proportion to the development of his powers, the poet's popularity waned, and the unsold copies of his works which crowded the publishers' shelves but too truly testified to the neglect and indifference of the fickle public. Poor Clare felt the blow, and became more moody and sad in his demeanour, till at last the springs of his overwrought mind gave way, and he became hopelessly insane.* He was, after awhile, removed to the Northampton County Lunatic Asylum, where he still remains; and where we recently visited him by the courteous permission of the medical superintendent, who generally refuses the same favour to others, because he deems, and rightly too, that his patients should not be made an "exhibition" of. Passing through several of the wards, we were ushered into what we at first deemed to be a gentleman's private sitting-room, but which was the ordinary sitting chamber of the better class of patients; and which appeared very cosy and comfortable

* I do not think this was the cause of his madness.—J. P.

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with its mahogany chairs, table, and couch, warm soft carpets, and cheerful fire. Several patients were lounging about, and in a recess formed by one of the windows, which commanded a beautiful view of the large and spacious gardens belonging to the establishment, sat John Clare. Time had dealt gently with the poet, who—making allowance for his increased years—bore a very striking resemblance to the portrait of him prefixed to "The Village Minstrel." He was rather short in stature, with a very large forehead, and mild benevolent-looking features. On our approaching him, we found him to be extremely taciturn, but the attendent informed us that in general Clare was good humoured, obedient, and cheerful.

He was reading a somewhat bulky volume, which he had obtained from the extensive library belonging to the institution, and appeared deeply interested in its contents. He still amuses himself by writing short pieces, of which the following is a fair specimen:

THE DAISY.

The daisy is a happy flower
That comes with early spring;
And brings with it the sunny hour,
When bees are on the wing.

It brings with it the butterfly,
And humble early-bee;
The polyanthus goldeneye,
And blooming apple-tree.

Hedge sparrows form their mossy nests
By the old garden hedge,
Where schoolboys, in their idle glee,
Seek "pooties"* as their pledge.

The cow stands browsing all the day
Over the orchard gate;
And eats her bits of sweet old hay,
While Goody stands to wait;

Lest what's not eaten the rude wind
May rise and snatch away,
Over the neighbour's hedge behind,
Where hungry cattle lay.

March 20, 1860. JOHN CLARE.

The last two verses contain some faint traces of the humour which formed such a conspicuous feature in his earlier works, while the poem itself is remarkable for its extreme simplicity, and its evidence of poor Clare's deeply-rooted fondness for old associations. Miss Mitford, in her "Notes of a Literary Life," has given some account of the delusions of the poet; and in the "Quarterly Review" for January, 1857, there is a powerful and graphic paper on Northamptonshire, in which some account is given of the olden home of Clare at Northborough, where his wife resides; and which we are informed "shows in the neatness of its arrangement and furniture marks of a higher cultivation than the ordinary labourer's home: in its books, many of them the gift of friends,—in the framed engravings, portraits of his benefactors—in flowers more abundant and more choice than in common cottage gardens—just such a holding as one would wish the Village Minstrel to enjoy."

Whether Clare will ever recover from the malady with which he is afflicted, is a matter of doubt; but so many of his old friends and benefactors have been removed by the hands of death, that it is perhaps better for him to be as he is, than to awaken to reason and find himself amongst a new generation who know, and yet know him not, so little is he in fashion with the present generation.

KETTERING, *May*, 1861. JOHN PLUMMER.

* *Pooty*. Miss Baker, in her excellent Northamptonshire Glossary, defines this word as meaning a "snail-shell," but Clare has here used it signifying a young hedge-sparrow, in which sense it is still used in the county.

THE CHOLERA BED.

I AM by profession an artist. I became, like many of my brethren of the easel, a temporary resident in Italy for the purpose of study, and after two winters devoted to Rome, and two summers spent between Sorrento and Castellamare, I bent my steps towards Florence. The galleries were, as may be supposed, my great attraction. It mattered little to me that the gaieties of winter were over, that heat and drought were compelling the fashionable sojourners in Tuscany to wend their way beyond the Alps, and that I should find the place thoroughly out of season. I was glad, for my part, that it should be out of season. I should have the galleries to myself. I should not find a coterie of amateurs attempting feeble-minded sketches of every renowned master-piece of art. I should be spared the babble, the stare, the comments, and the compliments, of those well-bred persons, who appear to consider a painter as common property, and who saunter from studio to studio, to gossip, question, and advise. A strong constitution enabled me to endure the sickly heats of an Italian summer, and I actually revelled in the idea that during the dearth of strangers which invariably attends the hot weather, palace and museum, Laocoon and Venus de Medicis, would be wholly mine own. Still, I own that I was somewhat startled by the absolute desertion of the city on the part of its wealthy inhabitants. We are all of us used to the phrase of "everybody out of town," and we know with what reservations to receive it, and how many well-dressed nobodies, and somebodies accidentally passing through, we shall be certain to meet, even in a London September. But in Florence I did not encounter, for hours, a single Paris bonnet or coat of superfine Saxony. The city seemed to be left to the poor, to the brown-jacketed artisan, to the fruit-woman in huge hat of Tuscan straw and scarlet handkerchief over her shoulders, to the peasant in fringed gaiters and crimson sash, to the lizards darting along the garden walls, and the dogs sleeping in the sun. The very beggars had forgotten their avocations: they sat in shady nooks beside the grass-grown steps of the churches, their gourds and wooden bowls lying beside them, demurely dozing. There was an absence of stir along the gay Lungarno, along the bright Cascinè, a silence in the dull dark streets, a hush in the parched Piazzas, everywhere an absence of vitality, which saddened me in spite of myself. At last

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the cause oozed out. I learned it at the British Legation, from a wretched little stripling attaché, who was left behind in charge of the musty papers and red boxes, and who was but too glad to have an opportunity of cursing his hard fortune and the ambassador's cruelty. There was one grim guest in Florence, before whose face the gay world of dancers, diners-out, and Casciné promenaders, had fled like chaff before the wind. The cholera was in the town again, more deadly and subtle than before. In the previous year, 1854, the cholera had swept North Italy as with a besom; had roved freely from hamlet to hamlet, from city to city, culling and choosing victims, young and old, ripe and green fruit, for the black harvest of death. And now the cholera had come again. The year '54 had slain its thousands: the year '55, its grim younger sister, seemed to threaten the slaying of its tens of thousands. What wonder that all who could fly on the wings of gold were gone, and that the city was left to those whom poverty, duty, or prejudice compelled to remain at home? Among these, and perhaps on account of all three of the reasons I have enumerated, I was now to be reckoned. I engaged lodgings, at a low rent I need scarcely say, although the rooms were excellent and the situation pleasant, but the dog-days placed the best apartments in Florence at the bidding of the most modest purse. I unpacked my easels and colours, my brushes and rolls of canvas, struck a bargain with the old-established models of the town, and visited the galleries daily. I had them all to myself, those great ghostly halls full of gleaming marble and painted canvas. Their vastness and silence saddened me, somehow, as I sat, lonely as Zimmerman, gazing, copying, admiring, through the long sultry days. I was perfectly undisturbed. I had the whole day to myself, without interruption, certainly; I worked hard, and no one called me off with idle talk, or proposals of billiards, or dominoes, or silly invitations to tea-parties and carpet-dances, as had been the case during the previous winter at Rome. Still, the silence and solitude overpowered me, made me nervous, caused me to start at the echoes of a footfall, or the clapping of a door; and I will own that I should have been very glad if a large British family had come prattling down the gallery and clustered about my easel, to criticise my work in stage whispers, and even extend their comments to my costume and personal appearance. I was not rendered more cheerful by the news which the papers afforded me when I daily repaired to the *trattoria* for my dinner, or to the *caffè* for breakfast. The pest was spreading dreadfully, drawing a net, as it were, around its victims. It was in Italy, in France, in England, in Germany, but its chief virulence was raging in the southern countries. It darted about like the tongue of a fiery serpent, touching its prey here and there, sparing one side of a street to exterminate all life on the other; shunning one house to enter another and destroy every human inmate. In vain the frightened governments increased the rigour of quarantine: guards and gates proved powerless to keep out the infection: successive provinces were invaded, in spite of the cordons of armed men posted on every road to prevent travellers from passing without a clean bill of health. Another noticeable feature of that terrible year was, that whereas in old visitations the dwellers on the heights of Apennine had been safe, it was not so now. The destroying pestilence surged up to the peaks of the highest hills, and left the mountain villages desolate, and the dead with none to bury them. In many places, doctors, magistrates, nurses, the whole mechanism of society, fled in blind terror from the devoted spot, and none but a few Sisters of Charity, a few relatives whose love overcame their fear, remained by the sick beds of the stricken. This was not pleasant reading for a man whose lot was cast in a city where the pest had its head-quarters. And I knew those foreign journals well; their reticences were worse than their tidings. It is only in England that you can get genuine information through the medium of print. Abroad, the editors venture to print little that may be unacceptable to the prefect and commandant; they soften down, smooth away, and garble news at the pleasure of government, and seldom mention an epidemic or revolt until the evil has grown to gigantic proportions. So it was with this cholera. The papers had ignored or pooh-poohed the scourge so long, that their timid after-statements were evidently dwarfed pictures of the hideous truth. If they dared tell so much—this was in the old Austro-Tuscan days—how dismal must the reality be! And, indeed, it was sufficiently shocking. All day long I heard the sullen tolling of the church bells; every time I went abroad I heard the melancholy chant of the monks, as a procession went with lighted tapers and the veiled Host to carry the last sacraments to the dying. Daily, too, I met the dead on their way to the crowded cemetery, borne coffinless on a bier, crowned with flowers, hurried along with that haste and want of decency which characterise interments among southern nations, and their upturned faces gleaming white in the glare of the sunshine. It is not surprising that I fell ill myself; not sickening of cholera, indeed, but succumbing to a heavy lassitude and nausea that made me see the world as through a crape veil. Hand and eye, spirits and temper, were fast failing me, when my landlady luckily persuaded me to consult a doctor. She said he was a clever man, a prince of a physician, the good angel of the poor, and I do not know what besides; and indeed Dr. Roberti, one of the most learned men in Italy, deserved her praises. It was not alone that he cured *me*, an inferior practitioner might have done that, but he did immense good among the cholera patients, cured many who were apparently beyond hope, cheered the convalescent, stayed the malady in its early stages in countless cases, and preached sanitary reform among the ignorant but docile poor of his native city.

Dr. Roberti did not cure me by the Pharmacopœia entirely; he found me sickening of ennui and gloom; and, of course, in a fit condition to sicken of the general pestilence. With great good sense and kindness he compassionated my lonely state, conversed with me, introduced me to one or two educated Florentines still in town, and seeing that I neglected my palette and brush, asked the

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cause. I frankly told him I could not help my distaste for work; I was weary of routine employment, and had a perfect loathing for the hack models, old Giacomo, with his white beard; brawny, black-muzzled Luigi; Gertrude with her tight bodice, worked apron, and white linen veil, that inevitable trio, who had taken the pauls and filled the canvas of whole generations of artists. Moody and moping as I was, I could not bear my tête-à-têtes with those old stagers of the studio.

"I understand," said the Doctor, smiling indulgently; "and yet it is good for us all to have an object and an interest in our work. Suppose I were to introduce you to a new collection of models, no conventional characters, no living lay figures, but varied and strongly marked features, forms often of no trifling grace and power, and faces branded and furrowed by the impress of fiery passions? You might startle your London Academy by the portraits and sketches you could take home with you, far better than the mock brigands, fishers, and bagpipers you have been yawning over?"

Then the good Doctor explained that he was physician to the prison of Florence, and that the convicts and galley-slaves were the models he would propose to me. I caught at the suggestion eagerly.

The Doctor was as good as his word. He pro-procured me free admission at pleasure to the strong building where the gaol-birds of Tuscany awaited in irons their transmission to the arsenal at Leghorn. I soon began to paint with renewed ardour, and my health benefited by the novel excitement. A paul or two to buy tobacco would, I found, win over the roughest prisoner there to sit patiently in any attitude, and for any time, I liked. Indeed, the galley-slaves took it as an honour that their coarse bold lineaments should be transferred to canvas; they jostled one another to contend for the privilege: nor were the women in the other part of the gaol less clamorously eager to volunteer themselves as sitters. I made many sketches: one day of a gaunt old Fury, whose dishevelled grey hair, keen yellow face, and distaff clenched in her skinny hands, realised Atropos in person; another day of a scowling, murderous-visaged villain, who had the word "bravo" written in every furrow of his face. One man alone did not come forward among the roaring, vociferating crowd of mercurial felons who competed for my custom. He sat alone, quite regardless of me, and this indifference piqued me. But, besides, he was a magnificent model. As he sat on a stone step, heavily ironed, with his head supported by one arm, and an expression of disdainful calm upon his handsome face, I could not but feel that he was worthy to serve as model to a better artist. Can you fancy Hercules in chains—Hercules in a prison garb of coarse crimson serge, loose and ill-made, to be sure, but impotent to conceal the symmetry of the mighty limbs and the breadth of the ample chest? If so, you can imagine the galley-slave I speak of, as he sat apart, with the red Phrygian cap on his head, bare-footed and in fetters. He was a head taller than any there, and his bronzed face, set off by a black beard, was handsome and proud,—the face of a bold, good-looking fellow of twenty-eight, with nothing wicked or base impressed upon it, as far as I could see.

"Who's that?" I asked of the warder who accompanied me.

"Il Capitano!" answered the man in a low tone.

"The Captain?" I repeated, in surprise at the statement.

The warder explained that this was a mere nickname. The well-looking convict was called Captain because he bore sway among his fellows as the strongest and bravest man there. He was well conducted, the turnkey added, but rather reserved and haughty.

"His crime?" I asked, feeling sure that the face I gazed on was not a thief's.

"*Omicidio! Signor carissimo;* murder and assassination," replied the warder with a shrug. "He was very lucky to escape the scaffold, and must wear those iron bracelets and anklets for ever,—at least till Death undoes the padlocks."

"Then his sentence is for life?"

"For life!"

That was all the warder knew. But Dr. Roberti, of whom my curiosity led me to inquire, had more to communicate. According to him this man had been an honest mountain peasant, with a thriving farm and a golden mean of prosperity. He had been about to be married to a pretty girl of his neighbourhood, when the dreadful event occurred which had set Cain's brand upon his brow, and made him a prisoner without hope. It was a feud, one of those grisly legacies of vengeance, so common in the wilder parts of Italy, and which approximate to the Corsican Vendetta, which had caused him to imbue his hands in blood. One murder lawlessly avenged another. Pietro had killed a man whom the popular voice accused as the murderer of his (Pietro's) younger brother, and the public opinion of the village had demanded the deed and applauded the doer. And so the jaws of the gaol had closed on Pietro for ever.

"The Marchese on whose lands he lived," added the Doctor, "spoke in his favour to the Grand Duke, and after some hesitation his sentence of death was commuted into perpetual confinement. His sisters have been admitted to see him, and his *fiancée*, too, poor girl. I saw her as she left the prison; she looked terribly pale and worn with weeping and distress; but bah! he is lost to her, and she will forget him and marry some one else. You don't indulge in snuff? It is the only old world habit I cannot break myself of."

The Doctor's account of Pietro interested me much, and I was not satisfied until I had struck up a sort of acquaintance with the prisoner. He was somewhat reluctant, poor fellow, to converse freely with a stranger, and flatly declined to serve as a model for my pencil. I forget the manner in which I succeeded in overcoming this not unnatural moroseness; some slight kindness—a mere trifle it must have been, for it has escaped my memory, and I had little means of rendering him service—completely won the heart of the caged

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mountaineer. Indeed it is strange how paltry a boon, how trivial a mark of kindly feeling, will awake the gratitude of a prisoner. Brooding, as they do, in a stagnant world of their own, the least sign of sympathy from without is dearly prized by them,—precious pledge that, in despite of sin and punishment, they are men still, and within the pale of human pity. But it was singular that Pietro, unlike the comrades of his captivity, could not be brought to regard himself in the light of a criminal, nor to be ashamed of the deed he had committed. In vain the good old Curé of the prison chapel, he who had listened to so many frightful confessions and had found means to soften so many a reckless heart, exerted all his eloquence to convince Pietro that he was a great offender, and that bloodshedding was a mortal sin. The prejudices which the peasant had imbibed in infancy were too tenacious to be easily dislodged; Pietro willingly admitted that the act was blameworthy and unchristian, but with curious inconsistency he protested that he had been bound in honour to do as he had done; that he had but fairly avenged his brother's treacherous murder, and that he had killed the assassin, face to face, in open day, before a score of witnesses. To persuade Pietro that he was on a par with ordinary rogues and ruffians, who composed the mass of his fellow-captives, was impossible: he carried himself proudly: his strength and courage procured him respect among the felons; his sad story conciliated the pity of the authorities, and yet I could see, under all this show of defiant resolution, that the man's heart was breaking. He conversed with me freely enough when I had once succeeded in gaining his good will. Ignorant as he necessarily was, he showed no lack of good sense and lively fancy, and I could not but remark that all his sentiments were frank and noble. Indeed his character had nothing in it of a mean or base stamp; the other prisoners were always fawning around me in hopes of some small coin or trifling luxuries, their flattering buffoonery and abject humiliation showing how low they had fallen in the scale of humanity. But Pietro civilly and firmly refused, although permitting me to paint or sketch him in any attitude, a dozen times over, to accept money, tobacco, or any of those little treats which would have brightened the eyes of any galley-slave there. Now and then I brought him a bunch of flowers, once or twice some bough of a fragrant shrub from Fièsolè, or a tuft of wild thyme from the breezy hill-side. And these the poor fellow would clutch to his heart, and gaze fondly upon for an hour together, while his face lighted up and his nostrils expanded as if to drink in the pure mountain breeze that was suggested by these objects; and he would kiss the flowers, and the hand that gave them, and sob over them, till it was painful to watch him. But he never asked even for flowers. I came every day to the gaol to sketch some one of the admirable models it afforded, and never failed to have some talk with Pietro, whose dark eyes always assumed a more cheerful look when I approached him; but his spirits grew more depressed as time went on. He would break out sometimes into some passionate remark about the wild Apennine highlands he came from, some half-spoken longing for the free mountain-side, the unpolluted air, the sturdy independence of life, the chase, the village festival, and all the simple details of the existence he had forfeited. He rarely spoke of the maiden he loved—of her who was to have been his wife; and when he mentioned her it was with constraint, and painfully. I could read in his darkling glance that his worst fears were for her—his bitterest regrets for her. More than once he muttered that he was sorry his judges had been so lenient; the scaffold would have been truer mercy. And then he would toss back his shaggy hair, and begin to pace the court-yard with great strides, like an ensnared lion. I quite forgot, when conversing with Pietro, that my companion was a murderer. But indeed that is a harsh word, and the poor man's conscience did not echo it—a homicide he was, but he attached no more disgrace to the fact than many a high-bred gentleman has done to killing his opponent in a duel. I could not bear to see a fellow-creature, and one who had much that was good and bright in his disposition, pining to death in this way, like a chained eagle, and eating away his own heart from lack of hope. I tried therefore to amuse him, to draw his thoughts to other subjects, but I found myself baffled. He was grateful for my consideration, but, like most Italians, Italy was the world to him, and his native province the centre and cynosure of it. The local topics which would have interested him most were of course unknown to me: there were no wars of independence then—no upheaving of the soul and sinews of Italy against the hated stranger, and more hated tyrant: I had therefore no public news to relate to Pietro. No public news, save on one point, and of this he was never weary of hearing all I had to tell—the cholera. Curiously enough, Pietro, who was a brave man and not educated enough to have the faculty of imagination much developed, took a nervous interest in the progress of the pest, which was not curiosity, not fear, but a sort of monstrous fascination. He listened eagerly to every fresh account of the Destroyer. His eyes glittered, his chest heaved, as I told of the ravages of the fell disorder,—the idea of the all-pervading, subtle disease had touched his hitherto dormant powers of fancy, and awakened his liveliest interest. Meanwhile the cholera, though still rampant in France and Piedmont, seemed to have spent its fury in the Tuscan provinces: it began to grow feeble—to slacken its attacks—to spare the victims it seized, and to abate in every way. The journals were loud in their gratulations—sermons of thanksgiving were preached in the churches, and all the land was full of joy that the plague was stayed. Still the tide of death ebbed but slowly; the ominous bells still boomed, the chanting of Litanies still rang abroad, and still did I encounter the flower-wreathed biers, the dismal processions, the lighted candles, and the veiled viaticum, but more rarely than before. To do the government justice, it had tried all along, in a blundering old-fashioned style, to check and curb the pest; and now it ordered the state physicians to lose no time in trying, by every kind of experiment, to obtain a sure remedy for the disease, and to lay down rules which might be beacons of safety in future dangers of this kind. The doctors obeyed. I am

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now about to relate one of the most remarkable results of their obedience.

One morning I was sauntering with my drawing materials towards the prison, avoiding to the best of my power the hot white bars of sunshine that almost calcined the pavement on which they fell, whenever a break in the houses permitted, and keeping as much as possible in the cool dark shadow of the well-like streets, when I was overtaken by a group of gentlemen, whose sable garb and studious air seemed to mark them as belonging to the brotherhood of Galen. Your Italian *medico* is still what the British physician was a hundred years back—to use Hood's words, "black, polished, and healing." I was not mistaken. The central figure was that of Dr. Roberti. He saluted me with his customary kindness, and introduced me to his companions, who were, if I remember rightly, the Grand Duke's own physician, the physician of the French embassy, and an Austrian staff-surgeon. There was another doctor, too, the director of the largest hospital in Florence, a man of high repute.

"We are bound for the prison," said Dr. Roberti; "shall we all proceed together?"

We walked on, conversing about various matters, chiefly of the cholera, its happy abatement, and the precautions of the government against new outbreaks. The other physicians were loud in praise of Dr. Roberti, to whose vigilance they attributed the fact that not one case of cholera had occurred in the prisons.

"Not that you'll long be able to make the same statement," said the Frenchman, laughing, "that is, if our charitable efforts succeed to-day, *mon confrère.*"

Roberti looked annoyed at the other's levity. He lifted his shoulders with one of those shrugs by which foreigners say unspeakable things, and took snuff noisily.

"I must obey the minister," said he, "but I assure you, M. Ledoux, it is not an experiment to my taste. Signor," continued he, seeing my surprise, "we are going on a singular errand. During the prevalence of cholera in this unhappy country panic has caused so much mischief that it is the desire of our rulers to possess some more certain information both with respect to the capabilities of fear and of infection. You know the wisest of us are in the dark as to the actual cause of cholera; the old simple theory referring all epidemics to contact and contagion is being given up on all hands. What are we to take in its place? Shall we hold, as some do, the ingenious doctrine that a cloud of fungi or of insects, floating in the atmosphere, spread the disorder by fastening on the victims whose constitutional predisposition——"

"The zymotic theory," interrupted the Frenchman, "is the only hypothesis on which the familiar symptoms, so similar to those produced by acrid poisons, can be——"

"Grosse Teufel!" broke in the Austrian surgeon, "can any rational person doubt that miasma, and miasma alone, in too-much-by-men-crowded-and-from-fresh-air-excluded dwellings, is the origin of——"

"By your leave, gentlemen, we will waive this professional debate for the present," said Dr. Roberti, rather tartly, "and I will pursue the explanation I was giving to my young insular friend."

He then proceeded to inform me that the government, wishing to ascertain if there was any truth in the old theory of contagion, had empowered him to offer a free pardon to any convict who would consent to pass twenty-four hours in a hospital bed, the said bed being one in which a cholera patient had just died. It was an important condition of the experiment that the person selected should be strong, young, and in rude health.

This was a measure thoroughly savouring of the "paternal" mode of governing men. It startled me considerably, I admit; and I thought to myself of the outcry which such a proposition would have evoked in England. But I had little time for such reflections before we reached the prison. It was just before the noontide meal; no work was going on, and all the galley-slaves were in the courtyard, watching the warders and soldiers as they told off a strong draft of prisoners condemned to hard labour, and who, with irons linked together to prevent escape, were about to be marched off to the Bagnio of Leghorn. Pietro—the captain, as they called him—sat apart, as usual, beneath the shade of a pillar. He nodded and smiled good-humouredly to Roberti and myself, but I could see that he was in one of his gloomiest moods, and he even looked with a sort of envy on the chain of convicts about to set off for the arsenal. Any change seemed for the better in that monotonous life. Dr. Roberti got the turnkeys to proclaim silence, and then mounted on a block of stone, and prepared to address them. Twice he had to wave his hand to hush the Vivas! of his excitable audience; at last he got a hearing.

"My lads!" said he; "my little flock of black sheep, do be obliging enough to leave off huzzaing for your old *galantuomo* of a doctor, and hear what he has to tell you. You know how bad the cholera—the American death, as you choose to call it—has been outside, though, luckily, I've had none of you slipping through my fingers on that account. None of your cheering! Listen to me, I say. Our good Sovereign, the most illustrious Grand Duke, offers a free pardon to any man among you——"

Here the clamour grew deafening. It was long before the doctor's voice could be heard, so stunning were the shouts of "Viva il Medico!" "Viva il Gran Duca!" But, at last, Roberti resumed:

"A free pardon to any of you who will comply with my request. Don't halloo so much, you're not yet clear of the forest. It's useless to tell you the reasons, you would not understand them; but his Royal Highness wishes to see if cholera can really be caught; so if any one will risk life for freedom, let him pass twenty-four hours in a bed in which a patient has just died, and his pardon is made out. Who speaks?"

Not a soul. Never a man spoke—never a fetter clinked—the cheers were hushed, and a great stillness and awe fell on the crowd of desperadoes.

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None would face death, and death in such a form. In vain Roberti addressed them, now seriously, now in his old jocular strain. In vain the Frenchman plied them with epigrammatic eloquence, nor were the pompous phrases of the Palace doctor, nor the Teutonic oaths of the Austrian of any avail. The downcast eyes, the dejection, the shuddering, of the felons as they listened despondingly, told how utterly they were cowed.

"*Poltrons!*" hissed the Frenchman. "If such a choice were afforded at Toulon—*Crac!* the whole Bagne would offer."

"I give it up," said Roberti, at last; "nor can I have the heart to blame the poor rogues."

Suddenly a man stepped forward. It was Pietro. Proudly erect, with folded arms and a flushed face and glittering eye, the poor homicide looked actually noble as he towered above the common herd of villains.

"I volunteer!" said he.

Roberti took him by the hand. The Frenchman called him a bold fellow, and a fine stout *gaillard* to boot, well adapted for the experiment. A sort of groan was uttered by the prisoners.

"Think it over, Pietro," said Roberti, kindly. "Look before you leap, my lad!"

"I have but my *parola!*" answered the mountaineer, with native haughtiness.

It was then settled that, in four or five hours, a guard should escort Pietro from gaol to the cholera hospital, where his dreadful ordeal was to take place. The doctors left him, highly commending his courage, but I declined to accompany them. I preferred to stay with poor Pietro, whose determination distressed me greatly. There seemed to be something cruel and unnatural in the trial that was preparing, though in the interests of science—somewhat of the old cruel spirit that required the mutual slaughter of gladiators. All the convicts evidently regarded Pietro as a doomed man. They shrank away, whispering and muttering, in groups, and there was wonder and admiring compassion in the stealthy glances they threw at him. The hero of the scene was himself in higher spirits than I had ever seen him in. His eyes were bright, his colour high, and his mien that of a gallant soldier about to face some deed of desperate peril. He was the first to propose that in the time that remained he should give me a last sitting for the picture I was taking of him as Hercules at Omphale's feet. He talked cheerfully and quickly as my brush worked at the canvas. His talk was all about the future, of his home, his old mother and sisters, his *promessa*, Carlotta, and how glad they would be to see him again, and what a surprise his arrival would be to them in the lone village on the mountains. Much he spoke, too, of the delight of being free, away from chain and city—free in his native place, far off on Apennine. And yet I could see that he was agitated and ill at ease, well as he concealed his inward terrors. I repeat that he was brave—one of the boldest men I ever saw on this earth—and yet so powerfully had the tales of cholera wrought upon him, that a dire contest was going on between his instinctive courage and the half-superstitious horror of the deadly pest—the viewless destroyer. Poor Pietro! I feared the worst for him, and implored him to revoke his promise, but he was as firm as a rock. The hours went swiftly on. I was very much affected when, towards the end, several of the worst and most hardened scoundrels in the gaol came up, one by one, and very humbly begged Pietro's pardon for petty offences or ill-natured speeches. These men were sad rogues, but they had something human in their hearts, for all that. At last, the guard of soldiers arrived, and the Governor received the warrant, and formally gave up Pietro to the sergeant's custody. I rose to say farewell, as cheerily as I could, promising that I would visit the captive in hospital, and see him off the next day, when he should leave Florence, a pardoned man. He kissed my hands very gratefully, in the old Italian style, and thanked me for the kindness I had shown him. But I could see that a terrible struggle between his resolute will and his terrors was going on in his bold, simple heart; and I heard him mutter, as if they were talismanic phrases to encourage himself with, the words "*Carlotta!*" "*Liberta!*"

I took a calessa, and drove to the hospital, that I might have a glimpse of it before the prisoner arrived. I found the doctors waiting there. They showed me the bed, in a half-empty ward, a clean little white couch, which a sister of charity was still arranging. On it was pinned a ticket with the name of its late occupant.

"Has the other poor fellow been dead long?"

"Three-quarters of an hour," said the Frenchman, glibly.

I heard the clank of arms, the stride of the soldiers tramping up-stairs, with Pietro in their midst. I felt sick, angry, indignant; and, turning to the back staircase, I hastened from the building. It was then five in the afternoon. All night I tossed and tumbled feverishly. When I slept, my dreams were of poor Pietro, in every phase of agony, gasping out life upon that hideous couch. I rose early, and calmed my nerves by a walk under the dusty trees of the Cascine; then, after a breakfast, for which I had scanty appetite, hurried to the hospital. A great bustle prevailed. Voices were heard, and quick steps. I found the ward half filled with men in sable garb—doctors whom rumours of the case had drawn thither, and who were eagerly talking and disputing. I saw Roberti's lofty head over the crowd, and I elbowed my way to the bedside. Alas! my worst bodings were realised. There, on that bed—blue, collapsed, and agonising—lay the dying form that I had seen but yesterday full of life, hope, and vigour. The teeth were set, the lips drawn back, and the eyes were glazing fast, and great drops of heat stained the broad brow, and the tangled hair flowed wildly over the handsome face, disfigured out of all beauty now. A priest, who had just administered the last sacraments, was kneeling in prayer beside the bed, and holding up a crucifix before the eyes of the dying man. Roberti held his wrist, and felt his failing pulse. I bent over him. There was a faint gleam of recognition in the anguished eyes, a flickering smile on the wan lips, and I think he muttered some salutation, but it was inarticulate. The lamp of life was extinguished in a minute more. Roberti laid down the

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passive hand. The priest prayed on. The little French doctor crept up to me, and whispered in my ear:

"The strangest thing in this very satisfactory experiment is—there is no use in keeping the secret longer—that the bed was *not* an infected one."

"How?"

"No cholera patient had died in it at all, *parole d'honneur*, monsieur."

It was even so. Fear and agitation had done the cruel work, and summoned, as by a potent spell, the Destroying Angel to that chamber of death.

JOHN HARWOOD.

THE TWO NORSE KINGS.

A YORKSHIRE LEGEND.

Two galleys, each with crimson sail,
Plough fast the green bath of the whale.

A fierce king stands on either prow,
A gold band round his knotty brow.

A bronze axe and an ivory horn
Are by each wrath king proudly borne,

A torque of twisted gold one wore—
That brooch Jarls from the walrus tore.

The raven banner's blowing black,
Their red prows cast a flaming track.

Clashing the gold links on his chest,
Each bids his rowers do their best.

The Saxon land is fair and green—
Broad meadows with a stream between.

Both galleys, with an equal beak,
Touch at one bound the sandy peak.

Both Norse kings leap at once to land,
Like sunbeams spring forth either hand.

Gunthron kneels down to kiss the earth,
Bonthron laughs loud with cruel mirth.

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Then helm meets helm, and shield meets shield,
Red grows the sand, and red the field.

Gather, ye eagles, on the crag,
Swarm, ravens, on each chalky jag.

Notched splints of steel and shreds of gold
Are scattered on the Saxon mould.

Bright mail is cloven, flags are torn,
Dear are the shouts to Odin borne.

But all the fight, this narrow verse
May not, if it could, rehearse.

This I know, a burial mound
Rises o'er that battle-ground;

And to this day the Saxon boor
Calls it in legends "Bonthron's Moor."

WALTER THORNBURY.

THIEVES AND THIEVES' CHILDREN.

MR. EDITOR,

IT has been my evil fortune to have been the intimate associate of thieves. I now pen these lines in the belief that the knowledge I have acquired of the thief-world may be made useful, and in some way an atonement for my own delinquencies.

I am not about to offer you an exciting story of adventure and dissipation, but I intend merely to relate what I know of the condition of a certain class in London to which much attention has been directed of late, but not in a way calculated to benefit the persons composing it, or to relieve society from the pest. You will readily perceive I have not the pen of a ready writer, but I will endeavour to make myself understood briefly and plainly, in the hope that my views may command the attention and support of some one of more influence than I can ever hope to possess.

Those most valuable institutions, the Ragged Schools, have already done more towards ameliorating the wretchedness of the miserably poor, than all that has been attempted for fifty years preceding them, not only by their immediate teaching and influence, but, through the interest created for them in the public mind, further inquiry has been invoked and knowledge obtained as to the condition of heathen and outcast London which *must* eventually arouse the selfishness—if it does not awaken a better feeling—of society, and relieve future generations from degradation and misery similar to that which now lies hidden in the courts, and lanes, and alleys of the boasted metropolis of the world.

There is a little book which every person should read who desires to fulfil the commandment "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and to whose truth I can testify. It is called "The Missing Link," and is written by one whose active benevolence has led her to scenes of such want, sin, and wretchedness as few persons of gentle nurture believed to exist, unless a companionship in vice had made them acquainted with the actors in this terrible drama of life. Read that book, man, woman, and child! and learn what work there is to do before any of you can declare your duty done. You may hide away from your sight behind lofty churches and stately houses the filthy lodging-room, "where each of the four corners is occupied by a family, and as many as sixteen persons—men, women, and children, some drunken and quarrelsome—are crowded together;" where "the new-born, the fever-stricken, the dying and the dead are horribly intermingled;" and you may try to cover with your charitable subscriptions the moral festerings which contaminate thousands of immortal souls; but as sure as there is a Judgment, any further selfish neglect of these social outcasts will cry out against you. The means to aid them is plainly set before you in that little book—read! man, woman, and child! and then to work, nor do it negligently.

It is not for such as I am to complain of the shortcomings and mistaken views of those who have taken a deep interest in the condition of the London poor; but I read in the "Times" with great regret the opinion of Lord Shaftesbury (a man who has done very much for the miserable amongst us), that the proposed metropolitan railways would do great injustice to the very poor by destroying their dwelling-places and scattering them abroad to find other shelter. As one who has passed many a painful hour in those colonies of vice, debauchery, and suffering, I declare that nothing is to be more desired than the destruction of those places, as society dare not let those miserables perish by the wayside, nor will it let other dens be formed unless where the appliances already exist. The very poor pay exceedingly high for the wretched shelter they obtain, and the only persons really benefited by the continuance of the "rookeries" are the owners of the property and their exacting underlings.

It is not my purpose to direct attention to the condition of the poor of London: abler pens than mine have already been employed on the subject, others are still busy, and I am convinced now that the plague-spot has been exposed, the well-to-do will not dare to rest until it is removed from among them, and no longer be contented with the mere payment of poor's-rates, but demand that those who call themselves the guardians of the poor shall search out the wretchedness which is about them—not feel their duty done by distributing a dole of bread, or giving a night's shelter in the casual ward of a workhouse. How often is this scant charity denied, and the poor miserables left with no other chance than the Refuge. "There, long 'ere night has fallen, the wretched claimants for its shelter have begun to assemble, and watch the door with that steady earnestness which only belongs to those who have no hope beyond its charity. As the dusk deepens they slink in from streets and byeways; old men of sixty and seventy, young boys—ay, and even children, but all alike in misery—faint, wet, and weary. They sit upon the sloppy ground in silence, more impressive than the loudest complaints; or, if they speak at all, it is in whispers, for want and suffering have quelled their spirits, and they move with an abject deference, painful to see, from the paths of the very few who pass that way. Gradually more and more drop in, until the group is increased to one hundred or thereabouts, and then the silence gets broken at last with hacking coughs from tall meagre spectres

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apparently in the last stage of decline, down to mere children hoarse with inflammation of the lungs, or paining the ear with their close, suffocating whooping-cough. Here are trampers, brickmakers, and labourers, who have had no work since summer; some who have just come out of hospital, and are too feeble to labour; old men and little boys, street-sweepers and orphans, in every grade of misery and loneliness.

"These are some, and only some, of London's homeless poor,—the men and boys without a friend or place to lay their heads in all this vast metropolis—the Bedouins of England, who live no man cares how or where—who struggle through some years of bitter want, and may-be crime, till they creep into a hole to die, and after lying in the parish deadhouse a few days, with a placard on their breasts marked with the touching word 'Unknown,' are given to the surgeons, and there's an end."

It is difficult to divert the thoughts from these terrible scenes, or to stay the pen from transcribing them. Something must be done to lessen this tremendous degradation of God's creatures. No man must say "It is not my business to meddle with this physical and moral filthiness. I pay, and that's enough." It is not enough. Every social enjoyment is a wickedness, every indulgence in a luxury criminal on the part of those who, having the power to help (and who has not?), yet keep their hands from the work.

It is with the thieves of London that I have now to do, and I pray you, Mr. Editor, to bear with me to the end of this paper, however wild and unpractical my propositions may appear to be. I have thought over them again and again when surrounded by the wretched outcasts to whom they refer, and always with the same conviction as to the necessity for their adoption.

The thieves of London may be classed

I.

Those who have had the benefits of education and careful nurture, but, tempted into crime, have lost their position in society, and been driven to a course of dishonesty and knavery to save themselves from starvation, or to continue the gratification of passions and indulgences which they cannot master. Some who have thus fallen contrive to creep back again into the society of the reputable, and it is to be hoped the reproaches of their own consciences and the contumely of their fellows expiate in some degree the wrongs they have committed. Others are not so fortunate, and sink lower and lower in the Slough of Despond, until Death the merciful ends them. "Judge not that ye be not judged."

II.

There are certain persons not altogether thieves who will labour hard and fare badly and endure great privations before they will risk the chance of detection as thieves, but, who having no moral restraint, yield at last before the demands of hunger and other forms of want. Of this class are the perpetrators of petty thefts, the young people that indulge in pleasures which, though low and sensual, are too costly to be purchased by honest labour. With such as these the Reformatory, and sometimes the Prison, often works a change, and could employment be readily found for them when their probation is at an end, they might become useful members of the community. Without work they must cheat and steal again.

On one or the other of these two classes are supplemented those of both sexes who have been made professional thieves from loss of character, or a liking for evil courses.

III.

There are also the BORN THIEVES of London—men and women and children who are the descendants of generations of thieves, and who have never known any other teaching than this: That to take whatever could be obtained was the chief good, and that the greatest wrong was to incur detection. There is no hesitation whatever in these beliefs. They have animal wants to satisfy, and they will gratify them, utterly insensible of any wrong committed. They know that if detected the policeman will take them into custody, and then they will be sent to prison, as all those around them have been or will be. They know from what they have been told by their "pals" and kindred that they will be cleansed, fed, and housed, and have to attend chapel, and hear about things which they cannot understand. They know that when they come out they will be received by their old comrades with a riotous and drunken welcome, and feel they have acquired consequence among their fellows from the experience they have gained.

They also know, that they will have to bear the punishment of discipline and good order, and abstinence from their habitual indulgences. Hard fare! Hard lodging! Hard words! Cruel stripes are nothing to them. They have known those from the hour they were born, but control irritates their wild natures, and produces enormous suffering. The dread of detection, therefore, is the Nemesis of their existence; they know that every man's hand is against them, and they are ready at all times to raise theirs against every man. They have no sense of their degradation, or they could not live. On the contrary they have infamous honours among themselves, and covet and strive for those distinctions. They have their pleasures, too disgusting and degrading to describe, and none, unless they had been eye-witnesses of the fact, would believe that the shivering, whining wretches who shock you in the streets in a few hours may be found in some London den, roaring and singing at their devilish orgies.

Not that I would have it supposed that the lives of those outcasts are largely made up of sensual enjoyment. No—the frequent misery of their existence would be unbearable had they any sense of shame or any desire for a better life, but they are so utterly deficient in all that makes MAN, so completely heathenish though in a Christian land, that their care of themselves is mere instinct, and they enjoy or endure as the beasts which perish.

What is to be done with these Pariahs numbering by thousands?

The prison teaches them nothing except cunning, punishment does not shame them into better lives, for their fellows honour them for having "been in

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trouble," and none will give them work for the same reason. They have the same wants to satisfy, and they return to their old means of gratification. Then comes detection, more prison, more punishment, and no abatement of the evil, for their wretched offspring, left destitute and uninformed, soon learn to prey for themselves (the precocity in vice of these outcasts is terribly startling), and grow up and propagate their like. Setting aside all higher considerations, think of the enormous cost of maintaining this terrible tribe amongst us! Spend as you will, strive as you will, you cannot reform or even mitigate the evil. There is nothing left for such outcast wretched creatures but theft, violence, and disorder! They have been neglected too long. They are cancers which cannot be cured by any of the agencies now employed by the State at such a vast expenditure of money.

"I am not sure," says McLevy, the celebrated Edinburgh detective, "but that the old notion that punishment tends to reformation hangs yet about many minds. For God's sake let us get quit of that. I have had through my hands so many convicted persons, that the moment I have known they were loose I have watched them almost instinctively for a new offence. The simple truth is, that punishment hardens. It is forgotten by the hopeful people that it is clay they have to work upon, not gold, and therefore, while they are passing the material through the fire, they are making bricks, not golden crowns of righteousness. Enough, too, has been made of the evident enough fact that they must continue their old courses because there is no asylum for them. You may build as many asylums as you please, but the law of these strange nurslings of society's own maternity cannot be changed in this way. I say nothing of God's grace,—that is above my comprehension,—but, except for that, we need entertain no hope of the repentance and amendment of regular thieves and robbers. They have perhaps their use. They can be made examples of to others, but seldom or ever good examples to themselves."

What then is to be done with these outcasts? I answer exterminate them—exterminate them through their children. I have thought this for years, but feared to put forward so startling a notion, but the following passage from the "Curiosities of Crime in Edinburgh," has given me courage to write to you.

"That they will always exist is, I fear, fated; but modern experience tells us they may be diminished by simply drawing them, *when very young*, *within the circle of civilisation*, in place of the old way of keeping them out of it."

Now how to proceed "to bring the *very young* within the circle of civilisation?"

The Ragged School? The Reformatory?—Excellent as are those means for great good they would not meet the difficulty.

The children would be exposed constantly to the temptations of their old associates, and so lost are the people of whom we are speaking, that parents would be certain to drag their children down to their own level if they could gain the least advantage by the sacrifice of their honesty. My remedy is a bold one. COMPULSORY JUVENILE EMIGRATION. I would compel the state to care for its wild-men. It should be made known by parish-aids what nurture the little creatures who swarm in our "rookeries" and "slums" were receiving, and where they were found to be training only for future thieves—where they were known to be the children of born thieves who had been convicted of thefts, the state should provide them homes in our colonies, where educated to the wants, and acclimatised, as it were, to their new country, they would become valuable members of the community, without the chance of after-contamination from those whom it is as well that they remember no more.

I have no doubt there are difficulties in the way of making this scheme practical. No good end was ever attained without striving. The charge would be very great, but remember, you are dealing with certain thieves *in futuro*, who will cost you thrice the sum for their punishment (to say nothing of the amount of their pilferings) as would be required for their emigration and after-education.

I have done. I have discharged myself of what I have long felt to be a duty. I have cast my morsel of bread upon the waters—may I find it after many days! BARABBAS.

OUR BIRDS OF SPRING.

THE arrival of our summer birds of passage is somewhat late this spring; but, as they are here at last, let us take a walk in yonder green meadow, with its sparkling stream meandering through it, and listen to the sweet warbling of the willow-wren in those osiers, and the white-throat in the adjoining brake. Then hear the nightingale in the hawthorn-hedge, "breathing its sweet loud music,"—an artless songster that rivets the attention and delights the senses of every lover of the country. But, amongst the birds of passage, we should not omit the cuckoo, whose monotonous notes proclaim that he is the harbinger of spring. He is heard with pleasure by every rustic, while his constant companion, the wry-neck, also tells us that he too has arrived to gladden us with its piping voice. See also the swallows skimming over the meadow, and sometimes dipping in the brook, showing their joyous hilarity after a long flight over distant oceans. They have just come amongst us, and what pleasing guests they are! Some seem fatigued, and cluster on the top-most dead branch of yonder venerable elm. The land-rail or corn-crake is another of our birds of passage, which arrive in the month of April. The male bird may be heard making a singular noise like a comb when the finger is drawn along the teeth. Still it is one of the most pleasing of our pleasant rural sounds.

But let us turn from migratory birds to our own resident songsters. You may hear the lark, though probably you are unable to see it, pouring forth its joyous notes high up in the heavens:—

He cheerly sings,
And trusts with conscious pride his daring wings,
Still louder breathes and in the face of day
Mounts up.

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What a variety of notes may be heard from her "little instrumental throat,"—what sweet music! It forms one of the greatest pleasures of a rural walk. But see, it ceases. Watch, and you will perceive its descent—not a gradual one, but it drops to the ground like a stone, to greet its partner who is patiently sitting on her eggs in some tuft of grass. What a pity it is that these charming songsters should be wantonly destroyed to pamper the appetites of the rich and luxurious!

But now listen to the songs of that blackbird and thrush, the former chanting its peculiar notes in the small grove adjoining the flowery meadow, and the latter on the top of that large spreading oak tree. Different as their voices are, they harmonise delightfully when heard together, and add to the concert of the hour. As good Isaac Walton said of them, "their melodious voices bid welcome to the cheerful spring, and in their fixed mouths warble forth such ditties as no art or instrument can reach to."

But, amongst our sylvan warblers, the blackcap ought to stand prominent, as some people have preferred it to the nightingale. They have been supposed to be migratory, although they have been seen amongst us in the winter. They are real mocking-birds, imitating the notes of some other birds. That amiable and enlightened naturalist, Gilbert White, gives them a high character for their full, sweet, deep, loud and wild pipe. He adds that when they sit calmly, and engaged in song in earnest, they express a great variety of soft and gentle modulations, and that their wild sweetness always brought to his mind the song of *Amiens*, in "As You Like It":—

> Under the greenwood tree,
> Who loves to lie with me,
> And tune his merry note
> Unto the sweet bird's throat,
> Come hither.

But let us not forget the woodlark in the general chorus at this time of the year. Although it cannot vie with the skylark in variety of notes, it probably surpasses it in its rich and melodious song. It generally mounts a little way in the air, and makes a graceful circle, and then settles on some branch, pouring forth its music all the time:—

> Poised upon its wings,
> Unseen the soft, enamoured woodlark sings.

The chaffinch is one of our most common English birds, and the male a pretty one withal. Much cannot be said of its song, but it always forms a pleasing variety in Nature's chorus, and it may be heard in almost every bush. Its nest is beautiful, and has been called a masterpiece of art. When it is built in the fork of an apple-tree, the mosses on the tree are so closely imitated on the outside of the nest, that it is difficult to discover it. The love-notes of the chaffinch may be heard very early in the spring. These birds congregate, and, in winter, vast flocks of them appear in the fields.

But let us approach those cows which are quietly cropping the luxurious spring-grass. See the wagtails hopping fearlessly about them, and picking up the flies which the cows whisk off with their tails; so careful is Nature that nothing should be lost.

Amongst the pleasing sounds which are heard in the spring, those made by rooks should not be forgotten. They are

> The sable tenants of five hundred years,
> That on the high tops of yon aged elms,
> Pour their harsh music on the lonely ear.

How busy are they in the spring, repairing and making their nests, clamorous all the time, as if they held some sort of conversation with each other. Their evening flights, as they return from their pasture-grounds, is a sight which every lover of Nature must delight to witness. Now and then the discordant note of a pert jackdaw may be heard amongst them, like a vulgar intruder into good company, as they settle on their roosting trees. They are affectionate birds, and show the greatest distress if one of their companions is killed or wounded.

Such are some of the rural sights and songs which may be heard in the spring. All nature then teems with life and hilarity. The very insects seem to participate in it, while the flowers help to adorn the scenery. How joyously the bees hum, as they extract their sweets. Well may it be said:—

> This isle is full of pleasant noises;
> Sounds and sweet airs that give delights.

and let us hope that this sketch from nature will not be found a displeasing one.

EDWARD JESSE.

SHANKLIN.

> "No, this is not the land of Love,
> Although its waters are so fair;
> Although the soft untroubled air
> Is fill'd with moonlight from above.
>
> "Sweet are the pale green tufts of Spring
> Among the laurels and the firs;
> And sweet the quiet breath that stirs
> No feather on the linnet's wing:
>
> "But though so shelter'd is her nest,
> And though the woods wherein she dwells
> Lie warm within as lovely dells
> As ever open'd to the west;
>
> "Yet do I loathe this fragrant shore,
> I weary of this still blue sea:
> They do not bring my quest to me—
> A love that loveth evermore."
>
> "Ah, sister, what a word is yours!
> And can you slight this land of God,
> Wherein so many paths we've trod,
> And every one was thick with flowers?
>
> "Come by the hazel-hooded way
> That leads to sunshine on the cliffs,
> And see once more the sailing-skiffs
> That dart and glimmer on the bay;
>
> "And if you say it is not fair,
> That land on which we two look down,
> The fault, believe me, is your own,—
> You cannot see the love that's there.
>
> "For we are like the wayward moon,
> That gives a beauty all her own
> To cluster'd trees and sculptured stone,
> And crisped wave and calm lagoon:

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"There comes a cloud, and all is gone,—
There comes a sorrow o'er our hearts,
And all the grace of life departs,
And night and we are left alone."

ARTHUR J. MUNBY.

THE ROADSIDE INN.

WE have often felt some surprise that amongst the innumerable Reminiscences and Diaries constantly appearing in print, no member of that large class, the holders of country inns, has ever noted down some of the scenes and characters which constantly pass before them. It is true that the "jolly host" and "buxom hostess," so often and inimitably portrayed, have passed away with the stage-coaches, waggons, and large profits of innkeeping; their roomy and substantial dwellings now present a forlorn aspect, and in many cases are divided into two or more tenements,—a slice of the house sufficing to carry on the remnant of roadside traffic, while their own places are filled by a sharper and needier race, who are often compelled to eke out a living by adding a grocery store, or some other trade, to the once bustling and money-getting business. The country tradesman, too, has little to spare now-a-days; the farm labourer, in effect, nothing—a night's indulgence at the "Crown" or the "George" sorely pinching his little ones through the remainder of the week.

Yet there still come the wanderers of this world, a larger body than many who may read this by their cosy fireside can well imagine. There, the mechanic in search of work stays his weary feet to rest for a night, and seek such information as may assist in guiding his steps on the morrow. Nor does he always come alone. At the close of one bleak autumn day, a footsore couple, man and wife, turned into a lonely house on the borders of a common, to seek shelter and help for their little one, a boy, some three or four years of age, dying from the effects of a chest complaint, aggravated by want and exposure. Their sad tale was quickly and truthfully told. The husband had been suddenly deprived of his employment at a large building, by some dispute between contractor and owner, and after vainly waiting its arrangement, until all his little possessions had melted away in satisfying daily needs, was on his route to the neighbourhood of London, where report said there was a chance of "getting a job."

The already ailing child had for three days been carried by both alternately; and who may describe the misery of the last few miles, when he became rapidly worse, and they tramped along the lonely road with stiffened limbs and aching hearts, the moans of the sufferer vainly urging them to greater exertions?

At last, the low, uninviting-looking hostelry was reached, and here at least there was warmth and sympathy. The rough men round the tap-room fire pushed and jostled each other away, to make room for the shivering mother and her helpless burden, and one, without asking, ran off for the parish doctor, but it was too late; a faint gasp proclaimed Death's victory, and hands coarsened with toil, but tender in their touch, lifted the tiny corpse from the lap of the fainting woman, and reverently closed the glassy eyes.

With the two sorrowful mourners following, the dead boy had a pauper funeral in the village churchyard. His mother, sinking on her knees beside the grave, did not even look up when the venerable clergyman who had read the service lingered beside her to speak a word of consolation, and slip a trifle into her hand. The sexton finished his work, and went; the idlers grew weary of watching them; yet there she knelt, her more collected husband sitting on the turf beside her, shivering in the keen blasts of the north wind, which howled around them. When he attempted to rouse her with a touch, and an entreating, "Come, come, wench, we maun go," she threw herself into his arms, with a wild cry, "I shall never, never see it any more, Ned! My poor baby's grave!"

She suffered him to lead her away; and together they slowly passed through the lych gate. One last look, and they had gone, perhaps, as the mother had predicted, never again to visit the spot where they left their little one to his quiet rest.

To the village inn, to seek a lodging, sometimes comes the more fortunate London workman, sent to execute a country order. He draws his evening's amusement from quizzing the regular frequenters of the smoky parlour, while they look shy at the stranger, who shrugs his shoulders somewhat contemptuously on learning that not one of his auditors has seen Madame Celeste, or visited St. James's Hall, and openly wonders how they contrive to get through the long winter nights.

There, too, at regular intervals, come the travelling linendrapers and stationers, who have taken the places of the ancient packmen or pedlars. The travelling stationer generally bears tokens of having known better days, and is often a man of some information. The vendor of robes and shawls is in most cases a sturdy young Irishman, well gifted with those powers of wheedling and coaxing, which seem irresistible with the fair sex, when dress or fashion is the object. Amid all their generous offers to *troost you*—never made unless it can be done safely—and assurances "that it's robbing themselves they are, to please you," they have a 'cute eye to business; and the regularity of their calls, their comfortable appearance, and the little indulgences they permit themselves, are evidences that the trade, although involving long walks under a load often excessively heavy, is not altogether an unprofitable one.

There, though not so frequently, comes the dapper Jewish-looking seller of cheap trinkets, scents, and all other requisites for a lady's toilet. He is always a welcome visitor in the servants' hall at the Squire's; nor are the young ladies averse to making occasional purchases from his tastily arranged assortment.

It is there, too, that the man milliner baits his pony, and, on the slightest encouragement, brings in the tall square cases made to fit his light cart, and, sure of tempting the mistress with a smart head-dress or a flower for her bonnet, lifts out

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tray after tray of the gay goods which delight feminine eyes. One of these men may be known to some of our readers, his regular rounds extending so widely that his good-humoured face and invariable crimson velvet waistcoat seldom appear in the same place more than twice in the course of the year.

And there meet and rest the hawkers of those innumerable odds and ends less easily procured in country places than by the inhabitants of towns, whose search after domestic requisites seldom extends beyond the next street. The hawker, however, only is constant to his calling in the winter months, varying it with haymaking, pea-podding, harvesting, or "fagging," as it is termed in Surrey; and in the autumn taking his whole family on an excursion to the hop-grounds of Farnham, or of Kent. After this, he settles down to his regular avocations, frequently pitching his tent in an unused gravel-pit, or sheltered nook, where he manufactures the clothes-pegs, baskets, and wooden ware, which his wife takes to the adjacent villages to dispose of.

Amidst all the vicissitudes and hardships of their wild life, the wives of the hawkers generally retain remarkable prettiness, and, toiling as they do from door to door, their basket on one arm, and too often a heavy baby slung on the other side, they carry cheerful looks and unmistakeable patience; seldom returning a saucy answer to the frequent refusal, and rewarding with a hearty blessing the more compassionate buyer. That in many cases exorbitant prices are demanded for their wares we well know; but how much of this may be attributed to the love of *cheap bargains* which seems to have taken possession of us? We have been assured by those among them whose veracity we had little reason to doubt, that they are almost invariably *bated down*, even when selling so close to shops where the same description of article was marked at the same price, that the purchaser must have been well aware nothing more than a reasonable profit was expected.

Besides these dwellers by the wayside, the country inn often receives the cadger or tramp, who offers a few matches, or begs for his food, relying upon a ticket from the Relieving Officer for a bed. How these wretched creatures, evincing as they do the usual antipathy to the Union, exist in inclement weather, is a mystery we fear to penetrate. Not many weeks since, an aged woman of that class, recognised as an occasional visitor to our neighbourhood, was seen slowly and painfully making her way from the nearest market town to a village at some distance. About half a mile from her destination her strength failed, and she sank upon a heap of stones; from thence, some labourers, returning from their day's work, conveyed her to the nearest public-house, where she expired in the course of a few hours.

With some difficulty it was learned that, a native of Glasgow, she had left that city when a girl of eleven, roaming England from that early period until her peregrinations thus abruptly ended at the advanced age of seventy-nine.

Never married, and, as far as could be ascertained, without friend or relation, this feeble creature had been a wanderer on the earth for sixty-eight years! What an incomprehensible life to the many who prize home and kinship as the necessaries of the loving heart! Yet at the present moment we know many who since childhood have never experienced the comforts and joys summed up in those words.

Deprived of them by distance or death, the roadside inn is their poor substitute. Its tap-room receives them after sunset, and they share with a mate one of the four or five stump-bedsteads in the room above, fortunate if the landlady is sufficiently good-natured to cook them some food once or twice in the course of the week; and knowing no other refuge in illness or old age, but the unwillingly doled-out parish pittance.

Have we given our readers sufficient examples to prove that they may find both profit and amusement in reviewing the motley comers and goers at the Roadside Inn? LOUISA CROW.

A VISIT TO TINTAGEL.

> After tempest, when the long wave broke
> All down the thundering shores of Bude and Boss,
> There came a day as still as heaven, and then
> They found a naked child upon the sands
> Of wild Dundagil by the Cornish Sea;
> And that was Arthur!—IDYLLS OF THE KING.

IT was on a cloudless day in summer that we left the grand and wild, but less romantic, cliffs of Bude, to spend a few hours at Tintagel, the reputed birthplace of (to quote from Caxton,) "the most renouned crysten kyng . . . Kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge us Englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges."

The road was most picturesque, giving us occasional glimpses of the deep blue sea on our right hand, and a wide expanse of Cornish scenery on our left, with many a church tower in sight, round which a village clustered, and in the far distance the craggy peaks of Rowtor and Brownwilly, two of Cornwall's finest mountains. Lizards were sunning themselves on every mossy bank, the hedges were full of wild flowers, and the Osmunda regalis grew tall and luxuriant in the sedgy ditches by the road side.

The apparently interminable descent into the town of Boscastle gave us the sensation of driving into an abyss. The grandeur of the scenery is indescribable. From the little bridge at the bottom of the town, we gazed upward awe-struck at the craggy hills that enclosed us on every side. A Lilliputian at the bottom of a Tyrolese peasant's inverted hat might be supposed to look upward with much the same feelings as we were then experiencing. The dark grey rock burst here and there through its turfy mantle, and the houses of the town of Boscastle, built one above another up a precipitous hill, gave the idea that if the top-most house received a push the whole village would fall over like a pack of cards.

As some of our party were unequal to the walk of three miles that lay between Boscastle and Tintagel, and our own mules were too tired to proceed further, we made inquiries about a conveyance, and being unable to meet with one at

the Wellington Arms, we proceeded to *climb* the village street, on the strength of a report that a mule-trap could be obtained at the top of the town. We little knew what we were attempting when we set out, or the most delicate among us would have preferred the three-mile walk to Tintagel, over headland and down, to the fatiguing ascent of the village, and the subsequent drive that was in store for them. We had no need to be told that we were "rambling beyond railways." The old-world, but not less interesting, appearance of the town, and the pursuit under difficulties of this fabulous mule-trap, of which some whom we questioned had heard, and others had not, bore testimony to the fact, which was further demonstrated by our discovering the identical "trap" drawn up in front of the last house in the village.

Let not the reader suppose that a Boscastle mule-trap is one of those dainty, morocco-cushioned equipages, driven by a smart youth in a jaunty cap, which they may have seen at fashionable watering-places during the summer months. What the Wellington Arms may be able to produce, I am unable to say, their conveyances having been pre-engaged, but the mule-trap we at length secured was neither more nor less than a tax-cart without springs, drawn by a bony animal of the size of a small horse, with a head ornamented with a gigantic pair of donkey's ears. A good-natured woman, with a loud voice and broad Cornish accent, consented to drive three of the party from "Boskittle" to Tintagel, and three ladies were assisted into the cart; two seated on the bare wooden board that constituted the front seat, and one perched behind on a high stool, placed for the occasion, which performed pleasing little peregrinations as the vehicle jolted forward. We only waited to see the driver mounted on her own seat, which consisted of the wooden ridge that formed the front of the cart, with a moderate allowance of the lap of the lady immediately behind her; and when she had, by dint of sawing away at the reins with her whole strength, and noisily belabouring the bony back of the poor mule with a large stick, succeeded in making him crawl forward in a zig-zag direction, we retraced our own steps down the precipice, bestowing many a sympathising thought upon those of our party who were jolting along the high road at a snail's pace, and whose comical faces of woeful despair, as they cast a departing look at us, still lingered in our imaginations.

From Boscastle we walked first to the harbour, which is half a mile from the town. It is a curious and romantic little inlet, winding between high rocks, and not a stone's throw in breadth. The sea is in constant agitation, so that the cove itself offers no protection to ships; but at its extremity there is a space large enough to hold two or three vessels at a time, and this is guarded by a small pier. The water, owing very likely to the proximity of high dark rocks, is black and dreary-looking, and one could fancy many deaths less fearful than that of being drowned in the gloomy waters of Boscastle harbour. We sat for some time on a seat at the foot of the headland of Willapark, and watched the curious and somewhat rare phenomenon of the blowing-hole, which is caused by the water being drawn up into a fissure in a rock outside the harbour, and ejected again with a volley of spray resembling a jet of steam. A passer-by made our blood run cold with the information, that, some years before, a young lady bathing in the harbour was sucked into the blowing-hole, and never afterwards heard of. He informed us also that at low tide, when the sea happens to be unusually agitated, a column of water is violently projected across the harbour, by reason of a passage underground, communicating with the open sea, which causes a loud report. There is something melancholy and depressing in this iron-bound coast, where even an ordinary fishing-boat cannot be launched with any feeling of security, and where stories of terror abound, from the awful tales of the Cornish wreckers, raising false lights in this immediate neighbourhood, to lure vessels to destruction, down to innumerable cases of death by drowning, either from the bathers having been sucked out by the irresistible sand-wave, or drawn off by one of the many strong currents that invest these shores.

On leaving the harbour we came within sight of the "silent tower of Bottreaux," to which is attached one of the most poetical of the many wild Cornish legends. It is said that a jealousy existed between Bottreaux and Tintagel, on account of the beautiful peal of bells belonging to the latter church, while the former possessed none; and on summer evenings the musical chime of Tintagel bells would be wafted up the coast, to meet with no answering response from the sister-tower.

The inhabitants raised a sum of money to purchase a peal of bells for their church, and after long and anxious waiting, the day at length arrived when a vessel hove in sight containing the longed-for and precious freight. As the vessel drew near shore the sweet peal of the Tintagel chimes came over the water. The pilot, who was a Tintagel man, uncovered his head with feelings of rapture and thankfulness. "Thank God!" he exclaimed, "that I hear those bells once more! With His blessing we shall set foot on shore this evening."

"Thank God upon land, you fool!" exclaimed the captain, in brutal tones; "on sea thank the seaman's skill, the good ship, and the prosperous wind."

No sooner were the scoffing words uttered than the wind began to blow high, the fearful waves of that terrible coast grew stronger and fiercer; the captain's cheek grew pale, and the noble ship, with its stalwart crew, sank, never to be seen more, one man alone being rescued from a watery grave—the pilot who had given "God the glory."

So Bottreaux lost her peal within sight of her own grey and lichened walls, and according to the "Echoes from Old Cornwall":—

> Still when the storm of Bottreaux' waves
> Is raging in his weedy caves,
> Those bells, that sullen surges hide,
> Peal their deep tones beneath the tide!
> "Come to thy God in time!"
> Thus saith the ocean-chime;—
> "Storm, billow, whirlwind past,
> "Come to thy God at last."

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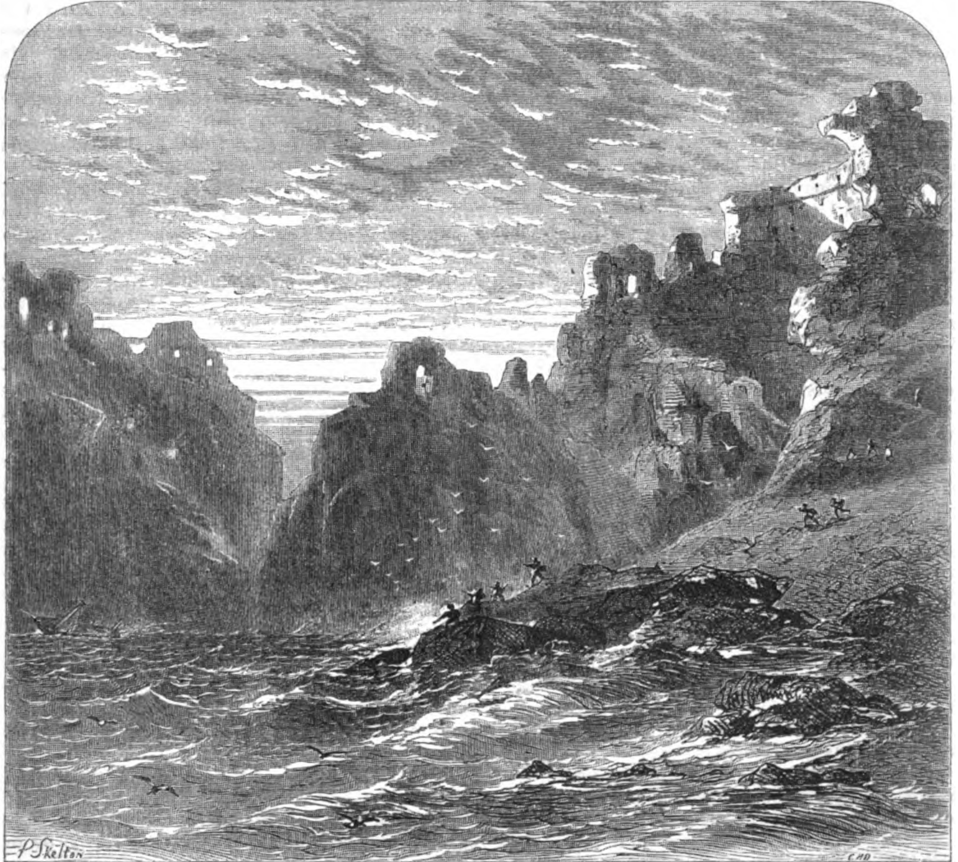
In the deep caverns which undermine this coast, numbers of seals are taken during the summer by the Boscastle fishermen. A little further on we reached the headland of Willapark, and gazed into the dreary chasm known by the name of "The Black Pit," in which the rock is so dark as to be easily mistaken for coal. We were informed by our guide that we were at that moment standing upon a spot interesting to geologists, where two great formations meet—the carbonaceous and grauwacke groups — which are respectively characteristic of Devonshire and Cornwall. Immediately to our west we observed a slate-quarry, named Grower, worked in the face of the grauwacke cliff. Our guide again informed us that the *guide-chains* by which the stone was raised, were fastened to the bottom of the sea, an almost incredible fact on such a wild and impracticable shore.

Proceeding onwards we presently descended into a picturesque valley, at the bottom of which flowed a clear stream. Had we had time to follow its windings upwards, through bush and brake, we heard that we should have found ourselves in a romantic spot called "St. Knighton's Keeve," where a waterfall dashes from a considerable height into a natural basin or *keeve* below. This place, like all others, has its legend; namely,



that two forlorn maidens took refuge here, and lived for a considerable time in such strict retirement that even the curiosity of their neighbours failed to discover their names. Their only means of subsistence was said to be snails, which are unusually plentiful; and in this lonely spot it was their tragic fate "to live forgotten and die forlorn."

The picturesque water-mills in this little valley, named "Trevillet," had been already made familiar to us by the pencil of Creswick, who called his picture "The Valley Mill." Once more mounting the cliffs, we caught sight of the hamlet of Bossiney, which, consisting, as it does, of a few mean cottages, yet boasts of having sent to Parliament such Members as Sir Francis Drake and Sir Francis Cottington.

This village is a hamlet in the parish of Tintagel, and first sent Members to Parliament in the reign of Edward the Sixth, and was disfranchised by the Reform Bill. The borough never had a charter of incorporation, but had a titular mayor, who never officiated in any other capacity than as the returning officer at elections.

A select number of freeholders of Tintagel, who assumed the name of burgesses, claimed the right of electing two Members of Parliament. Oldfield (in his "Representative History of Great Britain

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and Ireland") styles them a self-created corporation; and prints the names of nine persons (eight of whom were of one family), forming, when he published his work (in 1816), "the whole constituent body of the borough of Bossinney, alias Tintagel!" The same magical number of electors appears to have constituted the corporation some thirty years before, when eight of them were disqualified from voting (by Mr. Crew's Bill), by reason of their being revenue officers belonging to the custom-house at Padstow: and thus it was left to *one solitary individual*—Arthur Wade—to exercise the important function of choosing two Members of Parliament! The patrons of the borough were the Earl of Mount Edgecombe and J. A. Stuart-Wortley, Esq. Oldfield quaintly remarks that it is rather difficult to point out how the little body of nine self-appointed electors was acted upon by the patrons or their nominees; but as "eight of them belonged to one family, it may be easily conceived how they kept the secret."

The precept for the election used to be published by the mayor from the summit of a green tumulus, or barrow, opposite the Wortley Arms; and many a joke is still afloat in the neighbourhood, connected with the jovial festivities which attended the elections. On one occasion the returning officer was no man of letters, and proceeded to give the accustomed notice from memory, aided by the prompting of some more learned clerk, who stood at his worship's elbow. It was humbly suggested by a by-stander that the precept was held upside down, upon which the mayor turned towards him with a look of withering scorn:

"And pray, sir, may not the Mayor of Bossiney read it upside down if he chooses?"

On the summit of a towering precipice, which starts out in bold sublimity amidst the waters of this northern coast, stand the venerable ruins of Tintagel Castle, "the rude remains of high antiquity." The history of this fortress, like that of other Cornish castles, is wrapt in impenetrable obscurity; and the nature of its masonry appears to be the only principle from which we are to trace its origin.

Dr. Borlase is of opinion that the ancient Britons had here a place of defence before the invasion of the Romans. But the present remains are now pretty clearly ascertained to be of Roman workmanship.

Norden, who surveyed these buildings when in a less ruinous state, observes that "it was sometime a statelye, impregnable seate, now rent and ragged by force of time and tempestes; her ruins testify her pristine worth, the view whereof, and due observation of her situation, shape, and condition in all partes, may move commiseration that such a statelye pile should perishe for want of honourable presence. Nature hath fortified, and art dyd once beautifie it, in such sort as it leaveth unto this age wonder and imitation; for the mortar and cement, wherewith the stones of this castle were layde, excelleth in fastness and obduritye the stones themselves; and neither time nor force of handes can easelye sever the one from the other."

The whole of these buildings were formed of slate, and the cement consisted principally of hot lime. They occupied a considerable space partly on the mainland and partly on what is called the island—the sea having worn away a cavern quite across the promontory. Above this passage, on the eastern side, is a considerable gap, supposed to have been purposely cut for the security of the inhabitants in time of danger, and over it was formerly thrown a drawbridge which was destroyed previous to Leland's survey, in the reign of Henry VIII., and its place supplied with elm-trees. The only passage now to the island is by a narrow path over dangerous cliffs on the western side, where the least slip of the foot would send the passenger at once into the sea. At the end of this path we entered the island through a wicket-gate, the arch of which is still to be seen. We climbed the rude and dizzy staircase that had been cut in the rock, and presently found ourselves standing on the very rock where once had stood "the spotless King," and his fair but faithless Guinevere.

The cool Atlantic breeze was exquisitely grateful and refreshing after our mid-day walk, and the boundless expanse of deep blue sea, the picturesque line of coast, with the pleasant break of waves upon the shore, and the soothing ripple of the receding water, allured us into a long rest upon the short, dry turf that crowns the summit of the headland. At the water's edge, on either side, the sea was of the most brilliant emerald-green tint we ever remembered to have observed, and of such pellucid clearness that every stone and weed were visible for a considerable distance.

On the right of the wicket-gate by which we entered we were shown two rooms, of a good height, one above the other, and the chimneys of each are visible. We presumed them to have been occupied by the guard or porter. The buildings within the area seem to have been numerous, and walls are to be traced in every direction to the very edge of the cliff. On the highest part, towards the north, are the remains of a building, 56 by 58 feet, with an entrance to the south-west. A little further to the south we were shown the remains of the chapel, said to have been dedicated to St. Uliane, measuring 54 feet long by 12 feet wide.

One who visited this ruin many years ago writes as follows:

"At the N.W. corner of the island—which is the most exposed—are the remains of a small building, eight feet square, with two openings to the right of the entrance, which had once been apparently windows. The walls are about six feet high. In the centre of the room is a sculptured moor-stone, four feet four inches by two and a half, the top covered with letters or characters no longer legible. It was undoubtedly a sepulchral monument, and thought by some to mark the tomb of John Northampton, Lord Mayor of London, who, for abuse of his office, was committed to this castle a prisoner for life, by order of King Richard II. Perhaps in this melancholy cell the unhappy captive lingered out his days, to rest at last beneath a monument of his own carving."

It appears not improbable that the slab now

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shown as part of the altar of the chapel may have been the very one here referred to.

"There is an excellent spring of water on the northern side, and about twenty fathoms thence is a subterraneous cavern or passage, cut through the solid rock, for the space of twenty feet, but now so choked with earth that it is no longer penetrable. Some have described it as the Hermit's Grave, but it was most likely the unsuccessful expedient of some prisoner to escape."

Owing to some peculiarity in the stone, the constant wear of wind and weather has worn it into innumerable little pools and basins, which are called by the villagers "King Arthur's cups and saucers." Our guide exhibited, in entire good faith, the gigantic impression of a foot, which is said to be King Arthur's footprint, left when he strode across the chasm that separates the peninsula from the mainland. It did not appear to have occurred to him that, from the position of the footprint, the King must have stept backwards across the yawning gulf. No doubt the idea owes its origin to the tradition of his extraordinary stature which has descended to us. We made our way into a rude rock-seat, called "King Arthur's chair," and tried, as in duty bound, to recall the days so long gone by. But the records of King Uther Pendragon were too slender and various, and even the birth of his son too much shrouded in mystery, to enable us to conjure up any distinct imagery of the past. That the latter was born and bred at Tintagel does not appear to have been discredited many centuries ago, as appears from the verses of Joseph Iscanus (a priest of the cathedral church of Exeter), who accompanied Richard I. to the Holy Land :—

From this blest place immortal Arthur sprung,
Whose wondrous deeds shall be for ever sung,
Sweet music to the ear, sweet honey to the tongue.
* * * * * *
The only Prince that hears the just applause,
Greatest that e'er shall be, and best that ever was.

Lord Bacon says of King Arthur, that his story "contains truth enough to make him famous, besides what is fabulous."

Milton, in his verses to his friend Mansus, hints that he had once designated to celebrate King Arthur—but the British hero was reserved for another destiny, to be victimised in an epic poem of twelve books (which is now well-nigh forgotten), by the City muse of Sir Richard Blackmore. Bishop Heber left us a fragment of a poem upon the "Morte d' Arthur." But of all existing Arthurian romances, none can boast of such refinement and purity as the sweet fancies of the author of the "Idylls," who has invested the pure King and his court with a beauty and interest they never before possessed.

Warton, in his "Grave of King Arthur," thus pleasingly alludes to the traditional belief in his eventual return to govern his people :—

When he fell, an elfin queen,
All in secret and unseen,
O'er the fainting hero threw
Her mantle of ambrosial blue ;
And bade her spirits bear him far,
In Merlin's agate-axled car,
To her green isle's enamell'd steep,
Far in the bosom of the deep.
O'er his wounds she sprinkled dew
From flowers that in Arabia grew—
On a rich enchanted bed
She pillow'd his majestic head—
O'er his brow, with whispers bland,
Twice she waved an opiate wand,
And to soft music's airy sound
Her magic curtains closed around.
There, renewed the vital spring,
Again he reigns a mighty king,
And many a fair and fragrant clime
Blooming in immortal prime,
By gales of Eden ever fanned,
Owns the monarch's high command:
Thence to Britain shall return
(If right prophetic roles I learn),
Borne on Victory's spreading plume,
His ancient sceptre to resume ;
Once more, in old heroic pride,
His barbéd courser to bestride,
His knightly table to restore,
And have the tournament of yore.

After the Norman Conquest, Tintagel Castle became the occasional residence of several of our English princes ; and here Richard, Earl of Cornwall (otherwise known as King of the Romans), entertained his nephew David, Prince of Wales, when in rebellion against the king, in 1245. We read that in Domesday-Book, Tintagel is mentioned as "Dunchine" or "Chain Castle." It was kept in good repair, and occasionally used as a prison, until the reign of Elizabeth, when it was allowed to fall into ruins, which are now the property of the duchy.

We were fortunate enough to find a specimen of Trifolium stellatum, in our descent, and more samphire than we cared to gather. In the pretty rivulet that runs through the valley from Trevena, were growing luxuriant plants of mimulus, a mass of golden blossom ; and, although it was the end of July, we discovered a full-blown primrose in a shady corner, which we carried off as a memorial of Tintagel.

The parish church of Tintagel stands on an elevated spot, west of the castle, and several curious epitaphs are to be found in the churchyard.

Conybeare remarks, that the quarries of Tintagel afford quartz, rock crystals of great transparency and beauty, calcareous spar, chlorite, and in some instances adularia. The slate of Tintagel bears a near resemblance to that of Snowdon, and, like it, presents the impression of bivalve shells.

Few spots so well deserve a visit as this interesting ruin, standing, as it does, in the midst of the most wild and romantic scenery. The whole coast and neighbourhood abound in picturesque spots and legendary lore, and when a railroad from Exeter to Launceston shall have rendered the north of Cornwall more accessible, there can be no doubt that it will become a favourite resort with those who are glad to escape for a time from the restraints of conventionality and fashion, and who love nature for her own sake, and for the calm and elevating thoughts she suggests.

E. T.

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LAST WEEK.

AMERICAN affairs were the grand interest of LAST WEEK, as they are likely to be of many weeks to come. That Fort Sumter was overpowered could surprise nobody who knew the locality and circumstances: and that the President should issue a manifesto was a matter of course. What the reason is we hardly know; but there seems to be a disposition on both sides the water to disparage Mr. Lincoln. Not only is he blamed for inaction; but the quality of his action is found fault with in a way which appears, to really impartial people, unjust. There is no use in judging him by the standard of anti-slavery; for he is not an anti-slavery man. He is opposed to the extension of slavery to new territory, against the will of the general community: and this is the ground on which he was elected. Beyond this his opinions cease to be a matter of practical interest; for he has not to deal with slavery in any of the States. He favours the more liberal section of his cabinet; and, if forced to pronounce on the institution where it exists, it is probable that events would soon make an abolitionist of him. But with this the public has at present nothing to do. His proclamation is plain in its terms, and decided in its tone. As for the delay of five weeks in declaring war, if it had not been a necessity, it would have been a merit. But the President had no choice. When he took possession of the political edifice which looked from the outside so noble and venerable, he found it pillaged and half in ruins. The treachery of Mr. Buchanan's executive had disorganised and beggared the whole Federal Government, leaving to the new President the task of reconstituting all the departments, routing out remaining traitors, and finding better men to fill their places; replacing stolen stores, filling the empty treasury; in short, making his own tools, and fetching his materials before he could go to work. If overwhelmed by the Slave States which surround Washington before he was ready, he would have ruined the country. If he had driven the Border States to a premature decision, he would have been answerable for civil war. It will be a matter of wonder hereafter that five weeks sufficed him to get his government to work, so far as to enable him to issue his proclamation on the fall of Fort Sumter.

The importance of the responsibility of the first bloodshed is shown by the efforts made on each side to make the other begin. There has been more lawlessness in the Northern cities than has become known through the newspapers,—the good citizens being well aware that Southern money was in the pockets of the special mob in each place which harassed the prominent republicans and abolitionists. It has been hard work guarding one another and their houses and public halls, and exercising their rights of assembling and speaking under mob-intimidation; but it has been harder work to keep the young men passive where the object was to provoke a street fight, in order to say that the first blood was shed in the Free States. The aim was baffled. The first aggression was committed at Charleston; the first wounds were given in the attack on Fort Sumter; and the first deaths (except by accident) were inflicted at Baltimore, the capital of a Slave State, and the port which is, next to New York, the most deeply engaged in the illicit African slave-trade. The Southern section, after driving on a revolutionary policy for thirty years, made a groundless secession; and has now begun a causeless war. The North is so far responsible that a manly conduct and demeanour would have precluded the mischief, and that irresolution, bred of vanity, fear of loss, and idolatry of the Union, has encouraged both the delusions and the audacity of the South; but beyond this indirect responsibility, the North has no share in the disruption of the Union. Whatever its past faults may have been, its present course is clear; and it may enter on its task of self-defence with the stout heart and strong arm which properly belong to the defensive party in cases of pure aggression.

It may:—but will it?—That is the question anxiously pressed on every hand. In the first American revolution the constant and terrible difficulty was the uncertainty of civic and military support. Royalists were making secret mischief in all the towns; traitors were sowing discontent everywhere, as they are in Southern Italy now; the soldiers started off homewards at critical moments, or ignored opportunities of attacking the enemy, and shirked decisive action of any kind. These things were worse than the poverty of the towns, the defencelessness of the rural districts, and the want of shoes and weapons for the soldiers. Will it be so again? It was a civil war then; it is a civil war now: will the peculiar temptations of civil war operate now as before?

As far as we can judge, it will not be so. There must, it is true, be many Northern citizens whose hearts are half in the South, through the intermarriage of hundreds of families of the two sections; but in most of these cases, the Southern relatives are of the Uuion party, who are averse to secession and war. Their inability to act and speak under the pressure of the Secession leaders is an incitement to their friends in the Free States to put down the tyranny as quickly as possible. The fathers and brothers who live on free soil will fight stoutly to put down the rebel authorities who keep sons and daughters and sisters trembling and grieving on their plantations, expecting a rising of the negroes every hour, and seeing nothing but ruin and death in prospect for all who have, willingly or not, turned traitors to the republic.

The Southern trade, for which so much has been sacrificed, is at an end, after all; and the merchants are astonished to find how little they care about it. Except for family connexions, Northern citizens are now free to encounter their enemy; and, as has been shown, these family connexions are often the strongest incitement of all. Then there is a long accumulation of resentment of Southern insults, and disgust at Southern barbarism and braggartism. Above all, there is an intense sense of relief at throwing off the incubus of slave-institutions, and being restored to caste among the nations of the civilised world. All these things being considered, and the great population

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and wealth of the country allowed for, it is no wonder that the tramp of troops is heard with enthusiasm in town and village throughout the Free States; that farmers leave the plough, and clerks the desk, and students their colleges, and professional men their clients, to march to Washington. It is no wonder that money flows thither in a full stream, nor that women are as eager as men in offering such service as they can. Under the present awakening, there will be a quick weeding-out of traitors from all the services. From the highest ranks of the army and navy to the lowest of the customs or the post-office, there will be a watch kept upon all half-hearted, and an expulsion of all false-hearted officials; and there can hardly be many of either, now that all question of compromise or reconciliation is over.

The share that the great North-West is claiming in the struggle seems not to be attended to on our side the water; but it is highly important. The stout and prodigious population there have learned by the Kansas question how to appreciate the South,—or its aggressive forces at least. Their pride in their first President renders them intensely loyal. Their commerce is imperilled by the secession of the lower Mississippi States; and it is certainly the opinion of good judges in the older parts of the Union, that when the Western men begin to swarm down the Mississippi, and attack the seceding States in rear, while a blockade is instituted at sea, they will leave little to be done elsewhere. When we heard last week of encampments at Washington, the collision at Baltimore, and the secession of Virginia, we perhaps did not think of looking further into the interior; but we may perhaps see the scale finally turned by the forces of the West.

It is a matter of congratulation that the Border States have seceded. They are torn by divisions; at least the three principal ones, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri; and half-hearted States are better on the enemy's side. Of all the parties concerned, the Union men of those States are perhaps the most to be pitied. Impoverished and degraded by slavery, they have long struggled to rid themselves of it, and now they are to be carried over by their own legislatures to the desperate side, to fight and pay for slavery. They are one of the many elements of peril to the Secessionists. Many of them will no doubt cross the frontier, leaving land and negroes to confiscation. Those who cannot so escape must suffer bitterly, whatever happens, before the issue is reached.

All that we hear from trustworthy sources confirms the belief that the Secession cause is desperate from the beginning. There is certainly no mistake as to the dearth of money and food, the pressure of debt, the disaffection of the planting interest generally, and the enormity of the lies with which these truths are covered. The numbers of volunteers given in the newspapers could not be actually furnished if the plantations were left entirely unguarded, and the negroes wholly neglected. The impression is strengthened by the braggart tone of the administration and its organs. When it is announced that the Cabinet at Montgomery read Mr. Lincoln's proclamation "with shouts of laughter," people at a distance know what to think. It is the same with the protestations of the loyalty and zeal of the slaves. "Ignorance or worse" is the verdict of all impartial persons on such statements. The warfare is likely to be of a desultory, skirmishing sort, judging by the extent of the frontier and the character of the people; and that kind of warfare is likely to convey to the negroes in a very short time a true notion of the real character of the struggle. When the cause is once understood by any single negro, the vanity of the race may be trusted to spread it from the Ohio to the Rio Grande.

Last week the commissioners from the Southern Confederacy arrived, and there was a good deal of curiosity about the precise object of their coming. It was rumoured that one of their objects was to raise a loan; but few would credit it. There is no belief that adequate security exists; and if it did, it would be of no value when proffered by men who are implicated in acts of repudiation. Not only have some of the seceding States made themselves notorious by their repudiation of debts, but some of the new Administration, and especially its head, are under that disgrace in the eyes of the world. It was so desperate a notion that Mr. Jefferson Davis's government could expect to obtain money from Europe, that it was extensively disbelieved.

The subordination of the selfish to the sympathetic spirit in our North American colonies has been admirable throughout the last five months. They have expressed regret, which no one doubts to be genuine, at their neighbours' strife. But sooner or later they must consider the effect on their own interests; and last week we perceived indications that the time had come. The colonists everywhere, from the Atlantic to the furthest frontier of Canada, anticipate a great immigration from Europe, as the tide will turn from the shores of the United States to theirs. Their ports and their shipping, and their canals and railways will all be wanted for the new commerce which must flow in when half the American ports are blockaded, and the commercial world of the Union has gone soldiering. The issue of letters of marque by the Montgomery government, and President Lincoln's notice that privateering will be treated as piracy, must give over the carrying trade to the merchant navies of other countries, and especially of our own.

The fourth of July celebrations will be something singular and memorable this year. Congress will meet, to sanction civil war. There will be a hush of boasting, which is on that day usually so resonant in the land. The true patriots, who have thus far saved the republic from a servile war, may give thanks and rejoice; but the rest of the nation must gaze down with horror into the impassable chasm which has opened in their national structure.

It was satisfactory to all England to hear Lord John Russell's reply to an inquiry as to our position in regard to this great event. "For God's sake, let us keep out of it!" said our Foreign Secretary, of this quarrel: and the words may be taken as, and will be, those of the country at large. Ministers are in consultation with the law officers of the Crown, in order to attain the utmost dis-

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cretion in guarding British rights without taking any part in American quarrels.

There is no week now which does not bring important news from the Continent. Last week we were supplied with the particulars of the reconciliation between Garibaldi and the Minister and General of the King. The candour and nobleness of the man were just what might have been expected from him: but the whole affair leaves a painful impression of insecurity. Garibaldi has been so often misled now that his self-recoveries cease to inspire confidence. He cannot resist the influence of associates; and his associations are determined by the craft of others. For the present, however, he is induced to be quiet.

The schism in the clerical body in Italy became avowed last week in a distinct manner. It appears that the Italian clergy, who venerate the Pope's spiritual power too highly to apprehend any danger to it from the loss of temporal possessions, are under apprehension for religion from opposite sides. They fear the worldliness and superstition of the Ultramontane clergy on the one hand, and the inroads of Protestantism (so called) on the other. Speaking accurately, it is not, for the most part, Protestantism which conflicts with Catholicism in Northern Italy; for the Waldenses never having been Catholics are not Protestants. They hold the ancient faith which has come down from a time prior to Romanism, being preserved in the seclusion of Alpine life, unchanged from century to century. They have come out into the world with their faith now,—have a fine cathedral at Turin, and many churches elsewhere,—and are persuaded that it is their mission to convert Italy from Romanism. What schismatics from the Romish Church could not effect, they believe to be their work, as holding an unchanged faith, older than either; and their success is understood to have been considerable within the last fifteen years. To encounter at once this body and the Pope's proud and rancorous and rapacious priests, the liberal clergy of Italy have formed associations in all the provinces, and issued declarations of their objects. They propose unions and congregations for the guardianship and promotion of civil, for the sake of religious, liberty; and that, when these centres of action are in work, they shall send deputies to a general assembly, which shall institute a complete organisation. A journal is to be set up, to restrain the encroachments of Protestant doctrine: the assembly is to determine controversies by the canons of the Councils, to the exclusion of party authority: and the aim of the whole scheme is the reconciliation of religion with an advancing civilisation, in avowed and steadfast opposition to the party in the Church which stakes its interests on a system of political rule, and social morals and manners, which is the disgrace of Christendom. Every member must be a friend to civil and religious liberty, and a loyal subject of King Victor Emmanuel. We have no news from Italy more significant than this.

The great continental event of the week was the opening of the Council of the Austrian Empire on May-day. The Emperor spoke as if he really believed the existence of his empire to depend on the working of his new constitution. His call to the people of the various provinces to help the effective working can hardly seem to himself likely to avail, amidst the clash of interests and of claims, and the general distrust of his own stability. Whatever may happen, however, it is a memorable incident that an emperor of Austria has avowed to the whole world that the welfare of his crown and people depends on the success of any new representative system whatever.

From Germany we heard of the formal announcement at Hesse Darmstadt of the betrothal of Prince Louis with our Princess Alice: and from the West Indies news arrived of the loyal reception of Prince Alfred at several of the islands, and of the sudden stop put to the festivities by the tidings of the death of the Duchess of Kent, which is bringing the young Prince home.

The great parliamentary interest of the week was the protracted discussion of the Budget. The Opposition resolved in council to close up their ranks, and make a strong attack on the Ministry through Mr. Gladstone's measure. On Monday, the debate was made interesting by several striking speeches, and memorable by Mr. Gladstone's triumphant defence of his scheme, and by Lord Palmerston's quiet and effective declaration that his government meant to stand by it. When the House went into Committee that night, it was understood that the great struggle would be on Thursday night. All the world was aware that more was involved than considerations of paper and tea duties, or even the duration of the Ministry. The relations between Lords and Commons, strained, if not dislocated, for a year past, had to be repaired by getting quit of the paper-duty. The issue was probably doubted by nobody, though the number of the majority was variously estimated at the Carlton and Reform Clubs: and the majority of eighteen on the Thursday night settled the plan of taxation for the coming year, and a very great deal besides.

The announcement of a death on the preceding Saturday caused some emotion in society. Mrs. Agnes Baillie, the sister of Joanna and Dr. Baillie, died at the age of 100. A letter of Mrs. Barbauld's, dated in 1800, tells of the outburst of Joanna's fame, a year or two after the anonymous publication of her "Plays on the Passions:" "a young lady of Hampstead who came to Mrs. Barbauld's meeting with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line." At the time of the treaty of Ghent, Mr. Clay, the American commissioner, was advised to call in Dr. Baillie, as a physician of long-established fame. A quarter of a century since, Joanna and Agnes had settled their affairs precisely alike, and arranged everything, each for the other, wondering how the survivor could live alone. They lived on together till long past eighty; yet Agnes has been the solitary survivor of her family for so many years that it was a relief—though still a reluctant one—to hear that she was gone. With those women,—simple, sensible, amiable, and gay in temper, and of admirable cultivation, apart from Joanna's genius,—a period of our literature seems to [illegible]; and we are all weak enough to sigh at ti[illegible] over what is inevitable.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LXII.

MRS. HAWKESLEY returned to the bed-room in which she had left Bertha. The latter had raised herself to the couch at the foot of the bed, and lay there extended and exhausted.

When her sister came in, Bertha scarcely moved, but her eyes followed every motion of Beatrice. Mrs. Hawkesley drew a chair near the couch, and said, sadly:

"Bertha, it is something to be able to begin at once to make atonement for what is past."

"Do not speak to me about anything to-night," was the reply. "Let me go to bed, and to-morrow we will talk of everything."

And it was evident from Bertha's tone that she felt she had already done much in the way of atonement by the confession she had made to Beatrice.

"To-morrow will be too late," replied her sister, with more firmness than before. "Arthur Lygon is resolved to go to Paris to your husband, and before he goes you must see him."

"Why should he see me? What can I say to him? Beatrice, this is too cruel in you. I will not see him."

"Bertha, listen to me. Not one word of anger have you from me, not one word of reproach for the shame that has come upon all of us. I have heard your terrible story, and as God shall bless me and mine, I have had only two thoughts, how to believe that you are penitent, and how to save you from future sin and trouble. Do not make me ashamed of my love for you—do not make me believe that you are afflicted only because the judgment has come upon you. Bertha, if we are to be sisters, you must show yourself a sister to Laura."

"What can I do for Laura?"

"You can see her husband, and you can explain to him what you know of the wickedness that has made Robert believe her what you know she is not. This you can do, Bertha, and you must do it now."

"Do not ask me to meet him. Tell him yourself, tell him from me, if you will, that it is all a mistake, and that it will be cleared up if he will only have patience."

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"Bertha!" exclaimed her sister, "you are talking of the honour of a wife whom Arthur loves with all his soul, and you would send him such a message as might excuse a forgotten invitation. But Laura shall not be sacrificed, and you shall see Arthur."

"You think only of Laura; you have no mercy on me."

"Show that you deserve mercy," returned her sister, now becoming indignant at Bertha's selfishness. "I will fetch Arthur to you, and I tell you, Bertha, that if you fail in the plain duty before you, we shall never speak again."

She rose to go, when Bertha sprang up and clutched at her dress.

"Beatrice," she said, "wait a little—stay a little. There is so much to tell, and I cannot remember things. I am so ill. To-morrow——"

"To-morrow, Bertha," said her sister, impressively, "you may be unable to tell anything, for fever is upon you; and I only ask you to perform this duty, and then you shall be nursed and tended like a child. But while you have strength and memory, save her who is innocent—save Laura."

"Will he believe me? You know he will not."

"The truth will have its weight with him, no matter who tells it. You know why Laura left her home?"

"Yes."

"You know that it was to do no wrong?"

"I know it."

"Tell Arthur that, and why she came to you."

"He will not believe me."

"Why do you repeat that so earnestly?"

"Because—because he has asked me the question before, and I told him—well, it was the best thing that came to my mind at the moment," said Bertha, half despairingly, half irritated.

"But you will speak the truth now, and he will find out that you have spoken it."

"It is so painful to have to say that one has told a falsehood. Tell him from me, Beatrice, tell him that I was persecuted by a bad man, who wanted money of me, and that Laura came over to try to make terms with him."

As she spoke, the face of Beatrice assumed an expression of anger, such as perhaps it had never worn before. She became deadly pale, and she seized one of the hands of Bertha.

"And is *this* the truth, Bertha," she said, sternly, "as you hope for mercy and forgiveness for your great wickedness?"

"Yes, yes, indeed it is."

"Laura went over at all the fearful risk of ruin—Laura went over to help and save you—and you, *you* hesitate at making any confession of the truth that can save her!"

"Have I not told you?" stammered Bertha, terrified at her sister's anger.

"Me! You will tell it to Arthur Lygon in the next five minutes, or you are no sister of mine."

And, repulsing Bertha's hand, Mrs. Hawkesley left her.

CHAPTER LXIII.

AVENTAYLE, the manager, was enraged, and justly so. He could get no pieces from his friends the English authors, and his friends the French authors behaved no better to him. They were perpetually bringing out plays which made extraordinary successes in Paris, and furnished proverbs and caricatures to the Parisian press; but, with the most selfish disregard to the interests of English dramatic literature, they composed all these pieces (whose prosperity made Aventayle's mouth water) upon themes which could by no possible manipulation be rendered presentable here.

"And they talk of international relations, and be hanged to them!" said Mr. Aventayle, throwing down "Figaro," in wrath. "If our fellows," and it may be feared that he actually meant our Ministers—"knew their business, and were worth a farthing, they would provide in their treaties that French authors should not write anything that could not be used here."

"When are you going to do Hawkesley's piece?" demanded Mr. Grayling, the recipient of the manager's growls.

"How can I tell? He wants to re-write that end of the second act, and he has got some family troubles, and can't settle to work. What the deuce business has an author with a family, I should like to know?"

"I dare say a good many authors have asked themselves the same question."

"Not in these days, confound 'em! They are the best paid fellows going, except you actors, Master Grayling. They wax fat and kick, as Shakspere says."

"Shakspere!" replied the actor, who was exceedingly respectable, and went to church, and behaved quite properly when there. "That doesn't come out of Shakspere, Mr. Aventayle."

"Well, then, it ought. It's good enough to be his," replied the manager, quite unconscious of his irreverence. "I meant to have called the play to-morrow, but what's the good of getting a scene right, if it is to be knocked to pieces afterwards? I swear I've got nothing else to put up."

"Why don't you do that strange piece that the man in Paris sent you? It looked very good, I thought," said Mr. Grayling.

"Because it wants a week's work upon it, to lick it into anything like shape."

"Lick!"

"Very fine talking, as if I had nothing else to do."

"Catch the author, and make him do it."

"He lives in Paris, and has reasons of his own for not coming to London."

"Well, Aventayle, I suppose you have read of an interesting *trait* in the character of the prophet Mohammed,—when a mountain declined to come to *him*—eh?"

"By Jove! I have a good mind to go to the mountain, as you say. And one might see something. Will *you* come? Yes. You are taking your salary for nothing, just now: show your greatness of soul, by spending some of it in giving your manager a treat."

"I should like, but I can't be treating a manager while I am building a house; the bricks and mortar mop up every available sixpence."

"That's the way; actors building houses, and authors striking work, and a manager looking nine

ways for Sunday, and can't see it at any price whatsoever.

"That frame of mind is very objectionable, Aventayle. Come and dine with me to-morrow, and I'll take you to church to hear a sermon on contentment and virtue, and that last lot of Lafitte *is* the thing, my boy."

"I shan't. I shall go to Paris. You might come with a fellow, Grayling: what an unsocial brute you are! Come, I'll stand one dinner at the *Trois Frères*, and you shall order it yourself."

"I *can't*, my dear fellow, and there's an end. We're going to christen the small kid on Wednesday."

"Well, things have come to something when a play-actor lets a religious ceremonial stand between him and his duty to the theatre. However, I suppose I must bear with it. And here," he said, putting something into a piece of paper, "give that with my love to Mrs. Grayling, and ask her to buy a coral and bells for the young one, and I hope every time you hear them ring they will sound a reproach for your unnatural conduct to me."

"Pop's got a coral," laughed the actor, "but we'll buy her a spoon."

"It will equally remind you of your unhappy manager," returned Aventayle, mixing himself some brandy-and-water. "Now there's another go. I believe it rains and hails tribulations. I gave Hawkesley the letter with that Paris fellow's address, and he has never returned it to me—just like his unbusiness-like ways."

"I suppose you can send up for it?"

"Well, that is an inspiration. I suppose I can. And then I dare say he won't be at home, or he won't be able to find it—all the troubles of life are heaped upon my miserable head. Pop's health, and in due time may she have a better husband than her mamma has got."

"We shall meet in Paris," wrote Charles Hawkesley, enclosing, not the letter, but the address given by Ernest Adair. "Leave word at Galignani's where you are to be found. And on no account whatever let this man know that you expect to see me.—C. H."

"Some mystification," grumbled Aventayle, as he read the charge. "And if he can be running off to Paris, why can't he stay at home and touch up *Reckoning without the Host?* If there's one thing in the world that I hate more than another, it is a man's taking a holiday until he has finished off every single thing that he ought to attend to."

And the excellent manager, who had made a dozen appointments for the next Monday, called a confidential *employé* into council, left his theatre in that conscientious person's charge, and ate his breakfast in Paris next day.

This was Sunday, and he had a certain scruple about beginning any business on that day—unless some other manager were likely to be less religious—so Aventayle did not hunt up Adair, but inspected the improvements, dined pleasantly, and went to the theatre. There he did not see a literary production that was calculated to be of much use to him, but his abstinence from secular occupation was rewarded by his beholding a wonderful pantomimic trick, in which eight old ladies, who had been dancing on the stage in old-fashioned but not ridiculous garments, suddenly bowed their heads, and instantly became the elegant modern furniture of a drawing-room. The trick had drawn all Paris, and its ingenuity had baffled the double opera-glasses of a whole gang of intending pirates, but as a special boon to Aventayle, and further reward for his Sabbatical observance, a hitch in the transformation of a lady, who became a chair, occurred. It was the action of a moment, but it told the secret to the keen eye of Aventayle, and the effect was booked for his Christmas piece. So that night he slept the sleep of the good, and remarked in the morning, that change of climate was as lucky as turning your chair round three times after a run of bad cards at whist.

He sent a note to the address which Adair had given, and requested that gentleman to call on him at the Hotel Bedford.

The note was received, and a quarter of an hour later, Ernest Adair was in the presence of M. Wolowski.

"Ah, M. Adair, delighted to see you. I should have sent for you in a day or two, but I am glad you have forestalled me. Are you impatient to enter upon new duties?"

Adair's reply was to place Aventayle's note in the hand of M. Wolowski.

"Just received?" asked the Pole.

"Within a quarter of an hour."

"Then you have not, as yet, complied with the request?"

"Certainly not."

"Ah! I see," replied M. Wolowski, with a slight smile. "Yes, your precaution is perfectly right—it may be, as you do *not* say, a *ruse* to bring you into unpleasant society, and we cannot be too careful, in this evil city, my dear Adair, as to what company we keep. We will call Chantal into counsel."

M. Chantal made his appearance. There was no incivility in his manner towards Adair, but it would have required a very indulgent eye to discover that the semi-Englishman entertained any particular regard for his colleague.

"Do you know that name?" said Wolowski, tossing him the note.

"Yes, certainly. He is the director of one of the London theatres—he often comes over here."

"Does he know you?"

"No."

"Nor you, Adair?"

"Certainly not. But he has a drama of mine in his hands, and some time ago I wrote to him in reference to it."

"Well, gentlemen, I suppose you can manage the rest without me?"

"You do not quite comprehend the position, M. Wolowski," said Ernest. "I know that this is Mr. Aventayle's writing, and I make no doubt that he is at the Hotel Bedford. But we know that a certain person is in England, and it is more than probable she has put herself into communication with Mr. Charles Hawkesley."

"Hawkesley?" repeated the Pole, in uncertainty.

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"Dramatic author," said Chantal, promptly, "who writes much for this M. Aventayle, and is his friend."

"Ah!" said Ernest to himself, "it is you, then, M. Chantal, who have been employed in getting up my history? It is well to know that."

"But how comes Hawkesley?—ah!—I remember," said Wolowski.

Clearly seeing that he did not, the discreet Chantal added:

"Hawkesley is married to a sister of Mrs. Urquhart."

"Yes," said the Pole, calmly, "if Hawkesley, Urquhart, and Aventayle should all fall upon our friend together, when he enters the Hotel Bedford, the conflict would be a little unequal."

"I may point out," said Chantal, "that if it were deemed well to send a substitute for M. Adair, one who should represent him, the same awkward result might occur."

"Do not be alarmed, my dear Chantal. You shall not play the part of M. Adair. I will myself encounter the Cerberus, or three-headed monster. Remain until my return."

Aventayle was smoking in front of the hotel when he was pointed out to M. Wolowski by one of the servants.

"This," said the Pole, after saluting the manager with much politeness, and producing the note; "this is the note which Monsieur was good enough to send a short time ago."

"Yes. Have I the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Adair?"

The quick apprehension of the spy immediately told him that there was no *arrière pensée* behind that frank and pleasant address.

"No," replied M. Wolowski. "I am unfortunate enough to be several years that gentleman's senior. You have never seen him, or would not have made the mistake."

"I have never seen him. But I am very desirous to see him.

"Not more desirous than Mr. Adair is to see Mr. Aventayle. But, unhappily, Adair is confined to his house — to his bed, in fact — by illness, and has requested me, an old friend, to meet you, and, if possible, to negociate any business that may require attention."

"And that, I fear, is just what no third person can do," said Aventayle. "But let us go into the hotel."

"You have a cigar, and may prefer to walk in the gardens."

"So be it," said the manager, and they went into the walk.

"This is very vexing," said Aventayle ("just like my luck," he observed to himself), "for, I suppose, you guess what my errand with your friend is likely to be."

"His drama—"

"Exactly. Well, are you a literary man—perhaps you are his *collaborateur?*"

"In a humble way—very humble," said the Pole; "but I am quite capable of conveying your ideas to Adair.

"Well, then, he has sent me a play in which there is a great deal of good stuff, but it won't do in its present form. I wanted him to come and see me, and hear my suggestions for alterations, and then to go and make them, and let me take the play back, supposing, of course, that he liked my terms. But if it is not probable that he will soon be able to work, I must see what else can be done."

"That sounds all safe," thought Wolowski. "May I ask," he said, "whether your referring to something else is connected with my friend's production?"

"Why, yes, to this extent," said Aventayle. "If he cannot attend to it, and chooses to sell it to me, out and out, and we agree, I would get an English author to deal with it in my own way."

"These dramatists," said the Pole, with a smile, deprecatory of such small vanity as that he was about to mention, "have a sort of jealousy of their works being touched by other people; but supposing that we could get over that weakness, which of course it is, I conclude that you would employ the services of some author not unworthy to be associated with my friend?"

"Your friend," said the manager, smiling, "has never produced a single piece; but I should place his play in the hands of a gentleman with a first-class London reputation, and of whom I should think you may have heard in Paris. That is Mr. Hawkesley."

"His name is well known to me, and to Adair also," replied the Pole, gravely. "How unfortunate that he does not happen to accompany you, for my friend, though confined to his room, could receive you both, and ideas might be exchanged."

He watched Aventayle narrowly as he spoke. The manager, whose thought was, not unnaturally, upon his own interests, utterly forgot the injunction of Hawkesley, and eagerly replied,

"That's the very thing that I should like. Hawkesley is coming over; I shall know of his arrival, and I will bring him to call on Mr. Adair. He has read the piece, too."

This puzzled the Pole. It was either a perfectly frank and loyal proposition, or else it was a stupid English way of trying to arrange a bit of treachery. As he could not satisfy himself which was intended, he naturally decided to accept the second alternative.

"And when do you expect Mr. Hawkesley?"

"I am uncertain, but it will be very soon. He is to leave word for me at Galignani's, and—"

It was a curious study, that expressive and handsome face of the manager. With the word —as often happens—came back a sort of photographic reproduction of the lines of the letter in which the word had been used, and Aventayle, professionally accustomed to allow his features all play that was prompted by sensation, instantly manifested a discomfiture which would have been loudly applauded in the theatre, and which was so marked that for a moment the actor beside him actually thought it an assumed manner. But Aventayle speedily disarmed this suspicion.

"Monsieur is not well, perhaps. The change from the atmosphere of London to that of Paris is sometimes trying."

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"No, no," said Aventayle, "it was not that. I had forgotten something that I ought to have remembered, but I dare say that it is of no importance."

"I need not remind you of the telegraph."

"That would not remedy it," said Aventayle. "But it is nothing. Well, then, I think that we cannot do better than leave the matter as it stands. Just ascertain from Mr. Adair whether he will have any objection to his play being doctored under my direction, and if he assents, Mr. Hawkesley and myself will call upon him."

"Suppose, to save time," said the Pole, "we endeavoured to arrange preliminaries first. Frankly, I should not feel much sympathy with my friend, if upon a mere question of literary fame, he resisted the improvement of his play, and it is only upon the question of terms that men of business need talk. Would it suit you to visit him in the first instance, and if you arranged the matter satisfactorily, the rest could await the arrival of your friend?"

"Very well, by all means. Can we go to him now?"

"I should like to prepare him a little, for he has been extremely unwell. Would two hours hence suit you?"

"Perfectly. I am here on business."

"He lives in a somewhat humble dwelling, but you will have no difficulty in finding it, and, if you please, he will expect you after one o'clock."

M. Wolowski returned to the house where his younger friends awaited him.

"Your precaution, I have the honour to repeat to you, Mr. Adair, was perfectly right. I have seen your director, and he is singularly desirous to see you. This pleasure I have promised him. But inasmuch as it might be far safer for you to entertain that worthy man and his possible companions here, than that you should risk the kind of entertainment they might offer you at the Hotel Bedford, I have made an appointment for him to visit you."

"What does he want?"

"Mr. Hawkesley accompanies him to Paris, and they desire to have an interview with you upon the subject of a certain plot, which they consider an unworthy one, you know with what justice."

"Why is this Aventayle dragged into the matter?" asked Adair.

"That he wishes to explain to you himself."

"I shall not meet him."

"Having ventured to pledge myself that you will, I am sure that you will not permit me to be reproached. Besides, I think that you will be, in a pecuniary sense, a gainer by the interview."

"What!" said Adair, with no feigned surprise. "Has it taken that turn?"

"Most things take that turn," replied M. Wolowski. "And all things would, if people were not fools enough to have hearts, and passions, and consciences, and all the rest of it."

"Do I understand you, that there is a proposition to buy my silence as to certain matters?"

"There is a proposal to purchase your assent to certain representations."

The smile that came upon the lips of Chantal, who had detected in the tone of his *chef* what Adair's surprise and eagerness forbad him to perceive, now told Ernest that he was a victim to the malice of Wolowski's tongue. Evil was the glance of Adair, and not much less evil was the laugh under which he suppressed his anger.

"It is you who should be the dramatist, M. Wolowski," he said. "Accept my congratulations on your *finesse*. In return, may I ask whether I am to have any part in the comedy?"

Wolowski paused for a moment, eyeing Adair with some amusement, and then said, in his ordinary voice,

"This man Aventayle appears to me to be really come on the errand he describes. He tells me that he has got a play of yours, which is not so bad but that a real author could make it decent and presentable. He wants to buy it of you, on condition that a gentleman—whom he named—may do as he likes with it."

Barry Cornwall has, with a poet's truth, indicated the condition of a wretched, degraded girl as that of one who once had

"Gentleness, *vanity*, maiden shame."

Let it be said that amid all the degradation to which Ernest Adair had bowed and debased himself, the quality, or fault, which abandons woman only when she is abandoned indeed, had survived in the bosom of the demoralised spy, and that at the coarsely worded speech of the Pole, an angry flush came over the pale forehead of the younger man. He exclaimed, in as earnest a voice as an honest man might have used—

"I will see him and his insolence at the devil first."

Chantal laughed a small laugh, but Wolowski said, gravely,

"You must not make an appointment that interferes with mine. That is against all rule, M. Adair."

Adair recovered himself sufficiently to smile at the retort, but he was for once dreadfully and genuinely angry.

"And pray, M. Wolowski, whom was Mr. Aventayle good enough to mention as the workman who was to deal with my play?"

"The gentleman I have named to you—Mr. Hawkesley. I am told that your reputation will not suffer in his hands."

"Wolowski," said Adair, with an eagerness quite apart from his former manner, "did Aventayle say that Mr. Hawkesley *had* seen that piece?"

"I infer that it was upon his perusal that the director formed the favourable opinion which I have had the pleasure of imparting."

Ernest Adair rose from his seat, and with something like defiance, said:

"Now, M. Wolowski, and you, M. Chantal, for I know *your* interest in my affairs; now you can show your skill, if you think proper to do so. Now, gentlemen, there is a tangle worthy the talent of both of you. Now let us see a specimen of the vaunted clear-sightedness of those whom I was told I had disgraced by my shortcomings at Versailles."

"Your acting does you honour, my dear

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Adair," said Wolowski, "and shows that when M. Berryer recommended M. Lacordaire to adopt a religious vocation, he was not more in the right than myself when giving the same counsel to you. The world will hear you in the pulpit—meantime, don't let them hear you in the street. Close the windows, Chantal, unless our friend has done."

"Listen to me, I tell you," said Adair, resuming his seat. "It is now my turn to be heard. There is a riddle set for you which I defy you to solve. You, M. Wolowski, with all the help of the information which M. Chantal has acquired during his secret journey to England, you cannot say whether you are going to admit into this house an honest man with an honest purpose, or an agent from the family of Mr. Urquhart's wife."

"Fairly put," replied Wolowski, promptly. "I have no mercy, Adair, on blunderers, but I am never unjust. I do not know in which capacity this Aventayle is coming. You will discover, I take it for granted."

"I will not see him."

"Behind that tone there lurks some reason that one should hear, of course," said the Pole.

"Let M. Chantal take my place, if he likes."

"I should have no objection," said Chantal; "but he professedly comes to talk about a play, which play the person he will see is supposed to have written. Not having enjoyed the great advantage of perusing that play, it might be difficult for me to discuss its scenes and personages."

"Less difficult than M. Chantal supposes, if he did his duty in England."

"Another riddle, Adair," said M. Wolowski.

"Does M. Chantal find it a riddle?"

"I confess that I do."

"M. Chantal has apprised you, M. Wolowski, that he has travelled to England, and has made himself thoroughly master of my history."

"I cannot suppose you, Adair, to be such a fool—I do not withdraw the word—as to entertain any ill-feeling towards a colleague who has simply obeyed orders, and done by you what you have done by dozens of colleagues of yours."

"I am not such a fool, M. Wolowski. But I know my own value, and I do not choose that your favouritism shall be exerted in ignorance. You have every confidence in M. Chantal, and you have taken every opportunity of showing that you have no confidence in me. I do not complain of that. But I call on M. Chantal to vindicate your good opinion of himself."

"I dare say he will respond to the call."

"Let him, then, meet Mr. Aventayle, and, as Ernest Adair, discuss this play with him. And if M. Chantal did his duty in England, he will be able to discuss it with full knowledge of its contents, for, in that play, I have set out my own history. If he has learned that, he can talk to Mr. Aventayle."

"It is for me to decide," said M. Wolowski, "whether I will submit Chantal to any such test."

"It is," said Adair. "But you say, and with truth, M. Wolowski, that you pique yourself upon justice. I offer you a touchstone of the merits of a man whom you insist on preferring to me, and you are about to encourage him to shrink from the challenge."

"I wish to hear M. Wolowski before I reply," said Chantal.

"No doubt you do," returned Adair, with a bitter sneer.

"Your challenge means a charge against M. Chantal, as I understand it," said the Pole. "Is that so?"

"Yes," said Adair, "but there is no need for me to put that charge into words. If he comes well out of the trial, my charge falls to the ground. But he, I make no doubt, tells you that he has learned the principal incidents in my life. Well, they are in that play, and he need not be afraid of going too near the wind. I have not hesitated in telling them."

"I may observe," said Chantal, quietly, "that M. Adair has adopted an ingenious course for avoiding a meeting of which he evidently stands in dread, I do not say unnaturally."

"You speak falsely, M. Chantal. To have gone to the Hotel Bedford and exposed myself singly to the chance of some brutal attack would have been a fool's act. What have I to apprehend here from a single visitor?"

"That is just," said the Pole. "Adair is perfectly certain that if I desired him to give a meeting to this Aventayle, or any one else, I should take care that he was protected from violence. He would be aided by one whom he little thinks is likely to help him, and who, with others, will be in attendance, if required."

"M. Chantal hesitates to accept."

"I deny M. Adair's right to demand my acceptance of a challenge that implies a charge."

"Were you in England?" asked Ernest Adair, carelessly.

"I think that I may answer with contempt."

"You need not answer at all," retorted Adair. "But when you have come disgraced out of the trial to which I invite you, I shall have something more to say, and that I think you may find it very expedient to answer."

"After this, M. Wolowski," said Chantal, "I have only to claim the interview with M. Aventayle."

"There is an hour between this time and the appointment," said M. Wolowski, coldly. "Remain in the house, both of you, and I will let you know what I intend."

"I understand you," said Ernest Adair. "There *is* an hour. But, M. Wolowski, you pique yourself on your justice."

Ernest left the room.

"My position here is unsafe enough," he said to himself, as in entire disregard of M. Wolowski's recommendation, he went down into the street, "and if I am to re-establish myself with Wolowski, it must be by some *coup*, which is always more in my way than slow climbing. The thought was a fortunate one. If it should turn out that this man is an emissary of the Scot and his friends, it is in every sense better that my excellent Chantal should take whatever chance there is of an unpleasant affair. And if Aventayle means

plain sailing, let us see how the same excellent Chantal will get out of the dilemma. I ought not, perhaps, to have left him with M. Wolowski, who lets himself be talked over by that silky vagabond in a way that disgraces his profession—but stay. Three quarters of an hour—more. Wolowski and his man are not going to waste it, that I will swear. Yes. I see a very much better way of using those fifty minutes than in looking into shop windows."

(To be continued.)

VOLUNTEER DRILL.—AN ADJUTANT'S DIARY.—I.

Pursopen, September 1st.—Arrived here about nine o'clock last night. The family were dining out, and I took care to be in bed on their return. Here am I soldiering again! If there ever was a fellow fit for that, and for nothing else, it was myself. I knew by heart the facings, history, badges, war services, and army agents of every regiment; the dates of commissions, by purchase or otherwise, of every regimental officer of higher standing than myself; my subaltern Holbeach gave up betting with me on the above points, success being hopeless; I was well up among the captains in six years; and in a moment of disappointment to a petty ambition, I sold out.

The next day, I was sorry. It was muster, and my last parade. On returning to my barrack-room I took off my tight coatee and cumbrous epaulettes, and I remember throwing first them, and then myself on the bed and having a jolly good cry, or rather it would have been a jolly good cry, if there had not been a rap at the door at the end of three minutes, and before I could say "don't come in," Solomons entered. He came to buy my old uniform, and I sat up and had a deal with him.

The regret which began that day still lives. It quickens every time I see a big drum, or an Army List. There is that stupid fellow Holbeach—whom we used to call sometimes Dullbeach, not for his intelligence, and at other times Bullbitch, from the expression of his face—now commanding the regiment, a C.B., and a full colonel. We could never teach him anything, not even whether the facings of the royal regiments were blue or white.

I had hardly left the service six months when there was war with Russia. I was appointed to a company in a militia regiment, and might have had a commission in the Line by taking seventy-five men with me, but there was a struggle about beginning again as an ensign, and pride had the best of it. Then the war was over, the militia was disembodied, and I stood with my hands in my pockets.

Then everybody went crazy about the Volunteers, and seeing in the "Times" a War Office warrant authorising adjutants to that service, I wrote to my father's old friend, Fairfax of Pursopen, who had just been appointed to the command of a battalion, and asked him to give me the adjutancy. He had been in the Blues for six months of his early life, and was only too glad of some immediate assistance. So he recommended me at once to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and after I had gone through the hundred and one forms required by his lordship's clerk, another clerk at the Horse Guards, and a third at the War Office, notice came at the end of four months that I would be appointed if I could pass an examination. This was a poser. The whole of the drills had been changed in 1859, and having to begin by unlearning the old book, I was worse off than a recruit who had only to learn the new one. However, I set to work, and after undergoing a short course of musketry with a company of Marines, and after living a month in a barrack-square, under their colour-sergeant, who worked harder than I did (and I often think how poorly I requited him), I was sufficiently crammed to scramble through. At the end of another month, my commission arrived, and it is now among the three clerks to be gazetted. Ambition is dead, but there is a satisfaction in a Queen's commission, with a half-pay at the end of it.

Awoke this morning at five o'clock, by the cawing of rooks close to the window. Opened it, and took a look out. There is a fine view of the country, and of the windings of the river Dare, which floods the low grounds. That is the village of Pursopen, about half a mile from the house, and at the bottom of the hill; and a mile further is Dabshott, where I shall have to set up house; that is, if there is one to be had. The flyman who drove me here last night says that there are no houses to be let. I must live in Dabshott, as it is the head-quarters of the battalion; so something must be done, and that something quickly, for I cannot trespass at Pursopen for more than a week or ten days, and after that there will be nothing left for me but the Roaring Lion, where they charged me a shilling for a glass of brandy and water, when waiting for the fly last night. How tame the rooks are! One lit on the sill of the window, and only flew away on putting out my hand to take hold of it.

This is a fine old house with thick walls, but as comfortable as money and modern ingenuity can make it. All the furniture is new, but old-fashioned, to suit the house, and covered with heraldry. These Roaring Lions belong to Fairfax, but from what I recollect he is a quiet, unassuming man, and being of a good old family, never talks about it. Mrs. Fairfax was the daughter of a cotton-spinner at Halifax, with something suspicious about her mother. The Honourable James Tallboys married her for her money, and died before they had been married a year, leaving her with one son, who was a chubby boy, twelve years old, when I saw him last, ten years ago. Then her father died, leaving her very nearly half a million of money, and she was to have married an Irish marquis, but he wanted more management of the money than she would allow, and the match went off on the settlements. Fairfax being on the spot about this time, she married him more out of spite to the marquis than for anything else, and they lived very happily together ever afterwards. It was a great change for Fairfax, who had neither money nor a profession, and who hitherto could never afford to do anything but a little gardening

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among roses, thus to be lifted from lodgings to fifteen thousand a year.

The first thing Mrs. Fairfax did was to purchase a property which once belonged to her husband's family. The old manor-house with its three gables had been used for many years as a farm-house, and it stood about a hundred yards from the road; but she set to work to restore it. She had everything but a pedigree, and it was, therefore, a source of great pleasure to her to dabble among coats-of-arms and the old carved staircases and panels and high-backed chairs which still stood in the place. The house certainly does stand near the road, but she partly overcame the bad effect by placing an imposing gate-pillar, surmounted with a roaring lion, on each side of the road which passes the house at the angle where it branches from the main road. This leaves the impression that the high road is the private road to the house, and the impression is strengthened by the real entrance to the grounds being an unassuming gate, made low on purpose, and not more than a hundred yards from the front door. I did not see the deception until two men with long ash sticks—everybody seems to carry an ash stick in Cowshire—passed the house, driving four cows, then a man and a woman in a gig, then a three-horse coach, and then I observed that they were all on the high road to Dabshott market.

The breakfast-bell is ringing, and I must go down-stairs.

I had not seen Mr. Fairfax for ten years, and he seems very little changed. Roses are not a wearing pursuit. His wife is ten years older since we met, ten inches rounder, and more amazingly dressed than ever. If her lace is real, she had my income on her back at breakfast. They rose and received me very kindly, but the son kept his seat in an easy chair. He seemed half asleep till breakfast was brought in by two footmen, when he got up and shook me by the hand. He keeps the name of Tallboys from his father, with the Christian name of Penny from the flax-spinner. Though not tall, or more than two-and-twenty, he cannot weigh less than fifteen stone, and no wonder, for he eats grossly. He has very little expression in his face, except what springs from a cast in his left eye. He seldom talks except about money and a horse-deal; he hums half a tune now and then, and is not very taking in his manners.

At breakfast Mrs. Fairfax led off in the conversation, and we talked corps talk. She has raised the two companies in Dabshott, supplied them with uniforms, accoutrements, and instruments for the band, paid the drill-sergeant, given the corps a range of seven hundred yards in the park, and supplied them with as much ammunition as they chose to fire away. She did not quite understand a remark from me about the state of the funds of the corps and the number of subscribers, and she made me repeat it. Upon which she informed me, rather uppishly, that she was the funds of the corps. When it was first raised Mr. Fairfax was elected to the command, Mr. Potts, the tanner, to the lieutenancy, and the boy —she called her son the boy—was made ensign. She scarcely ever mentions Mr. Fairfax by name, or as her husband; but when the context of the sentence requires him in the first or third person, after a pause (of slow time) she bends her head towards him if he is present, or to the window if he is on the lawn among the roses, or to the door through which he has gone when she does not know where he is. When the five corps in Cowshire were formed into an administrative battalion (here she bent her head slowly at Mr. Fairfax) was elected by the officers to be lieut.-colonel commanding. By the rules of the Dabshott corps, which about that time was increased to two companies, the original appointment of the officers rested with the members, but all after-promotion was by seniority; a rule which Mrs. Fairfax and the corps would willingly have evaded, but the Tanner stood on his rights. The rule had its evils, but it was good as serving to prevent the officers bidding for popularity, and also to make the members more cautious in electing gentlemen in the first instance, instead of free and easy fellows like the Tanner, who might not be objectionable as a sergeant, particularly as he was a pretty good drill and a capital shot, but who, as commandant, was quite out of his place, and could be no credit whatever to the corps. So the rules were held good; Mr. Potts succeeded to the command of the corps, and the boy to the second company.

Mrs. Fairfax was rather proud of her husband having been elected to the command of the battalion, for it was as much as to say that he held the best position as a country gentleman in all Cowshire, which extends from Cowdale at one end of the valley of the Dare, quite among the dales, to Yakerley at the other, a distance of forty miles; but she scarcely seemed pleased that the boy had not succeeded her husband, not so much on account of the Tanner, but as removing Mr. Fairfax (meaning herself) from taking an active part in the command of the Dabshott corps, and its drills, firings, funds, and general management. From being paramount, she had dwindled to an honorary member, which meant a subscription of a hundred pounds a-year. Here she explained, almost in the words of the War Office circular, the difference in the positions of the commanding officer of the battalion and the commanding officers of the different corps composing it; and she let out that the Tanner was quite aware of his prerogatives, and not a little tenacious in maintaining them. In fact, he had not been gazetted a week before she found out that, though she might be the funds of the corps, *he* was the rules of it. And the other corps were, if possible, more beyond her control, for she was not, as yet, an honorary member of them; so that she found herself completely shelved, with no more say in the battalion than to submit every now and then to the Lord Lieutenant recommendations for the promotion of officers of the different corps made by their commanding officers. During all this conversation she never spoke of the command being vested in any other person than herself. Her husband had been for some time on the lawn, and the boy in his easy chair, and after a lull of a few minutes she rose, shook her feathers, and retired.

She must have been a fine woman in her day.

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By all accounts she is very liberal, quite a Lady Bountiful. In the class from which she sprung, and in which she passed her first twenty years, the capacities of money-makers are measured by the money they make, and by the way they keep hold of it. With her money is paramount. She thinks money can heal all wounds, cure all complaints, mental and physical, soothe all differences, and buy gratitude.

"Poor thing!" she said at lunch of a gentlewoman who had lost her son in India, "I will send her a ten-pound note."

There is certainly no sticking-plaister like a note of the Bank of England; and, holding as she does this sentiment in common with me and other philosophers, it was quite beyond her comprehension when the note was returned. She looked vacant surprise, and nothing more, when the commanding officer of the Pringle corps—a mill-owner as purse-proud as herself—returned Mr. Fairfax's cheque for ten pounds, which she had sent as his subscription to the funds of that corps.

After church Tallboys proposed tobacco in the saddle-room. The stables are magnificent, like everything about the house; one contains the carriage horses, and the other the boy's hunters,—five well-bred and valuable-looking animals. He does not give me the idea of being a flyer. I should say that a pair of wheels, and a broad pair too, would suit him best. Some of his horses are young and not up to his weight; but the two bays would carry anybody that ought to hunt. I was quite innocent of a hint in saying that the bay with the near white leg could carry me; but he cocked his eye and said in an impressive tone, as if to put a stop at once to the idea of my having a mount—

"My horses have enough to do when they carry me."

He also gave me a peep at a mail-phaeton under a brown-holland cover, dark green picked out with white and red; also harness to match, in a glass-case. He says he likes wheels.

He says the Pringle corps parades at three o'clock on the second Saturday in every month. Wrote to the commanding officer to say I would be at Pringle by the noon-train on the 8th. I wish the boy would drive me; it would be nice exercise for the greys, but I dare not say so. Wrote also to the corps at Cowdale, Wakup, and Yakerley to name a day for me to visit them.

The afternoon was wet. Mr. Fairfax handed me a number of letters and printed circulars from the Lord Lieutenant, the Inspector of Volunteers, and the War Office. Begged an old folio law-book from him, cut out the leaves, all except about an inch of each, to which I pasted the circulars in the order of their dates. Read the whole carefully, and left off with rather confused ideas on many points. Wonder what my duties are. There do not seem to be any instructions for the Adjutants of these rural battalions in particular. Had a long conversation with Mr. Fairfax in his study. When left to himself, and beyond the influence of Madame, he loses his reserve about the middle of his first cigar and talks well, with perhaps rather too much deference to the opinions of others; but his manner is very conciliating, and I was surprised how well I got on with him. He spoke about my visiting each corps in the battalion once a month; he did not know in what capacity; he had heard that my travelling expenses would be allowed shortly by Government; in the meantime I am to keep an account, and he will pay me at the end of the quarter. He seems bored at the idea of being at the head of the battalion, and only too glad to throw the responsibility any where, on me for instance, or upon his wife before my arrival.

Wrote to my old brother officer, Pipps, who has been an Adjutant of a rural battalion in Wales for six weeks, and of course knows everything about it, and asked him fifty questions.

September 8th.—At breakfast Tallboys said he would go with me to see the corps at Pringle, but as he did not say anything about driving, we walked to the Dabshott Station for the train at twelve, and in about half-an-hour were at the Calham Station two miles from Pringle. I proposed walking, as we had two hours and a half before parade, but the boy preferred wheels, and jumping into—no, not exactly jumping, but mounting—a fly, told the man to drive to Pringle. Having missed lunch I was hungry, and ordered something to eat at the inn; he was not hungry, but picked bread, cheese, and celery, when the waiter was out of the room. He had forgotten his cigar-case, and as I had none, he went out for an ounce of bird's-eye, which he began to smoke, and which smelt strong and rank. At three o'clock the corps paraded in the market-place; fifty rough-looking fellows — mill hands and miners — in grey and knickerbockers, and fancy neckcloths, commanded by a big fellow in a pair of hunting-spurs, for he lives six miles off and had ridden to parade, and in a woollen comforter, for he had a very bad cold indeed. As we neared them an old sergeant in the rear gave the word to shoulder, and the corps was on the point of being delivered of a general salute, the band taking independent headers into "God save the Queen" at the caution, when I put up my hand and stopped them. The big man in the comforter stepped forward and said he was the lieutenant, apologising for the absence of the captain, who was an elderly millowner and seldom attended parade. He also said the corps consisted of eighty members, sixty of whom were mill hands employed by the captain and the other millowners in Pringle, the remainder being miners. I here explained to the lieutenant that as Adjutant I was junior to them all, and not entitled to any salute whatever; that my duty was to see that the drills were carried on with uniformity and according to book, to see that the arms were kept in good order, and to give the corps any instruction or assistance it might require. I would therefore thank the lieutenant to "examine" arms, and I would then see him or the sergeant drill the company. The sergeant told me that the men did not know how to examine arms. However, it was easy to see that the rifles were in a filthy state, and, on trying the locks, I found that most of them had been tampered with to such an extent as to be almost dangerous.

I asked who had charge of the armoury. There was none. It was Captain Bates' wish that every man

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should have charge of his own rifle. The sergeant then put the corps through some of the company-drill, but, to my surprise, according to the old book of evolutions which was done away with in 1859. Being fortified with the pocket-edition of the new book, I pointed out the difference between the new system and the old, and also the necessity of all the corps being drilled alike in case of their being brought together as a battalion.

He thought it was a hard thing, at his time of life, to have to learn a new drill.

It would be of little use my attempting to drill them, for I should have to begin at the beginning, but I put the officers and sergeants into their places for line and column, made the old sergeant a present of the book, and told them I would be with them again in a fortnight, when I would see how much they knew of the company-drill as far as section fourteen.

I tried them also at position-drill, of which they knew little, but the lieutenant said that some of them were very good shots. This did not seem very probable, but on placing myself in front of the right-hand man, I told him to go through the second practice of the position-drill, and to aim at my right eye. His position was correct, and he went through the motions steadily without winking or moving a muscle. The position of the next man was that of a poacher at a sitting hare. Some were nervous, some hurried, and all were wrong. On giving the same instructions to a wild-looking fellow in greased boots, he rather hesitated. I raised the muzzle of his rifle between my fore-finger and thumb towards my eye, and repeated the words.

"I munna," he said.

"Why not, my man?"

"She's full."

In Cowshire full means loaded.

Upon this I pointed out the danger of such irregularities, and the necessity of examining arms at every parade according to instructions from the War Office, and quoting the circular; but the circulars, though received, had not been filed, and were never read.

Tallboys here told me that the men are allowed as much ammunition as they like, which they fire away in matches among themselves for beer or money. If the sergeants are present at all, it is not for the purpose of keeping order, but of keeping the score, or to join in the match. I suggested to the lieutenant, who seems anxious enough to do what is right, if he only knew how, that it would be as well to forbid ball practice, except to men who have gone through the course of musketry instruction laid down in War Office form No. 1600. Here he and the sergeant looked at each other; they knew as much of War Office form No. 1600 as they did of logarithms. The lieutenant quite agreed with me, but he said the captain had an idea that the only means of keeping the corps together was by giving them plenty of ammunition. I thought that it would be better if the corps tumbled to pieces than be kept together on such terms; at which he did not seem very much displeased.

A gorgeous footman now came up with Mr. Bates' compliments, and he would be glad to see us all to lunch. Bates was the man who had offended Mrs. Fairfax by returning the ten pound subscription to the funds of his corps; but Tallboys said, "Oh, by all means," and started off at once.

All this time there had been a gaunt-looking lad of eighteen or twenty hovering about the supernumerary rank, with a few others in uniform, the honorary assistant-surgeon being one, sometimes standing in line with the sergeants, and sometimes a few paces off, with his hands in his pockets. He had neither chevrons on his arm, nor bugle nor rifle in his hand, and I guessed in vain what he could be. I was speaking of the bad state of the rifles, and suggesting that the corps should parade with them for three days for "cleaning arms" drill, when there was a voice from the rear in very broad Cowshire—

"Captain, what mun I dya, Captain?"

"What's the matter, my lad?"

"I a brokken my gun."

I found Bates (an elderly gentleman) in a library, dressed—how shall we say? A word is wanted for a black frock-coat, ditto trousers, and a black satin or sticking-plaister waistcoat, at three in the afternoon. There was an elaborate lunch and a great show of silver, but I could only peck at a cutlet after the lunch at the inn; besides, it was late. But I never saw any one eat so voraciously as Tallboys, and he had a grand dinner at home staring him in the face at seven.

Mr. Bates asked a number of questions about the corps, and though I drew my answers as mild as possible, he coloured up at my report of the men and the arms. On my suggesting an armoury he said that such a thing was quite out of the question; the time of his hands could not be occupied in taking their arms out of the armoury and in returning them afterwards. He kept the War Office circulars, but attending to them all was quite another thing. You soldier officers expect too much from the Volunteers, with your forms number this and number that. However, he would speak to the sergeant about the arms, and he ended by saying the only way to keep up a corps was by giving each man charge of his own rifle, and allowing them plenty of ammunition.

"When the corps tendered its services to Government the commanding officer was called upon to state what provision was made for an armoury."

"Yes," he said, "I put down the police-station."

"The arms have never been placed there."

"Oh, that is quite a matter of form."

"And you are responsible for the arms, without knowing how short a time they will remain serviceable if kept as they are. If you had been on parade this afternoon you would agree with me in thinking that to keep arms serviceable they must be kept in an armoury."

"When the arms become unserviceable, what then?"

"Everything being vested in you, the loss will fall on you—fair wear and tear excepted."

"Is that all?" he said, with a chuckle, "I can afford that." And out of a pocket which reached to his knee, he pulled out a long vulgar purse and swung it round his forefinger.

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"Besides, the services of the corps," I said, "are accepted, and arms and ammunition supplied on condition that you find an armoury, and conform to all other War Office regulations."

"Mere matters of form."

"And by your very first rule the corps is subject to all regulations which have been or shall be issued from the War Office."

"Pooh! pooh!"

"Besides, among a mill population like this, who can say on what terms mill-owners and mill hands may be this day six months? Mills may be stopped by an insufficient supply of cotton from America; a civil war there will stop that supply altogether; or the hands may be on strike with not the best of feelings towards mill-owners. It might be desirable to have your rifles in an armoury, but it would show weakness and want of confidence to call them in then; whereas," and he was listening attentively, "it would be an overt act of rebellion if men, Volunteers or not, were to attempt to take arms by force out of a police-station, or a private room used as an armoury. There is another point," I said, rising and putting on my gloves, "which, perhaps, you have not considered. If Government merely wants the services of your corps in the form which you feel inclined to give them, there would be no necessity for my services; but Adjutants are appointed to all rural battalions for the purpose of assisting the different corps in carrying out the War Office regulations, and of making returns, showing their progress in drill and musketry, and the ages of the men, and what they are made of, so that in the day of need Her Majesty may know where to lay her hands on good defenders." Here I hit the table with my hand. Tallboys awoke, and we escaped in the smoke. Tallboys had ordered the fly to wait, so he ought to have paid for it; but when we arrived at the station he scrambled out, without speaking, and walked through the booking-office, leaving me to pay the expenses, which were eleven and sixpence. Probably he had no money in his pocket, and he will pay for the wheels the next time we visit a corps together.

(To be continued.)

ALNWICK CASTLE.

Ten years ago I found myself at the pleasant northern country town of Alnwick. All about the town were pretty drinking-fountains (*pants*, as they called them, a word which may have some remote affinity to *slops*), long before it became the healthy fashion to popularise them in London and elsewhere. That tall column just outside the town, surmounted by a lion, whose long tail streamed horizontally in his rear, owing probably to the breeziness of his position —that remarkable beast carried one's thoughts from one end of the kingdom to the other, even to Charing Cross, where, over Northumberland House, he has a horizontal-tailed brother, in whose caudal waggings at the striking of the clock young Cockneys are taught to believe as an article of faith. Yes, that was an undoubted specimen of the Percy lion! a heraldic creation of national history, and not a mere leonine creature of natural history.

And there, at no very great distance, were the Northumberland buffaloes, also with extended tails, for they were careering along their park with streaming manes, and presenting a very uninviting appearance to the Mr. Briggs of the period, who wanted to make a short cut across their own peculiar domain. And there, as we advanced through the town, was the Bond Gate—the only survivor of the four towers that fortified the town —recalling a memory of the street of the Bondagers or serfs of the mighty Percy, and also of "the gallant Hotspur, young Harry Percy," whose name has been given to the gate tower. And there— hard by the street called the Bailiff Gate, with its advanced line of walls and forts, and double barbican, and with its cloud of towers surmounted by their stony defenders—there was the Percy's stronghold—that castle which of erst would not surrender to the foe, and, now, might not be taken by the artist at the pencil's point. For, alas! I had travelled hither from Warwick Castle, into whose precincts I had not been permitted to enter until I had given up all my sketching materials to a brigand of a porter, who only suffered me to pass within the castle's outer gate, upon the solemn bond of my word and honour that I would not furtively make any sketch with any materials surreptitiously concealed in pockets, or even boots. "It was his orders," he observed; (this law was under the old *régime*, and I believe has now been repealed); so I saw all that a tourist could see of Warwick Castle, but could not carry away any memories save those impressed upon the tablets of the brain. From Warwick, with its three acres of castle, I travelled north to Alnwick, with its five acres of castle, and there discovered that the Warwick rule of the Midland shire had found its imitator in the northern county, and that the artist who wished to sketch within the walls of Alnwick Castle was, practically, nowhere. The pencil had no freer play within the walls of Alnwick than within the walls of Warwick; and hence it is, as I suppose, why all the published views of Alnwick Castle are taken from positions *without* the walls.

How I came to be more privileged at Alnwick than at Warwick—notwithstanding the stern laws and brigandage of either place—need not here be divulged, more especially as they who are curious to learn may have their curiosity gratified by consulting the nearest spirit-rapper. It is sufficient to say that I *had* permission to sketch within the walls, and that I took that advantage of the permission, which is here extended to the reader in the accompanying copies of a portion of my sketches. For their faithfulness I can vouch, according to the brigand porter's form of bond, upon my word and honour; and in their explanation I could say much, but, as anything like an adequate account of Alnwick Castle would far transgress the limits of the present article, I must restrict myself to a mere peep-show explanation, and tell the reader what he sees when he looks to the right or the left.

Look, then, at the sketch from the private grounds, and it will give you a general idea of the castle and its situation. It is built on the summit of the southern bank of the Aln, on a plateau of five acres of ground, walled round with strong

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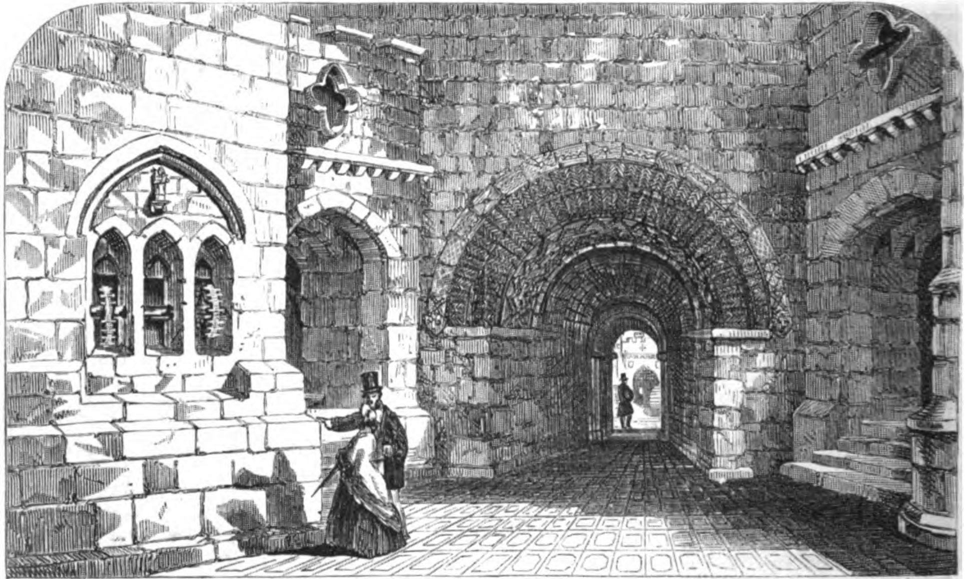
fortifications, defended by sixteen towers, and divided into large court-yards, with the keep in the midst. The keep is polygonal in form, faced by nine towers, and is built round a third, or inner court. Commencing at the left hand of that sketch, we have the northern side of the second court-yard, with the Round (or Record) Tower; next to that is the abutment, called the Ravine Tower, in whose recess is the stone seat called "Hotspur's Chair," and between which and the Record Tower is "the Bloody Gap,"—a name given to that part of the curtain-wall from a breach being there made by the Scots, during some Border war, in a vain effort to capture the castle. Three hundred Scots are said to have fallen there, and the extent of "the Bloody Gap" is plainly to be discerned from the variations in the masonry. We then come to the Constable's Tower, and the Postern Tower, or Sally Port, and then to the Keep itself, which was protected by a low curtain-wall, carried in a semicircle to the Armourer's Tower, and the Falconer's Tower. These are the two towers lately swept away (together with their curtain-wall) in order to accommodate the arrangements consequent upon the erection of the Prudhoe Tower, for which also the two north-western round towers of the Keep were also destroyed. One of these towers contained the ancient banqueting-hall of the Percies; and the successive sacrifice of these four towers, with their many interesting evidences of feudal times, in order that the modern Italian interior of the castle might not be interfered with, has raised a storm of discussion, and a hot debate among such distinguished architects as Scott, Cockerell, Donaldson, Godwin, Wyatt, Pocock, Ferguson, and Salvin, under whom the recently completed works have been carried out, chiefly from the designs of Commen-



The Norman Gateway, Alnwick Castle.

datore Canina. These works have been hailed with applause, and hailed upon with disapprobation. It is an example of one of those Sir Roger de Coverley cases, where much may be said on both sides; and I cannot do better than direct the reader who wishes to inform himself on these points to the pages of "The Builder,"* where he will find all the *pros* and *cons*, and can read Mr. Salvin's descriptions of the magnificent artistic works committed to his care. In the six last years these works have magically transformed the interior of the feudal castle of the chivalrous Earls of Northumberland (much debased, it is true, by Batty-Langley and Strawberry-hill Gothic) into a [illegible] palazzo, with the most gorgeous and costly [illegible]ns of the Renaissance. For six years [illegible] hundred workmen been employed in [illegible]tions; much has been done at Rome, and much on the spot, especially by the twenty-seven native wood-carvers. There are no shams in the decorations; the ceilings and cornices are carved, and not cast or moulded: the walnut and maple-woods are what they pretend to be; and, to such an extent has this Ruskinism, "conscientiousness of art," been carried, that in this age of papier-mâché, carton-pierre, gutta-percha, and the like, there are several *miles* of the egg-ornament laboriously carved by hand, while a door panel has occupied its carver four months, and a shutter panel a twelvemonth. This modern sumptuousness of decoration is a remarkable contrast to that peculiar species of economy imposed upon the proud Percies of three centuries back, when Clarkson's report (in 1567) advised the taking out of the glass windows whenever my lord and his friends did not lie there, and laying them up in safety until their return, justifying this economical act by the "decaye and waste" of the windows "throwe extreme winds."

* [illegible]rticularly the numbers for November 22, 29, [illegible]20, 1856; January 3, October 24, 1857; [illegible]18, Nov. 3, 1860.

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Next to these now-destroyed Armourer's and Falconer's Towers, comes the Abbot's Tower (the large corner one), where the abbot had apartments, whenever choice or necessity caused him to leave his abbey, snugly situated down in the wooded valley by the river-side. Beyond this is seen the West Garret, and the outer or "Utter Ward," with its square and octagonal towers, and its advanced barbican, forming a picturesque mass of great size and strength, and a noble entrance to a noble castle.

In my sketch of the second court, we are looking towards the block of buildings dividing the two court-yards, both of which served as *places d'armes* for exercising and manœuvring troops, and also for jousts and tournaments, although they contained the representatives of those divers dwellings, and kitchens, and laundries, and offices that, in more peaceful days, have been cleared away, and rebuilt, out of our sight, on the outside of the southern wall. There, too, is the large square of the stable-yard, where, a decade of years since, I saw the long ranges of stables fitted up in the pseudo florid-Gothic style, in which the horses tugged their hay out of crocketed-pinnacled racks, on whose front doors were brass plates bearing the steedly names.

Walking along the parapets from the Round Tower, we pass the East Garret, and reach that portion of the wall where my sketch commences. Beginning at the left hand, we first come to the Guard House, and the Auditor's Tower, which flank the southern gate. The south wall is then continued to the Middle Ward, which, as being the second great entrance to the castle, is a building of great size and strength. Over it was the chapel, approached from the library,—a noble room that occupied the greater part of this block of building—but which has now been converted into the private apartments of the Duke and Duchess. This block of building divides the two court-yards, and is terminated in the Keep, whose two semi-octagonal towers were added, in advance, to the old square Norman tower, by the second Lord Percy, about the year 1350.

A series of escutcheons on the upper part of the towers, helps us to the date of their erection; and, though we know not their architect, we have full proof that he did his work well, for the towers have not needed repairs up to this day, and even a rector's legal adviser would experience some difficulty in awarding dilapidations. The moat and drawbridge that guarded the entrance to the keep have long since passed away; but, at the time of my visit, a field-piece, backed up by a pyramidal pile of cannon balls, did harmless duty on either side of the gateway, and playfully menaced the Auditor's Tower and the Guard House on the opposite side of the court-yard.

The ground-floor of the octagonal towers of the keep is lighted by long arrow slits that admit a thin wedge of light to the wine-cellar, on the left-hand, and to the chief dungeon, on the right: the entrance door to the dungeon is shown at the further end of the long entry, in my sketch of the Inner Court. Each of the lodges at the various gates was furnished with dungeons; but this was the chief dungeon for the State offenders. Its size is 11 feet 4 inches, by 10 feet 4 inches. In the floor is an iron grating, over a pit; and, a light being lowered into this for the depth of eleven feet, discloses a horrible grave (worthy of Naples and the dark ages) nine feet by eight, into which the wretched prisoner was lowered, or shot like a sack of coals. Let us thank Heaven that such a place can now only be shown as a curiosity. The breakfast-room was over the gateway: we see one of its windows over the mound of the keep. The windows in the first round tower, and the windows in the flat wall to the left, lighted the old dining-room. The next round tower (to the right, in the sketch,) contained the old drawing-room, whose interior shape was that of the ace of clubs. A portion of the low curtain-wall is seen at the base of the keep mound; and then, immediately on the right, is the postern tower, or sally-port. In the lower part was a laboratory; in the upper part, a collection of old armour, and a museum of miscellaneous antiquities; Roman remains; small cannon, used at the first invention of gunpowder; the old standard bushel of Northumberland, and a chain of several links, that could be bound around an arm, like an iron chain, and was carved out of a solid block of stone.

Let us now pass between those two great octagon towers, and up the long dark tunnel that will lead us into the heart of the Keep, the third, or inner court. Here is the chief entrance to the castle; the carriages rattle under that dark archway with a peculiar, dull sound, for its pavement is of wood, as is also the pavement of the inner court. It is a polygon, having nine sides of various dimensions, besides other little angles, and it is about 100 feet across from the one side to the other; and, as it is walled in with high towers on every side, it has somewhat of a well-like aspect. Its two great architectural and antiquarian curiosities are the Saxon (or Norman, if you are a great stickler for this point) mouldings on the inner face of the archway, presenting a great diversity of enrichments—and the old draw-well, for the use of the castle during a siege. This is built in the thickness of the wall, with three pointed arches, surmounted by one large discharging arch, on the point of which is a humorous-looking corbel, supporting the figure of a priest, who is in the attitude of blessing the water. The old axle, with its pegged handwheels, still remains, and this interesting draw-well has not been interfered with in the recent alterations, though the aspect of the Inner Court has been altered by the addition of the covered drive.

Thus much with the pen to explain the sketches with the pencil. The limits of this paper do not allow me to say more of Alnwick Castle, or to touch upon the varied events that have befallen it and its owners, from those early Percy days when—

"in the Conqueror's fleet
Lord William shipp'd his powers,"

(as one of the family has told us in his Ballad of the Hermit of Warkworth) down to those later times of handsome Hugh Smithson, the London apothecary, and his descendants, when, as the American poet Halleck sings in that ballad, which

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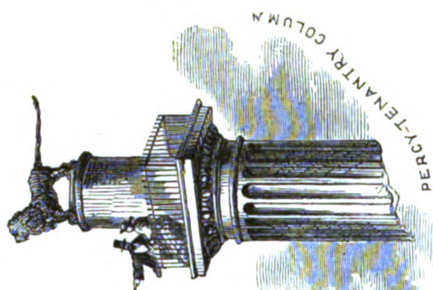
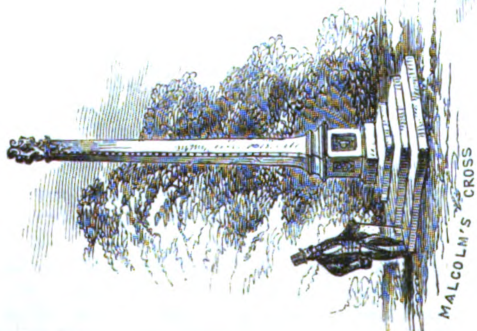


PERCY-TENANTRY COLUMN

ALNWICK CASTLE FROM THE PRIVATE GROUNDS



MALCOLM'S CROSS

THE SECOND COURTYARD.

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is not so well known (in its entirety) as it deserves to be:—

> "The present representatives
> Of Hotspur and his gentle Kate,
> Are some half-dozen serving-men,
> In the drab coats of William Penn,"

who will bow you

> "From donjon vault, to turret wall,
> For ten-and-sixpence sterling."

I have not space to dwell upon these matters, although there is very much to interest us in the records of the castle and its owners, and much for salient anecdote and gossip, not only as to the people, but also their manners and customs. As, for example, that curious MS. book, dated 1512, which tells us how the fifth Earl and his family lived; how they had fresh meat from Midsummer to Michaelmas, and salt meat for all the rest of the year; how the servants rarely had anything else than salt meat, with few or no vegetables (the roast beef of Old England being a mere Jack-o'-Lantern to them); how my lord and lady had no sheets to their bed, and only washed their tablecloths once a month; how they rose at six, breakfasted at seven on a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, six red herrings, four white herrings, and a dish of sprats—half a chyne of mutton and a chyne of boiled beef being added on flesh-days; how they dined at ten and supped at four, and went to bed at nine; how there were only two cooks, with two assistants, to provide for a household of two hundred and twenty-three, and how the head cook was so great a monarch that when he gives an order for the making of mustard it bears this preamble: "It seemeth good to us and our council;" how the players at Christmas had twenty-pence for every play, and the rockers in the nursery had as many shillings each year; how, in the winter, only a peck of coals were allowed for each fire, and no fires after Lady-day, except half-fires for my lord and lady, and the nursery. There is all this, and very much more, that is both curious and interesting, but space, and not material, fails me.

Nor can I speak of the out-of-door lions of Alnwick—the park, the gardens, the model farm, the duchess' dairy, the ruins of Alnwick Abbey down in the sequestered dell by the river, the ruins of Hulne Abbey upon the slope of the hill over against the castle—Brislee Tower, a Strawberry-hill erection eighty feet high, called by Mr. Walter White "an elegant structure;" but, in my humble opinion, a very hideous affair, and a fit companion to the Kew Pagoda; and more useful than ornamental, for the summit commands a glorious view;—the monument to commemorate the capture of William the Lion, and the cross to commemorate the death of King Malcolm, of which, as an engraving appears with my other sketches, I subjoin a brief account. It bears the following inscriptions: "Malcolm, III. King of Scotland, besieging Alnwick Castle, was slain here, Nov. xiii., an. MXCIII.—K. Malcolm's cross, decayed by time, was restored by his descendant, Eliz. Dutchess of Northumberland, MDCCLXXIV." It is distant about three-quarters of a mile from the castle, on the opposite side of the river; but, from what the ancient chartulary of Alnwick Abbey says, the spot where Malcolm died was two or three hundred yards nearer to the castle, where "Malcolm's Well" now is. Malcolm was ravaging Northumberland with fire and sword, and, in due course, laid siege to Alnwick, which was stoutly defended by Morœl of Bamburgh. When the garrison could hold out no longer, a certain man rode forth to Malcolm, bearing the keys of the castle tied to the end of his spear, and presented himself in a suppliant posture, as being come to surrender up possession. Malcolm advanced to receive the keys, when the soldier pierced him with a mortal wound, and, dashing through the swollen river, escaped by the fleetness of his horse. Malcolm dropped dead; a panic arose among the Scots, and the desperate defenders of Alnwick made a successful sortie, and put their enemy to the rout. Prince Edward, Malcolm's eldest son, received mortal wounds in this fight. The old Abbey chronicle says, that the soldier's name was Hammond, and the place where he swam the river was called "Hammond's Ford." But, Hector Bœtius has improved the story into a legend, and says the soldier's name was Mowbray, and that he pierced Malcolm through the eye, and from that circumstance acquired the name of Pierce-eye, and became the founder of the proud family of Percy, Earls of Northumberland. A very pretty legend, but somewhat damaged by obtrusive facts, especially by that fact, that the ancestor of the family was that William de Percy, of the town of Percy, in Lower Normandy, who was one of the Norman chieftains who came over with the Conqueror, and whose name is recorded in the rolls of Battle Abbey.

CUTHBERT BEDE.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

SOCIAL REFORMERS.

PESTALOZZI: THE COMBES: ROWLAND HILL.

THOSE of us who can look back forty years must well remember the fancy that Society took, on a sudden, to interrogate children. It is an odd thing to recal now,—one of the strangest fashions of a period full of wild fashions. After a long term of insular seclusion, through the war, we welcomed all sorts of foreigners to our soil, and all manner of foreign notions to our minds. The grand discovery of the benefit of questioning children made great way in the country, and among some of the best-hearted people in it. Wherever one went, among the educated classes, one found the same thing going on. Children of all ages, but especially the younger, were undergoing cross-examination from morning till night. It was a terrible time for them. I have seen some fall into a habit of tears when asked a question which they could not answer. I have seen more fall into a habit of glib lying, under the teazing constraint. I have seen tempers ruined for life by the constant irritation; and most old people may probably say that they have seen promising intellects frittered away; minds above the average at the outset of life rendered incurably desultory, shallow, and conceited. If there are readers of Wordsworth who are puzzled at this day about the drift of his poem, called "Anecdote for Fathers, showing how the

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practice of Lying may be taught," let them remember that it was written at the time when "the Pestalozzian system" was in vogue in England and throughout Europe; and then they will see what a good lesson it yields. If, at this day, the image flits across our memories of some pale child, with a fretful brow, red eyes, and a constant disposition to get out of the room, or to hide behind the window-curtains when spoken to, we may refer that image back to the days of the "Pestalozzian system," as it was fashionably understood in this country.

It was a cruel injustice to Pestalozzi to render him responsible for all this mischief. His mission was, not to craze children's brains and break their hearts, but the very contrary. We, in fact, gave his name to a mere reaction from a mistake of our own, — to one kind of ignorance into which we fell in our escape from another.

In our desire for popular education, early in the century, we had supposed the thing to be done was to put certain facts into the learner's mind,—to lay them upon his memory, as it were. To quicken and spread the process, we set children who had learned a thing one minute to teach it to other children the next. This did not answer. We called it "the Lancasterian system," and supposed the nation would be educated in a trice. When we found at the end of ten or twenty years that boys and girls left school after sitting nine years on the benches, unable to do any good with book or pen, while they had lost their home-training in the workshop, the field, or the dairy, we were ready for a reaction: and to that reaction we most unjustly gave the name of "the Pestalozzian system."

The notion was that we had been all wrong in putting knowledge into children's heads; and that the right way was to get ideas out of them. Henceforth we were to develop faculties, and not to impose knowledge. It was a great day for us when the conception was formed, and began to spread. Without it, education would never have advanced even as far as it has. But we blundered over it sadly at first; and among our mistakes it was not the least that we christened our follies after Pestalozzi. Every great step in social progress is taken in the name of some Representative Man. It is the business of those who come after to absolve those representatives from the disrepute of mistakes which were none of theirs; and we may hope that Pestalozzi's memory has long been clear from the charge of torturing on the rack of cross-examination the generation of children whom he loved so well. What it was that he did propose is best seen by looking at his life; for, if he was not a very practical man in the sense of wisely conducting affairs, he was still less of a theorist. He knew very well what he meant and what he wanted: but he had no compact system to propose, grounded on any new theory of the human faculties. The foremost man in the educational revolution of modern times, he obeyed his instincts, and left it for incompetent followers to make a scheme of doctrine out of what he said and did.

What were those instincts? And how did he use them?

We first see him as a very peculiar little boy, whose best friend was his mother's maid, Barbara. His name is Italian: but he was a Swiss. His ancestors had been citizens of Milan: but one of them, becoming Protestant at the time of the Reformation, had to seek a Protestant country to live in, and went to Zurich. The father of this little John Henry was a physician. He died so early that he left a very bare provision for his widow and their only son; and, aware of the prudence that their circumstances would require, he recommended them, on his death-bed, to the care of the trusty maid Barbara, who fully justified the confidence. She carried them through with an appearance of respectability on the smallest means, and nourished the pride of narrow circumstances in the boy, in striving to avoid the opposite fault of meanness. She told him that no Pestalozzi had ever eaten the bread of dependence, and that his mother's self-denial raised him above the degradation suffered by many another orphan in Zurich. These lessons, and Barbara's own character, account for much of the passionate advocacy of the claims and the independence of the poor, and of the respect for their virtues, which were the chief features of the whole life of the man. From six years old, when his father died, he looked upon all poor orphans with an interest compounded of fellow-feeling and of lofty pity for their inferiority in independence. His great, but as yet unconscious desire was to help the whole class to independence.

It does not appear why he devoted himself, as he grew up, to the study of languages. Probably he had no choice as to the course of his training: but we find him, so early as the age of eighteen, leaving that study and preparing himself with great zeal for the pulpit. His deeply religious nature might well indicate this career: but he early failed in it, and gave it up. His first attempt to preach ended in mortification, and it is not difficult to perceive why. His education must have been defective, for, to the end of his long life, he spoke a jargon of German or French, sometimes mixing the two; a kind of language which none but his intimates could comprehend. His articulation was defective; his countenance was so ugly as to be forbidding; and, during the latter part of his life at least, his personal habits were worse than slovenly. The failure in the pulpit is not wonderful: nor yet that in the law, which he tried next. He turned again to his first pursuit, and published some philological writings. While eager about a new method of teaching Latin, he one day took up Rousseau's "Emile;" and the book determined the whole course of his life.

Insisting that the pursuit of learning was the most unnatural of human occupations, he not only gave it up, but burned all his papers; not only his notes, but manuscripts on Swiss law and Swiss history. He would live henceforth as a son of the soil. He sold his small patrimony, to buy a bit of land to farm; married the daughter of a merchant of Zurich, and began domestic life at two and twenty. His wife's connection gave

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him an interest in a cotton-manufactory; and he became well acquainted with two classes of labourers at once. The discovery of their intellectual degradation shocked him. Both the farm-labourers and the spinners were so inferior to the poor of his imagination, that he was at once stimulated and dismayed. He was thirty when he set about the sort of work which made him the world's benefactor. He collected about fifty poor, and desolate children on his little estate, lived with them in a state of hardship, taught them to work, and to think, and to read, and made friends of them. In the absence of other assistants, he adopted the plan of setting them to teach one another; a feature of his method which recommended it where the Lancasterian system existed. Having no skill, and no prudence in the management of affairs, he was soon ruined, and the establishment was broken up.

This was the occasion of his giving us the book which made his name famous all over Europe. To explain his views, and to get immediate means of support, he wrote "Leonard and Gertrude," which might soon after be seen on the tables of all benevolent and all literary persons in all countries. Its disclosure of continental peasant life was perhaps the first charm to us; but it also changed the character of educational effort in England as elsewhere. Perhaps this popularity gave the good man honour in his own country.

After the revolutionary war in Switzerland the Canton of Unterwalden was overrun with wretched children who seemed to belong to nobody. They prowled about the burned hamlets, and infested town and country like little wolves. The government asked Pestalozzi to take charge of some of them, and offered him some little aid. It was a singular spectacle when this uncouth man, then in the vigour of his years (it was in 1798), entered the ruins of a ravaged convent, with his mob of 150 outcast children. He was all alone with them: and some of them were sickly and stunted; many were fretful; and not a few ferocious, or malicious, or impudent, or full of suspicion and falsehood. He lived and laboured among them, nursed them, taught them, and soon began to open their minds and gain their hearts. In a little while their avidity for knowledge astonished him. The facts of the case indicate that he had an aptitude for communicating with children's minds that amounted to genius. Our mistake, twenty years later, was in supposing that the virtue lay in that part of the method which could be imitated. Pestalozzi, conversing with young creatures who had never supposed that anybody cared for them, surprised them by his interest in what they felt and thought. His questions roused their faculties, and sent a glow through their feelings; and their improvement transcended all precedent. Reports of his conversation and his achievements set others to work; and there was such an interrogation of children as was never dreamed of before.

One question which Pestalozzi asked of this set of pupils is memorable. They had seen Altdorf in flames. About those blackened ruins there were again desolate children, living as they could. Pestalozzi sounded the minds of his pupils as to doing something in the case. When they eagerly desired to take in twenty among them, Pestalozzi asked them whether they could bear the consequences. They must work harder even than now: they must live yet more barely: they might have to share their dinners and their clothes with strangers whom they might not like. He would not allow a rash decision. He made them fully understand what they were undertaking, and put off the settlement of the question. Still, the pupils said, "Let them come!"

The ravage of war swept away this institution; but Pestalozzi could never again be overlooked. His special function was recognised at home and abroad. His books were translated into many languages; and the emperors and kings of Europe were eager to apply his wisdom to the education of their people. He was summoned to Paris, to join a consultation on the interests of Switzerland, ordered by Napoleon. But he made his escape from Paris at the first possible moment: he did not waut imperial patronage which interfered with his work at home: he would have nothing to do with politics. He desired to live with children and the poor, to open their minds, and make them good and happy.

It seemed as if he had attained his utmost wishes when the town of Yverdun offered him its castle and grounds for a school, with perfect freedom as to the management. For a few years the promise of educational advancement was truly splendid. Some of Pestalozzi's own pupils became able and devoted assistants; and other young men, of the highest qualifications, devoted themselves as apostles of his mission. Here and there over Europe establishments arose where boys, and sometimes girls, were trained at once in industry and intellectual progress. Those who were in the gardens, or the harvest field, or the dairy, at one time of the day, were studying languages, mathematics, or music, at other hours. And where this direct imitation of the Swiss establishments was not attempted, there was a visible improvement in methods of instruction. We learned to see that books and education, books and teaching, are not the same thing. Oral instruction came into use elsewhere than at mothers' knees; and, amidst some gross abuses, "the Pestalozzian system" began to work great good.

There is almost always some dreary chapter in the history of these Representative Men. In Pestalozzi's there were several: but the dreariest of all was the last.

There never was a movement which depended more entirely for success on the personal qualifications of its agents. We need not look further than the next street, or the next house, to see how one person differs from another in the faculty of genuine intercourse with children's minds. The smallness of the number of the well-endowed with this power is the best reason for the large use of books in schools; and Pestalozzi's genius for companionship with inferior minds caused a too exclusive recourse to oral instruction. Thus, when assistants came upon the scene, there was diversity, disagreement, disappointment, and no little

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disorder. We need not go into the painful story of warring tempers and incompatible interests. The institution declined for some years, and then was broken up,—the government of the Canton warning the manager of the concern, who acted in Pestalozzi's name, to leave the country.

It needs no explanation that Pestalozzi was in some respects weak. The failure of all his establishments and his inability to keep out of debt show this. His faculties of imagination and sympathy overpowered the rest of his mind. He early seized a great truth;—that of the claim of every human being to the full development of his faculties, whatever they may be; and the concentration of his strongest powers on this great truth made him a social reformer of a high order. He was not a philosopher; he was not a man of good sense, or temper, or practical ability, generally speaking; though sense, temper, and ability appeared to be all transcendent in the particular direction taken by his genius. Among his inferiors,—and particularly friendless children,—he was a prophet and apostle: among men he was a child, and sometimes a perverse one.

He died at the age of eighty-one, preserving, in the midst of great pain, his enthusiasm for justice, his special love for children and the poor, and his strong religious sentiment. Two days before his death he spoke long and nobly, while taking leave of his family and his enterprises. His country, and we hope the world, has remembered his good offices to society, and forgiven his foibles. It is no disrespect to him to point out how purely personal his special work was, however general the truths which it may exemplify. For instance, the Hofwyl Institution, which arose directly out of Pestalozzi's movement, and was conducted by one of his best pupils, soon exhibited the spectacle of a separation of classes on the ground of social position. There was a genteel school and a working-class one; and the young gentlemen in one of the schools took pains to impress on visitors that they had no intercourse whatever with the youths in the other, who tilled the farm. It was enough to make Pestalozzi turn in his grave to hear them. Yet has Hofwyl been valuable in familiarising us with the idea of industrial schools as something different from a practicable education for paupers.

When, again, we see instructors (as I have seen them) making fools of themselves and knaves of their pupils ("showing how the practice of lying may be taught,") by proceeding on "the Pestalozzian view" of children, we must separate the merits of Pestalozzi's view from the abuses of followers, who have not genius, as he had, to make up for the want of philosophy. We must remember that when he interrogated children, it was for their benefit, and not for the gratification of his own imagination or complacency. He got a hold of their minds in order to use them for their own improvement; but some of his followers have assumed that children are cherubs and seraphs in disguise, and have interrogated them as oracles, and not as learners; and when treated as oracles, children have wonderful things to tell. These abuses are not attributable to the great reformer of the principle of education. He was a Representative Reformer in his clear view of the evil he wanted to cure; in his devotedness, his benevolence, his genius in a special direction, and his weakness in other special directions. We need never look among reformers for first-rate men, or for complete and well-compacted minds: and Pestalozzi was not of the highest order of men, or anything like complete or perfect. But we owe it to him that we long ago took the turn from a hopeless mechanical training of the multitude in schools into a path in which we are making an accelerating progress. It was he who set his own and following generations on producing intellect by bringing out faculty to act upon fact, instead of trying to communicate knowledge by laying in a stock of instruction, as a deposit upon inert minds.

There is no saying, either, how much he has wrought in every work of rescue of the poor from ignorance, since the opening of the century. When John Pounds, the Portsmouth cobbler, beckoned in first one and then another disorderly boy from the gutter, and gave him room in his stall to stand and learn of him as he mended shoes, the spirit of Pestalozzi was there. John Pound's little ragged school was a better Pestalozzian institution than several which have looked grand upon the title. When Dr. Guthrie kindles his audience with appeals for the ragged, and shows what has been done for hundreds of them, and what remains to be done for thousands, it is the same thing as hearing Pestalozzi, "in his habit as he lived." Whoever else may work, and whatever may be done, over and above what he could have done, Pestalozzi will remain the representative of educational justice to the whole community.

It may be safely said that, but for Pestalozzi, we should not have had the benefit of the Combes. George and Andrew Combe declared, with all sincerity, that it was the doctrine of Gall and Spurzheim which determined the direction of their powers and the aim of their lives; but their beneficent application of the doctrine of phrenology itself was doubtless due to the enthusiasm of the day for educational justice to the whole community. To this cause George Combe was, perhaps, the greatest benefactor of his generation, by giving the world his "Constitution of Man," at the moment when society was ready to appropriate the idea of the operation of natural laws on the bodies and minds of men, as on their outward circumstances.

It was not necessary that Mr. Combe's book should be soundly philosophical in its substance and in its reasoning. Few persons, if any, would now pronounce it to be so: yet it has been a singularly valuable gift to society. A work which circulated to the amount of nearly 100,000 copies, in the author's own country, during his life, must have some extraordinary aptitude for the popular need; and the spread of the work in America, and in some European countries, was scarcely less remarkable than its reception at home. Part of the circulation was owing to the extreme cheapness of the book, after a benevolent man had left a legacy for the purpose of reducing the price;

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but the demand is a fact, and a significant fact in the history of the time. The educated classes read it, determined its value for themselves, obtained useful hints from it, and left it behind them; but the effect on the half-educated and hitherto untaught was vital. Hundreds of thousands of intelligent mechanics, and of fathers of families in the middle classes would say, if asked, that the great event in the life of their minds was the getting hold of that book. There they learned that their bodies were a part of the universe, made of substances and governed by laws which it is man's duty to study and obey. It was a new view to them that by knowledge and self-management, men have their health, and the development of their minds in their own hands. They had before thought of themselves as beings outside of the world, as it were,—apart from the rest of creation,—each individual being a single existence, incomprehensible in nature and qualities, and in no way concerned with natural laws, except perhaps in the matter of eating and drinking, for the sustaining of life. When the chemical composition of the human frame was opened to them, and they were led to the conception of organs of mental action—organs susceptible of health and disease, and committed to the guardianship of human prudence and conscientiousness, it was as if a new revelation had come to them. Multitudes rushed into the conviction that their lot was mainly in their own power, and men set to work to study their bodies and minds, and to arrange their habits for the benefit of both, as no men in this country ever did before. They educated themselves, and claimed education for their children with great zeal; and if there was much nonsense talked from phrenology seizing the imagination of ignorant persons, it was worth while for the sake of the self-respect and self-discipline created by the new set of ideas. Beyond a certain point the Combes themselves hindered the advance of Gall's great discovery. They were not philosophical enough to comprehend the requisites of philosophy; and they could never discern the limits of the scope of any particular evidence. When satisfied therefore, and rationally satisfied, of the main truth of Gall's discovery, they made out all the particulars to their own further satisfaction. They mapped out the brain, left nothing doubtful, left no room for any essential modification, and imagined they had explained things by describing them. They were generous, tolerant, serene, benevolent, and practically wise, in comparison with most men; but they had not the clearsightedness or the modesty of philosophical investigators and discoverers. They announced great truths with an exemplary goodwill and devotedness; and, to make them real social reformers, it was not necessary that they should perceive precisely the scope, or the actual position of the truth they taught. They did an enormous amount of good, of a kind which perpetuates itself, and can never be lost. If Pestalozzi convinced society of the right of every poor child to the full development of its faculties, the Combes showed every man in society how to do himself justice, and, on the whole, what those natural laws are, by obeying which men may raise themselves and their children to the best condition their constitution admits.

The effects have been conspicuous for thirty years past. The bodily habits of society have greatly improved, and our baths and washhouses —our sanitary arrangements of all kinds—our restrictions on hours of labour, and the new demand for bodily exercise are largely owing to the Combes. They denounced the bad arrangements of schools, by which boys became stunted and girls crooked. They have introduced baths as an ordinary article of furniture in middle-class houses. In their benevolence they had courage to set prudery, as well as prejudice, at defiance; and the mothers of the present (and in them of each future) generation owe them much. Yet greater was the good they did in putting men in charge of their own mental and moral health, by engaging them in an interesting inquiry into their own structure of brain, and into the influences which operate upon it for good or evil. It was to ignorant men like entering upon a new state of existence, when they began to recognise themselves as a subject of study, and their children as committed to them as to a Providence.

The brothers were of the very make for social reformers, except that Andrew wanted health. In one way his life of disease made him a benefactor; for all who knew him saw how he prolonged and husbanded his life by wise and cheerful care. They were constitutionally firm, confident, and strong in the singleness of their view and aim, which involved some narrowness about other views and aims. They were liberal in allowing perfect freedom of opinion to everybody; but this did not extend to regarding with respect any divergence from their own convictions. They taught and practised universal tolerance; but they made no secret of their pity of those who differed from themselves. In their view it was want of knowledge or of candour which prevented the whole world from being of their opinion; they compassionated the defect, and did their best to remove it. If they could have perceived that their key fails to unlock many of the chief secrets of human nature, and that their proposals are inadequate to the supply of its needs, they would not have been the zealous and happy and confident apostles that they were, and could hardly have led forward the middle and working-classes to the point of improvement which they have reached.

In their lives they were a thorough contrast to Pestalozzi. He was a man of genius and passion, dirty in his person, always embarrassed in fortune, infirm in temper, but idolised by his dependent pupils. The Combes were altogether respectable, —in manners and the conduct of their affairs; very amiable in intercourse, and delightfully attached to each other; but as far from genius as from passion. The Swiss, by genius, stimulated by passion, and the Scotchmen, by benevolent zeal, concentrated by good sense within a narrow scope, did one of the great works of the age, in extending the range, and elevating the aims of education, in the larger sense.

Another great work, achieved by a man who differs from these as widely as they differed from

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each other, seems to me to claim honour as a means of educational advance, more than in any other light. The institution of Cheap Postage has been praised daily and hourly for several years now; yet there has perhaps not been enough said about its educational effects on the public at large. Rowland Hill understands this more accurately than social reformers sometimes comprehend their own work. He was bound to show that the scheme would answer in a pecuniary sense, and as a matter of convenience; and his showing this triumphantly is no evidence that he made his scheme for the sake of the money or the convenience. He wrote and spoke of pence and farthings, and fractions of farthings; and he went into details about hours and distances, till apathetic and selfish people called him a bore: but he was thinking, all the while, of the governess pining for family letters which were then too costly a luxury; of the apprentice and the servant-maid who dropped by degrees their intercourse with the old home because they or their parents could not pay postage; and of the lovers who lost all the best comforts and pleasures of the engaged period by the difficulty of correspondence by letter. He thought of the tricks and lies which were made common and familiar by dear postage, as vice was made common and familiar by prohibitory duties in the days of smuggling. There were plenty of other evils, connected with commerce, the administration of justice, and social intercourse, for him to think about: but the family and personal interests of the British people were no doubt nearest his heart. Though the modes of success have been more various than he, or anyone else, could have foreseen, he must have had a prevision of great and precious blessings, when the day should come for letters to be almost as free as speech; when the evils of separation would be softened to families and friends; and when a new inducement should be supplied to fresh classes of persons to cultivate thought and the art of expressing it. One is told now, in an evening school in a factory town, by one uncouth young woman of another who is at her pot-hooks—"Hur wants to write to hur chap." This is a great thing; but it is a greater that more civilised orders of families are kept together, and as if at home, by our present facilities for correspondence, and are early habituated to express their thoughts on paper in a natural way; this being one of the best methods of acquiring the habit of distinct thought.

No social reformer has stood in more need than Rowland Hill of the persistency, arising from clear conviction, which is the main attribute of the character. He had to contend with more than the reformer's ordinary share of obstruction from conceit, apathy, levity, wrongheadedness, prejudice, and self-interest. There were times when, if he was patient and serene, his supporters found it impossible to be so. I vividly remember the nonsense talked at London dinner-tables while the project was in suspense, when everybody supposed himself qualified to criticise and correct the man and his scheme. Most laughed at it as nonsense; and those who affected to patronise it, proposed some amendment which would have destroyed its whole character. I do not remember meeting any one person, outside the circle of his friends, who saw any unity in the principle and the embodiment of it. Nobody saw why the postage of a letter should be a penny rather than threepence, or why it should be universal and uniform. The members of the parliamentary committee showed no more sense of this than the multitude: did not see that the ratio of population to the length of railroad in any country had anything to do with the question: had not inquired for post-office returns in America; decided that there could be some considerable reduction in postage, but nothing resembling in wildness a uniform, or a penny postage. So the affair dragged on; and when the mercantile world compelled the government to do something, the thing that it did was more trying than failure. It ordained a fourpenny postage, and threw the responsibility of it on Rowland Hill. This and much more he had to bear before his project was adopted; and when it was adopted, there was the constant irritation of seeing mischief done by the unscrupulous hostility of the functionaries of the post-office, high and low. I need not enter upon the well-known old story of what they did. It is over now; and cheap correspondence is to us now as plentiful bread and spacious windows, a secure daily blessing. We ought not, however, to forget that time in our lives when we were devising schemes to lure the humbler classes to school,—proposing to make the ability to read and write a condition of domestic service, of enlistment in the army or navy, or the public service, and of admission to beneficial associations of any kind. At that very time Rowland Hill was urging a project which, under a different name, would do more than all these devices for the encouragement of popular education. We must not forget that desolate silence of the heart under which parted households pined before their benefactor gave them the power of calling to each other from any distance, unheard by everybody else. There is a vast development of industry and wealth to be considered also; and inestimable service to science, art, and convenience: but the main blessing of the reform is the enlargement of the powers of speech, among the classes which needed it most.

Sir Rowland Hill is a Representative Social Reformer by his earnestness, his persistency, the clearness of his aim, and his command over the proper means. He has had a fuller success than most of his order, though he had to wait for it through years of solicitude and vexation. In the accuracy of his statements and his expectations he is a fine example for men who believe themselves born to set the world right, and are in too great a hurry to do it. His experience of success is something unusual: but sincere reformers do not stop to calculate the probabilities of success before going into action. That he has title, position, wealth, and even fame, is of less interest to both aspirants and mere observers than the qualities which he brought to bear on his work. He represents the social reformers who succeed in a great object by means of adequate knowledge and clear sense, actuated by honest intent, and upheld by a good-natured patience. HARRIET MARTINEAU.

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THE FIRST BLEEDING IN RUSSIA.

THE Czar Alexis, father of Peter the Great, was one morning in a state of great irritation. He alternately walked about and sat down, contradicted and scolded his courtiers around him, who stood trembling before his bloodshot eyes and the unnatural hue of his countenance. All of a sudden his sight became darkened, his head fell heavily upon his shoulder, his legs tottered, and he fell into a swoon upon the floor. He was laid on the sofa, and his physician at once sent for, who, finding his pulse at a perfect stand, and all the symptoms of the face indicating an approaching attack of apoplexy, ordered the Czar's arm to be uncovered, in order to bleed him. But hardly had the doctor taken in hand the lancet, when Alexis, somewhat recovering from his swoon, opened his eyes, and asked the doctor in an angry tone what he was about.

"I was about to bleed you, your majesty," replied the other, softly.

"To bleed me?—I don't understand you."

"This instrument," said the doctor, pointing to the lancet, "would make such a slight incision in the flesh of your arm, as to cause much less pain than even the scratch of a pin; but it will cause a few drops of the thick blood to flow off, and facilitate thereby the circulation of the whole system."

"How?" shrieked Alexis. "You mean to wound me, and spill my blood intentionally! How dare you!"

"It's true, sire, the cure of bleeding is not yet known in your vast empire; but it has been introduced into Poland, Germany, and France with unfailing success; but I would certainly not have dared to attempt it on your majesty's person if I had not found you in imminent danger of your life."

"Nonsense! I will not allow my body to be wounded or my blood to be spilt," said the Czar, doggedly.

"But consider, Czar Alexis," remonstrated the doctor, earnestly: "in taking from you a few drops of blood, I am sure to save your life; but if you refuse, I cannot answer for the consequences, and what now appears only a slight indisposition, may turn to a most serious illness, which will baffle all my skill and all the medicine in the world."

Struck by these ominous words, Alexis asked whether there were no other means of saving his life.

"None that I know of," replied the doctor, seriously.

"Does bleeding hurt a person in good health?" asked Alexis.

"Certainly not; it can neither harm nor do good to persons who are in no need of it."

"Then," said Alexis, "bleed yourself first, doctor."

"With pleasure; but my arm will then be so weak for a couple of days, that I shall not be able to perform the operation on you during that interval."

The Czar then told all his courtiers to stand round in a circle, and ordered the doctor to bleed them all in turn. These were Ilia Milaslowsky (late father-in-law of the Czar), the Princes Narishkin and Dolgorucki, Count Tolstoy, General Lubanoff, Shermetoff, Godanoff, and many more of high rank and birth. Each and all were obliged, in blind obedience to the Czar's will, to submit to the ordeal; however, when the turn came to Streshneff, who was bent with age and enfeebled by long service, and was, besides, related to the reigning dynasty by the mother of Alexis, the doctor made a full pause, and looked hesitatingly at the Czar, as much as to say, here is danger in the operation. Encouraged by the pause, Streshneff bent his knee before Alexis, and said:—

"May your majesty please to pardon the liberty I am taking to beseech you, in all humility, to spare me the few drops of blood which the Almighty has still left in my veins at my advanced age. What may be useful or harmless to the young, may prove dangerous to the old."

The doctor nodded assent to the assertion. The Czar, however, felt himself so insulted, that, clenching his fist and inflicting a blow at the breast of the old man, he shrieked in a most violent voice—

"How dare you, old dog, to disobey your Sovereign? If you do not at once unbare your arm, I shall have you shot like an old beast."

We need not say that Streshneff underwent the operation, which done, the doctor told Alexis that it was now his turn to be bled.

"Very well," said the Czar, gloomily; and unbaring his arm, turned away his head, and bid the doctor to make haste.

Strange to say, Alexis, who could with the utmost indifference look on at the blood he caused to be shed of thousands of his subjects, was coward enough to be frightened at the sight of a few drops of blood from his own body!

JAPANESE GARDENERS.

"Blest be the man (and blest he is) whome'er—
Placed far out of the roads of hope and fear—
A little field, and little garden, feeds:
The field gives all that frugal Nature needs;
The wealthy garden liberally bestows
All she can ask." COWLEY.

I LOVE a garden. There is scarcely a day in the year in which I do not find something in it to admire and gratify me, or some pleasing employment to occupy my spare time. A garden and a wife were amongst the first gifts bestowed on man:—

"The fairest garden in her looks."

Evelyn says that the life and felicity of a gardener are preferable to all other diversions, and this I am more and more convinced will be found to be the case. How well may we enter into the feelings of Shenstone when he turned a small farm into those grounds called the Leasowes, which were at the time so much visited and admired. He collected and brought through a little "bosky dell," several insignificant rills, and caused them to fall over rough stones, thus forming a cascade which foamed and fretted through a bold ridge of rocks, surrounded by oaks and beeches, or else trickled over pebbles as it wandered through his fields.

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Fond, however, as the English are of their gardens, they would appear to be excelled in this respect by the Japanese. Every one of these singular people, both rich and poor, are said to have a garden; the latter, if possible, both in front as well as in the rear of their cottages. In them they cultivate the plum and the cherry, not for the fruit, but for the flower. By a peculiar treatment they improve them so much as to make the flowers become as large as roses. Indeed it is stated that plum blossoms have been seen four times the size of our common cabbage roses. In the season, when they are in full blossom, these trees afford a delightful sight in the gardens, and about the temples, and public walks.

They also practise the art of dwarfing trees to a great extent. Le Baron Léon de St. Denys, in his work entitled ' Recherches sur L'Agriculture et L'Horticulture des Chinois," Paris, 1850, contains some valuable information on the method of producing these interesting and miniature plants. The system is not confined to a few sorts of plants, for they can dwarf all. A box was offered for sale in which were flourishing a fir-tree, a bamboo, and a plum-tree, the latter in blossom. The box was only three inches long and one inch wide. 1,200 florins was asked for it. The florin varies so much that I am not aware what this would amount to in English money. Another very small box contained miniature specimens of every tree that grows on the Japan Islands.

They also enlarge their trees in an extraordinary manner. For instance, when the branches of some of them spring to the height of seven or eight feet from the ground, they are led out across ponds and supported on props, so as to afford a shade and covering of 300 feet in circumference.

The Japanese also pay great attention to their forest trees. They do not allow either their firs or cypress-trees to be cut down without the permission of the local magistrate. The cedars grow to a large size, some of them being eighteen feet in girth: Sir Edward Belcher, when making his surveys in the Japanese seas, was supplied with a quantity of spars, all of cedar, which measured ninety-six feet in length. All the temples in Japan are approached through thick avenues of evergreen trees. I think it was Pope who said that a tree was a nobler object than a prince in his coronation robes. This appears to have been the idea of the Japanese, from the care they take of them. They also enjoy that soft, fascinating, and what may be called poetical odour, which emanates from groves of cypress, clumps of cedar, and other evergreen trees. This odour may be considered as a natural, living, and growing incense offered up to Heaven at all seasons of the year, and at all times, by night as well as by day.

We are indebted to the Japanese for our beautiful camellias, and I am not sure whether this is not the case with my favourite Pœonia Moutan, or Chinese Peony, as representations of it may be seen on some of the Japan fans. It is certainly not indigenous at, or propagated in Canton, from which place, however, most of our varieties have been imported. It will always hold the first rank amongst flowers. It is a curious fact, that almost all the plants we have hitherto derived from Japan are either hardy or nearly so. For instance, the Pyrus Japonica is not only a beautiful but perfectly hardy shrub, and it is to be wondered at that it is not oftener planted as a protective hedge in flower and kitchen gardens, instead of Hornbeam or Laurel.

There is another very pretty shrub in Japan, called the Subacki, and I am not aware whether it has yet found its way into this country. It grows to rather a large size, and bears flowers not unlike large roses. The Japanese are said to give 900 different names to the varieties of this plant. It is to be hoped that increased intercourse with this singular people will add considerably to the riches of our flower gardens. This, however, is not likely as long as their trade is restricted to the Dutch. They are an honourable but very jealous nation, and attribute the late and present disastrous state of China to their having admitted strangers into their country for the purpose of trade. The consequence is that at present Japan may be considered as shut up from the rest of the world, and we are chiefly indebted to Dutch merchants for what little we know of it, and from whose writings some of these extracts have been taken. At all events, they appear a happy and contented people, strictly honest, and their wives and daughters eminently virtuous. They abound with schools for their children. Their cottages are picturesque, and few gardens are without a small rivulet, which, by the use of little contrivances, they make a source of enjoyment, as well as of beauty, by means of rocks and stones. It is evident, however, that they consider trees as among the most ornamental objects of scenery, and, as we have seen, they cultivate them with the greatest care. Indeed, what would our English scenery be, with its rivers, hills, and rocks, without the accompaniment of groups of trees?

It is probable that this interesting country will soon be better known, and that steam will be productive of that intercourse which cannot but end in our mutual advantage.

Those who have read the interesting works of Mr. Fortune on China, will see what great progress the inhabitants of that country have made in floriculture. They, like the Japanese, dwarf plants, and by a curious process of grafting, produce an immense quantity of the Chinese Peony, one of the finest and most beautiful flowers imported into this country. With a little winter protection, they will flourish well in this country, especially if planted in a rich loam. Some have grown from six to eight feet in height, and formed a bush from eight to ten feet in diameter.

EDWARD JESSE.

THE DIRGE OF ADONIS.

(FROM THE GREEK OF BION.)

AI! ai! wail for Adonis!—the young Loves wail for him, ai! ai!
Hurt on the hill lies Adonis the beautiful; torn with the boar's tusk,
Torn on the ivory thigh with the ivory tusk, his low gasping

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Anguishes Cypris' soul :—the dark blood trickles in rivers
Down from his snowy side,—his eyes are dreamily dimming
Under their lids ; and the rose leaves his lip, and the kisses upon it
Fade, and wax fainter, and faintest, and die, before Cypris can snatch them ;
Dear to the Goddess his kiss, though it be not the kiss of the living ;
Dear—but Adonis wists none of the mouth that kissed him a dying.

Ai ! ai ! wail for Adonis !—ai ! ai ! say the Loves for Adonis.
Cruel ! ah, cruel the wound on the thigh of the hunter Adonis,
Yet in her innermost heart a deeper wears Queen Cytheræa.
Round the fair dead boy his hounds go, dismally howling ;
Round him the hill-spirits weep ; but chiefest of all Aphrodite,
Bitterly bitterly wailing, through all the long hollows laments him,
Calling him Husband and Love—her Boy—her Syrian Hunter.
Meantime dead in his gore lieth he—from groin unto shoulder
Bloody ; from breast to thigh ; the fair young flank of Adonis,
Heretofore white as the snow, dull now, and dabbled with purple.

Ai ! ai ! sad Cytheræa—the Loves all answer with ai ! ai !
All the cliffs echo it, all the oaks rustle it, Ai ! for Adonis.
Even the river-waves ripple the sorrows of sad Aphrodite,—
Even the springs on the hills have a tear for the hunter Adonis ;
Yea, and the rose-leaves are redder for grief ; for the grief Cytheræa
Tells in the hollow dells, and utters to townland and woodland.

Ai ! ai ! Lady of Cyprus, "Lo ! dead is my darling Adonis !"
Echo answers thee back,—"Oh ! dead is thy darling Adonis."
Who, good sooth, but would say, Ai ! ai ! for her passionate story ?
When that she saw and knew the wound of Adonis,—the death-wound—
Saw the blood come red from the gash, and the white thigh a-waning,
Wide outraught she her arms, and cried, "Ah ! stay, my Adonis !
Stay for me, ill-starred love !—stay ! stay ! till I take thee the last time,
Hold thee and fold thee, and lips meet lips, and mingle together.
Rouse thee—a little, Adonis ! kiss back for the last time, beloved !
Kiss me—kiss me—only so long as the life of a kiss is!
So I may suck from thy soul to my mouth, to my innermost heart-beat,
All the breath of thy life, and take the last of its love-spell
Unto the uttermost drop—one kiss ! I will tenderly keep it
As I did thee, my Adonis, sith thou dost leave me, Adonis !
Utterly hapless my fate, and utterly hopeless my grief is,
Weeping my love who is dead to me ; hating the Fate that hath slain him.
Fled is my joy, like a dream ; thou art dead, thrice lovely and longed for !
Queen Cytheræa is widowed—the Loves in my bowers are idle—
Gone my charmed girdle with thee ; why, rash one, went'st thou a-hunting ?—
Mad wert thou, being so fair, to match thee with beasts of the forest."

EDWIN ARNOLD.

TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES IN GERMANY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE various laws which were frequently enacted in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to check drunkenness, or, at least, immoderate drinking of wine and spirits, proved utterly abortive, owing to the social life of the middle ages, which was chiefly based upon *quaffing*.

Charlemagne himself was obliged to order that the counts and margraves should at least be sober when sitting in courts of justice, while the German emperors were, at their coronation-ceremony, asked, "whether they promise, by the help of God, to lead a sober life !" Indeed, all the laws and regulations of the sixteenth century were mainly directed against *drunkenness*, but not against *drinking*. Even Luther was no enemy to wine ; witness the large goblet (still extant at Nüremberg) which he presented to his friend Jonas.

A temperance society was at last formed by the aristocracy in the sixteenth century, and the following were among the rules :—

1. To drink daily only 14 cups of wine.
2. Italian, Spanish, or hot-spiced wines are prohibited, beyond 1 cup a-day, which must be deducted from the daily allowance.
3. For the further quenching of thirst beer is allowed.
4. These 14 cups must not be drunk at once but after at least 3 intervals.

ROMANCE OF THE CAB-RANK.

"CAPITAL brougham, and splendid horses : but hang it, Stenthorpe, coachee spoils all."

"There we differ, Frank. To my mind, he is the right man in the right place."

"How in the name of smallpox do you make that out ?"

"Too long a story by half, my dear fellow with the Slave Trade and the West India Island looming in the distance. One thing is tolerably certain. But for my poor pock-marked coachman who has incurred the dregs of your contempt, should more likely be lying beneath the sods of Balaklava at this moment, than driving you down to the House."

Startling as was this paradox, it must perforce give way to speculations upon the relative value of human chattels and palm oil, coolies from Madras, and coolies from Bombay. And it was not until an expression of Mr. Stenthorpe agai

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brought it uppermost, that with my host's assent I one day mounted beside Jehu, and was soon in possession of the following story, which I prefer giving in his own words :—

"How I came to know my master, was this way, sir. I had managed to scrape enough together, by hook or by crook, to start a cab; and one day that I hadn't had a fare for many a long hour, I thought I might as well go and have a glass along with the others, for there were lots of cabs in the rank before me, and but little chance of doing anything. Somehow, however, I did not like to throw that little away, so I set to work instead, to rub up my cab, and was just hanging the nose-bag round Barty's neck, when up comes a gentleman asking if my horse is fresh."

"'Fresh enough for a dozen miles, sir,' said I: and looking round, saw it was a servant in handsome claret-coloured livery; and a very tight, long, uncomfortable suit it looked too.

"'Just about the distance I want him for,' said he.

"So in he got, and I jumped on the box and drove off in the best of spirits. Wasn't I glad then I hadn't gone to the public? When we got to No. —, Queen Street, May Fair, he got out, and let himself into the house with a latch-key, telling me to wait.

"And I did wait, long enough, walking up and down, and patting old Barty, counting up my fare, and promising him a good feed, till I was sick of waiting. At last, however, the door opened, and I went and stood by the cab door, when up comes my claret-coloured gentleman, and twirls me round like a top, though I ain't a very little one, but it was so unexpected-like.

"'Mount your box; that's all that's required of you,' says he, low and fierce.

"I didn't much like it, but that claret suit didn't deceive *me*, and I thought I'd best do as I was told.

"As quick as lightning he brought a lady out of the house, and placed her in the cab. Another lady assisted him, and, between them, they half carried her.

"Having told me to drive to Wimbledon, and to drive slowly, as the lady was ill, he got inside, and off we started.

"This would all have seemed natural enough, if I had not caught a glimpse of the lady's face as they hurried her in. It wore a haggard, stupefied look, and I began not to like my job at all, when just as I was making up my mind it was no business of mine, I heard such a long piteous scream proceed from the cab, and, pulling up Barty, I was getting down to see what was the matter, when out pops the head of Mr. Claret-Suit, and says he, 'What's in the wind now? Did you never hear a mad woman scream before? Drive to "The Retreat," at Wimbledon, and let us have no more of your shilly-shallying nonsense.'

"Well, I drove on, anything but satisfied, till last we reached 'The Retreat.' The poor lady was carried in. And I had no reason to complain of my fare. But never had I felt more uncomfortable in all my life.

"I stood there I don't know how long, like one in a dream, till, finding there was really nothing to be done, and perhaps (I tried hard to think) nothing wrong at all, I was about to drive off, when, looking in to settle the cushions, I caught a glimpse of something white sticking out from between them; and if it had been a 20*l.* note, I don't believe I should have been better pleased than when I saw a letter directed 'To the driver of this cab.'

"I was not long reading it, you may be sure, though I took care to turn the corner first; and this was written in it :—

"'They will tell you I am mad, when you are hired to take me to some asylum. It is not true. They want to hide me from my husband, whom they falsely accuse of having deserted me. But for the love of Heaven, and for the sake of my yet unborn child, I implore you to deliver the inclosed letter to Mr. Stenthorpe, No. —, Eaton Square. Do not, I entreat, trust it to other hands. No one is to be trusted. Perhaps this appeal will be in vain. No, I will not believe it. I shall live in hope. If only they don't drug me as before, and frustrate this last chance. Never mind your time and trouble, *he* will repay you amply. May Heaven mould your heart to help me!'

"'That will I, in right good earnest,' said I, 'now I know the way.'

"And getting us both a feed, Barty and me, I drove straight to Eaton Square. The lackey yawned as he opened the door; and to my inquiry for speech with his master, asked my business. This, of course, I refused, saying I must see him myself.

"'You had better take a seat, then,' said he.

"'And you,' I said, 'will mind my cab?'

"'Oh, with much pleasure; but—the seat I recommend to you is—outside.'

"I walked back to my cab, wishing myself a little brighter, to be even with the fellow, and not liking to give it up, when, by and by, he opens the door.

"'Well, friend,' he says, 'are you going to tell me your business? or do you mean to stay there all day?'

"'I must see Mr. Stenthorpe myself,' said I.

"'And you mean to stay there till you do, eh?'

"'I do,' I said, firmly, getting downright provoked with the man's impertinence.

"'I recommend you to get inside, then,' said he. 'We may have a cold winter, and Mr. Stenthorpe is in the Crimea.'

"'Oh, Heaven!' cried I, 'then she will be lost.'

"To do the man justice, the moment he saw it was something of consequence, he dropped all his foolery, and told me civilly enough that his master had gone off that morning to join the Bellerophon, at Gravesend, on his way to the Crimea.'

"I grudged the time necessary to go home, and tell my wife, but there was no help for it. I put up my cab, and in a couple of hours was on board the Bellerophon, which I was lucky enough to find still at anchor. Mr. Stenthorpe, however, was not there, though he was expected every minute, as the vessel was about to sail almost immediately.

"Well, I waited and waited, till at last orders were given for all strangers to leave the ship. I was regularly cut up. When, at the last minute, up comes a boat alongside, and a gentleman springs on board.

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"'That is your man,' somebody said to me.

"I made a rush towards him, but he turned his back upon me, and shook hands heartily with a gentleman, who had also been waiting for him. They were still in close and apparently confidential communication, when the orders were again given, and I knew by the bustle on board that the ship's minutes in port were numbered.

"'Fool,' at last I said to myself, 'thrust the letter into his hand, let who will be nigh.'

"No sooner said than done.

"As his eye caught the writing, he stopped in what he was saying, and glared upon me with a look of horror.

"'Allow *me*,' urged his companion, whose voice at once confirmed my previous suspicions; 'it is but a trick to unman you. Let me read it, and if——'

"But Mr. Stenthorpe waived him off, saying:

"'No, it is her faithlessness sends me to meet death on the battle-field, and this shall go with me, though it be the record of her guilt.'

"And he opened the envelope, and read.

"No sooner did the gentleman—not claret-coloured now—perceive this, than with a glance of the deadliest scorn at me, he abruptly quitted him and the ship.

"Mr. Stenthorpe then beckoned me to him, and I told him all I knew. He went after the captain, and when he came back, told me to follow him, and we dropped in a gig that lay alongside, and were rowed ashore. On our road to London he asked me no end of questions, how

she looked, and what sort of person was with her. And when I told him I was certain it was the same gentleman who had just left him, I never in my life saw anything like his face. It was like a dead man's.

"'Traitors!' said he. 'Double-dyed, infamous scoundrels! Ah, my own true-hearted Fanny! For a little paltry wealth, they would have sent us both to our graves. And you have saved us, my fine fellow.'

"And he grasped my hand, and turned his head, as if to look out at the carriage window.

"He was not long putting matters to rights; and one morning that I called by appointment in Eaton Square, my master marched me straight into the breakfast-room, to receive the thanks of the lady herself.

"Though she looked so beautiful, I should have known her anywhere; and as she stood up and held out her hand, the outline of her figure reminded me of some allusions in her letter, and I thanked God in my heart, that perhaps under Him I had been instrumental in saving three lives.

"Ever since then I have been in Mr. Stenthorpe's service. And a lucky thing it was for me, I fell in the way of the claret-coloured gentleman."

I looked at the man, and became a convert.

"Decidedly," I thought, "Stenthorpe is right. Peu de moyens, beaucoup d'effet. No wonder he won't hear a word against his pock-marked coachman." FRANK PERCIVAL.

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LAST WEEK.

THE batches of news from America which followed one another LAST WEEK set at rest the great question of the preceding,—whether the people of the Free States would move with stout heart and strong arms, as one man, to the defence of their territory and its institutions, on the ground, not of mere quarrel, but of repelling wanton invasion. That point was presently settled. The President's requisition for aid in defending Washington turned the whole Northern population into soldiers, on the instant; and when the regiments were once on the march, the prospect of what they were to do became clearer every day. Before the end of LAST WEEK, we seemed to have learned more than we had ever known before of the relative position of all the four parties concerned. There was nothing to correct in our prior impressions; but we better understood the grounds of them.

As the Secessionists have made themselves responsible for the whole conflict, we may take them first. We learned LAST WEEK that they had an undoubted belief that the people of the Free States could not and would not fight. This delusion was not unaccountable, though it is inconsistent with all the traditions of the War of Independence. The political subservience of the North was mistaken for a general cowardice. Again, persons who see work done by slaves only, or by free men more degraded than slaves, are led by association of ideas to imagine that all who work must be slavish and degraded. Thus, the more ignorant of Southern men, and especially those who hold no slaves themselves, have a notion that the working citizens of New York and New England are a sort of human reptile whom they can crush at will. One day among the fishermen of Massachusetts Bay, or the factory people, or with the New York farmers, or the foundrymen of Pennsylvania, would convince them of their mistake. But they are now likely to meet these people, not among their boats and their looms and their corn crops and their furnaces, but hand to hand in the field of conflict. The prevalence of this delusion accounts for the power of a minority of Secessionists in several of the States; and especially in the Border States. It is well known that in these States, not only the intelligence of the community, but its numbers, are opposed to secession: and this success of a minority could not happen if it had not been taken for granted that the nineteen millions of the North would let the eight millions of the South have their own way in military, as hitherto in political matters. No new light was thrown on Secession affairs during the week. It was reported that the Southern army was in Virginia, within view of the dome of the Capitol at Washington; but it did not prove true.

The next party in the case is that of the Free States. We need not repeat here the stirring narrative of their martial gatherings at the call of the government. A finer spectacle could not be seen,—even in Italy two years ago. The Seventh Regiment of New York State, the pride of the State, and composed of the finest young fellows of the republican aristocracy (for there is such a thing), marched down the miles of main street in New York, kindling an enthusiasm which will never be forgotten. These "curled darlings" of fashionable society were eager for the field; and they marched down gaily, while bystanders were saying to each other that they may be thankful to have half the regiment back again. These marchings, and the throwing abroad of the national flag from every steeple and spire, and dome, and balcony, and village tree, and green hill-top, we had all read of in the course of the week; but all may not have been aware of the purposes of the march, beyond obeying the President's call, and defending the capital.

One object was to be on the frontier in time to prevent any invasion of the soil of any Free State. The adversaries who have declared themselves foreigners are taken at their word, and must be met at the threshold of the sacred soil of home. Another object was to keep open the communications by rail and wire from the capital and the frontier, and to secure supplies of food from the pork and grain States, as well as men and arms from the North and East. Another, and all-important aim was to afford a rallying point for the loyal party in the Slave States, and at the same time to preserve them from the perils of a servile war. Nothing short of the presence of a friendly military force could be expected to keep the negroes in order, from the moment of their discovery that their liberties are the question of the war. Fathers and brothers might well hasten the march to districts where daughters and sisters were awaiting in terror the fatal consequences of secession, or looking out for rescue at the hands of loyal citizens from home. There will be no lack of John Browns to incite the slaves to rise and escape: and there is to be no lack of a military force to prevent insurrection among the blacks, and protect the whites. The supposition naturally is that emancipation will take place, as of course.

This brings us to the two remaining parties; the loyal party in the Slave States, and the four millions of negro slaves.

Time only can show what the strength of the Union party in Secession territory really is. It is known that the most active and conspicuous Secessionists are not planters, nor slave owners; and that the planting interest has suffered grievously from confiscation, under the name of taxes and loans. It is known that Northern families, who have relatives in the South, believe many, most, or nearly all of them to be loyal to the Union, and simply repressed and silenced by the tyranny of a faction. If so, the interval between the evacuation of Fort Sumter, and the appearance of Southern or Northern forces in each neighbourhood, must be a period of deadly suspense to families and communities which are over-ridden by rebellion on the one hand, and menaced by negro revolts on the other. No wonder the Northern troops marched down with all possible alacrity to the frontier.

As for the slaves,—there could be no safety in their presence again, after they had caught sight

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of a northern regiment on southern ground. And the Free States have had enough of the snares, and perils, and damage of implication with any system of slavery. They have all abolished it at home; and they will now, no doubt, use their opportunity to establish free labour wherever they make their way.

It is undisputed that land doubles in value the moment that it is exempt from the tread of a slave. It is not a saleable commodity while enslaved negroes are upon it; for the value is imputed to the human chattel: but when it is inhabited by free negroes, or other cultivators who are not saleable, the land resumes its natural value. A large proportion of planters know this, and would be thankful for an opportunity of making free labourers of their negroes: and, as for the rest, they will probably see that they have no longer a choice.

Such are the views with which the Northern regiments marched forth. Meantime, the navy yard in Virginia was burned by the Federal officers, to save it from falling into the hands of the Secession party in that divided State. This was a fearful loss to the government, and there was plenty of cause for anxiety about the first moves of the war.

There was the difficulty of defending Washington, with its group of public offices: there was interruption of communication by land, and much menace of it on the great sea-channels leading to Washington. There was an insufficient supply of food, and much else at the capital, and every disadvantage which could arise from the enemy having pillaged the government in all directions.

Misfortunes might happen at first, and were indeed to be expected. But from the White House to Canada, and from the eastern sea to the western mountains, there was an absolute confidence that the Free States would gain all their points. The general impression was that the war would be short, sharp, and decisive; but of this there can be no certainty.

Among us English, the great anxiety was to know what we were to expect in regard to the security of our commerce. It was believed that letters of marque, issued by the Southern President, were in London; and the whole train of painful ideas associated with privateering were awakened at once. In answer to an inquiry in the House on Wednesday night, the Home Secretary announced that the government would issue a proclamation on the duty of Englishmen under the Foreign Enlistment Act, in case of attempts to fit out privateers here, in the name of the Southern Confederacy.

Proclamations and protests arrived during the week from St. Domingo and Hayti, leaving no doubt of the treachery of the one President and the fidelity of the other to the interests of the people. Santana, who by the support of factions at home and in Spain, rules St. Domingo against the will of the liberal party, last year pawned the Customs duties, for his own purposes, and introduced Spanish officials and creditors, in preparation for making over the republic to Spain; and it is too clear that Spain accepts the gift, and is taking possession of it by military and naval force. The Haytian President, Geffrard, has issued strong and sensible protests against the treason which threatens the liberties of his countrymen. The thing to be ascertained is what the pledged protection of England and France really amounts to: whether any treaty for the purpose is in force, or only begun and left unfinished. Not only our human sympathies, and our commercial interests, require that no wanton interference with the improvement of the Haytian people shall take place, but it is of importance to civilisation generally, and to the prospects of the United States in particular, that the promising black republic should hold the place it has claimed and acquired among the free peoples of the world. Spanish adventurers have trodden down Indians enough in that hemisphere. They must not now begin again with negro republics. President Geffrard's protests are worthy of the occasion, and extremely interesting as a feature of the time.

There was plenty of amusement last week for those of us who care more for May pleasures at home than the fate of nations abroad. There was broad sunshine shed all over the country; and, in contrast with the spring of last year, this is a source of exhilaration. The winds were cold, it is true; and we heard of snow and sleet in some districts, and saw and felt it in others. It was very partial. In some places the farmers were repenting of having ploughed up their sown lands, believing that the crops would have prospered, after all; while elsewhere we read of damage done by cold winds unaccompanied by rain. From France we heard of vines killed by frost, and fruit-blooms cut off, and wheat injured. Natural calamities of various kinds, and very terrible in their several ways, were reported during the week. South American earthquakes always make men feel like insects on a mountain—as insignificant and as helpless: and the recent earthquake which has buried half the town of Mendoza and nearly 7,000 of its inhabitants, has been one of the most terrible on record in the South American continent. It threw down a fine church some hundreds of miles off in one direction, and jarred the houses yet further away in another line. The spectacle of the burying alive of people by thousands, and crushing and burning them, was witnessed in its full horror. Yet something else happened in the northern American continent, perhaps as appalling, though far less fatal. A new source of wealth has been lately discovered in some of the Northern States, in a series of springs of mineral oil which is nearly pure enough for immediate exportation. In boring for this oil, which spouts up like a fountain, great care is required to leave no fire burning near,—a highly inflammable gas bursting out through the oil Through accident or negligence, one of the fresh fountains caught fire, and the destruction of life and property is said to be great. The spectacle of a vast flaming fountain, raining fire day and night over a wide circle of burnt soil, must be unique. There can be nothing like it, from Iceland with its geysers to the snow region of the South Pole, where Mount Erebus is flaming away through the long night of the Polar winter, without witnesses,

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except the stars which wheel ever round, and do not set till the sun begins to rise again. There was elsewhere some of the commoner mischief from fire. News came that Limoges was partly destroyed, and that the fire could not be put out. It reminded us of the great calamity at Hamburg. As for the destruction of individuals by fire, there is rarely a week now in which we do not hear of the burning to death of women and girls by their petticoats catching fire, under the present insane fashion of female dress.

For those who like dissipation of a benevolent, or scientific, or theological, or economical character, there are now May meetings to suit their tastes; and there was, last week, the Mansion House festival in honour of Lord Elgin, which afforded an opportunity for clearing up our ideas on many things about China, and opened a gratifying prospect of future trade with a country full of valuable commodities, and of people who will want boundless supplies of what we have to sell. In the midst of these amusements a deeper interest intervened. The Princess Alice was commended to the affectionate loyalty of Parliament and the country on her establishment in life; and the Queen's message and the Minister's proposals were received by the House of Commons with much cordiality. The Princess is not grudged a handsome marriage-portion, and a liberal income.

Year by year it becomes evident that the agricultural labourer is regarded as a more interesting, if not a more really important, member of society in this country. He was once despised; he was once feared; sometimes we were in disgust with him, and sometimes in despair about him. The improvement in agriculture which has followed the repeal of the Corn laws has brought the condition and claims of the rural labourer before the public in a fresh light. Last week some details of the new Census were published which excited a strong sensation in the agricultural districts of the kingdom, as well as at the head-quarters of opinion. It appears that the population of some districts in which agriculture is the great interest has remained nearly stationary, or has declined, since the preceding Census, and everybody concerned has been busy inquiring why. Emigration is the reason generally assigned. It is true that more emigration takes place from rural districts than from towns; but this cannot account for anything like the difference between the industrial activity of manufacturing and of agricultural districts. Some years ago, before the repeal of the Corn laws, a sensible man in a rural neighbourhood bethought himself of inquiring into what occupations were resorted to by the children of the labourers. It appeared that, while in manufacturing towns the young people almost all adopt the pursuit of the place, the rural labourer's children almost all go off into other occupations.

One son, perhaps, remains to fill his father's place, and a daughter or two may marry a labourer; but the rest go into service in the next town, or become shopmen, or get into some small way of trade, while the daughters are eager to get engaged in any manufacture. The dwindling proportion of the rural to that of other industrial classes has been a prominent point in the statistics of the country for many years past. The surprise at this moment is occasioned by the continuance of the decline, while agricultural improvement advances so rapidly. There is nothing irreconcilable in the two facts, however. The labourer is becoming more intelligent, better skilled, and better paid. He is not now the mere digging and reaping machine that he was. We have digging and reaping machines of wood and iron; and the two or three men who manage them are, in fact, doing the work of a score of the old sort of rustics. Still, there is a strong demand for more labour; and it follows that the wages and general condition of the class must rise, for some time to come. Another incident of last week testifies to this. On Wednesday Sir L. Palk opened a very interesting discussion in Parliament on the dwellings of rural labourers. It is shocking that, while their numbers are nearly stationary or declining, they should not have room to live in decency and comfort. The overcrowding of a class of tenants which is not increasing shows that some artificial restriction on house-room must exist. The Home Secretary complained of the strength of the representations, because great efforts had been made, and are now making, for the improvement of cottages; but the facts are patent; and the inevitable conclusion is, that however much may be doing, there is much more to be done. The spirit of the discussion was all that the friends of the labourers could desire. All the speakers were well disposed towards facilitating the extension and improvement of cottage building: and it is probable that the State will advance loans for the purpose, in the same way as for drainage improvements. We already see the labourer spared, where possible, the long walk to and from his work, which was one of his great hardships till very lately; and the enlargement of his privileges in many ways may well set him thinking of the future of his family and order. Meantime, the class is rising, and everybody seems ready to lend a helping hand.

From the Continent the news of the week was too interesting to need comment. Everybody understood the significance of the absence of Hungarians and Croatians from the new Austrian parliament at Vienna; and every heart sympathised with the "cry of despair" which went up from the Diet at Pesth on the announcement that Count Teleki was lying murdered in his residence. The first trial by jury in Naples was sure to be appreciated in this country; and, in a contrary direction, so was the increased savageness of the Russian government towards the Poles. The common instinct suggests that the cruelty has become so intolerable that some sort of issue must be at hand. Of all the changes in Europe since the opening of the year, none is perhaps so grave as that of the position of the Russian Emperor. Stripped of his graceful attributes of frankness, justice, and beneficence, he presents himself to us now as the traditional Czar, with his reckless self-will and passionate cruelty, dashed with savage cunning. At the first scratch of the Russian skin, the Tartar has appeared below.

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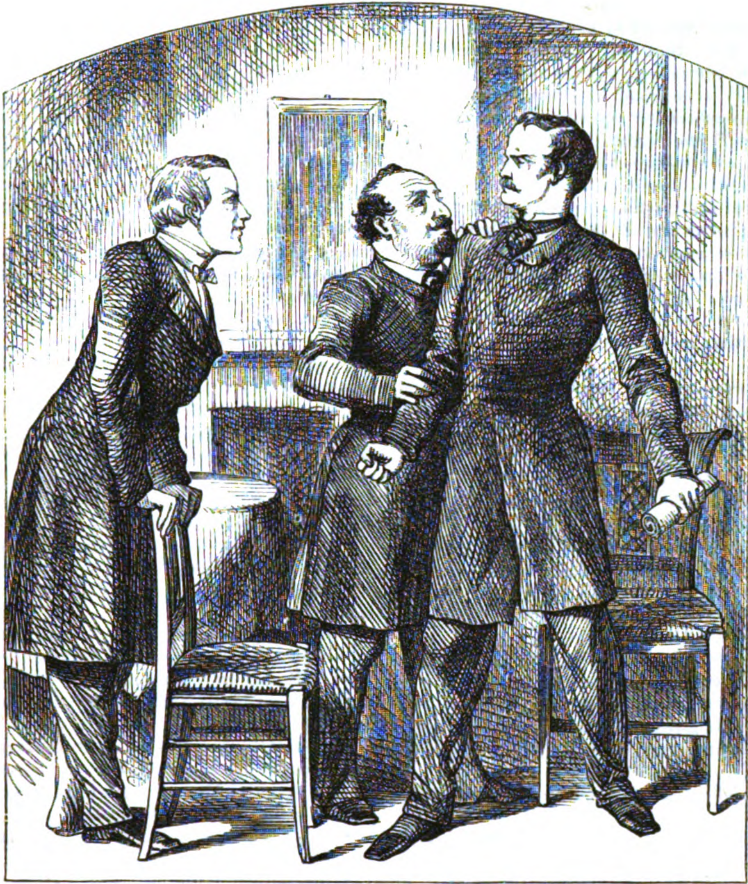
THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.



CHAPTER LXIV.

THAT morning Arthur Lygon and Charles Hawkesley arrived in Paris, and it will easily be imagined that during their journey they had fully discussed the various courses that were open to them. But they addressed themselves to the painful subject in very different moods of mind. Lygon permitted himself to be almost passive, when contemplating his own future, a future which he had brought himself to believe was doomed to be one of bereavement and wretchedness. He was unable to disentangle the complications which the arrival of Bertha, and her miserable revelations, had introduced into the story; but he was not to be shaken in his conviction that the fatal letter from Urquhart had been based upon discoveries which no addition of circumstances could render less damning. Hawkesley, on the contrary, had been unable to resist the influence of his wife's earnest and affectionate pleading for faith in her sister Laura, of her womanly intenseness of belief that the latter was the martyr to some strange and wicked perversion of facts, and he prepared to apply himself to a task which he refused to look upon as a melancholy one, so far as Lygon and Laura were involved. But there was enough, more than enough, in the thought of the approaching meeting with Robert Urquhart, to deprive Hawkesley of the power of exerting himself to inspire his companion with the hopeful view which the author had adopted as to the position of Laura.

The interview with Bertha had been brief and sad. Beatrice had resolved that it should take place, and that Arthur should learn from Mrs. Urquhart's own lips that, let his wife's conduct have been what it might, her flight to Versailles had been caused by her resolution to save a guilty sister. Bertha would scarcely speak, but with sob and murmured assent she confirmed the tale as she had told it to Mrs. Hawkesley. Arthur Lygon questioned her but slightly. He believed her to be utterly regardless of truth, utterly lost to honour; and though he had no hesitation in accepting her statement as against herself, he gave no credence to her faint protests that he was

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wronging Laura. He went through the scene rather as a form, than as a means of obtaining information, and when it was over, he quietly said,

"The sooner we are in Paris the better."

And the sisters were left to themselves, and it was perhaps well that the increasing illness of Mrs. Urquhart compelled her removal to the seclusion of the sick room, and her being treated with the forbearance which her condition required. For Beatrice, though she might almost have striven to seek merciful extenuation for the sin of the weak and foolish Bertha, could but regard her selfishness and ingratitude with a severity that would, but for the prostration of Mrs. Urquhart, have found bitterer expression than had ever come from the loving and kindly Beatrice Hawkesley. But, enforced to silence on the theme nearest her heart, Mrs. Hawkesley tended her sister with a calm watchfulness that had more of duty than of affection.

The travellers drove to their hotel, and Lygon at once proposed that they should proceed to Versailles. But Hawkesley thought that it might be more acceptable to Robert Urquhart to be informed of their arrival, and to be summoned to Paris; and Lygon yielded with but little opposition. A messenger was therefore dispatched to Mr. Urquhart, with a few lines from Charles Hawkesley.

Leaving Arthur at the hotel, Hawkesley went in quest of Mr. Aventayle, and found the manager at his own quarters, waiting the hour for keeping his appointment with Adair.

"I call this mean, you know," said Aventayle, shaking his friend heartily by the hand—"you have no business here. Why is not my play finished off? Or have you come to annex—that's the word, isn't it—some incident from somebody else's piece?"

"My dear fellow, I am here on a very different matter."

"And a disagreeable one, I am afraid, by your manner, Charles," said Aventayle, looking sincerely concerned. "I could not know that, of course, or I shouldn't have met you with a joke."

"A painful business, Aventayle; but I do not want to speak of that at present."

"Can I be of any possible use?"

"I am not sure that I may not avail myself of your kindness. But let me ask you a question. Have you seen the man whose address you sent for?"

"Not yet, but I shall see him in less than an hour." And he informed his friend of the interview with the Pole, and of his own carelessness in forgetting the injunction not to apprise Adair of the expected arrival of Hawkesley.

"I wish it had been otherwise," said Hawkesley, "but we must manage as best we may."

"Do I understand that you know something of the man?"

"A great deal too much."

"Is he a bad lot, then?" asked Aventayle, curiously. "He is a very smart fellow, nevertheless."

"He is simply the greatest scoundrel in Paris," replied the author, "and that is saying a good deal."

"Well, it is, if half what one hears is true. I am sorry I am going to have anything to do with him. But his being all that does not damage his piece, about which I am to call on him presently."

"Why does he not come to you?"

"I invited him, but he sends word that he is ill."

"Ill, is he?" repeated Hawkesley.

"So he says. Do you think it is a trap to inveigle me into some den of robbery?" asked Aventayle, smiling. "He won't get much out of an unlucky manager."

"No, I don't think it is," replied the other, so gravely that Aventayle could not help looking thoroughly puzzled. Without immediate answer, he took out Adair's address, and showed it to Hawkesley.

"That can hardly be a den of iniquity, close to the Rue de la Paix," said Aventayle.

Charles Hawkesley looked at the paper for a few moments, and said:

"One reads a distant address half-a-dozen times without associating any recollection with it, and then when one comes near the place a whole story revives. I know something about that house, or, at least, about the street. I heard about it from a man in the French embassy."

"I don't associate with such swells, you see."

"I'll tell you what, Aventayle," said Hawkesley, after some thought. "Stay, I must ask you a favour."

"I'm very glad you must. What can I do?"

"Break this appointment, and come with me."

"Well, but suppose I lose my piece."

"My dear Aventayle, when you know what I can tell you, and what I am afraid I shall be obliged to tell, you will as much think of connecting yourself in business with this man as with that chiffonnier there in that gutter. But take my word for the moment, will you?"

"Sir, I will take it in a greater matter. But had I not better send to him?"

"By-and-by, perhaps. Come along."

Charles Hawkesley had remembered his French friend's conversation to some purpose, and the use of that gentleman's name speedily procured for himself and Aventayle admission to the presence of an official of whom we have heard before. This was M. ——, the accomplished chief of the "system;" the personage on whom had devolved the duty of imparting to the unfortunate Robert Urquhart the news which sundered him for ever from the wife of his heart.

M. —— received the Englishman with his usual urbanity, and the name of the *attaché*, though the chief admitted their acquaintance was of the slightest, proved a perfectly sufficient introduction. In what way could M. —— be of service?

Hawkesley explained that there was a person in Paris, regarding whom some exact information would be materially to the advantage of several persons, whose respectability would satisfy M. —— that he should be acting justifiably in serving them. He would offer M. —— any explanation, and would venture to solicit his good offices.

M. —— would require no explanation from a

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gentleman who had been so introduced to him, unless it were necessary for the furtherance of Mr. Hawkesley's own objects. Who was the person?

Not a symptom of surprise came upon the well-tutored features of the official when Hawkesley named Ernest Adair.

"M. Adair is fortunate enough to be the object of solicitude to more than one worthy person, just now," he answered, quietly. "Shall I ask—but do not reply if the affair be a secret—whether your investigations connect themselves with a somewhat delicate matter in which an English, or rather a Scottish, family has lately been interested?"

"I perceive that the whole story is in your possession, M. ——," said Hawkesley. "I am the brother-in-law of Mr. Urquhart, of Versailles."

"Late of Versailles, would be the more accurate description."

"What!" exclaimed Hawkesley, alarmed. "You do not mean anything has happened—"

"Nothing to distress you—I regret I spoke unguardedly. I meant to imply that Mr. Urquhart has broken up his household, and abandoned Versailles, a fact to be deplored by all who know him."

"I have just sent off a messenger to his house."

"He will find it closed."

"But is he in Paris, M. ——? It is of the utmost importance that I should see him."

"I can obtain that information for you, and will do so with a sincere regret, for I shall be hastening an interview which I may, without indiscretion, suppose will be painful. I will send you word to your hotel. But as regards M. Adair, your relative has not much, I imagine, to learn."

"We have reason to think there are circumstances which we should know, and do not. Mr. Adair is in Paris."

"That is so," said the chief, with a very slight smile at the information.

"And he has given this as his address," continued Hawkesley, showing it to M. ——.

"He will be found there, I believe."

"He will be looked for there, at all events," said Charles Hawkesley. "But may I ask you in what position in society he is living?"

"M. Adair has no position in society, Mr. Hawkesley, and is an inferior agent of the law. The house to which he seems to have invited you is appropriated to the purposes of our police. Your companion appears to be surprised. Has such a character as M. Adair never been presented on the stage which Mr. Aventayle ornaments?"

"You know me, sir?" asked the manager, again looking astonishment.

"Who that has had the good fortune to see Mr. Aventayle upon the boards is likely to forget him?" replied M. ——. "Besides, he has frequently favoured Paris with visits."

"And this Adair *is* a bad fellow," said the straightforward Aventayle, bluntly.

"I do not know that it is for me to discredit him," said the chief, smiling goodnaturedly; "but I have owed Mr. Aventayle too much gratification not to be frank with *him*. M. Adair is a very finished scoundrel, and the less an honest man has to do with him the better for the honest man."

"That is what *you* said," remarked Aventayle to his friend. "There is an end of the matter as regards me. But," he added, perceiving that he was likely to hear what Hawkesley might not have intended should reach him, "I think that your conversation, gentlemen, had better be finished without me. You will find me at the hotel, Mr. Hawkesley."

He was about to bow and retire, when M. —— said,

"In the next room, Mr. Aventayle, you will find the journals. I would suggest your remaining."

When the manager had gone out, M. ——, drawing his chair somewhat nearer to Hawkesley, said,

"There is no object in keeping his appointment with Adair. Your friend will have nothing to say to him. You, on the contrary, will probably have a good deal."

"You knew of the appointment. True, I forgot. You know everything."

"Indeed, no; I wish we knew a quarter of everything. But as for this Adair, you may suppose that I should not trouble myself about the movements of such a person, except when on business. I happened to be aware that he was to meet your friend, merely because another person, who made the appointment, was wanted here, and had to excuse his absence. That is not worth a word. But, Mr. Hawkesley, I can probably be of more use to you, than in telling you so very little more than you already know. May I ask the object of your visit to France?"

"To see my brother-in-law."

"And your other brother-in-law, why does he accompany you? You arrived together at nine this morning."

Charles Hawkesley hesitated for a few moments, and the thought came to him that let the truth be what it might, it was probably known to M. ——, and that it might suit him to impart it. At all events, no possible injury could be done by accepting any aid that M. —— was pleased to afford.

"You are acquainted, M. ——, with the painful circumstances which have caused poor Urquhart to abandon his home."

"Unhappily, yes. But it is not to those circumstances that I owe the honour of making Mr. Hawkesley's acquaintance. I tell you frankly that I know this. Not of course that I would desire to ask a confidence that is not volunteered, but because, for a reason which I am not at liberty to mention, I would gladly make myself useful to any part of the family of Mr. Urquhart."

"You speak in a manner that leaves me in no doubt as to the sincerity of your intentions, M. ——, and I thank you on behalf of two persons who are suffering most undeservedly."

"One is suffering undeservedly, the other is not. The first is Mr. Urquhart, the second is Mr. Lygon."

"Lygon has deserved his misfortune!" exclaimed Hawkesley.

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"I cannot now explain myself," replied M. ——. "It is more to the purpose to go on from your admission that Mr. Lygon's misfortune has brought you here. Now, I presume that you, Mr. Hawkesley, have too much wisdom to be party to the absurd scheme of vengeance which is at present occupying the mind of that very talented man, Mr. Urquhart."

"Of vengeance?"

"Yes. I perceive you know nothing of it, and I am sure you would discourage it if you could. It is true, however, that he has resolved to discover this unhappy Adair, and if he should succeed, a very terrible, and also a very ridiculous thing will be done."

"Urquhart will kill him."

"He will not, because, of course, means will be taken to prevent such a possibility," said M.——.

"I am saying nothing offensive in supposing you will protect this Adair, on account of his employment in the police."

"I should certainly not do so on that account, but on his own. If the question simply turned upon the merits of this Adair, Mr. Urquhart should be at perfect liberty to throw him from one of the bridges into the Seine, either strangling him previously, or omitting that ceremony, as might best please him."

M. —— uttered these savage words in the gentlest tone imaginable, but perceiving that his manner did not seem to produce a favourable impression on Hawkesley, he added:

"I mean that I would not stretch out a hand to save Adair, who is a cold-blooded villain. But Mr. Urquhart shall never have a chance of touching him, because I honour and respect Mr. Urquhart."

"Yet, if I had met Urquhart, and had told him Adair's address, he would at once have gone there and carried out his revenge."

"Dear Mr. Hawkesley, think better of our sagacity. It is far from certain that had your friend Aventayle gone to the appointment he would have seen the man with whom he believed he was conversing, and quite certain that he would not, had he been accompanied by yourself. I have told you that the house is a police establishment."

"Well, M. ——, I gather that you mean kindly by my poor brother-in-law."

"Yes, whether you mean Urquhart or Lygon. Let us speak of the affairs of the latter, if you will. For, as regards the former, I fear the account is made up. His fugitive wife is safe in one of the bedrooms of your hospitable house—why do you start?"

"Did I start? It was an involuntary homage to your system."

"We do our best," said M. ——, calmly, "but nothing is perfect. I was about to add that Mrs. Urquhart being safe in England, and her husband being solely bent upon his errand of impossible vengeance, we may leave their fortunes for the moment. Is Mr. Lygon come to reclaim his wife, and reconduct her to England?"

"You ask a question that it is impossible for me to answer."

"And, I presume, equally impossible for him?"

"At this moment, yes."

"In other words, Mr. Lygon has the misfortune to believe that he is as unhappy as Mr. Urquhart?"

"The misfortune to believe?" repeated Hawkesley. "I snatch at your words, M. ——, because, if you comprehend the distress which has been brought upon us all—"

"It has been made painfully clear to me in one case, Mr. Hawkesley, and I can easily imagine it in another, especially as in this last there was far more reason for a husband's grief than in the instance of poor Mr. Urquhart. I am speaking to a connection of the lady who bears his name, or I might use plainer language. It is right, however, you should know, that though the immediate purpose of Mrs. Lygon's journey to France might have been answered, her hope to rescue another person from a degrading intrigue would have proved fruitless."

"I have been, unhappily, prepared to believe that," said Hawkesley. "But if you can give us any clue, any guide—"

"To Mrs. Lygon. I can give you her address at Versailles, and I know that she will be found there," said the Frenchman, looking straight into the face of his companion. "I understand," he added, after a pause, "it is not her whom you seek, but her reputation."

"No," said Hawkesley, with energy. "It is not so. Circumstances, as I see you are fully aware, have caused painful feelings to arise among us, and much unhappiness now exists. But no suspicion, M. ——, rests upon the character of Mrs. Lygon, and my errand to France is to obtain the explanations which must restore all to its old and happy condition. If you can assist me in this, you will, I am induced to hope, give me all the assistance in your power."

"I have told you that I will do anything to serve the family of Mr. Urquhart. But you must begin with frankness. You have just described to me a state of belief which does not exist."

"I do not understand."

"You have stated, perhaps with a pardonable exaggeration, your own convictions as to the lady of whom you speak. But you have entirely misrepresented those of her husband, who, if the information I have received be true, either listened in sullen silence, or answered with strong doubts to the assurances and consolations with which you assailed him during your journey."

"During the journey?"

"Yes. Specially while the train was stationary, by an accident, near St. Just. When you consult a physician, Mr. Hawkesley, you tell him all your symptoms, or else you are not thought to be among the wise."

"Is it wonderful, M. ——," said Hawkesley, who had, by this time, become careless as to the means that gave his companion information, "is it wonderful that a husband, whose affliction has made him less capable of judgment, should not be so easily convinced as another and a calmer person?"

"Leave the case so," said M. ——. "Mr. Lygon has yet to be convinced that he has an innocent wife. And you, Mr. Hawkesley, will spare no pains to lead him to that conviction."

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"None. For it is mine."

"You have a difficult task before you, and you are about to place one and the greatest difficulty in your own way. Yes. You are about to bring together Mr. Lygon and the man whose own belief is directly the reverse of your own, and who has far more influence with Mr. Lygon than yourself."

"You mean Urquhart."

"Certainly. He is at once the witness and the judge in the case of the poor lady, as regards the evidence that comes against her from Versailles."

"Yes. And confident as I am that he has been deceived, I am as confident, M. ——, that Urquhart, a just and honourable man, will be brought to comprehend that deception, and to do right to the woman whom he has wronged."

"And what is your plan for unmasking this supposed deception?"

"How can I say, until I have seen him—have heard his own evidence from beginning to end—have examined for myself into the value of the testimony."

"Suppose that all done, and you still retain your present belief in defiance of a mystery you cannot solve."

"Then," said Hawkesley, "may I not count upon your aid?"

"You may. But would it not be wiser to ask for that aid in the first instance?"

Hawkesley did not reply for a moment.

"I see," said M. ——. "Do not be vexed with yourself for betraying yourself. Most persons who enter this room betray themselves over and over again. You have the English feeling that you would rather work out this problem for yourself than be indebted to the means which I can place at your disposal. You have some romantic feeling that there is a contamination in the system which accomplishes its purpose in the most direct manner, and you prefer to try to organise a spy system of your own, which can only succeed by imitating us in a bungling fashion. Do not suppose I am annoyed; I merely regret my desire to serve you must remain ungratified until you have ascertained that you can do nothing for yourselves. I shall equally be at your command when the time comes."

"I am not in a position to act on my own sole responsibility, M. ——, or I should at once admit the force of your representations. But, as will occur to yourself, Mr. Lygon, who has accompanied me to Paris, has the first claim to decide by what means he will obtain the satisfaction so earnestly desired."

"And you think that he will refuse to owe the solution of his doubts to the services of the police?"

"He is English enough—the word is your own, sir—to prefer another course, but I feel that no scruple ought finally to oppose itself to the ascertaining the facts, if we cannot arrive at them in our own way."

"Well, I recognise the sentiment. You propose at once to meet Mr. Urquhart?"

"Certainly."

The chief pressed a knob in the wall, and a distant single stroke on a bell was heard. He then wrote a few words on a slip of paper, and inserted it in a slit in the wall. A slight sound as of machinery was heard, and M. —— turned to Hawkesley.

"That is nothing mysterious—it is simply an ascending box, which saves a clerk's legs and my tongue. Shall I tell you whence I took the idea of its construction? It is from a place which I dare say you never saw—the interior of a pawnbroker's shop in London."

"Might one ask what took you into such a place?" said Hawkesley.

"I served, or at least I stood behind the counter of a pawnbroker for two months, some years back, in order to be able to identify two fugitives—or as you politely call them, refugees, who were in the habit of raising money there. I was a young man then, and rather enjoyed the adventure, which, moreover, gave me some curious insight into English life—not the life of the poor, Mr. Hawkesley—the *canaille* is alike everywhere—but into that of some much better people. I have seen some odd things."

"Let us hope that you will keep the secrets of that confessional."

"Some of them are useful to me, occasionally," said M. ——, carelessly. A bell near him, but behind the panel of the wall, sounded, and he lifted a small flap that fitted flush with the woodwork. A note lay in a black tray behind.

"Mr. Urquhart," said M. ——, when he had read the note, "was occupied yesterday in walking about the Bois de Boulogne. He took refreshment twice—the places are mentioned, but have no interest for you,— and he slept at the house of the mechanic, * * * * *, whom he has often employed in experiments. We have not yet the report of his proceedings to-day, but I will send you word where he is to be found. You are at the Hotel Mirabeau?"

"Yes."

"But it occurs to me that the better plan will be for me to let Mr. Urquhart be informed of your arrival, and then it will be for him to visit you."

"That will, I am sure, be the promptest way," replied Hawkesley.

"It shall be done. Let me add one thing. It was in the chair in which you are now sitting that your unfortunate friend received the information which is now disturbing his mind, and driving him in this unhappy condition about Paris. He came to me on an errand similar to your own. I wish that the most distressing incident of my life could have been spared me, but I had no choice."

"Then—then," said Hawkesley, "do I understand you, M. ——, that the scoundrel who has been the cause of what is now afflicting us was so unspeakably base as to be the betrayer?"

"It is by some letters addressed to M. Ernest Adair," said M. ——, "that the fatal fact was proved to M. Urquhart."

"And by—," said the Englishman in ungovernable indignation, "if Urquhart should meet this unredeemable miscreant, it is not I, M. ——, who will stretch out my hand to prevent murder."

"The more needful, Mr. Hawkesley, that I should stretch out mine. I must in justice to Mr.

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Urquhart prevent any such madness. Adair shall be kept out of the way of all of you. Shall I call in Mr. Aventayle?"

CHAPTER LXV.

A QUARTER of an hour before the time at which Mr. Aventayle had agreed to visit Ernest Adair, the latter was once more summoned by his chief, M. Wolowski. The latter was alone in the small, mean room in the little street turning from the Rue de la Paix.

"You did not think proper to stay in the house, Adair," said the Pole, coldly.

"I did not," said Adair, seating himself. "You will admit that I was fully justified in taking every precaution in my power. I am perfectly aware, M. Wolowski, that this is a most important moment in my life, and that if I lose the game to-day, I lose your friendship."

"You have had no reason to say so."

"Pardon. At the risk of offending you, I must say that you have permitted yourself to import private regard into questions of business, and that your favouritism for another person is inducing you to do me wrong."

"The truth never offends me. The concealment of truth does not offend me, but it is a departure from the usages of the system."

"I am unconscious of having deserved that remark. But once more, M. Wolowski, I claim justice at your hands."

"You shall have more than justice, Adair, if only to prove to you that you judge me unfairly. Chantal has been a better agent than yourself, yet I will show him so little favour on this occasion as to give you the opportunity of withdrawing your challenge."

"I will not do so, M. Wolowski."

"Is that final resolution the result of information which you have obtained since you left this room?"

"I made the resolution before leaving."

"Scarcely an answer. What was Mr. Aventayle's reply to this note?"

And M. Wolowski, smiling, held up, and threw to Adair, a short note in the handwriting of the latter, and addressed to Mr. Aventayle.

Adair, accustomed as he was to the almost preternatural promptness and success of the system in which he was an adept, started, and an exclamation escaped him.

"You fill me with genuine admiration, M. Wolowski," he said. "That note has certainly not been written half an hour, and it is in your possession."

"Reserve your admiration, my dear Adair, for something worthy of it. A child—or, at least, a girl who had had a clandestine love-business—must have known that you would utilise that hour in ascertaining whether Mr. Aventayle had brought your play to Paris with him. My messenger was at the Hotel Bedford before your own."

"He said that Aventayle was alone in the room."

"He spoke the truth—remember it, in case you have to employ him again. But while the Englishman was writing the hurried answer, a gentleman came in, and, with apologies, took a pen from the inkstand. Did your messenger not say that?"

"No."

"Then do not employ him again. If he had done his duty he would have told you that, even if he had not noticed that, by a curious awkwardness, the gentleman managed to push your note off the table. You have it, you see. What was the answer?"

"I presume you knew that also."

"Frankly, no, for Aventayle did not use blotting paper. The abominable pounce-box was before him, an old fashioned invention, Adair, which we ought to discourage."

"Then here is the answer."

He produced in his turn a note from Aventayle. It was this:—

"DEAR SIR,

"Unfortunately, no. I came away without the play.

"Yours faithfully,

"F. AVENTAYLE.

"E. ADAIR, ESQ."

M. Wolowski read the note.

"After this, you are doubly resolved that Chantal shall meet this manager."

"It will be very satisfactory that he should do so," said Adair, quietly.

"Yes. If he could have looked over the manager's shoulder, and picked up the story as he went along, he might have succeeded in deceiving me as to his previous knowledge of the facts you have worked in."

"M. Chantal is a clever man."

"I like your just admission of the fact. Now, in return, I once more advise you to withdraw the challenge. Because, if Chantal acquits himself satisfactorily, your defeat is an accomplished fact."

"Allow me to persist," said Adair.

"This confirms what I always heard of your play, Adair. You were most obstinate when you held a weak hand."

"Let me play my cards out this time, however."

"I like you so well that I will not have you over-trumped. Your antagonist shall lay out his hand before you.—M. Chantal," he called, through a voice-pipe in the wall.

M. Chantal appeared.

"You have not been out, Chantal?"

"You desired me to remain."

"Very true. M. Adair has been more active, and has ascertained from Mr. Aventayle that he has not brought the play to Paris with him."

"I compliment M. Adair's activity."

"But how have you been employing your time, Chantal?"

"In admiring M. Adair's intellect."

"You are very good," said Adair, with a not very easy smile, for the tone of the young man was not pleasant.

"Explain, Chantal," said the chief.

"I have been perusing M. Adair's delightful play," said Chantal, pleasantly. "Let me return him the manuscript, with many thanks for the gratification."

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Ernest Adair sprang to his feet with an oath, as Chantal ceremoniously laid a roll of paper into his hand.

It was the original rough manuscript of the play that he had sent to Aventayle.

"What is trumps, Adair?" said Wolowski, smiling.

"Robbery," exclaimed the enraged Adair. And clenching his fist, it seemed that he would have struck at Chantal, but that the Pole advanced upon Adair, and laid a hand on his arm.

"Come, come, my friend, we all labour for the common good. I thought your friend the Jesuit would have taught you that if an order is to exist, its members must have no personal views. Thank Chantal for his generous frankness, and prepare yourself to meet Aventayle."

(To be continued.)

A BOTTLE OF WATER.

It is but a bottle of water. I filled it this morning from a quiet rock-pool, placed in it a frond or two of seaweed gathered at random, and now, by the aid of a pocket-lens and where necessary of the microscope, I am going to try to make acquaintance with some of its inhabitants. Small as my bottle is, it contains almost infinite variety of living forms, some beautiful, some simply grotesque, some few, I fear, to the common eye, hideous; yet all miracles of design, all—even the most simple—offering problems for solution at which skilful hands and thoughtful brains might labour long in vain.

Observe that graceful waving frond of red seaweed, the Ptilota sericea, or silken featherweed, how full it is of life. Nimble little crustaceans skip merrily from place to place, or rest here and there in strange postures, looking, I fancy, not unlike squirrels holding nuts between their paws. How they start suddenly and wheel in rapid circles round the bottle, frightened possibly by the too near approach of that monster, snake-like, shining, red-spotted, which is winding his way among the branches, not that he means them any harm, for their scaly armour is proof against his sharp and horny jaws, formidable as they are to softer-bodied creatures.

Variously-formed shells are creeping along the seaweed, some twisted into an elegant spiral, some bivalve, like little mussels; others, like young periwinkles, which indeed they probably are, glide softly along the smooth under-surface of the water. Dotted about the glass are numberless white spots which the lens shows to be foraminifera, shells shaped much like the nautilus of which they were long supposed to be the near allies, though they have lately been degraded to a far lower rank in the scale of creation. Each shell seems to be spun to the glass by delicate threads which are, however, in reality part of the substance of the animal protruded through numberless small holes in the shell, and which serve him instead of legs to drag himself slowly from place to place. Quaintly-shaped creatures, scarcely visible to the naked eye, fill the water like swarms of gnats on a summer evening. Zoophytes innumerable blossom among the seaweed, and polyzoa creatures, not unlike zoophytes in form, but of far more complex organisation, stretch forth their ciliated tentacles. There, on a spray of coralline, grow several small sponges and something which I believe to be an ascidian, but cannot quite make out, and a lovely little lucernaria hangs pendent from the topmost spray.

Look at those little white dots which you may see with the lens to be not unlike water-fleas, swimming about restlessly with strange zigzag jerks. Who would imagine that those active little beings, which never seem to rest, are destined to spend the greater part of their lives firmly soldered to the solid rock. For these are the larvæ of the common acorn-shell in one of the early stages of its development. In their present state they are, as we have said, not unlike water-fleas, having a body rounded in front, tapering to a point behind, and ending in a forked tail, the whole covered with a single shield-like shell or carapace. They have one large compound eye, two pair of antennæ, and three pair of jointed bristly legs, by the aid of which they row themselves through the water. After several times changing their skin, always undergoing some modification of form, they at length appear in a shape differing as much from their present as it does from that of the perfect animal.

The single eye has now become two, the shield-like carapace has vanished, and instead of it we see a bivalve shell jointed down the back, opening beneath from which protrude a large pair of antennæ, and six pair of swimming feet. In its next change, eyes, shell, and legs, are all thrown away; the animal attaches itself by the head to the rock, becomes covered with a shell composed of several pieces or valves, and never again quits the spot where it has undergone this final transformation.

Look, now, at that strange spider-like creature with small body and disproportionately long, many-jointed legs, ending in sharp hooked claws by which it drags itself over the seaweed, somewhat after the fashion of a sloth. That is one of the curious tribe of animals called by naturalists pycnogonidæ, far off and humble relatives of the lobster and crabs. It has certainly no pretentions to beauty, is dull in colour, inelegant in form, and slow and awkward in its movements, yet it is not altogether uninteresting. Particularly curious is the structure of the stomach, which, in this as in many other of the lower animals, sends out branches, termed cœca, almost to the end of each of the long slender legs. Heart, veins, and arteries, are entirely wanting, nor is there any trace of gills, the aeration of the blood being effected by the general surface of the body. Those two little bundles which you see on the under surface are eggs, which the female carries about with her until they are ready to be hatched, for which purpose she is provided with an extra pair of many-jointed legs. In what form the young animal emerges from the egg is, I believe, at present unknown. Probably, like many of the crustacea, it goes through many metamorphoses before attaining its perfect form. Let us place it in a bottle by itself in the hope of learning something, presently, of its development.

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There are few occupations more interesting than that of watching the changes which take place within the eggs of certain marine animals which are transparent enough to allow all these changes to be distinctly seen. The eggs which we have just now been examining are too opaque for this purpose, but there are others in our bottle which are as transparent as we could desire. Here, upon a frond of seaweed, is a circular spot of transparent jelly-like matter, containing a considerable number of small white spots. Removing it from the seaweed with a penknife, and placing it under the microscope, we find it to consist of a collection of hollow spheres, each enclosing a somewhat opaque, round, granular globule, which is the vitellus or yolk, the seat of the mysterious series of changes which we are going to watch. The yolk is suspended in the midst of a clear, colourless substance containing numerous vacuoles or hollow spaces which are not very clearly seen in the living egg, but may easily be brought into view by adding a very little spirits of wine to the water containing it. The colourless substance, together with the yolk, is enclosed in a membranous bag, which also is more clearly seen after the addition of the spirits of wine.

The whole series of changes which take place within these eggs may easily be watched by detaching one, from time to time, with the point of a needle, and placing it with a drop of water upon the stage of the microscope. High powers are by no means necessary, an inch-and-a-half object glass is amply sufficient. First we shall find that the yolk has divided itself into two parts, so as to appear like two spheres touching one another. Next each of these spheres similarly divides itself into two, the whole yolk mass now assuming the shape of a cross of which four little balls form the limbs. Each of these balls is again subdivided into two more, and this division of the yolk proceeds until it is transformed into what from its shape is commonly termed the mulberry mass. But this division has not been perfectly uniform, for already there are obscure indications of a distinction of parts. The mulberry is not spherical, but is unsymmetrically divided into two parts, one being slightly larger than the other. Soon an uncertain tremulous motion is seen, and by the use of a higher power and a nice management of light, cilia may be detected vibrating upon the smaller half. These cilia we presently find to be arranged upon two lobes projecting from that half of the yolk which is destined to become the head. By this time the motion has become decided, and the young animal keeps always steadily revolving within the egg. Next the body becomes covered with a delicate shell, from which the ciliated lobes project. Eyes, organs of hearing, tentacles appear—the motion becomes much less steady, and we see that it is no longer entirely due to the action of the cilia, but partly to a contractile foot with which the animal crawls over the internal surface of the egg. It now almost fills the membranous bag which may be seen moving with every motion of the little prisoner. Finally, the cilia vanish and the perfect animal emerges from the egg in the shape of a little yellow periwinkle.

But there are other ova in which the process of development is in some respects different, though its first stages are probably alike in all. Look at that green gelatinous bag suspended from a tuft of coralline. At this season of the year almost every seaweed in our rock-pools is provided with one or more of these curious appendages. If we examine it with the lens we shall find it to consist of a transparent jelly-like substance full of small green dots, easily to be recognised as eggs. These eggs are not so favourable subjects for examination as those of the periwinkle, being far less transparent and individually much smaller, though the whole mass is often considerably larger. But, as we have already observed, the earlier stages of the process of development this is not of much consequence, the less so as these animals emerge from the egg as soon as they begin to assume a definite form. If we place this green bag in a bottle of salt water, and examine it again in a few days, we shall then find that the bag has become perfectly clear and colourless, while the water is filled with myriads of moving green atoms, too minute for their form to be distinguished by the unaided eye.

Place a drop of the water under the microscope and you will probably find it to contain one or two of these atoms. Seen with a high power they prove to be green egg-shaped animalcules, having a row of very long cilia running round their middle, by the aid of which they spin rapidly through the water like so many small tops. There is at present no further distinction of parts, except that on the upper half may be distinguished two bright crimson specks, probably destined to become eyes. In a few days a stomach may be detected within the animal, and two apertures may be noticed at the end of the body opposite to the eyes, one with, the other without cilia. Beyond this point I have never been able to keep them alive, nor do I know what is the further process of their development.

Look now at that pretty little zoophyte attached to the seaweed. That is the Coryne Pusilla, a very common zoophyte, easily to be recognised by its knobbed tentacles, not, as in most animals of this kind, arranged in a circle round the mouth, but studded over the whole surface of the head, giving it somewhat the appearance of a club. Independently of its beauty, it is well worthy of notice, for of it is told one of the fairy tales of science—a tale of transformations as strange as the wildest imagination ever dreamed of. Attached to the body of the polyp, among the bases of the tentacles, may be seen certain small white bodies termed gemmæ, or buds, by which a new generation of zoophytes is destined to be produced. Among the lower animals it often happens that a new individual is produced by generation or outgrowth from the body of the parent; but in most cases the new individual so produced is in every respect similar to the old one. But in this, and in some other zoophytes, the bud is not developed into the likeness of the parent polyp, but assumes a widely different form, that of a medusa, or jellyfish, which, after a time, becomes detached from the parent stem and dances away merrily through

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the water, alternately expanding and contracting its crystal bell.

It is not a case of simple metamorphosis, like that of the acorn-shells before mentioned, or like that of the butterfly, which is first a caterpillar, then a chrysalis, before assuming its perfect form. The polyp has always been a polyp; the medusa will never be anything else but a medusa. But though the medusa will not itself become a polyp, it will give birth to a fresh generation of polyps. Its children will not be medusæ like itself, but polyps, which, in their turn, will produce gemmæ, to be again developed into active free-swimming medusæ.

I have now in my aquarium, growing upon an empty whelk-shell, a numerous colony of small naked zoophytes—the Hydractinia echinata,—upon which are to be seen medusa buds and medusæ, in all stages of development. Some are only just visible, and as yet give no sign of the form which they will take; some, a little further advanced, have begun to assume the bell-like form, and may be seen with the lens to be marked with four faint pink dots, showing the future place of the eyes; while some, fully formed, are struggling to free themselves from their parent, eager to commence an independent life. The medusæ developed from the buds of the coryne I have never seen; but those of the hydractiniæ, which probably are not very different, are the most delicate fairy-like creatures which it is possible to conceive. I know no better way to give an idea of their form, than to compare them, as many writers have done, to a crystal bell,—the resemblance being made more complete by the presence of a curious organ called the peduncle, occupying exactly the place of, and in this species being of the same size as the clapper. From the margin of the opening of the bell spring four long, curling, tendril like tentacles, and alternating with them are four others, similar, but shorter. At the base of each of the four longer tentacles is a faint pink spot, supposed to be an eye, which is visible only when considerably magnified and in a strong light. Indeed, the whole animal is so transparent and shadow-like, that it may easily escape notice, even when the direct rays of the sun fall upon the vessel in which it is contained.

But we have wandered from our bottle, which at present contains no medusæ, though I fancy that some of the buds on the coryne show signs of an approaching change. We have been able only to glance at a very small part of the vast population with which our miniature aquarium is crowded. Every drop of water, every frond of seaweed, might afford materials for many closely written pages. The seaweeds themselves, their growth, and various modes of propagation, might employ many an hour of study. We have not examined the diatoms, those curious microscopic plants, with elegantly-shaped and beautifully-marked skeletons of flint, whose strange movements almost tempt us to doubt whether the much-vexed question, animal or vegetable, has been at last rightly answered. We have passed by, unnoticed, the myriads of infusory animalcules which swim through the water, or attach themselves to the weeds. Animals, too, of larger size, we have, doubtless, overlooked. Search as carefully as you will, scrutinise with eye and lens the sides of the glass, peer into every frond of seaweed, into every corner and crevice of the fragment of rock on which it grows, and when you think there is nothing more to be seen, place your bottle on one side, and if, after a few hours, you return to your examination, you will probably find more than one animal which you would scarcely believe it possible that your former search could have missed.

Of the animals at which we have been looking, most, if not all, may be found everywhere where there are rocks and seaweed. For accurate study of their anatomy, the microscope is of course indispensable; but with the eye alone, or, at all events, with a simple lens, much may be learned of their habits, and even of their development; and with no other aid than this, any one who will try may easily provide himself with occupation for many days, and, with care and patience, may not improbably add something to our still very imperfect stock of knowledge. C. C.

CARD SHARPING.

M. ROBERT HOUDIN, the celebrated conjurer, has just published a very curious volume in Paris under the title of *les tricheries des Grecs*, or the art of winning at all games. The latter, however, is a misnomer, for I greatly doubt whether any reader will be wiser as regards the manipulation of cards, but at any rate he will learn the tricks most usually in vogue by which "Sharpers reconcile the caprices of fortune." Confining myself to the purely technical portion of this instructive volume, I will string together a few paragraphs that may throw a light on the whole art of card-sharping.

One of the great manœuvres of the Greeks is *fausser la coupe*, or falsifying the cut, which is effected in various ways, the chief of them being *sauter la coupe*, which may be rendered, leaping over the cut. This is effected in a very simple way. As the Greek places the packet on the top of the other, he allows it to project the least bit in the world. When he takes up the cards to deal, he slips the little finger of his left hand between the two packets, and manages to change their position at the right moment. Another mode of practising this is to insert the top of the finger between the packets of cards at the moment of taking them up to deal. The *passe coupe*, or passing the cut, is another variety. When the packets are separated by the cut, the Greek, in lifting them, slips the packet nearest to him with incredible skill over the other, and it is an easy task for him to get it where he wants it,—that is, underneath the other. This trick is also known by the name of the *enjambage* or straddle, and is generally used most successfully when the victim "has been looking at somebody drinking." Another excellent mode of preparing the *saut* is by introducing a wider card from another pack in lieu of its fellow card, and in this way the cut is rendered almost certain at the spot the Greek desires.

The *pont* or bridge is one of the oldest tricks of the Greeks, and when cleverly done, is very diffi-

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cult to guard against. Holding the pack in his right hand, he bends one half the cards up, the other down; hence, when they are cut, a hollow is formed between them, which wonderfully facilitates the *saut*. *Filer la carte*, or slipping the card, is changing one for another. In the hands of a skilful Greek, this change is effected so imperceptibly, that it is impossible for the most suspicious eye to notice it. M. Houdin tells us that a Greek of his acquaintance was so clever at this, that he placed the King of Spades on the top of the pack, and slipped it thirty-one times in succession, Houdin, though fully acquainted with the trick, not being able once to detect it.

It is difficult to credit that a Greek can remove, under his opponent's eyes, one or several cards, and return them to the pack unnoticed. This trick, however, called *enlevage*, is very frequently employed, and is of considerable service. It is effected by bending the cards into the hollow of the hand, and securing them by the ball of the thumb. A practised sharper can hold in this way as many as half-a-dozen cards, and cut the pack with this hand without arousing the slightest suspicion. When he wishes to restore the borrowed cards, he very quietly puts them on the top of the pack, keeping his hand fully extended.

Another favourite scheme of sharpers is substituting pre-arranged packs for those on the table. For this purpose they have pockets in the back of their trowsers, called *finettes*, whence the cards can be drawn very easily. Watching his opportunity, the Greek effects the change, while the old cards disappear in the lining of the coat. Other Greeks, with even greater audacity, will change the packs at the table in the following way, and for this purpose the pockets are in front of the waistcoat, and are called *costières*. When sitting down at the table, the sharper draws one of these packs out, and holds it in his right hand; with the other he takes the pack on the table as if to remove the paper, and lays his pack on it, being careful to conceal both packs with his right hand. By a quick movement he changes their position, removes the true pack by the *enlevage*, and that finds its way into his lining pocket. To render this trick perfect, the envelopes of the cards must be precisely alike: but this is very simply effected. The Greek discovers the shop where the persons he intends to swindle buy their cards. He becomes a regular customer there, and presently buys several parcels of packs. The next day he brings them back on the excuse that the cards are not of the required pattern. The packets are still sealed: hence the tradesman unsuspectingly exchanges them. But the Greek has passed the night in unsealing the packages and marking the cards. The tradesman has them in his shop, and the Greek waits patiently till they reach the party he intends to victimise. Another very artful contrivance is a tin box, fitted to the arm under the coat sleeve, and containing ready-prepared cards. When the Greek is going to act, he lays his arm on the table, his hand quite covering the cards: he presses a spring, the prepared cards slip out, and the others are whipped away by a pair of pincers, and conveyed to the box.

Basiled cards were one of the most effective modes of sharping in the last century, when they were only known to adepts, and gained them numerous victims. Now-a-days they have gone out of fashion, but a description will prove interesting. These are cards wider at one end than the other, which have been clipped by the Greek with a pair of scissors, and sloped off to the other end. As all the cards are basiled in one direction, if one be turned the opposite way, it is a little wider than the rest at the narrowest part of the pack, and can be easily recognised by the sharper, whatever care may have been taken in shuffling. The Greek, by turning all the Court cards one way, can cut high or low according to the end of the pack he takes hold of. Some Greeks employ cards with a double basil, the Court cards being cut with a convex edge, the others with a concave edge; with these cards the result is the same as with the others, though they offer more chances for cheating. Clever sharpers employ so slight a basil, that it is difficult to detect even for professionals.

When white cards are not of the first quality, some of them are of different colours, that is, of a white more or less pure. This imperfection results from the bad quality of the pasteboard employed in their manufacture. The Greek manages to recognise the cards by these slight shades, when he has looked at them for a little while. If the cards have no irregularity in their colour, the Greek manages to give them various tints which he alone can appreciate. For this purpose he rubs the cards he wishes to know with a rag slightly covered with blacklead. A player, however on his guard he may be, will find it difficult to detect this roguery, for it needs the lynx eyes of the Greek to distinguish the marks. Again, a new pack of cards, when taken out of the paper, is frequently an aid to the sharper in distinguishing the Court cards. In dealing, the Greek presses his left thumb against the cards, as if to make them slip more easily. Now, the low cards slide more easily than the Court cards, for the following reason. Gum is employed to make the cards shine, and this easily grows damp and becomes a little sticky. This trickery is especially employed by the Greeks of the highest society, who take advantage of it without detection. Another clever mode of cheating is by pricking certain cards so as to produce a slight relief on the back. Some Greeks refine on this process, however; they undo the back of the card, make the prick underneath, and then gum it down again. In this way, there is only a slight roughness on the back of the card, which, if noticed, easily passes for a defect in the manufacture. Others, again, make this mark on the face of the card, where it is so completely concealed by the paint, that it can only be detected by the touch. Another very ingenious method in vogue with the Greek is to make a very slight mark with his nail in the corner of every card that may be useful to him. This slight mark is easily recognised by his delicate fingers. Those Greeks who trust to these schemes have a wonderful softness of touch, which they keep up by wearing gloves whenever they are not playing. Some of them even rub the ends of their fingers with

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pumice stone, or dip them in certain acids, which render the skin extremely sensitive.

The *chapelet* is an arrangement of the cards in accordance with certain words of a sentence retained in the memory. There are chaplets more or less ingenious, the best being those which offer the mind a meaning or an idea. One of the oldest chaplets is formed of two Latin verses, in which each word indicates one of the fifty-two cards in a complete pack :—

Unus, quinque, novem, famulus, sex, quatuor, duo,
Rex, septem, octo, fœmina, trina, decem.

These thirteen cards are also arranged in an order of suits, as :—

1. *Unus*, ace of spades.
2. *Quinque*, five of hearts.
3. *Novem*, nine of clubs.
4. *Famulus*, knave of diamonds.
5. *Sex*, six of spades ; and so on, following the order of the chaplet and the suits to the last card.

Here is a chaplet for a piquet pack of two-and-thirty cards :—

Le roi dix huit ne valait pas ses dames,

which is, being interpreted,

Le roi, dix, huit, neuf, valet, as, sept, dames.

When a Greek has substituted a pack arranged in accordance with a chaplet for another, and has made a false shuffle, which does not disturb the sequence, he can easily know all his adversary's cards by those he holds in his own hand. At *vingt et un*, and similar games, this trick is extremely dangerous. The packs are changed beforehand, and, though really shuffled, a considerable period elapses before they have completely lost their order : some cards may be disarranged, but the Greek can easily form a knowledge of the following card by that which precedes it.

The Greek at times renders trickery artistic : and the following instrument is a proof of it. If this trick were not invented for a culpable object, we should be tempted to admire it. It is a ring known by the name of *trépan :* it is hollow, and forms a reservoir filled with a very limpid ink. This fluid would have a tendency to escape from an opening or a point formed in the inner circle of the ring, were it not retained by capillary attraction. As this point is hidden in the interior of the hand, the Greek can, at a suitable moment, mark certain cards with an almost imperceptible dot. This ring is also employed for cheating at dominoes, but in that case the point is made of very sharp steel and is solid. Another excellent instrument for cheating is a snuff-box. The Greek, when preparing to play, places on the table a box, on which is a medallion, about the size of a shilling, generally exquisitely painted. This is usually handed round, and admired by the company. When returned to the Greek, he takes a pinch of snuff and places the box close to him, but at the same time presses an invisible spring which substitutes for the miniature a small convex glass, which is very useful to him. When dealing, for instance, as this mirror is under the cards he gives his opponent, they are reflected in it, and the Greek knows all he wants to know. Now and then, the Greek returns the miniature to its place, and politely offers his victims a pinch.

Some of my readers will probably remember in "Gurney married" a system of telegraphy employed at whist by husband and wife. Thus, the lady says, "Smimsmag dear, it is your turn to play," and shows she wants a spade by the initial of the first word, and so on. The Greeks have also their telegraphy, but it is far more artistically managed. Although there are 32 cards in a piquet pack, they may all be indicated by twelve different signs, eight for the nature of the cards, and four for the suits. At écarté, the number of signals is further reduced, as the confederate only wants to point out the Court cards. But it is not necessary, as some authors assert, to employ any exaggerated signs, such as coughing, sneezing, drumming the table, &c. The Greeks are far too clever to employ such simple machinery, as they would speedily be detected. On the contrary, the signals given are only understood by the accomplice, as may be judged from the following example. If the telegrapher look at—

1. His partner, he indicates a king.
2. The adversary's hand, a queen.
3. The stakes, a knave.
4. The counters, an ace.

And while indicating the nature of the cards he points out the suit by the following signs :

1. The mouth slightly open, hearts.
2. The mouth closed, diamonds.
3. The upper lip drawn over the lower, clubs.
4. The lower lip over the upper, spades.

It is certain that by the help of these manipulations, and many more I have passed over for lack of space, a Greek can win at all games, by dealing himself favourable cards. But it must not be supposed that the Athenian gentlemen are so clumsy as to employ legerdemain, for that would be speedily detected. These intelligent scamps are chary with their resources, and act with great prudence ; they generally deal themselves an ordinary hand, and their skill, combined with their slight influence, is sufficient to ensure them the favours of fortune. As a general rule, the Greek modifies the employment of his skill by circumstances. The more skilful he is at play, the less necessary is it for him to call cheating to his aid. If he has to deal with a poor player, and recognises his own superiority, he plays fairly, and reserves his knowledge for another occasion. As, however, it often happens that fortune justifies the adage that "novices have the most luck," the sharper stands on the defensive against accident, and does not lose while he can prevent it.

It will be seen that most of these sharpers' tricks would be difficult with our substantial English cards, and hence Greeks are not so numerous in this country as in France, which is their *habitat*. It is refreshing to find, however, according to Houdin, that cheating rarely prospers with them, and the majority die in a state of extreme indigence. LASCELLES WRAXALL.

VOLUNTEER DRILL.—AN ADJUTANT'S DIARY.—II.

September 10*th*. — After breakfast Tallboys walked with me to Dabshott to look for a house. It is a town of about five or six thousand inhabitants, with one broad street and several alleys, a

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ruinous old castle with a keep, three churches, three cotton mills, and looks at a stand-still. The town has no room to expand; the castle people will not sell the fields around it on any building terms; there is a steep hill to the north; the river Dare floods all the low lands to the south, and the three mills are built on the narrow piece of land to the west; so that there is no room to build and no houses to let, and what is still worse for me, no tradesman has ever let lodgings, to the army at any rate, since an officer recruiting for the Royal Artillery went away without paying four months' rent, and taking with him his landlady's best-looking daughter. I am not particular about quarters; those who have wintered in a hut at Shorncliffe never are; but in Dabshott there *is* nothing to be had except one small house, which not being as yet roofed CAN not be ready for three months. I was ruminating on my road home when we met old Doctor Dearden.

"Do you know of a house to let?" said Tallboys, for the fiftieth time to-day.

"No, I don't—yes, I do; poor old Mr. Mansfield will be dead before night, and his house opposite the Roaring Lion will be to let." We turned back, went straight to the Duke's agent, and a word from Tallboys got me the refusal of the house. Having as good as taken the house, it was about time to look at it. Walked past it, and into the back yard, which contains a two-stall stable and loft. The place looks my measure.

Tallboys said I shall want a servant, and suggested making inquiries at the Roaring Lion opposite. The landlady being out I asked the barmaid if she knew a maid-of-all-work. She knew a general servant (and I stood corrected), who was in service a few doors off, and who might suit me. Might she send for her? She said that women servants were a great difficulty in this country, for girls earned such high wages at the mills, and had so much liberty and time to themselves that they seldom would take service, and never stayed long in a place. A message came to say that the girl would slip over in a few minutes. Tallboys ordered some beer and ginger beer mixed in a jug, which was very refreshing, and soon made him so hungry that he went foraging to the larder, and brought back some pressed beef, of which we both ate voraciously with pickled cabbage. He then called for cigars, and a box of regalias at eightpence a piece being produced, we each lighted one, and had smoked for five minutes, when a smart dapper young woman of four-and-twenty, in a very neat cap, and a fair allowance of crinoline, stepped into the bar-parlour. The barmaid explained what I wanted, and beckoned her to sit down, which she did, and was soon sufficiently composed to ask me several rather embarrassing questions. Did I live in the town or in the country? I looked towards the window for the purpose of pointing to the house opposite, but recollecting that Mr. Mansfield had only to die that night, I said there was some difficulty in finding a house in Dabshott.

"What wages did I give?"

Here was a puzzler. I looked first at the barmaid, who was looking at her work, and then at Tallboys, who said his mother gave her maid Moffatt twenty-five guineas, whereupon both girls giggled. I countered by asking how much she had had, and how much she expected. She began by asking twelve pounds a year, and was going on with tea and sugar and several other items, which I was giving as fast as she named them, when the landlady entered. She spoke well of Susan, and entering, to my relief, with spirit into the deal, at once struck a bargain, the foundation of which seemed to be included in "what was right and the usual thing."

Tallboys lighted another cigar, and proposed moving. I proposed tossing up for the lunch, having an eye to setting it off against his five-and-ninepence for yesterday's fly, but he told the landlady to put it all down to his mother.

We all left the hotel together, and I was chuckling at having made such good arrangements about a house and a servant; but Susan took immediate advantage of my being beyond the protection of the landlady by crossing the street, and asking me if she would be expected to clean my boots. I was as weak as a weasel. If she had asked me whether she would have to put me to bed, I could not have said "Oh, certainly not," with more animation.

September 12*th*.—The Dabshott corps assembles for drill in the High Street every alternate Wednesday, at half past one o'clock, when they march into the country. This being one of their days, Mrs. Fairfax sent the Colonel's compliments to Mr. Potts, with a note to say he would be glad if the corps would drill in Pursopen Park. The message arrived late. The corps had marched out of the town, but not having gone far they were countermarched, and reached the gates about three o'clock. The Colonel and Tallboys put on their war paint, which to the latter is not at all becoming. Headed by Mrs. Fairfax in a general's sash of crimson and gold over her shoulders, the whole party, including several visitors staying in the house, walked to a level piece of ground inside the gates, where we found the corps, under the command of the tanner, drawn up to receive us. He gave a good word of command, and the men presented arms very fairly. We then walked up and down the ranks. The corps consists of two companies of about eighty members each, but to-day there were not above thirty present, formed into one company, not including a brass band with an enormous big drum.

The uniform is a light drab grey, with red facings and bronze ornaments, the tunic being trimmed with mohair cord. When the ranks were closed the tanner asked Mr. Fairfax what he would like. Mr. Fairfax turned to his wife and she turned to me. I suggested the second and third practices of the position drill, as something which the men were likely to know, the tanner having been to Hythe. The third practice, which includes the loading, tells more in a few minutes how much men know individually about the use of a firelock than any other drill. The tanner seems to have taken a great deal of pains with himself, and for all volunteer purposes he is as good a drill as need be. The men were unequal, some of them knowing the practices well enough

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and having a correct position, but the others, particularly the sergeants, did badly, though until I stopped him the drill sergeant was prompting them from the rear. This was followed by light infantry drill, in which, as in the other, some were good and others knew very little. They were all extended behind some trees, and I was pointing out something wrong to the tanner, when two footmen, the gardener, and the coachman were seen to leave the house, carrying baskets and two huge cans, each containing about two gallons of beer. The close was sounded, arms were piled, and in a few minutes the corps was extended along the wall, busy with cold beef, bread, and beer.

"Now, Mucky Mac, you be off."

This was said by Mr. Potts to a tall, well-built, but rather silly-looking fellow, dressed in the tunic, trousers, and cap of the corps. He had been only a spectator, but had pressed with the corps into the grounds whilst the other lookers-on were sitting on the wall on the opposite side of the road. He deserved the name of "Mucky," for he looked as if he had been rolling in the road.

"If you please, mum, may I have a bit?" said Mac to Mrs. Fairfax; "I have not tasted since dinner time." It was then about four o'clock.

"O, yes," said Mrs. Fairfax, smiling. "Give him some beef."

"Thank'e, mum," said Mac; and, speaking loud enough for the corps to hear, "there would have been more on parade, if they had known of the beef."

Indeed fresh men were joining every minute; for as soon as it was known in Dabshott that the corps had countermarched to Pursopen, several who had been kept at home by business, winded beef, popped on their uniforms, and followed as fast as they could. Not that they wanted anything to eat; most of them were tradesmen or well-to-do artisans, who had dined; but a drill in the park was a little excitement—a sort of picnic—and a change from a march out,—a drill on the side of the road and a march home again.

Mr. Fairfax tells me that Mac is the only son of very respectable people in Dabshott; though very cunning, and quite capable of taking care of himself, he is not exactly all there; he does not want head, but it would be better if screwed on a little tighter; though well clothed he always looks dirty from a habit he has of sitting down whenever and wherever he stops; and though well-fed, he is always hungry. When the corps was raised, Mac was one of the first to tender his services, of which the leading men of the corps were not very anxious to avail themselves; and though he became all the more pressing as he saw the number of feeds to which volunteering led, they managed to keep him out for some time on one plea or another. The corps refused to provide him with a uniform, and this plea availed them till one of their many ambitious members, being disappointed at not being elected sergeant, resigned, and, to spite the corps, made a present of his uniform complete to Mucky Mac. One of the printed rules of the corps was that any person providing himself with the uniform and accoutrements of the corps might be a member; so Mac was enrolled and sworn in by the tanner. He attended every parade, was not deficient in drill, and was the only shot in the corps who could beat the tanner at the long ranges; but no amount of drill could break him off the habit of sitting down at the word halt, and resting his chin on the cock of his rifle—a most unsoldierlike habit. The corps put up with him for some time, trying all sorts of plans to keep him on his legs, until the Assistant Inspector of Volunteers paid the corps a visit of inspection, when his peculiarity made the corps so ridiculous, that the tanner, who had high notions of military dignity, gave him fourteen days' notice to quit, and then struck him off the muster-roll. The disappointed sergeant put Mac up to asking whether he was dismissed for disobedience of orders, or breach of discipline while under arms, neglect of attendance, misconduct, or improper behaviour as a member. The tanner, quoting the Act, said it was for other sufficient cause, the sufficiency of which the commanding officer was the judge. So Mac returned his rifle into store, but the uniform was his private property, and he lived in it.

Though no longer a member, he still continues to attend all parades, employing himself in keeping back the crowd of idlers and children, curling his moustache all the while, and assuming Mr. Potts' military swagger. Tallboys delights in listening to anything derogatory of the tanner, of whom he always speaks as a low-bred fellow. Tallboys forgets the Penny connection.

September 17th.—Still at Pursopen. Mr. Mansfield died on the 10th, according to the dictum of Dr. Dearden, and I have agreed to take the furniture, and everything in the house, as it stands, at a valuation. One of the executors caused a delay for a few days, but I enter the day after to-morrow. The tables and chairs are very old, with thin, fluted legs, but sound; the beds are four posters with curtains, and look stuffy, but I will have them changed for iron. I have very little to buy but linen. Susan is in the house giving it a good cleaning and airing.

A letter by the evening post from my prim Aunt Boodle. She wants to know when I enter my new house, as she will then pay me a visit at once, and help me to buy linen, put up the curtains, and do a lot of things which men do not understand. What a pity! I have written to say how glad I shall be to see her, and that she is to come on the 20th. She is not to know a word about the house being furnished till she arrives. She will be sadly disappointed, for she likes fussing among carpets and curtains, during which time she always wears an old bonnet on the top of her head like a charwoman; and she would have bought lots of things for the house, and being a good soul, would have paid for them. I wonder what she will say of Susan. This is the first time we have dined at Pursopen without company. Tallboys, also, is away on a visit, and his mother in her room; so that Mr. Fairfax and I have been *tête-à-tête*, and very pleasant he has been. There was the same dinner of three courses, *à la Russe*, and a dessert, as if there had been a party of ten; the same butler who looks like a statue with an

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eye, and the same two footmen in powder; and whether it is from a habit of dining alone, and in a plain way, or from having dined much at mess, where we know the soldier-servants make a point of eating the sweets with their fingers on the stairs back to the kitchen, there is nothing which puts me off my feed so much as three grand faces watching two plates. I do not object to one in powder to every two plates, for we can keep him moving; but to-day I actually passed a *vol-au-vent*, in which I know there were coxcombs and truffles, for the simple reason that Mr. Fairfax having refused it, there would have been six eyes on one plate all saying I had had enough. I like a woman to wait at table.

If ever I have ten thousand a year I mean to have two of the smartest and best-looking women instead of footmen, and their livery shall be lavender silk dresses, white silk stockings, and lace caps trimmed with lavender ribbons. There shall be no man-servant in-doors. Men always have creaky boots. In the event of my absence from home, a steady male of sixty shall sleep in the house, with just courage enough not to put his head under the bedclothes in case of burglars, and with just vigour enough to let off a gun. Women never have creaky shoes.

We found Mrs. Fairfax in the drawing-room. She does not improve on acquaintance, but looks best sitting *en grande tenue* at the head of the table, where sometimes, I fancy, she takes more champagne than is good for her memory. She is never quite at her ease, but always seems to be under an effort to shake off the Penny and put on the Tallboys or Fairfax. When she has had four glasses of still champagne—the Pursopen glasses being six to the bottle—she begins, like many others in the world, to talk as if she possessed what she would like her friends to think she does possess. Having worse than no pedigree, she dilates on these occasions on the quarterings of the Tallboys and Fairfaxes with her three Pennies proper, a carving of which is to be seen over the chimney-piece in the entrance hall. But give most men a bottle of champagne, "or women either," as William says, then give them their heads, and let them lead off in the conversation, and they will talk about the thing which they think they want to make them happy. Whenever a family talks of having dined with their neighbour the Marquis at his town house in London, and of all the nice people they met there, and how friendly they were, they mean to say how much they would like me to think they were in the habit of dining with his lordship. Some people differ from others; some talk in this style without the champagne.

With all Mrs. Fairfax's kindness and generosity—which at times is quite a waste of money—there is a hankering for gratitude, and an expectation that the benefit conferred will bind the receiver to friendship and to her service—hopes which never were and never will be realised in this world. Who is better for a gift? Who is grateful? Does not a gift betoken an obligation? Do we ever really love those to whom we are indebted? Every morning she feeds her speckled Hamburghs, the blackbirds and thrushes, robins and finches, on the terrace in front of the dining-room window. How tame they all are! How close they come to her when she steps forth with an enormous basket under her arm! How like they are to human beings!—sitting all day in the trees or under the shrubs with their eyes on the window, and as long as they are fed never making the slightest effort to feed themselves. And when they are fed, though there is plenty for all, look how jealous the thrushes are of the robins, and the chickens of the finches! just like so many once-loving brothers and sisters with a disputed legacy among them. But she is a good soul, and does a deal of harm with her money.

Dabshott, September 19*th.*—Entered my new house this afternoon. Bought some iron bedsteads from Mr. Fogg, the upholsterer, who allowed for the four-posters about two-thirds of their valuation. Sent the feather beds out of the house on rather worse terms in exchange for hair and flock; but the house smells much less mouldy. Susan seems an active girl with an honest face, so I have handed my keys over to her. When she brought in the tea, she said, "About them boots, sir?"

I replied, "Oh, ah, yes;" and she was so neat and her hands were so clean, that it would have been a shame to put her to such work.

"Who can we get for the job?"

"And the back yard," she added, "and the windows?"

She knew of a man who would come in the morning for half-a-crown a week.

"Six pound ten a year—a deal of money."

"A deal of money! He cannot come for a few days, being very busy for the rest of the week."

"And in the meantime—"

"Yes, sir, in the meantime," she repeated.

"I will clean my own boots, and you shall clean yours."

It was a great relief when Susan agreed; and for me it will not be the first time,—for did not you, Adversity, teach me such a variety of lessons *au quatrième* in the Rue de Lurêne, brushing my own boots being one of the most useful?

September 20*th.*—My aunt arrived at three o'clock, with more starch than ever, and looking tired. She stared at Susan in such a stern manner that I would have given anything if I could have told my aunt that the girl was too smart and young, and that I had given her notice.

I wonder whose place it is to clean the old lady's boots. I will do them till the man comes, to save arguments.

Letters from Cowdale and Yakerley. At the former the corps parades every Saturday—(they all parade on Saturday)—and the captain, whose name is Prescott or Peascodd—for he writes a bad hand, and his name does not appear in the Army List—says he wishes to see me as soon as convenient.

The captain of the Yakerley corps regrets that he cannot name a day for me, as he is likely to be from home for some time, as if it is any matter whether he is on parade or not, and the men are busy with a late harvest. But I must see the Yakerleys before the end of the quarter, for the Colonel has to certify that I have visited each corps during the period for which I make out my

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claim for pay and allowances, and the quarter ends the last of this month. I mean to persuade Mr. Fairfax to go with me to these places, and also to Wakup on Saturday. He has never seen those corps, and he will support me. Having no rank according to the warrant, I have no authority. Indeed, my position seems to be rather anomalous, in having to visit corps commanded by my seniors, and in having to correct them, or, perhaps, to report, if anything is going on wrong. Drilling a corps once a month can do little good, so I intend to ask the officers to drill their men; if they do right and according to book they do not require me, and if not I will point out their mistakes.

Looked at the forms of returns to be sent in (transmitted is the word) at the end of the month. I do not quite understand them, especially the totals. How am I to know who are effectives or non-effectives in the corps at Yakerley? Officers absent with leave—officers absent without leave. The idea of Volunteers asking for leave! They take leave and don't say so. Wrote to Pipps and asked him fifty more questions, and why he had not answered my last fifty.

(To be continued.)

ON HER DEATH-BED.

A LULLABY.

HUSH, baby, hush! the still dews are falling—
  Silence muffles all the earth, and steals over the sea, love;
Fair rides the moon—but, ah, the fairest moon
  Will never bring my darling back to me, love!

Hush, baby, hush! the grey light is dawning—
  Slumber dies from earth and sea, and peace hurries away, love;
Fair glows the morn—but, ah, the morning light
  Has other eyes than mine to fill to-day, love!

Hush, baby, hush! the dull winds are waking—
  Mournful over land and sea, and wild thorough the sky, love;
Yes, let them mourn—the love that man can give
  Will never fill my darling's heart like my love!

Ah, how they wail! And yet, they have tidings—
  Tidings to a mother's soul too sweet not to be true, love;
Death may be dark—but soon, there is a day
  When Love Himself shall lead me back to you, love!

ARTHUR J. MUNBY.

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THE FORTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

TO THE EDITOR.

Dear Sir.—Among the various inaccuracies observable in the accounts of current American affairs, I notice that the "capture" of Fort Smith, Arkansas, has been spoken of as a *great success* of the Seceding States, while it appears unaccountable that a fort should have been thus taken without bloodshed. As I am well acquainted with the place in question, and with most of the "forts" on the frontier, I conceive that I am well qualified to offer you some information on the subject, which may be acceptable to you in your editorial capacity.

The whole map of the United States is covered with forts, and misapprehending their character, a stranger might conceive that the land was in a state of chronic war; whereas these are simply the shadowy traces of wars that once existed. Ere the "area of freedom" was so surprisingly extended—in the old colonial and post-revolutionary days—those points whereat troops were stationed to defend the frontier against the savages, were always so named with proper American grandiloquence. A fort was then an aggregation of rude log huts girdled by a picket fence, of such a height that an Indian could not pass it without alarming the garrison, and exposing himself to the certainty of being shot *en route*. Sometimes a loop-holed block-house, or "keep," was erected within the enclosure, whereto, in case of the pickets being forced, the garrison might retreat. As savage warfare was stealthy, and based on surprises, this rude system of fortification sufficed to the emergency. The Indian, conceiving no honour in rash exposure, would scarcely scale the fence; and the loopholes of the block-house prevented his approach to fire it. During the long Canadian war, wherein the combatants were of different metal, the forts along the then Canadian or French frontier were fortified in a different style, according to the existing state of military science; but most of those old citadels, like Ticonderago, are now in ruins. The only forts, in the proper sense of the word, now existing in the United States, are on the Lakes, or on the Atlantic shore, in the vicinity of the great commercial cities; and these, to the military eye, are indifferent, and are also amusingly small. Many "forts," noticeable on the maps, indicate the former position of a frontier post, such as I have described, which has been succeeded by a thriving village engaged in agriculture and trade. On the present Indian frontier, the West, the existent military stations,—or, as the Americans by a strange metonomy term them, *garrisons*,—are undefended even by a stockade, for the power of the Indian tribes has passed away for ever. Of the many forts in Texas, only two have the slightest pretensions to the name of *forts*:—Fort Brown, opposite Matamwas, and Fort M'Intosh at Laredo, both on the Rio Grande; where are small rectangular earthworks, intended as a defence against the Mexicans! Even these are slowly declining into the ground from which they rose—the troops, stores, &c., being quartered outside them on the "open," to use an Americanism.

All the others on the Indian frontier consist of lines of comfortable quarters, with their stores, workshops, stables, and offices surrounded by shade-trees, the military character of which is betrayed by the military attire of those working or lounging around. Fort Smith, or Belle Vue, as the inhabitants euphemistically style it, is a town of 3000 population, on the Arkansas, where *once* was a howling wilderness and a stockaded "fort." It is a military station, generally occupied by two companies, and being the head-quarters of the division, there all the stores designed for the other posts in *that* Indian territory are accumulated. Thus, you will be right in concluding that the Secessionist *success* is reducible to the ignoble plundering of the Government stores, in full safety of patriotism, after the withdrawal of the garrison to avoid bloodshed that, however justifiable, would have been, in every light, lamentable. I forgot to except Forts Bent and Laramie from my generalisation; but they are in the midst of the desert, on the slope of the Rocky Mountains, in an exceptional position, and liable to be beleaguered for months ere reinforcements could arrive; and are, therefore, surrounded by walls, or curtains without bastions, of adobe, or sun-dried brick. You may place every dependence on this statement, as I know all these places personally. It is not six years since I passed through Fort Smith in particular. The general public in America, that is, in the Eastern and Atlantic States generally, are nearly as ignorant of the fact I have stated, as the "Times" correspondent, who is not to blame for not knowing what is a matter of indifference to Americans themselves.—I remain, Sir, yours truly,

Francis Morton.

London, *May* 18, 1861.

MY UNCLE'S HANDBOOK.

"After all, young man, there is nothing like experience!"

"Experience! Experience! I would I had never heard the word! 'Trust to my experience,' is the eternal cry of age to youth. But I maintain that youth is a hundred times better off without it."

On hearing this astonishing verdict, five guests assembled in a drawing-room after a bachelor dinner, looked up with surprise at the mortal daring enough to utter a heresy so contrary to all received opinions.

"Still you must admit," replied, after a pause, the first speaker, a grey haired officer, "that experience is a precious talisman, when rightly applied."

"Ah, who knows?" rejoined the other, who was a young man barely five-and-twenty; "but if not too tedious, let me relate you the history of my own."

All signified their eagerness to listen to the exposition of so strange a theory, and he resumed:

"Four years ago, gentlemen, at nine o'clock in the morning, I left my native town for the great metropolis. My Uncle Thomas, an excellent man, who, from my earliest recollection, had never lost sight of me, accompanied me on the platform, and the train was on the very point of starting,

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when, grasping my hand, he exclaimed over and over again, 'Good-bye, Alfred, good-bye; and, above all, do not forget my handbook! Remember my handbook!'

"To explain this, I must tell you that the day before leaving, my Uncle called me into his study, and spoke to me as follows:

"'Alfred, I am getting in years; I have a house, 2000*l.* a-year, a nephew, and the gout. I watch over my house with order, my means with economy, my gout with pain, and yourself, my boy, with pleasure. It is my wish to leave you all I possess, except the gout; but, before doing this, I wish you to complete your education by some knowledge of London life. You shall start to-morrow by the first train, and remain in London until I call you home. Combine amusement with instruction, and see as much as you can of the world. Still, my dear boy, as London is a place where a man ought always to be on his guard, I have resolved on providing you with arms. Take this book! It contains the fruits of my long experience. In it you will find a protection against the snares that will beset your youth in the great city; there have I noted all the observations acquired by a knowledge of men and things, and I have named it my Handbook. When you have entered on the slippery path which lies before you, take no step without first consulting it. Here it is. You will thank me on your return.'

"Thus it is, gentlemen, that I left by the train at nine o'clock, and why my Uncle Thomas reiterated up to the last moment his pressing recommendations.

"You may fancy how my heart beat the first time I trod the pavement of Piccadilly, though I could hardly refrain from looking for the concealed traps that might lie upon its polished surface. However, I soon took courage. What had the possessor of 'my Uncle's Handbook' to fear?

"A week had hardly glided by when, thanks to the letters of introduction with which I was provided, I made my *début* at a fashionable party.

"Up to the present, I see no great misfortunes," interrupted the grey-haired officer.

"Patience—the critical moment is at hand. Amongst those present, I had remarked from the first a young man of most prepossessing appearance—about my own age—polished in his manners, and talented, as his conversation plainly showed. On his part, he seemed equally pleased with myself, and, before the evening was over, we were the best friends in the world, and it was agreed we should dine together the next day. However, before going further, I remembered my Uncle's advice, and, on my return home, opened the famous handbook at the article 'Friends.'

"The paragraph ran thus:

"'Friends. To distrust London friendship. Not to be too easily led away by the advances of strangers. Particularly to shun those who, with fascinating manners, seem to take a fancy to you at your first interview. As a general rule, such are mere adventurers who want to borrow money of you.'

"Forewarned is forearmed. When, the next day, my insinuating young friend presented himself at my door, he was told that I had changed my lodgings, leaving no address.

"This was No. 1.

"My time being my own, I had ventured on a few timid attempts in literature. Verses naturally were among them, an unpublished volume, and a play, as I thought, completely unknown. But things, somehow, do come to light, I hardly know how; and, one evening at a party I gave in my own rooms, I was asked to repeat a mere trifle—a sonnet. At first I refused, but was over-persuaded. My play and three sonnets all passed the ordeal.

"It was a perfect triumph!—compliments, thanks, applause! I was retiring to bed in ecstasy, when the inexorable Handbook rushed to my thoughts. I opened it at the word 'Compliments.'

"'Compliments,' it sneered; 'never to believe one word of the praises of the world. True merit never excites anything but envy—the more you are praised, the less should you think of yourself.'

"'Which means clearly,' I thought, with a sigh, 'that I am a perfect nonentity. My poor verses! to judge by your reception, you are but sorry things.' I bade farewell to my dreams of literary fame. My MSS. did not take five minutes in burning.

"This was No. 2.

"I now turned my thoughts on acqu ing wealth. Fortunately a merchant, to whom I had been introduced as a most successful speculator, had condescended to express great approbation of a plan I had conceived, and had expressed himself most kindly towards me. Giving me his card, he added:

"'Come and see me to-morrow, we will talk over all this together, and as you appear intelligent,' these words are his, 'I may be able to get you a share in a most lucrative affair.'

"As I was preparing the next morning to keep this appointment, a thought crossed my mind—I had forgotten to consult the Handbook. I turned over its leaves impatiently until I came to the word 'Business.'

"'Business. On this point more than on any other mistrust is a most necessary quality. Speculations are double operations—cheats on one side, dupes on the other! Rule without an exception. Should any speculation be proposed to you, deem it worthless, otherwise it would not be offered you, as men prefer keeping the good things of this world for themselves.'

"On reading these lines, I sincerely blessed the uncle who had snatched his nephew from such imminent danger. As for the merchant, I need hardly say that not only I never went to his house, but when I met him accidentally, I turned my head away to avoid recognising him. A wretch who lived on dupes!

"This was No. 3.

"I think I said I was then just twenty-one. Who, at that age, can help falling in love? How beautiful Flora was! how full of candour, innocence, and modest grace! I thought, too, she was not quite insensible to my devotion. Indeed, some stolen words and glances had almost converted doubt

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into certainty. I was told she had but slight expectations, but I should have been ashamed to have made that a consideration. I determined on making my sentiments known to her the next day. But, first, the Handbook lay open before me:

"'Love—Marriage. A snare to catch fools! To dread like the plague, the soft glances and modest airs of portionless girls. This is one of the commonest kinds of trickery—'

"Trickery! There was the word. Was I to allow myself to be tricked? How exact the description! 'Soft glances,' 'modest airs,' 'portionless.' Very nearly so—what an escape! Without my uncle's Handbook, what would have become of me?

"When I met her again, my withering contempt proved that her unworthy stratagems were discovered.

"This was No. 4.

"Yet that evening I was exasperated without knowing why. I wanted to be revenged on somebody. It so happened that everyone was enthusiastic in the praises of a certain Baron, in whom I suspected a rival. 'A baron—a baron!' I said, with a sneer; 'titles sometimes no more real than their supposed owner's diamonds.' A phrase borrowed verbatim from my uncle's wise Handbook.

"As ill-luck would have it, the Baron in question, coming in at that moment, overheard me. A challenge ensued—a ball in my shoulder was the result.

"This was No. 5.

"Six whole weeks I kept my bed. During that interval there was time for reflection, and after that came an irresistible yearning to confide my meditations to some sympathising ear. I found this in a cousin who came to see me. I told him all.

"The history of my first friend—

"'So, you would not see him:—the most estimable fellow in the world? His father, who is one of our first men, could have been of the greatest service to you.'

"The story of my MSS.—

"'I was entrusted with most advantageous offers by an editor!'

"The story of the merchant—

"'One of the most honourable men in the City. The transaction he spoke of will bring him thousands!'

"The tale of my love—

"'An angel, my dear fellow! She has just come into a legacy of 40,000*l.*, and is on the point of marriage with Baron ——.'

"'My adversary?'

"'Yes; a perfect gentleman and true nobleman!'

"All this was too much—this last stroke completely overcame me. I seized a pen with frenzy, and traced the following lines:

"My dear Uncle,—I return your 'Handbook.' In three months it has made me lose a friend, an editor, a fortune, and a lovely wife, and gain a pistol-shot in my shoulder. This experience is quite enough for me. Please try to find some one else to whom you can offer the valuable fruits of your experience. For my part, I have learned to my cost, that certain illusions are amongst youth's dearest privileges. Every season has its proper fruit.

"Your affectionate nephew."

"Now, gentlemen, am I right in not believing the old maxim of acting on the experience of others?" concluded the narrator.

"And what did your uncle reply?" inquired the grey-haired officer, ironically.

"Well, I have never heard of him since."

"Then, sir, pray allow me to give you some news of him. I dined with him yesterday, and he sends you this message by me, that he has cut you off with a shilling!"

SERFDOM IN RUSSIA.

"THE WHITE HUSBANDMEN."

The liberation of twenty-one millions of human beings from chains riveted by centuries, is begun, and proceeds with a smoothness that promises completion within the term proposed. With the advance of spring, serfdom in Russia is dissolving like the frozen fetters of her fields and rivers; and the land seems to share the hopes of its children.

In the tranquillity also of its progress the moral revolution resembles the physical change, from wintry desolation to sunshine and verdure; and the sober moderation with which the great event is being carried out, is as much to be admired as its stupendous importance. The emancipation of the serfs in Russia is not wrested from tyranny by rebellion, but it is bestowed as a wise concession to the growing intelligence of a people who have never lost their faith in the superior goodness and wisdom of their rulers. This faith and veneration may be deplored only when misdirected, for when guided by sufficient intelligence it becomes a quality productive of high results, as may be exemplified in the following anecdote of a Russian serf, and the first sovereign of the house of Romanoff.

The village of Korobova is situated about twenty-six miles from the town of Kostroma, and is remarkable, in Russia, as being the abode of above one hundred free settlers, who neither pay tribute to any lord, nor are liable to the performance of any duties usually attached to their condition; such as the repair of the public roads, and the furnishing of recruits for military service. They are, in short, exempted from all the burdens of the nation, and yet remain in the full enjoyment of all its rights and advantages. These fortunate people, who are called the "White Husbandmen," are all descendants of the peasant serf, Ivan Sousanin; and they are indebted for their immunities to the devotion with which he sacrificed his life for the service of his Tzar, on the following occasion.

At the time when Michael Romanoff, by the unanimous choice of his countrymen, was called to the throne, Russia was suffering from the aggression of the Poles, who, hearing of this selection of a Tzar, naturally feared that it would prove an obstacle to their design of subjugating the country, and they accordingly resolved to effect his destruction. The young Tzar was but sixteen years of age, and was living at his private

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estate, near the town of Kostroma. His father was a prisoner in Warsaw, and his mother was consuming her days in sorrow, in her cell, at a nunnery, where she had been forcibly placed against her wishes.

The Poles dispatched a troop of armed men for the purpose of killing the young Tzar Michael; and the detachment had already reached the village of Domnina, belonging to his property, and not above three-quarters of a mile from his residence, when the soldiers found themselves ignorant of the road to the house, and, at the same time, accidentally met the serf, Ivan Sousanin, of whom they inquired, with evident impatience, where they might find the newly chosen Tzar. To remove all suspicion, they informed the peasant that they had been sent by some friends of the Tzar to be the first to congratulate him on his unexpected good fortune.

Sousanin was both prudent and shrewd; he suspected he had to do, not with the friends, but the deadliest enemies of his lord. From their dress he knew them to be Poles; and at that time that was enough to excite against them every true Russian. Feeling that the safety of his master depended on his caution and resolution, he at once resolved to sacrifice himself to secure that point. Sousanin carefully concealed his joy at hearing that his young master had been chosen Tzar of Russia, a fact of which he had not previously been aware, and answered the inquiries of the Poles by assuring them, with great simplicity, that he was well acquainted with the dwelling of the Romanoffs, and would undertake to lead them to the very door. The counterfeited honesty of the peasant imposed upon the Poles, who, believing in his words, directed him to guide them thither, as he best knew how. Instead of doing so, he led them in a totally opposite direction, finding means, at the same time, to send notice to his young lord of the impending danger.

The Poles, led by their guide, marched for a long time without stopping, and at nightfall found themselves in a gloomy and impervious forest, where Sousanin still contrived to keep them wandering for some time longer, under the pretence that he had strayed from the path, owing to the darkness. The assassins, however, now suspected that their guide had misled them, and angrily charged him with deceiving them.

"No," replied the undaunted Sousanin, who already saw before him the certainty of a painful death. "No, it is not I who have deceived you, but you have deceived yourselves. How could you suppose that I should betray to you my sovereign? He is now safe, while you are far enough from his dwelling."

The assassins, dreading their own destruction, in a forest as yet untrodden and impassable, and where the ground was thickly covered with snow, threw themselves with fury upon the faithful serf of the Romanoffs, and killed him with inhuman cruelty.

For this noble act of self-sacrifice the Tzar liberally rewarded the descendants of Sousanin with a grant of lands in the vicinity of Domnina, which were afterwards exchanged for others, in the waste of Korobova, where the posterity of Sousanin founded the present village of Korobova. In addition to the lands, the Tzar Michael granted to these descendants those exemptions and privileges which have been already mentioned, and which they continue to enjoy to this day; and by which they are distinguished from all other peasants of the empire, being the forerunners of their countrymen in emancipation fromserfdom.

It may be necessary to add, that the descendants do not at present bear the name of Sousanin, but that of Sabinin. The fact being that Sousanin left no sons, but only one daughter, Antonida, who married Bogdan Sabinin, by whom she had two sons, Daniel and Constantine, who are the progenitors of the present "White Husbandmen."

ANA.

THE NAPOLEON VINE. — Lieutenant-Colonel Palmer of Nazing Park, Essex, has received a communication from Field-Marshal the Count d'Orsiano, governor of the Hôtel Impérial des Invalides, in Paris, informing him that the Napoleon Vine, struck originally by the great Emperor, a few months before his death in Saint Helena, and thence transplanted to Nazing, in Essex, and which was sent last year by Colonel Palmer to the Count d'Orsiano, to be again transplanted to the Garden of the Hôtel Impérial des Invalides, is in a very flourishing condition, and growing luxuriantly. This fact may be worth noticing, as an act of courtesy passing between a Marshal of France and one of the oldest Volunteer officers in this country, Lieutenant-Colonel Palmer having served continuously as a Volunteer for upwards of forty-two years: and this may tend in some degree to counteract the ill effects that occasionally arise from injudicious speeches and irritating paragraphs directed against the present Emperor, or the French nation generally.

A CHAPTER OF CHINESE HISTORY.

THE MINISTER'S STRATAGEM.

MOST history is voted dry, and, so far as the mere narration of facts is concerned, the history of China forms no exception to the rule. But when we get off the beaten track, and wander amongst the bye-paths which skirt the way, we shall find much that is interesting and amusing. The "History of the Three States," from which the following extracts are taken, is one of the most popular works in the Chinese language. Partaking largely of the character of a romance, its dignity is preserved by a strict adherence to the chronological succession of the events which it records; and though its pages are embellished with innumerable fanciful and minute incidents, it does not necessarily follow that the characters and scenes with which they are connected should be regarded as purely imaginary. The beauty of composition is, however, that which most commends it to the favour of the Chinese; in comparison with this, historical accuracy is looked upon by them as a matter of very secondary importance.

The portion of history of which it treats takes in a period of more than a century, from the death

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of Heuen-te, A.D. 147, to the accession of the first sovereign of the Tsin dynasty, Woo-te, A.D. 265, who once more united under one sceptre the three kingdoms into which, on the abdication of the last sovereign of the race of Han, the empire had become divided. It was a period of frightful anarchy. The effeminacy of Heuen-te's successor, Ling-te, who was completely under the influence of the eunuchs of his seraglio, whom he advanced to the highest honours; had led to the alienation or destruction of all those ministers best capable of conducting the affairs of state. Vague rumours of mysterious signs and portents filled the minds of the people with apprehension, and led them to expect the extinction of the ruling race; so that when an impostor, who laid claim to supernatural powers, took advantage of the discontent, which prevailed throughout the empire, to raise the standard of revolt, and proclaim the downfall of the House of Han, thousands flocked to enrol themselves under his yellow banner. A bloody war ensued, in which for some time the rebels had the advantage, but the imperial arms were finally victorious; the rebellion was crushed, and its leaders destroyed. It is in this war that mention is first made of the imperialist general, Tung-chŏ, not, however, as a victor, for his army was only saved from a total rout through the accidental assistance afforded by the three heroic volunteers,

Chang-fee.

Heuen-tih, Chang-fee, and Kwang-kung; and it was to their bravery and the successful generalship of Tsao-tsaou that the rapid suppression of the rebellion was chiefly due.

On the death of Ling-te, after a reign of twenty-two years, the nobles leagued together to destroy the eunuchs, to whose intrigues they attributed all the evils by which the empire was afflicted. The murder of the generalissimo, Ho-tsin, accelerated their destruction; the enraged troops marched against the palace, and, setting it on fire, massacred the eunuchs and their followers; of these only two escaped, taking with them in their flight the youthful emperor and his brother. Hard pressed by their pursuers the eunuchs were forced to abandon the royal children,—and this carrying

Kwang-kung.

off of the young emperor, with his miraculous escape, forms perhaps one of the prettiest episodes in the whole work.

The empire now became a prey to rival factions; the young emperor was a mere puppet in their hands; and Tung-chŏ once more comes upon the

Tsao-tsaou.

stage, to perform for a time the part of the "evil genius" of the piece. By means of heavy bribes this general had escaped the disgrace due to his defeat by the rebels, and purchased the favour of

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the court; so that he had been elevated to the rank of a noble, and appointed to a high command. He now marched an army of 200,000 men

Tung-chŏ.

upon the capital, with the avowed purpose of reforming the government, when, having gained possession of the empress-mother and the imperial children, he became their self-constituted guardian, and as such assumed the supreme direction of affairs. This usurpation was resented by the other nobles, and he would have succumbed to the forces which they led against him, had it not been for the treachery of one of the opposing generals, Lew-poo, who, unable to resist the temptations which were held out to him, killed the commander-in-chief, by whom he had been adopted, and brought over the largest portion of the army to Tung-chŏ, who, in his turn, adopted him as his son. Encouraged by the accession of strength obtained through Lew-poo's defection and treachery, Tung-chŏ threw off the mask, and no longer attempted to conceal his cruel and ambitious nature.

As the first step towards the accomplishment of his designs, he procured the deposition of the young emperor, who, with his mother, was shortly after put to death by his orders; a younger son of Ling-te's, who was then nine years old, being placed on the vacant throne. A reign of terror ensued; the most horrible cruelties were perpetrated by the unscrupulous minister and his followers, and the nobles of the court, though secretly conspiring against him, dared not oppose his will. In the provinces they were more successful, and a powerful army was raised, for the purpose of delivering the empire from the tyrant's rule, under the leadership of Tsao-tsaou, in which marched the heroes and sworn brothers, Heuen-tih, Chang-fee, and Kwang-kung, at the head of their contingents. Tung-chŏ advanced to defend the capital, but was driven back after a sanguinary battle, in which the prodigies of valour performed by Lew-poo had nearly turned the tide of victory in his favour. He is beaten, but not conquered; he pillages and burns the capital which he is unable to defend, and, driving its wretched inhabitants before him, transfers the seat of the government to Chang-nan, which recommends itself to his favour by the strength of its position. The audacity of this measure seems to have disconcerted his opponents; and dissensions having sprung up amongst them, the confederacy was dissolved, leaving Tung-chŏ in possession of the new capital, the person of the young emperor, and such portions of the imperial dominions as he was able to hold by force of arms. Though contenting himself with the title of Regent, he was now emperor in everything but the name: profuse in his rewards, licentious in his pleasures, and terrible in his anger, self-indulgence and self-aggrandisement were his ruling passions. Building a strongly fortified city, called Mae-woo, at some distance from Chang-nan, he filled it with his vast treasures, and provisioned it for twenty years, with the intention of retiring to it in case of a reverse; but all his precautions were futile, for the day of retribution was at hand.

We shall give the sequel, as far as possible, in the Chinese historian's own words:

At a banquet given by Tung-chŏ to the nobles and great officers of state, the wine had only gone round a few times, when Lew-poo, turning towards him, whispered in his ear.

"What!" said Tung-chŏ. "Has it come to this? Let Chang-hwan be seized and carried from the hall."

His guests were greatly disconcerted; and when, ere many minutes had elapsed, Chang-hwan's head was brought in upon a waiter and presented to the Regent, they were overwhelmed with consternation.

"Pray, gentlemen, do not be alarmed," said Tung-chŏ, laughing, "it is nothing but a traitor who has met with his deserts. A letter, delivered by mistake to my son, Lew-poo, betrayed him. I can assure you, gentlemen, there is not the slightest cause for fear."

His guests answered as they best might, but lost no time in taking their departure.

The Chancellor, Wong-wan, returned home in deep thought, for what had taken place at the feast filled him with apprehension. He could not rest; and the night being bright and fine, he took his staff and went into the garden. There leaning against a tree, he raised his eyes to Heaven, and burst into tears. Suddenly he heard a noise:—from a small pavilion near where he stood, there came the sound of sobs and deep sighs. Going stealthily towards it, he saw a little singing girl belonging to his household, called Teaou-shin, whom he had brought up from infancy and treated as a daughter, weeping, and in great grief. She was just sixteen; very beautiful, and accomplished.

"Ah!" said Wong-wan, after listening for a short time. "What are you doing here? Can it be that you are intriguing?"

Teaou-shin fell at her master's feet, trembling with fear.

"How could my lord's poor handmaiden be guilty of such unworthy conduct?"

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"Then why here so late and all this sobbing?"

"May I open my heart to you?" said Teaou-shin.

Teaou-shin.

"You may; but take care that you tell the truth, and conceal nothing from me."

"I owe so much to your lordship's parental care," said Teaou-shin, "that were I to be crushed to atoms, I could not repay a thousandth part of the kindness I have received. I have seen of late that your brows have been knit together with care;—I knew that it must be occasioned by weighty affairs of state, and I dared not speak of it; but to-night your lordship's great uneasiness filled me with anxiety, and I came here to weep unseen. Would that I could be of any use! I would brave ten thousand deaths to be so."

Wong-wan struck his staff upon the ground. "Who could have thought," said he, "that the fate of the empire of Han was in your hands. Come with me." Then taking Teaou-shin into the painted hall, and ordering out his wives, he placed her in a chair, and bowed low before her.

Teaou-shin threw herself on the ground. "What have I done, my lord, that you should treat me thus?"

"It is because you alone can take compassion on the living souls belonging to the empire of Han," and his utterance was choked with tears.

"I have said that I am ready to brave ten thousand deaths; my lord has but to issue his commands."

"The state," said Wong-wan, "is turned upside down—the ministers and nobles are in momentary danger of destruction—it is you, and you only who can stretch out a helping hand. The treacherous tyrant, Tung-chŏ, aims at supplanting the supreme authority, and the court is powerless to oppose him. This is my scheme:—Tung-chŏ has an adopted son, Lew-poo, who is bold and daring. I have observed that both he and his father are slaves to beauty; I will first offer you in marriage to the son, and then make a present of you to the father, whilst you, seizing the opportunity, must sow dissension between them, and so manage matters that Tung-chŏ's death at the hand of Lew-poo shall be the result; and thus the dangers by which the state is threatened will be averted. Everything will depend upon your strength and courage. Say! are you ready to make the attempt?"

"My promise has been already given. Trust me, my lord, that when the time comes, I shall know how to act."

"Remember," said Wong-wan, "that if one word of this leaks out, my death, and the extermination of my whole family, will be the consequence."

"Rather would I be cut to pieces than be guilty of such base ingratitude," was Teaou-shin's answer.

The next day, Wong-wan having had a golden cap ornamented with some of his finest pearls, sent it privately, as a present to Lew-poo. Lew-poo was greatly pleased, and came in person to

Lew-poo.

express his thanks. Wong-wan, who had ordered an elegant collation in expectation of this visit, awaited his arrival.

Directly he was announced he went out to receive him, and having ushered him into the inner hall, he drew back, and motioned Lew-poo to proceed and take the highest place. Lew-poo demurred:—

"I could not be guilty of such presumption, being but a simple general, whilst your excellency is a high dignitary of the imperial court."

"Not so, my general, it is not to your rank but to your exalted character that this respect is due; for at this moment I behold in the Lord Lew-poo the most valiant champion of the empire."

Lew-poo was highly gratified; and the minister,

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redoubling his attentions, ceased not to eulogise his guest's and Tung-chŏ's rare merits.

When Lew-poo's hilarity showed that the wine was beginning to take effect, Wong-wan sent away the servants, and ordered the wine to be served by the women of his household. They had drank deeply, when Wong-wan said to the attendants, "Tell my child to come to us."*

And in a few moments two waiting-women came in, leading Teaou-shin, magnificently dressed, between them.

"Who is this?" asked Lew-poo, in great surprise.

"It is only my little daughter Teaou-shin," said the minister, "who I have ordered in to do you honour, as a slight proof of how highly I esteem the unmerited favour you have shown me."

He then told Teaou-shin to serve the general with wine. She did so, and as she handed him the goblet, their eyes met.

"My daughter begs of you to drink," said Wong-wan, feigning intoxication, "it is upon you, general, that the reliance of my whole house is placed."

Lew-poo, more and more enamoured, begged Teaou-shin to sit down; but she, pretending to be coy, was about to retire, when Wong-wan stopped her.

"The general is one of my most intimate friends, my child, and there is no reason why you should not do as he bids you."

Teaou-shin then seated herself by Wong-wan's side, whilst Lew-poo continued to gaze at her with undisguised admiration.

"I would gladly bestow this maiden upon you, my general," said Wong-wan, pointing to Teaou-shin, "if I thought you would be willing to accept the gift."

Lew-poo started from his seat. "Only do this," he said, "and there is no service that I will not render in return."

"Since such is your wish," said the minister, "no time shall be lost in selecting a fortunate hour for sending her to you."

The joy of Lew-poo was beyond all bounds, the more, that when he turned to Teaou-shin her eyes were no longer averted from him, and her glances revealed that she fully returned the passion she had awakened in his breast.

"I would beg of you to remain under the shelter of my poor roof," said Wong-wan, as his guest rose to depart; "but I fear that your illustrious father might be apprehensive on your account."

The general expressed his thanks, and took his leave.

Such is the first portion of the plot.

In the second: Tung-chŏ is invited to an entertainment by the wily minister, who makes extraordinary preparations for his reception. The Regent goes in great state, escorted by a body-guard of upwards of a hundred spearmen, who line the entrance hall, whilst Tung-chŏ descends from his chariot, and Wong-wan prostrates himself before him. He rises at Tung-chŏ's command, and is honoured by a mandate to be seated near him. The wine is brought in; the music strikes up; and Wong-wan fails not to pour a continued stream of flattery into the Regent's ear. Thus the time passes; it grows late, they become cordial in their cups; and the minister, as a proof of his good-will, invites his guest to enter the inner apartments.

Tung-chŏ readily assents, and sends away his body-guard. Then the minister, cup in hand, predicts the high destiny that awaits him, and informs him that the hopes of the whole empire are centered in his person.

Tung-chŏ attempts in vain to conceal his gratification.

"Should Heaven really so order it," said he, "the minister Wong-wan shall be raised to one of the highest dignities in the empire."

It grows dark, the lamps are lighted, and the table is once more spread, when Wong-wan varies the entertainment. He sends for Teaou-shin, who comes in and dances before them. Tung-chŏ is charmed with her voluptuous grace. In answer to his inquiry, he is told by Wong-wan that she is his little singing girl, Teaou-shin—he no longer speaks of her as his daughter. She is told to sing, and Tung-chŏ loudly applauding her performance, receives the wine-cup from her hands.

"How many verdant springs have passed over thee?" he asked.

She tells him she is just sixteen.

"Thou art indeed a very fairy," said Tung-chŏ, smiling upon her.

This is the opportunity which Wong-wan has sought for; he offers her to Tung-chŏ, who deigns to express his acceptance of the gift. The minister is truly grateful for such an act of condescension, a carriage is got ready, and Teaou-shin is at once driven off to the Regent's palace.

Then Tung-chŏ rises to take his leave, and Wong-wan shows his respect by escorting him on horseback to his gate. He has ridden half-way back when he sees two rows of coloured lanterns ranged in the road before him. It is Lew-poo, who, spear in hand, rides furiously forward.

"How is this?" he cries, seizing Wong-wan by the robe. "What is the meaning of this trifling? you gave Teaou-shin to me, and now you have given her to his highness."

"Be careful," said the minister. "This is no place to talk in. Come back with me, and all shall be explained."

"Now," said Wong-wan, when they were seated in his inner hall, "why is my general thus angry with the old minister?"

"Because," said Lew-poo, "I have been told that you have sent Teaou-shin tŏ his highness's palace, and I want to know what it means."

"It is nothing more than this," said Wong-wan. "Yesterday, when I was in attendance at Court, I was informed by his highness that there was something he wished to say to me, and that he would visit me to-day for that purpose. I, of course, made every preparation to receive him, and it was whilst being served with a humble repast, that he did me the honour to inform me, that the object of his visit was to inquire about a rumour which had reached him, of my having pro-

* The Chinese commentator begs the reader particularly to observe that Wong-wan here speaks of Teaou-shin as his "child."

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mised you my daughter. These were his very words :—

"'I am told that you have a daughter, named Teaou-shin, whom you have promised to my son, Lew-poo: fearing lest you may have changed your mind, I have come in person to beg her of you for him, and to request that you will let me see her.'

"It was impossible for me to do otherwise than accede to such a request. And when his highness declared that this was a fortunate day, and expressed his intention of taking my daughter back with him, that he might give her to you at once, my general will, I am sure, agree that it was not in my power to oppose the wishes of so near a relative."

Lew-poo is for the moment satisfied, and returns home. But the next morning reveals how deeply he has been wronged; Teaou-shin has been taken into Tung-chŏ's seraglio, and his heart is filled with anger at, what he believes to be, the Regent's treachery.

He manages once or twice to gain sight of Teaou-shin, and she endeavours to convey to him by unmistakeable signs, the depth of her affection for him, and her detestation of the tyrant who has wronged her. Tung-chŏ's suspicions are at last aroused, and he forbids Lew-poo to enter the sacred precincts of the palace, to which as his adopted son he had previously access. But a partial reconciliation is effected through the good offices of Tung-chŏ's confidential friend, Lee-joo, and the Regent seeks to propitiate him and make him forget the past by his increased liberality and favour.

Thus it was, when one day, Lew-poo having escorted Tung-chŏ to the imperial palace, remained without, whilst the Regent went in to the young Emperor. A sudden thought strikes him, he mounts his horse and rides back. Then, leaving his horse at the outer gate, he grasps his spear, and forces his way into the inner courts in search of Teaou-shin. It is not long before he finds her.

"Go into the further garden, and await me by the temple of the Phœnix," she hurriedly exclaimed.

He did so, and in a few moments he saw Teaou-shin radiant with beauty, coming towards him through the flowers, like some being from beyond the skies.

She spoke to him weeping :—

"Although I am not indeed the Lord Wong's daughter, he treated me ever as his child, and when your choice fell upon me, and I knew that I was to be yours, the dearest wishes of my heart seemed to be accomplished. I little knew how soon I was to fall a victim to a tyrant's treachery. I should have died ere this, for life had become a burden to me; but I wished to tell you all. Now that I have been able to do so I shall die happy. I am no longer worthy to be a hero's bride, but I can show the depth of my love towards him by dying in his presence."

Saying this, she grasped hold of the balustrade, and was about to throw herself into the lotos pond, near where they stood, when Lew-poo caught her in his arms.

"I have long known," said he with deep emotion, "how thou hast felt towards me; but never could I gain speech with thee till now."

Teaou-shin threw her arms around him: "If I may not wed my prince in this life, I may at least be united to him in the world to come."

"If I do not make you mine in this life, I am no true hero," was Lew-poo's reply.

"The days will seem as years whilst I remain in this place; have compassion upon me and save me!"

"I have come here by stealth," said Lew-poo, "and I must now leave, or the suspicions of the tyrant will be awakened."

Teaou-shin held him by the robe: "If you thus fear the tyrant's anger, when will the blessed day of deliverance arrive?"

"You must let me think the matter over," said Lew-poo, taking up his spear, "now I can stay no longer."

"Can it be that you will thus desert me? The fame of your exploits has rolled like thunder over the whole empire, and yet you now desert me and leave me in the hands of another." She burst into an agony of tears.

Lew-poo laid down his spear, folding Teaou-shin to his heart, he endeavoured to console her, and who would not forget his own danger at such a moment?

But they were not allowed to remain long undisturbed. Tung-chŏ, missing Lew-poo and finding his horse tied to the outer gate, suspects that all is not right. He orders back his attendants, and, entering the seraglio, inquires for Teaou-shin. He is told that she is in the further garden looking at the flowers, and there is a terrible scene, when Tung-chŏ comes upon the two lovers unawares. Lew-poo flies for his life, for Tung-chŏ has seized his spear; but the Regent being fat and unwieldy, he is enabled to escape.

Lee-joo once more steps in as a mediator; he points out how necessary it is that the tyrant should retain Lew-poo's good-will, at however great a sacrifice, and he proposes that Teaou-shin should be surrendered to him as the best means of securing it. Tung-chŏ after a slight demur agrees to this; and, dismissing Lee-joo, orders her to be brought before him.

"Wherefore this intriguing with Lew-poo," he asks.

Teaou-shin, in tears,—"He came upon me suddenly as I was looking at the flowers in the garden; I would have fled but he prevented me: he said that he was your highness's son, and bid me stay; then, brandishing his spear, he drove me before him to where you found us. I was about to drown myself, but he caught me in his arms, and it was whilst I was struggling with him that I was rescued by your highness."

"What do you say to my giving you to Lew-poo?"

"I am yours and yours only," said Teaou-shin, sobbing. "What have I done that your highness wishes to discard me? I would rather die than be so dishonoured." And snatching up a dagger, she aimed it at her breast.

Tung-chŏ seized her hand:

"I was but joking with thee," he said, as he pressed her to his heart. "How could I bear to bestow thee upon another?"

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"My greatest anxiety is on your account," said Teaou-shin, "for I much fear that Lew-poo will try and do you some injury"

"We will retire for a time to Mae-woo," said the Regent, "and to-morrow we will commence our journey."

And he forbade his confidant Lee-joo to make any further allusion to Teaou-shin under pain of death.

The next day they set out for the tyrant's stronghold of Mae-woo. As they passed through the crowd of courtiers assembled in honour of the Regent's departure, Teaou-shin, looking from her chariot, beheld Lew-poo with his eyes fixed on her, and she assumed an air of the deepest anguish. Her chariot rolled on, and Lew-poo galloping to a rising-ground, reined in his horse, and continued to gaze after her, a prey to the bitterest emotions.

"Why does my general linger so sorrowfully here?" said a voice from behind him. He turned round and encountered Wong-wan.

"It is a long time since we met," said the old minister. "Illness has kept me at home, and obliged me to close the door against my friends, and now I should not have ventured out had it not been for the departure of his highness. But, tell me, what is the matter that you look so sad?"

"Your daughter is the cause."

"What!" said Wong-wan, feigning great surprise, "has she not yet been given to thee?"

"That old traitor has taken her for his own."

"It is impossible! I will not believe it!"

Lew-poo told him all. Wong-wan remained silent for some time as if stupefied by the intelligence.

"I did not think his highness could have been guilty of such a brutal act," he said, at last. "Come to my house, we must consult together."

The minister alternately restrains and stimulates the anger of Lew-poo. At last his scruples seem overcome.

"Were I not his adopted son I would kill the old tyrant! but posterity would cry shame on me."

"In this you err, my general. What real relationship can there be when your very names are different? Besides the tie was severed when but yesterday he sought your life?"

He appeals to his patriotism and ambition, and when Lew-poo swears to take vengeance, and to be a faithful servant of the House of Han, Wong-wan confides to him that a plot has been formed against the Regent, and the time has arrived for putting it into execution.

The conspirators arrange that an imperial decree shall be sent to Tung-chŏ, recalling him to the capital, under pretence of the Emperor being anxious—from the impaired state of his health—to relinquish his crown in the Regent's favour; and that, in the mean time, a secret order shall be obtained from the Emperor for his destruction, the execution of which shall devolve on Lee-soo, who is to be posted with a chosen body of men within the palace, ready to fall upon the tyrant as he enters. In accordance with this plan a messenger is sent to Mae-woo.

"What says Wong-wan to this?" asks Tung-chŏ of the general of cavalry, Lee-soo, who has been charged with this mission.

"The minister has issued orders to have everything prepared for your inauguration, and he anxiously awaits your arrival," is the answer.

"I had a dream last night," said Tung-chŏ. "'Twas of the imperial dragon; this good news is its verification. But there is no time to be lost."

Then, having given the necessary directions, he went to take leave of his mother, who was upwards of ninety years of age.

"Whither art thou going, my son?" she asks.

"Your son goes where the vacant throne of Han awaits him, and in a few days his mother will be an empress."

"Beware, my son! These aged limbs, by their unwonted trembling, speak of some hidden danger. Were it not so, why should my heart be agitated by these strange forebodings?"

Tung-chŏ reassures her, and then proceeds to acquaint Teaou-shin with his good fortune, and to bid her farewell.

"And when I am emperor, thou shalt be the sharer of my throne," he tells her.

She is radiant with gratitude and joy.

The journey to the capital is marked by many ominous incidents, but they are skilfully turned by Lee-soo—who never leaves the tyrant's side—into presages of good fortune. On arriving at the city, all the great officers of state came out to meet him, with the exception of his former friend and companion Lee-joo, who made illness a pretext for being absent, and Lew-poo is one of the first to offer his felicitations. He is graciously received, and promised the command of all the imperial forces.

The next day the Regent proceeded in state to the imperial palace. On entering the outer gate, the main body of the troops which escorted him remained behind, a slender guard only accompanying his chariot. He had scarcely passed the gate, when he perceived Wong-wan and the other conspirators with arms in their hands, drawn up within the entrance. Anxiously inquiring of Lee-soo, who had remained near him, the meaning of this hostile demonstration, and receiving no answer, he became alarmed and would have fled, but Wong-wan shouting out:—

"The traitor will escape! Where are the guards?" a body of soldiers rushed out and attacked him. Saved for the moment by a coat of mail, which he wore under his robes, he was thrown wounded from his chariot, calling loudly on his son, Lew-poo, for help.

"I have thy death-warrant, traitor!" said Lew-poo, coming from behind the chariot; and raising his spear, he stabbed him in the throat.

Lee-soo cutting off the tyrant's head raised it aloft; whilst Lew-poo holding his spear in his left hand, and drawing forth the imperial edict with his right, cried:—

"It is by his most sacred majesty's command! Let the name of the minister Tung chŏ perish!"

And the by-standers responded with long-continued shouts of "Wan-suy-yay! Wan-suy-yay!"—"Long live the Emperor!"

G. G. Alexander.

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LAST WEEK.

WE did not receive the news which most people were expecting at the beginning of Last Week,—of an attack upon Washington, and probably its capture. There was less American news during the week than had before been supposed possible; yet our minds were in the state of having learned a great deal. There was no bombarding of the Capitol or the President's house; no street fighting, no battle-field or naval conflict to read of: but we began to see something of the prospect generally, and of the turn affairs were likely to take next.

There had not been time for news to arrive, even at New York, of the effect produced in the South by the zeal and promptness of the Free States in responding to Mr. Lincoln's call; but it was pretty plain what some of the Border States thought of the new aspect of affairs. The change of tone in a few days was remarkable. Maryland decided, by her legislature, to remain loyal to the Union; and the citizens undertook to keep the "rowdies" of Baltimore in order. Batteries were so placed as to command the city; and it was effectually tamed, in a trice. Western Virginia had been always known to desire free labour, and to be in sympathy with the Union party; and now the eastern part was found not to be full of Confederate troops, but so far quiet that the Governor pledged himself to the President that no troops should march through Virginia to attack Washington. It was clear that the Northern forces were in time, and that there was some halt in the action of the Confederacy. In spite of probability, we began to conceive that there might be no severe fighting after all. Not that conciliation, or compromise, or a separation without terms was practicable. Whatever might happen, the thing that could not happen was a recurrence to a former state of affairs; but for the present it was plain that no campaign was on foot, and no invader was within hail of the frontier.

The most interesting details were of two kinds;—the starting of the troops from the respective Free States, and the "stampedes" of the negroes. That term, derived from the flying tramp of herds of wild horses in the Pampas of South America, and the rush of masses of buffaloes over the prairies of the northern continent, has been for some time past applied to the escape of negroes in the considerable numbers which have become common. Bands of slaves have recently escaped where a stray fugitive now and then got away formerly; and we hear at present of a flight of negroes into Pennsylvania which will leave few slaves for Maryland to contend about. Negroes are an imitative race, and very apt at learning military arts; so their presence in large numbers in Pennsylvania is likely to add a strong element to the power of the North. We hear at the same time of the complete neglect of cultivation in the planting States. This seems to be bad policy. To carry on the industry of the country would seem not only necessary with a view to the next season, but indispensable to keeping the slaves in order. To let them be idle, and free to gossip among themselves, and to observe the anxiety in the mansion, and the hurry and excitement of the gentry, is to admit them to the great question of the day: they must be more than ever persuaded that "there is a great man coming," who is to reverse their lot.

The details of the Northern march have a freshness and animation which must excite great sympathy here. While newspapers were appearing in the Gulf States which told how, in six weeks, or in ninety days, or three months, the Southern Confederacy would be enthroned at Washington, and the Republican party banished to New England, Washington was calling to New England, and receiving a wonderful response. While the journalists of Charleston and New Orleans were informing the world that New York was with them in heart and purpose; that Philadelphia was to be taken, with the help of Baltimore, and that New York would then offer a welcome to the Confederacy, there was an uprising of the whole range of country on the other side. The Ex-presidents, whose aid was relied on as tools of the South, were not now to be had. Rumour says that Mr. Buchanan has sold his estate precipitately, and fled into Canada, in dread of the indignation of his neighbours. Other Ex-presidents and Secretaries of State were marching down at the head of regiments of their own raising. Wealthy merchants were sending millions of dollars as free gifts to government. Elderly gentlemen made presents of outfits to one another's sons or grandsons, and sent them forth, while they themselves remained to garrison their towns. These things we had at once conceived of, when we heard of the President's call for aid: but some of the incidents in the more primitive parts of the country are more like tales of old times of invasion than any mode of modern warfare.

The North-Western States immediately raised fourfold the force required by the President. Their power is perhaps the most formidable of all; for they hold the Mississippi as a tool in their hands. They could swamp New Orleans at pleasure by cutting the banks. The very danger will prevent the thing being done. New Orleans will not provoke such a fate; and the chief port of the Southern Confederacy will be thus rendered harmless. The other traits of the time were that military officers had refused to look after fugitive slaves; and that naval officers and merchant-captains had dared any applicants to search their vessels for the same sort of contraband article. If, as at present appears, the military and naval services in large majority adhere to the Union, there can be no doubt whatever of the comparative helplessness of the South, from its smaller volunteer population, and the incumbrance of the slaves. Boasts of assistance from the slaves are hollow. In one of the recent alarms about negro-risings, an old lady on her plantation was asked whether she had no fears. She replied that she had only to ask her coachman to sleep before her door to be quite safe: and she really believed in the attachment of her "hands." But it came out presently that the coachman was the leader in an insurrectionary plot which embraced her estate. From the South we heard of much drill and camping

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out, much valorous intent, and strong denunciation of any lingering love for the Republic; but of clear purpose and practical movement we heard nothing; possibly for good military reasons. Fort Pickens had been reinforced from the North, by the ships which, for that reason, did not reinforce Fort Sumter. The great ports were soon to try how they could get their privateers to sea, in spite of the strict blockade ordered from Washington, and enforced with all the energy of the commercial interest of New York. We may add, as the last item of the news of the week, that the impracticable character of the Morrill tariff had been fully ascertained, and that the newspapers were opening out against it in full cry.

On this side the water, the most important incidents were the appearance of the Queen's Proclamation, by which her subjects are warned against any kind or degree of participation in the civil war in America. We read in American newspapers of companies of recruits from Canada, on the one hand, and of expectations on the other of strong privateer crews from European countries, and especially from England. We trust our countrymen will see the difference between the temptation of aiding an oppressed people to throw off an insufferable yoke, and rushing into the strife in which two sections of a republic are contending for a principle of government. It is not often that in the former case foreign recruits do so much good as harm; and in the American case there is no excuse whatever for meddling. As for the adventurers who would seek plunder at sea, they take their chance of the halter; and it may be well for the world if they find it. Their sovereign has now warned them; and if they outlaw themselves, they are answerable for their own fate.

The other incident is the arrival of the new company of Ambassadors from the United States Government to the European Courts. Among them, Mr. Adams has landed, with his family. He is the grandson and son of the two great men of his name who were Presidents and Ambassadors in their day. He has not proved himself equal to the great occasion of last winter in the Washington Senate,—having brought forward a futile plan of compromise. But away from his trimming political associates, and animated by the rising spirit of the time, he is likely to be a better American Minister than any that we have seen for a generation. He met a cordial welcome from his own countrymen and ours at Liverpool; and he must be as well aware as we are that there ought henceforth to be a happier tone of intercourse between the two Governments than there has been during the long period when harassed Presidents and Secretaries of State took refuge in bickerings with their allies from their perplexities between the Northern and Southern sections at home.

There was much earnestness and unanimity in both Houses of Parliament about the vice and mischief of temptations to privateering. There were tidings of a copious return of the Irish to Ireland on the breaking out of war, and the suspension of industry in America. By the rising wages at home, and the demand for workers of all orders, it would seem to be wise to return from a scene of dislocation of industry. Multitudes of Irish remain in America, however, and are acting as loyal citizens, while a sprinkling take after the demagogue Mitchell, who prefers being surrounded, as he says, by "fat negroes" of his own, to being teased by clamours for liberty on the part of troublesome patriots of his own race.

We were not so absorbed in the news from the West as to be careless of that from the East; and one item of the Asiatic news is so remarkable that it must have a place in history. A ministry of Foreign Affairs is established at Pekin! It is as strange as if the Czar and all the Russians had turned Quakers, and buried their arms; or as if the Pope and Cardinals had been establishing a Bible Society. The rulers of China must have learned of late that Pekin is not exactly what they had been taught,—the centre of the universe, which had no other place in it worth notice. The Emperor's brother has seen, heard, and believed Europeans; and he has sense enough to perceive that the old exclusiveness is at an end for ever. The great Chinese wall of pride—longer impregnable than the great wall of earth—was forcibly breached at first: but now it is thrown down from within. It is a great day for China and for the world when dignified arrangements are made for intercourse with foreigners. Our duty in the case is, as Lord Elgin so earnestly pointed out in his Mansion House speech, to do whatever is possible in sending out honest and honourable men to represent us in diplomacy and commerce, and to restrain, as far as possible, the bad element which does so much mischief wherever new scenes are opened to our enterprise.

The Indian mails were interesting last week from their bringing Mr. Laing's reply to the accusations launched against him after he had left England, in connection with the great Canada railway, which seems to disturb all men's tempers. Before Mr. Laing could reply, the world was pretty well satisfied of the recklessness of the charges against him; and his letter has only made clearer what we all believed. The misfortune is not, however, wholly repaired. It is an evil that the people of India should know that there has been any question whatever of the honour of a public man sent over to retrieve their financial affairs. The matter has ended as well as it could; but those have much to answer for who neglected Mr. Laing's offer to explain, face to face, whatever they might desire, and then, as soon as he was gone to India, attacked his character. There is not much comfort yet in thinking of the inhabitants of the famine-stricken districts; but we are presented with a short list of figures from a district which has often been famine-stricken, which should afford us stimulus enough to cover the wide Indian plains with water channels. The Ganges Canal has fed a million and a half of people for a year, with their cattle, creating corn (besides cotton and sugar) to the value of a million and a quarter of pounds sterling, and saving to Government two hundred thousand pounds of revenue which must otherwise have been lost. Where, in former famines, the stench from human bodies

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hung thick in the air, and not a blade of verdure could be seen for miles, there have now been multitudes of peasants and landowners gathering in their crops, thronging the markets, paying their taxes, and carrying food along the rivers to the desolate people in districts where there are no canals. There is a great new world opening before us there, and that statesman will bear a great name in history who shall most effectually provide for the encouragement of private enterprise in developing the resources of India.

Sir Charles Wood is so far from being the man, that he is now attempting, by an arbitrary and new reading of terms, to wrest the profits of the Irrigation Company from their hands on behalf of the Government. This company is the first of any consequence which has started without a Government guarantee; and the Indian Secretary damps their enterprise at once by claiming for Government those rewards of enlightened speculation which the shareholders had supposed to be their own property. Such a claim is contested as it ought to be; and, for the sake of India, it is to be hoped that the Minister's new interpretation of the terms of the bargain will be set aside. Government will certainly never irrigate all India; and it can have no claim whatever to the extraordinary profits of companies which do not trouble it for a guarantee or other assistance.

It is interesting to observe how the provision of law-courts in any country follows the condition of the people. We were called on to rejoice Last Week in the increase of courts in one country, and the proposed reduction in another,—each being a token of social advancement. In Bengal, where indigo-growing has long caused and illustrated great social troubles, it is now intended to establish a great number of courts for small causes, to be presided over by British barristers acquainted with the local languages. A host of quarrels will be prevented by those courts, or settled in them; the people will find that justice is within their reach; and the European settlers will be on a better footing with the cultivators of their crops. In Ireland, on the other hand, the tone of society is so much improved that the overwhelming apparatus of law and justice may be much reduced. Lord Clanricarde told the Peers on Tuesday of last week that, not only crime but litigation had so diminished in Ireland, that the courts have not half enough to do, and the judicial staff may well be reduced in some proportion to that which suffices for England. The younger generation of Englishmen will never know their own happiness in being relieved from "the Irish difficulty" which made their fathers' hearts so heavy, year by year.

Amidst the commercial anxieties of the time, there were some pleasant industrial tidings during the week. The prospects of cotton-growing in Jamaica are now distinct and highly encouraging,—the produce of several thousand acres being expected within the year. The attraction of labour to Queensland, in Australia, is of a kind which will enable the experiment to be tried there. At home, the herring fishery had opened well, and the mackerel fishery was beginning. The strong opposition in the French Chambers to the lowering of the fish duties was evidently only a useful exercise in discussion; for M. Chevalier was understood to speak the mind of the government in contending for the advantages of a free trade. A hope arose at the same time that the duty on foreign rags would be lowered, through the new treaty between France and Belgium, so as to benefit our paper manufacture. Such a manufacture never does, in fact, perish for want of anything that science or ingenuity can supply; and we have never doubted that rags or an equivalent will be forthcoming as they are wanted; but it is not the less agreeable to have the prospect of more rags at a cheaper rate than we expected a month ago.

The ninth night of debate on the Budget decided the second reading of the Bill, and thus virtually settled the fate of the Paper Duty, and of some other things which were attempted to be reached through it. This passage of arms over, it is to be hoped that the business of the country will proceed with dispatch after the Whitsun holidays.

There were some items of painful news during the week:—that Count Teleki died by suicide, and not murder,—there being disease enough, however, to account for the act:—the compulsory illumination of Warsaw on the Czar's birthday,—a revolting festival!—the terrific character of the South American earthquake, which destroyed, among the 8000 people in Mendoza, whole families of great worth and consideration, who had settled there from neighbouring States in political trouble: and finally, the terrible fire which has destroyed the town of Glarus, in Switzerland. Many of us well remember that primitive place in its retired valley, with its cotton mills, and the cheese-making of which it was so proud. The great fire must have startled the cattle on the uplands, and the eagles above them, and almost broken the hearts of the old-fashioned people of the valley. Scarcely a house is left; and a remnant of antique Swiss life is destroyed.

At home, we lost a nobleman who, but for feeble health, would probably have been an eminent statesman. The Duke of Bedford was a man of marked ability; and his friends grudged his absence from the public service. He did much good in his own way, however. He will be remembered in humble life for generations to come, by being the first to throw open his game preserves, when he found the game laws cost more than they were worth: and he has left hundreds of model cottages, to be his honourable monument. On other estates than his own, generations of peasant families will remember that at this time there lived a Duke of Bedford who gave much thought and money to make the poor man comfortable in his home.

A new prima donna created a vast sensation last week. We shall hear much of Miss Angelina Patti for some time to come, and we therefore record that she first appeared on Monday of last week, as the youngest Amina yet known to the stage. This may be the date of a new enthusiasm in the most exciting department of Art.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LXVI.

"Well," said Mr. Aventayle to himself, as, after the interview at the bureau, he parted from his friend Hawkesley, with the arrangement that they were to meet late in the day, "here is another piece of my luck. I come to Paris in the hope of doing a bit of business, and the very man who made it necessary for me to come over, steps in and proves to me that I must give up my design. Such is life, as hath been remarked once or twice before. I shall take back nothing with me, except the hotel bill, and that trick of the woman-furniture. However, that's something, and on the strength of that we'll have an ice."

He turned upon one of the Boulevards, installed himself at a table in the front of a restaurant; and, after the fashion of his country, procured a second chair for his feet, and ordered his refreshment.

"Monsieur forgets his appointment, or does not care to keep it," said a voice at his elbow.

The Pole quietly slid into a chair by the manager's side.

"Eh, ah!" said Aventayle. "Yes, you."

The monosyllables might not have seemed to the listener particularly expressive, but he perfectly understood them.

"Why, you see," said Aventayle, the next moment, "I could do no good unless I had your friend's play with me, and I have unluckily left it behind me."

"Shall you telegraph for it, Monsieur?"

"Telegraph for it—not a bad notion at all. Yes to be sure, I can do that, and then I can make another appointment with you. Confound it!" said Aventayle to himself, "what am I to say to the fellow? I can't tell him that his friend is a rascal, and that I want no further dealings with him."

"Then I would suggest," said the Pole, "that the meeting take place at the bureau of M. ——."

"Now, what does he mean by that?" thought

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Aventayle. "However, he has no right to talk to me. I dare say," he said, "that we shall easily settle time and place; but I can say no more until I receive the manuscript." And he dug into his ice, as one who wished to put an end to the conversation.

"If the absence of the manuscript be the only thing in the way of the proposed interview," said the Pole, "I am happy to say that M. Adair is in possession of his original copy, that from which the transcript in England was made."

Aventayle was inclined to wax wroth at the man's pertinacity, but had been accustomed to deal with pushing authors, and others who do not let small matters stand in their way, and he restrained an impatient answer.

"I must wait for my own copy. It has some marks and notes upon it, which must be attended to. I suppose that your friend, the author, is not so ill as to make it necessary to lose no time?"

"We understand one another, Monsieur," said the Pole, smiling. "There is no objection to M. Adair's sending his piece to another manager, if he wishes?"

"I should be sorry to stand in the way of his interests."

"M. —— is a man of general accomplishments, and quite able to advise Mr. Aventayle as to the talents of any artist, literary or not."

"The least said, the soonest mended," said Mr. Aventayle; "and without going into other considerations, be good enough to tell your friend that I will return his play to him. Good morning, sir."

He paid, and was about to retire, when the Pole said,

"I am the last person to intrude, but if Mr. Aventayle finds that his friend, Mr. Hawkesley, cannot effect the object with which he came to France, they might do worse than accept a suggestion from me. The presentation of this card at the address which you have, will bring me to the Hotel Mirabeau, or anywhere else."

And this time M. Wolowski turned away to go.

"I believe that all these fellows in Paris are in a string," muttered Aventayle, "and get hold of one, you get hold of all. A word, sir, if you please. You mentioned a friend of mine. Do you know him?"

"Not personally."

"Do you know his business in Paris?"

"I know what it ought to be. But as Mr. Hawkesley may not have been confidential with Mr. Aventayle, it is not for me to be indiscreet enough to say more."

And M. Wolowski turned away in earnest, and speedily disappeared.

"I don't know whether I served Hawkesley or not by letting this fellow go away without making him speak," said Aventayle; "but that I must ask him. Of course this man means to be found when he's wanted."

"I congratulate you, my dear Adair," said Wolowski, entering a small room above that in which the previous interviews between the spies had taken place. "You may return to your usual health as soon as you like."

He drew back the curtain of the window, and Adair, who had been seated in an arm-chair, with some costume of an invalid about him, hastily rose.

"He will not come?"

"He has been warned off you by the great man. He declines business."

"Then he is a fool. However, that is his affair," said Ernest.

"There are other theatres in London," said the Pole, "and it is not likely that every manager will inquire of M. —— as to the character of the author who sends in a piece."

Adair made no reply.

"Vexed," said the Pole. "Actually and positively vexed because he has lost a chance of having a play submitted to an ignorant London audience. Have more ambition, my friend."

"Curse the play!" replied Adair, impatiently. "You do not think I am such an idiot. But there is an end. I think, M. Wolowski, you told me that you were about to give me some employment. It would be a charity, for my mind wants occupation."

"Mr. Hawkesley and Mr. Lygon wish to find Mr. Urquhart. Will you like to assist them in their researches?"

"Researches! As if he could not be found in a quarter of an hour."

"That is beneath you, then? Well, we must think of something else. Only, as you have so recently been ill, do not go out too soon into the air."

"Bah!"

"Obey orders, M. Adair," said the Pole, turning upon him with an imperative gesture. "Remain here until night, and it is not improbable that I may have something for you to do. At all events, wait and learn."

Ernest Adair looked at him steadily, and pursued him with that gaze as the Pole left the room. Ten minutes later Adair left the house.

"By Jove!" said the manager, as Adair's card was put into his hand at the hotel, "this is too much. He is so horribly afraid of losing a chance for his piece that, ill or well, he hunts me up. I am engaged."

But Adair followed close upon the *garçon*, and stood at the little table beside Aventayle.

"A gentlemanly-looking fellow, and there doesn't seem much the matter with him," was the dual thought that passed through Aventayle's mind. The next was the mental inquiry how to get rid, in the easiest manner, of a man who had been so very unfavourably recommended to his attention.

"Oh! I have seen your friend, M. Wolowski," said Mr. Aventayle, "and have explained my views to him. He will inform you of my intentions."

"M. Wolowski is a police spy, and I am another, and it is not of the play that I wish to speak to you, Mr. Aventayle," said Adair.

The manager's face, at this prompt speech, was again one of those studies in which the real play-lover, if such a person now exists, should have delighted.

"Have I been doing anything to offend the

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police?" he asked, with a certain touch of humour.

"Can I have some conversation with you?" said Adair, gravely, and without taking notice of the speech.

Aventayle had been warned against him, and had his own reasons for being displeased at the visit, and yet he yielded to the influence of Ernest Adair's manner, and said, though not over-graciously,

"Well, yes, if you wish it."

"I must ask to see you in a private room."

"This way, then," said Aventayle. And as he preceded Adair upstairs, the manager said to himself, "I have locked my trunk, and I have got my watch on, and my money in my pocket. I don't see what harm he can do me. I am as tall as he, if he tries to murder me,—but I don't see what good that would do him."

With this pleasant review of his position, Aventayle led the way to his own room.

"I would repeat at once," said Adair, taking a seat, and speaking with seriousness, "that I have no intention of saying a word upon the subject of a play which I sent to you. I can quite understand that circumstances have induced you to consider you are better without it. There is an end of the matter."

"The play is a very clever play, nevertheless," said Mr. Aventayle.

"Let us forget it, if you please, Mr. Aventayle. I wish to speak upon a much more important matter."

"Which concerns me?"

"Not as a principal, but you will be glad—more than glad, I believe, to take part in it."

"Some swindling company, I dare say," thought Aventayle. "British and Foreign Dramatists' Mutual Friendly Translation Society, very likely. But he won't catch me."

"I believe I may assume that you, Mr. Aventayle, have had an interview with the chief of the police, and that you have heard from that gentleman a good deal which is not of the slightest consequence to our present conversation, but which I may conclude has helped you to your opinion of me."

"If, as you say, sir, you are connected with that estimable body, the police, you have the means of knowing tolerably well what everybody in Paris does."

"I am answered. I start therefore with the proposition that, so far as you have an opinion, it is that I am a person not to be trusted."

"Are you here to alter that opinion?" said Aventayle.

"No. Possibly to confirm it. But, in doing so, I may place at your disposal the means of serving friends of your own."

"It can do me no harm to hear you, M. Adair, though you certainly do your best to deter me from doing so."

"Your friend, Mr. Hawkesley, has come to Paris with his brother-in-law, Mr. Lygon, upon an errand of an exceedingly delicate character. I am perfectly acquainted with their object, and with all the circumstances of the story they have come to investigate. If you are not, and I think this must be the case, it will spare their feelings if you should learn the business from one who, like myself, is a mere legal machine, rather than from one of those closely interested."

"Mr. Lygon and his friend have come on a visit to Mr. Urquhart."

"Mr. Urquhart's wife having eloped from him, and Mr. Lygon's wife having previously left her husband. I see, Mr. Aventayle, from your face, that I need be in no doubt as to the amount of confidence which has been placed in you."

"Certainly," said Aventayle, as soon as he could recover from his astonishment at these revelations, "certainly I had no idea that anything so painful was connected with my friends' business here. I conclude that you must be telling me—"

"The truth?"

"I meant to say, telling me what is within your own knowledge."

"Perfectly, Mr. Aventayle, a statement which you will be the more ready to believe when I further inform you that I am the person who was mainly instrumental in involving both ladies in their——misfortunes."

"You were the spy, the detector," said Aventayle, with an irrepressible gesture of disdain.

Ernest Adair smiled.

"I was more than that," he said, "but I did not come here to make a boast, but a bargain."

"What sort of bargain?"

"One into which I think you may enter without any imputation on your honour."

"Leave me to take care of that."

"I wished to imply that although it might be improper for me to make a proposal to one of the gentlemen who are principally interested, it might be open to you, as their friend, to listen to me, without compromising them in any way."

"I have said that I am ready to hear you."

"I will speak, then, with as little regard to words as becomes a mere policeman. Otherwise, of course, I might enter into histories, offer extenuations, and so on. But I apprehend that my best chance of bringing you to my views will be by stating the case as nakedly as I can."

"And by leaving me time to test your story."

"You will find it self-tested; but if not, ask, in a whisper, a single question either of Mr. Hawkesley or his brother-in-law."

"Well, sir?"

"I must begin by saying that, in the case of one of the ladies whom I have named, there is no chance of bringing matters to a friendly arrangement. Mr. Urquhart's character, and the information of which he believes himself to be possessed, have made the affair a breach past healing; the lady has fled to England, and Mr. Urquhart himself is walking about Paris, like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, or rather seeking one person whom he wishes to devour."

"That is a most offensive tone in which to speak of the misfortune of an honourable man," said Aventayle; "but no matter. Who is the person he is searching for?"

"Myself."

"You?"

"Yes, I am the object of his wrath."

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"Then you," said Aventayle, "have contrived in some way, I conclude, to poison his mind against his wife, and he desires to punish you."

The flush came over Adair's cheeks and forehead. Aventayle had struck him hard, unconscious that he was striking. That Adair should be the favoured lover of a well-placed lady—that had not entered the manager's head; that Ernest should be the dastardly spy who had betrayed, or, perhaps, slandered her—that was likely enough. But Adair had mastered himself before he spoke again.

"It is not so, sir. Unfortunately, Mr. Urquhart believes he has reasons for thinking that I have injured his honour. No explanations of mine, or of others, could at present remove that conviction."

"They told me you were a rascal," said Aventayle, though he had scarcely intended to utter the thought.

"Be that as it may," said Adair, coolly. "There are so many standards of right and wrong that one hardly knows who is truly virtuous, unless it be a theatrical manager who exhibits a very pretty set of ballet-girls. But my present object is to show you that I am not so entirely a rascal but that, if it could be made worth my while, I could do something that even you would consider a good act."

"But you wish to be paid for it."

"Yes, and paid highly. But you will allow that I have to offer something which is worth a price, when I tell you that I have it in my power to do for one of these unfortunate ladies what, unhappily, I see no chance of doing for the other."

"Of clearing her reputation?" asked Aventayle, eagerly.

"Of making her husband believe it cleared,—which will answer the same purpose," said Adair.

"Do you mean that you can manufacture a lie, and wish to be paid for doing it—that's plain-speaking, I fancy?"

"Practical and to the purpose. No, Mr. Aventayle, I do not purpose to manufacture a lie. A lady has been condemned upon evidence which her husband has never had an opportunity of sifting so thoroughly as a man of the world should always sift evidence, unless he thinks he had better not investigate too closely. I desire to give him that opportunity, because I think that if he avails himself of it, he will regard the character of his wife in a new light, and possibly a favourable one."

"At present—"

"He believes that she is a fitting companion for her sister, who never deserved to be mentioned in the same day with Mrs. Lygon."

"And what do you propose?"

"I need not try to raise my market by dilating upon the cruelty of Mrs. Lygon's position, or upon the proud satisfaction which Mr. Aventayle would feel at having been instrumental in restoring a wife and a mother to her husband and her children," said Adair, in his cynical tone.

"Spare all that, and let me know how I am to convince myself that I should not be lending myself to a scheme for deceiving a man who may be in the right."

"The evidence which has condemned her shall be laid before you. If you deem it satisfactory, take no further step. But if you think that she has been wronged, you will know what to do."

"That sounds fair; and if the whole story is not a falsehood from beginning to end, and I have no knowledge whatever that should make me believe it, I should not—so far as I see—be doing wrong in meddling in what is certainly not my own business. But I must ask some questions first."

"You will, perhaps, be sorry to have asked them when you see the effect your questions will have upon the two men who are now at the Hotel Mirabeau. But you have a right to be suspicious."

"Frankly, sir, I am more than suspicious. I am downright sceptical. There may be some family quarrels that have separated these couples, and you, for purposes which I do not understand, may be representing that guilt exists where there is only misunderstanding."

"The reading plays is a capital education, Mr. Aventayle, for sharpening the wit, but perhaps it occasionally leads to over-refinement. What can I gain by telling you a falsehood, for which I receive nothing, and which you can detect in the course of ten minutes?"

"Perhaps you want to revenge yourself on some of these people by making them think that the world believes in scandals about them. How should I know?"

"The world knows too much about them already. But will you do me the favour to go to the Hotel Mirabeau, and make the inquiry whether I have misled you. If I add that you had better not mention my name, it is only because I am especially desirous to keep out of the way of Mr. Robert Urquhart. I have given you some guarantee of my honesty of purpose in what I have told you, for the assurance that Mrs. Lygon's case has not been fully comprehended will ensure you the warmest reception from Mr. Hawkesley."

"This is a wicked world, Mr. Adair, and the fewer people we trust the better, but I begin to think that you are telling me the truth."

"With every acknowledgment, Mr. Aventayle, let me, for the sake of saving valuable time, go on to my own part of the business. I have said that I can reproduce all the evidence which has condemned Mrs. Lygon. I will do so upon my own terms only."

"Of course—that is understood," said Aventayle, whose matter-of-course manner of saying it conveyed the impression which he had formed of his companion. But the latter did not wince, this time.

"I am in the employ of the police. I hate my work—or, at all events, I am tired of it."

"And you wish to be independent?"

"I can earn an independence, but I wish to do it in my own way. I do not want much money; in fact, the sum I should perhaps stipulate for is scarcely worth mentioning. But I wish for an occupation in England—one in which what is

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known of my antecedents would not tell against me."

"England is not a very large place, but people have managed to live there *incog.* for years."

"That attempt would be hopeless for me. I am warned by my employers that if I presume to go to England, and accept occupation, any person who may engage me shall be informed of my history and character. And without seeking to blacken myself for a melo-dramatic purpose, Mr. Aventayle, I may say that no employer, so informed, would be justified in retaining me."

"This I was not altogether unprepared to hear," said Aventayle. "Then, into whose service do you wish to go?"

"Into yours."

"Well—you are very good—you are d—d insolent," stammered out the manager, in the excess of his astonishment. "What do you mean, sir?"

"What I say. I propose to you to give me an engagement at your theatre. I shall not ask exorbitant terms. I must live, and I wish to study acting, and if I do so to any purpose, you will be glad in due time to act liberally. I shall have the additional advantage of being able to defy the malice of my friends here, because, when they come to you with their revelations, you will be able to answer, first that you know everything, and secondly that you care nothing."

"I perceive that you are quite incapable of comprehending the insult you are offering to me, and to the profession to which I have the honour to belong," said Aventayle.

"Come, Mr. Aventayle," said Adair, with much coolness, "we have hitherto spoken like men of the world. Do not let us infuse sentimentality into our talk, or pretend that we believe in the dignity of a trade that compels an educated man to pad his legs and smear his cheeks with paint to amuse any vagabond who can find sixpence to pay his way to the gallery."

"Sir," said Aventayle, in a rage, for he was a true artist, and if he hated the vulgar part of his audience, it was not that they were pleased with him, but because they did not appreciate him; "sir, you talk offensive folly, and a man who, holding such views, expects to rise in his art, had better go and hang himself, for he'll do no good in this world."

"It may be so," said Adair; "but you see I do not deceive you as to my notions of the calling I propose to adopt. I have now told you my terms, details excepted, and when you have convinced yourself that the facts are as I have stated them, send to me again. Perhaps I may not choose to come, but this will imply no disrespect to you, but will simply be a piece of caution. I will only add, that though I claim no merit in making the offer I have made, and, in fact, I make it only for the sake of attaining an object of my own, you, Mr. Aventayle, may render your friends a service which they will never forget—unless they are as ungrateful as most people's friends are."

"He speaks devilish well," said the manager to himself. "He has learned elocution somehow. M. Adair," he said, "not that the idea you have suggested is to be entertained for a moment, but—a—if you did come to England, you would not wish to retain your—your own name?"

"A bagatelle," said Adair, smiling. "Certainly not. You might call me Aventayle if you like, and make any romance about my pedigree."

He went out with a slight bow, and the manager sent something after him which sounded like an oath.

CHAPTER LXVII.

The hotel at which Lygon and Hawkesley had taken up their quarters forms the square that encloses a large and oblong courtyard. Two of the quiet and comfortable apartments on the left hand as you enter the *porte-cochère* had been given to the brothers-in-law, and in one of these Charles Hawkesley found Lygon, who had not stirred since his companion left him.

"Your messenger has not returned," said Lygon.

"It would be impossible, my dear fellow, in this time. But it is of no consequence when he returns, for Urquhart has broken up house and home, and is wandering about Paris."

"I suppose so," said Lygon. "It is natural."

And he turned to the window.

"It is not natural," replied Hawkesley, "and it shows that the strength of mind of which he was so proud was no real strength, but a mere assumption. A sorrow comes upon him, and this wise strong man proves himself a coward."

"I understand you, Charles," said Lygon, turning towards him, "but I am past spurring. Where is Robert to be found?"

"We are to hear."

"I am not a coward, Charles."

"Why do you say so in that tone?"

"I do not know what tone I use. Do you know that my own voice sounds to me like that of a stranger, and of a stranger whom I hate?"

"We will tune it again for you, Arthur," said Hawkesley, cheerfully.

Arthur Lygon made no reply, but wandered across the passage into the opposite room, and sat down at the window.

Charles Hawkesley wrote some letters, and an hour or more had passed, when he heard his friend's voice.

"There is Aventayle."

"What does he want so soon, I wonder," said Hawkesley. "We were to meet at seven. He means to return home at once, perhaps," thought the author, "as his object is defeated."

Aventayle came up, and seemed relieved at not finding Mr. Lygon with his brother-in-law. Closing the door, he said,

"Only a few words, and if I have been made a fool of, you will forgive me."

"Not at all," said Hawkesley, smiling.

"It is not a matter to be spoken of lightly, and yet I hardly know how to approach it," said Aventayle.

"I should think that between us there need be no beating about the bush."

"That is true, but this is so very delicate a matter. You told me, though, that you were going to make a confidence to me."

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"I was, and I am, and I hardly know why I delay it, for you have a right to it, after what has occurred, and yet I am reluctant to touch the subject."

"It has been put into my head that I can perhaps save you the trouble, and the pain. And yet I hardly know," hesitated Aventayle, "for what has been said to me is so—is so extraordinary, that I hardly like to ask you whether it can be true."

"Does it concern any member of my family?"

"Yes, indeed, two—four. Have I been deceived—say yes."

"I wish that I could say yes, my dear Aventayle."

"Ah!"

"Whom have you seen?"

"Well, that I would rather not answer just yet, until I have had time to think over something. I hope, my dear fellow, that you will forgive me for alluding to the subject before you invite me to do so, but I have had a strange interview, and I came in here to know whether I had not been dreaming. Then there is real grief, affliction of the worst kind."

"In the case of one of my brothers-in-law, I confess I have no hope to hold out to him. In the case of the other," and he pointed in the direction of Lygon's room, "I hope and believe that I have not come to Paris in vain."

"That tallies with what I have heard. Now, having said so much, you must let me say a little more."

"Well, my dear Aventayle."

"They say that you can't touch pitch without being defiled, which is like most proverbs, an excuse for selfishness. I only know that I have had to touch a good deal in my time, and I hope that I am not much more defiled than other people. But still, we may as well keep away from it as long as we can. Is not this an oracular prelude?"

"It is not much in your usual way, and I know that you have got something to tell, and do not quite like to bring it out."

"It is this, then. I am told that—that new light may be cast upon circumstances of a painful kind, and that people—" and in his turn he indicated Arthur Lygon—"may be brought to see things as they do not see them now."

"Ah," said Hawkesley, eagerly, "have you been told something of my sister-in-law, Laura—Mrs. Lygon?"

"Look here. I am not afraid of touching pitch; but as I said, there is no need for any one to touch it before the time. I have had a strange story told to me. Before I can examine into it, I must, of course, have your leave to do so."

"Mine!"

"In strictness I should say *his*—but it i the same thing. Now, if I have your leave to go into the matter, I may be able—I don't say I shall be able—to do some good, and at all events you may, I think, rely upon me to do no harm. In a word, do you object to my inquiring into the history that is making that man in the next room so wretched?"

"Use your own discretion, my dear Aventayle," said Hawkesley, shaking his hand kindly. "Between us, no more need be said."

"Not a word," said Aventayle, hurrying out. And he had scarcely departed when Lygon, still at his window, said,

"There is Urquhart."

The words were uttered in the same calm, unimpassioned manner in which Lygon had spoken during the last few days.

Hawkesley sprang to the window, and saw Robert Urquhart looking up and down, as if unable to recollect the number of the apartment to which he had been directed. Charles Hawkesley ran down stairs into the court-yard to meet him.

Some one had given more attention to Urquhart's external appearance than he himself had been in the habit of paying to it. He was dressed plainly, but the loose and careless garb of the engineer had been exchanged for the ordinary surtout and decorous attire of a man of business. Save for his height and size there was nothing now in the outward appearance of Urquhart to attract attention. But the cheeks had sunk, and the eyes were hollow and restless, and there was a feverish and abrupt manner about him.

He shook Hawkesley's hand with some warmth, but instantly said,

"Is he with you here?"

"Arthur, yes, certainly."

And Hawkesley beckoned to Lygon, who still sat at his window, to come down.

"What is that for?" said Urquhart. "I mean, why are you together?"

"Why, my dear Robert, what else should we be."

"You are an honest man?"

"I trust so. Why do you say that?"

"Because—— What? Is he going to thrust himself on me?"

Arthur Lygon came out, and advanced towards the two men.

"We meet again, Robert," he said, in his melancholy voice, and mechanically holding out his hand.

Urquhart placed his hands behind him.

"I have nothing to say to you, Arthur Lygon," he said, sternly. "Nor did I come to seek you. There has been a time when I would have given you a rougher meeting, but we are in God's hands, and it is not for us to war with one another. But keep from me, man."

"I will not resent your language, Robert," said Lygon, flushing, nevertheless, with a man's anger at being so addressed. "I would rather wait and hear you justify it."

"Justify it. If your friend here wonders at what I say, it is because you have deceived him as you deceived me. Settle that between you when I am gone. In the mean time, stand away. Stand away, I say, Arthur Lygon," he added with an imperious gesture, "for I will have no words with you."

"Your violence is of no avail, Robert," said Lygon, with calm resolution. "I must have many words with you, and serious ones."

"I will not speak to you. If you have aught to ask, do it through Charles Hawkesley. Do not follow me."

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And with a motion of repulse, he placed his arm through that of Hawkesley, and led him—forced him, it might be said—from the place where they had stood.

"Yield to his wish for the moment, Arthur," said Hawkesley, "but trust me to have justice done you."

"It will not be done him in this world," said Urquhart, with a fierce scowl. "Walk with me, Charles."

And they turned away. Arthur looked after them with his melancholy smile.

(To be continued.)

LARGER THAN LIFE.

The wisdom of the world, like its own physical phenomena, has its cycles; and civilisation, like the pendulum, swings across a wide arc with slow but certain motion. The life of a nation has been compared to the tidal currents of the ocean, and habits, manners, customs and fashions most surely ebb and flow. Thus though the stream of modern civilisation moves ever forward, it needs but little fancifulness to discover an occasional point in which we nineteenth century folk have reproduced the habits of our forefathers; generally, we must say, greatly improved upon, and refined. Perhaps there is nothing in which this tendency is more noticeable than the revival of the pictorial instruction of olden days, which has been brought about by the introduction of photography; for that "pictures are the books of the unlearned" is a dictum quite as true to-day as it was when uttered by the fathers of the church—those fostering parents of education,—fifteen centuries ago. But it is not now the ignorant alone who learn useful lessons from the photographer's art; on the contrary, our highest intellects and keenest eyes call in its aid to their assistance in the discovery and registration of some of the most magnificent as well as most minute facts of physical science. Without this magic artist at command the astronomer, the meteorologist and the chemist, together with many another investigator, would be deprived of one among the most powerful of scientific divining rods. How would it have fared, for instance, with our wise men this last summer in Spain, without the camera and the sensitive plate? A hundred telescopes might be levelled at the lessening solar disc, and a hundred trained observers note with astonishing accuracy every visible phenomenon of eclipse; but each eye is more or less fallible, and looks only for a few seconds on new and startling appearances. The lens and the collodion, however, are observing too; the fleeting nature of the picture is as nothing to the obedient chemicals, and while human eyesight, and human memory, at their best can do little more than carry away a faint and confused impression of the sight, *they* will take and retain an exact and lasting image of the strange and important appearances which accompany the event.

Although we presently propose directing attention to a new use of sun-painting in a special branch of scientific inquiry, it is impossible to avoid comment upon the extraordinary development which marks the history of this art, and the enormous range over which its operations extend. It is difficult in passing along the Strand or Regent Street, and noting the number and importance of the shops devoted to the sale of photographs, to realise the fact that all these results have sprung from labours so recent as those of Daguerre, Archer, and Mr. W. H. Fox Talbot. Twenty years ago the daguerreotype was an expensive means of getting a bad likeness, and now, for an absurdly small sum, we may become familiar not only with every famous locality in the world, but also with almost every man of note in Europe. The ubiquity of the photographer is something wonderful. All of us have seen the Alps, and know Chamounix and the Mer de Glace by heart, though we have never braved the horrors of the channel. The pyramids of Egypt would fail to astonish the most ingenuous of British schoolboys. We have crossed the Andes, ascended Teneriffe, entered Japan, "done" Niagara and the Thousand Isles, drank delight of battle with our peers (at shop windows), sat at the councils of the mighty, grown familiar with kings, emperors and queens, prima donnas, pets of the ballet, and "well graced actors." Ghosts have we seen and have not trembled; stood before royalty and have not uncovered; and looked, in short, through a three-inch lens at every single pomp and vanity of this wicked but beautiful world. But while the enterprising disciples of Talbot have thus ransacked the uttermost ends of the earth for our delectation; while less commercially active astronomers and philosophers have been investigating the craters and scaling the mountains of our satellite by similar means, or forcing that subtle and wonderful fluid which we call light to become autobiographical, and absolutely put upon paper many important hints and suggestions towards the complete elucidation of the more obscure facts in its history; there is another and no less interesting quarter into which a few observers have been pushing their inquiries, and registering the results by means of photographic art. The small things of this world have long wanted faithful delineators and transcribers, equally with the large, and microscopists, like astronomers, have been glad to welcome an ally capable of permanently reproducing with perfect truth and exquisite finish the minute structure of those members of the invisible world whose strangeness, delicacy, and extreme complexity mock the efforts of the most practised draughtsman. Microscopic investigation, limited as is the circle in which its results are generally known and understood, has become a most important and valuable agency towards the increase of our knowledge in several branches of science. Physiology owes its very existence to the microscope, and medicine as a consequence is immensely indebted to its discoveries; geology no less than zoology and phytology rest some of their most vital laws upon its teachings, while a new and if possible more numerously peopled realm than the visible creation is brought to our knowledge by its means. It can, therefore, be readily imagined that so wide and comprehensive an agent, having its several departments of investigation parcelled out as clearly as any of the better known, because less

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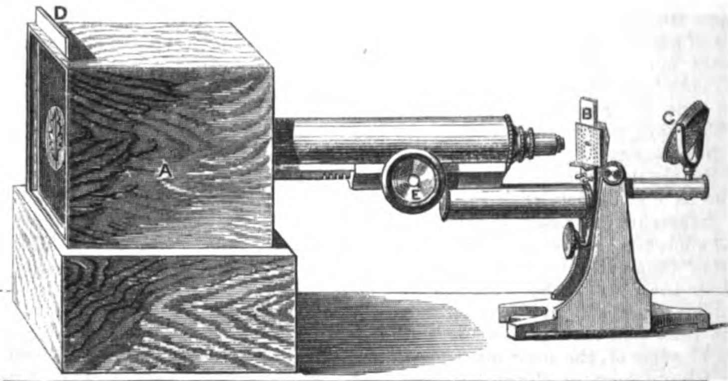
minute departments of science, must derive immense assistance from the possession of a method of permanently recording its observations with the necessary accuracy. For many years such records have been made by means of the draughtsman's craft, and hands and eyes specially trained for the work have laboured with various success to transfer to paper the revelations of the magnifying glass. Micrography, however, is an extremely difficult pursuit, involving the possession in its professors of an amount of talent and patience rarely found in combination; and the use of photography has, within the last few years, suggested itself to many working microscopists.

In these days of accomplished wonders it is difficult to excite surprise, still less astonishment; we are so habituated to the contemplation of successes gained over nature, and victories won by art, that the announcement of a new triumph falls flat on accustomed ears; notwithstanding this, we think there is something sufficiently startling even to modern senses in the consideration that we are able not only instantaneously to picture with fidelity the glories and the beauties of the world we see, but also to produce—as it were out of nothing—similarly brilliant and faithful images of the countless forms which make up the invisible creation by which we are everywhere surrounded. Perhaps those of our readers whose jaded faculty of wonder is not yet worn completely out, may be stimulated by this fact into a sufficient amount of curiosity to listen, while we endeavour to explain how such a result is brought about.

The photographic camera by whose aid all the heliographic marvels are performed is an instrument with which we are all sufficiently familiar. Consisting of a lens, a dark chamber, and a sensitive plate for the reception of the images of distant objects refracted by the lens, it is an optical instrument of precisely the same general character as the human eye, with but one exception. In our visual organs the pictures which the natural glasses form fall upon the retina, or closed end of the camera box, whence they are conveyed to the brain, but every image formed on its surface is as fleeting as our eyes are restless. In the camera the place of the retina is taken by the photographic plate, which is so prepared that a lasting impression of the picture it receives becomes printed permanently upon it.



Now the action which takes place when we look through a microscope at any object is simply this. Between that object and our eye glasses of certain shapes have been introduced, whose effect is to bend the rays of light proceeding from the minute form outwards in all directions. these divergent rays are caught on other lenses, which in their turn bend or "refract" them farther and still farther apart, until the pencil of light which left the object we observe of an almost unappreciable diameter spreads to dimensions tenfold, or it may be several hundredfold its original size. Simply told, this is absolutely everything effected by the microscope, and the term "magnifying," therefore, merely means the adoption of some artificial method of making the rays which issue from any given point diverge with such rapidity, as ultimately to cover a space equivalent to many times its size.

If, then, the retina which receives this magnified image could be replaced by the sensitive plate of the photographer, we could readily secure the permanence of the picture, inasmuch as we have already seen that both retina and sensitive plate fulfil the same functions, with the difference of sensibility only. Suppose then, in place of straining our sight down the wonder-working tube, we put as in the diagram, the body of an ordinary camera (A), where the head would be, with the hole usually filled by its lenses embracing the instrument, we proceed thus:—

We fix the object to be photographed upon the stage at B, and throw the full power of the sun's rays directly upon it by means of the reflecting mirror C. Taking our stand behind the camera, and sliding a ground glass focussing plate into the groove at D, we will cover our head with the black cloth, so well known both to all lovers and caricaturists of the art, and bring a clear image of the object upon the surface of the plate by means of the screw at E. Our arrangements are then complete, the ground glass represents with perfect fidelity the relation of the retina to the picture under ordinary circumstances, and we have but to make it highly sensitive to the decomposing influence of light to produce the desired result. Replacing this artificial retina therefore with collodionised glass, and allowing it to be exposed

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to the sun-rays for some few seconds, we have only to remove, and develope in the ordinary way the picture which will have formed, and we possess a true representation, to the minutest details, of the object viewed, enlarged some fifty, one hundred, or even seven hundred times, just as we may have pleased. In the supposititious case, we are assuming that success has crowned our first trials; in practice, this will scarcely be the fact; perhaps no branch of photographic manipulation requires greater skill, delicacy, and patience, than this; and certainly, there is none whose results are more exquisitely beautiful. One great source of failure which besets the tyro, is in the singular, though well known fact that the visual and chemical foci of a lens are not completely similar and equal—or in other words, the focussing which would give a completely defined picture to the eye upon the ground glass slide, will produce a blurred and hazy image on the collodionised plate. Chemicals see with other eyes than we do, and experiment is needed to determine that which will suit them best. One or two very slight changes of the focal distance, made at a venture, will soon establish its correct length, when any number of pictures may be taken without further trouble or difficulty. From the "negative" photographs thus produced, it is of course easy to "print" as many copies as we please on prepared paper in the ordinary way, and by this means we have the power to transform an apparent speck of dust upon a microscopic slide, into a perfectly defined picture of such a size, that every detail of structure in the original is reproduced with sufficient enlargement to be recognised by the naked eye. In this manner, the minute anatomy or histological features of animal and vegetable life can be drawn with an accuracy utterly unattainable by the draughtsman's skill; the breathing vessels, muscles, digestive organs, or the nervous system of insect, mollusc, or reptile, can be delineated with all the truth and finish of the most perfect portrait by Claudet, or by Mayall. The bee's fangs and poison bag, or the house-fly's strange proboscis; a cheese mite, or the spinnarets of the spider; the file-like tongue of the garden snail, or the toothed gizzard of the grasshopper and cricket; all these we are able to portray as readily as either of the above named artists could furnish the reader with his or her own miniature. In enumerating these few objects we merely hint at the boundless number of interesting forms which might be brought within the power of photographic art. Far as the heliographic devotees have wandered over the face of this visible world, and many and varied as are the results of their labours, yet in this other and invisible creation there are realms so populous, diversities so great, and peculiarities of organisation, form, and structure, so wonderfully numerous, that we will make bold to say it would be easy for the microscopic artist fully to match the productions of his fellow-workers on the things we see, by the variety, as well as in the beauty of the things we cannot see. Nor is it with dried and dead objects of interest that the microscopist need exclusively deal. Living and breathing animals of the minuter orders are as ready to become the subjects for his pencil as inanimate things; the delicate beauty of the polyp, or the natural ugliness of the mite and parasite, may be transferred to the sensitive plate; the lively rotifer, or the sluggish tardigrade, can all with a little management be made to give this invincible photographer a "sitting," while he paints their portraits for our pleasure or instruction, larger than life. Further than this it seems difficult to go, but a higher ambition still is cherished among many of the enthusiastic modern sun-worshippers.

The microscope, like the single camera and the human hand, presents us with pictures whose relief and solidity are only artificially indicated by light and shadow; but the path which has been opened by stereoscopic photography is one in which microscopists are bent on following. So far as we are aware, no micro-stereographs have yet been produced, but there is good ground for believing that in course of time the efforts which are being made in this direction will become successful, and that we may therefore soon be as familiar with the embodied forms of the unseen creation which surrounds us as we are to-day with the binocular images of life and scenery now crowding so many of our London shops.

That this art will have benefits to confer greater than the mere pleasure its performances can create, or the curiosity they can rouse, admits of little doubt; the introduction among persons hitherto unacquainted with the ends and aims of microscopical investigation of these images of forms called like "spirits from the vasty deep" of invisibility, cannot fail to exert an influence in directing attention and attracting inquiry into this extremely interesting channel. The ranks of microscopic students are not so large but that the cause of science would gain by farther additions to their numbers. The field is so enormous, and of such diversified nature, and has been opened so recently in comparison with the better known paths of philosophical inquiry, that all well-wishers to the increase of knowledge will welcome anything which may possess a tendency to incline, here and there, one among the many active youthful minds who are casting about for some object on which to spend their powers of research, towards this highly important, but little understood and less practised branch of investigation.

The suspicion which for many years attached itself to the deductions and theories of microscopic observers, is now entirely dissipated, and the instrument takes rank as one among the foremost of the means by which our information is extended, and our resources multiplied; yet notwithstanding all the triumphs which have already been achieved by its assistance, there is a great dearth of able workers with this useful tool. It is greatly to be regretted that the contributions of foreign countries, more especially Germany and France, towards the facts and literature of the science find but few parallels in England; whether or not this is owing to national taste among us taking a firmer hold upon more tangible and apparently more practical lines of inquiry, it is difficult to say. It is certain, however, that our activity and originality in the matter is far behind that of continental microscopists, and we therefore hail with special pleasure the appearance

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of anything which may help towards the creation of a much larger class of young observers, who will, by-and-by, become fitted to carry on with a vigour and intelligence fully equal to, if not surpassing, that of their foreign confrères those researches in minute animal and vegetable anatomy which may be considered as hardly yet fairly entered upon, and from which, insignificant as they may naturally appear to the uninstructed mind, results of the highest importance have already sprung, and others no less useful may be expected. We might add much more upon our favourite topic, and illustrate the high value we attach to microscopy by many startling instances of its usefulness; but want of space warns us to desist, and we close our remarks in the hope that what little we have already said may stimulate the inquiry of a few into a subject which is full of promise and of pleasure to the student, and one which has its rewards as well as its labours to offer.

D. P.

VOLUNTEER DRILL.—AN ADJUTANT'S DIARY.—III.

September 21*st.*—Got up at half-past six; did the lamps and the boots; did not think my aunt had such a tidy foot; but she was always active in her habits, and at sixty still thinks of her figure. She has been a widow for thirty-five years. She never had any children. I wonder what she will do with her money. It is not much —about seven thousand—but all her own and well invested. She does not make any less of it. I have known that black silk with two flounces nearly as long as I can recollect anything.

Devoted the morning to doing dutiful to my aunt; proposed taking her to see the castle. She came with her boots for me to lace into the orderly-room, a small stone-floored room at the back of the house, where I keep papers and a ruler. They were a thickish pair, well worn and mended, with a patch for a bunion. What were cleaned this morning must pinch her if these are a fit. I told her that the natives in Dabshott are rather particular, and that she might just as well put on her other boots. She says that these and her shoes are all she has with her. I find I have cleaned the young woman's boots.

A warrant from the War Office granting allowances for travelling and stationery to adjutants. This is better than receiving them from the officers, for, however generous they may be, no promise of theirs can be binding on their successors; and officers do not seem inclined to accept appointments in the Volunteers saddled with payments arranged by their predecessors. A sum of money down is bad enough, but an annual subscription is one of the most wearing of human ills, especially in face of indefinite number of years. There ought to be no allowances made by officers of Volunteers to their adjutant, for it is not desirable that he should be dependent on them in any way: but he should be placed by Government nearly on the same footing as that of an adjutant of Militia.

September 22*nd.*—A long letter to-day from Pipps, in which he tells me nothing, and asks *me* fifty questions. He knows less than I do. He says all the corps in his battalion parade about the same hour on Saturday evenings; that their distances are so great he can only visit one corps in a day, and then he is obliged to stay out all night; that there are no railways in his part of the country, that he travels in his gig, and has lamed his horse, and that the travelling allowance will not cover his expenses. He envies me and everybody, particularly a neighbouring adjutant, who draws the two shillings a-day in consequence of there being in the battalion a single corps which happens to be a little more than five miles from his head quarters, and he talks of resigning. It certainly looks hard upon Pipps that he has to visit five corps which are forty-eight miles apart on the same allowance which his brother adjutant draws for visiting one corps not six miles from head-quarters. But Pipps was always a growler.

In the afternoon Mr. Fairfax called for me in an open carriage, and we drove about eight miles over the moors to see the corps at Wakup. When near the town we overtook several of the members on their road to parade, some on foot, and a few in gigs and dog-carts. They carried short Enfield rifles, seemed to be of a better class than usual, and wished us good morning in a friendly manner. Their uniform is gay; tunic of a bright spinach-green, with black braid and red facings, edged with silver binding; ditto trousers with red stripe and the same edging; black plume in the shako, silver chain and whistle on the pouch-belt, and a white lily of frosted silver all over. On arriving at the inn we were received by the captain, a Mr. Gayman, a gentleman with a stomach and tight boots, got up like a foppish lad of nineteen. I have no idea of his age, nor can I describe him more clearly than by saying he seems to be a young, middle-aged, old boy. He escorted us into the large room of the inn, where we found about twenty members and a lunch like a ball-supper, with hock and champagne. How are the funds? I thought.

We were introduced to them all by name, and I could see that Mr. Fairfax was rather embarrassed, not knowing who were officers, for they were all dressed alike, and whom to shake hands with. At last he put his hand to his shako, and kept it there to officers and all, till the presentation was over. I sat next the honorary surgeon, who was an old army medical, and wore whiskers like Wellington. He told me, with a look as if several persons were treading on his best corn, that several of the members of the corps were quite gentlemen. The captain's nephew is a private, and Lieutenant Smith's brother is the bugler. What did I think of him, eh? The gentlemanly young man half-way down the table, with no end of watch-chains, trinkets, and eye-glasses, in a tangle with the whistle and chain, all of which the surgeon thought would be in the way when skirmishing among hedges and brambles. He is a clerk in the Wakup bank, and his other brother, the sergeant in patent-leather Balmorals and turn-down collars, is the cashier. Oh, yes! we are all gentlemen and clerks and men of business in this corps, and we are all going to be officers some day, though we are only privates at present. The old officer, the pompous mess pre-

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sident, could not shake off the idea that he was eating and drinking with private soldiers, and pins were running into all his early prejudices. Mr. Smith, the cashier, is a better-bred man, and holds as good a position in the town as the surgeon; but when Sergeant Smith asked him to take wine, the blood of the old officer began to boil; he turned red about the gills, filled his glass, and bowed anywhere but to the sergeant, looking as if his hospital orderly had shaken hands with him in the fever ward.

A very fair brass band was playing in front of the inn—twelve smart fellows in spinach-green and gold edgings, led by a German bandmaster. Generally speaking, Volunteer bands seem to be all big drum, and cracked cornet-à-pistons, but this one plays well enough. Every corps in this battalion has a band, except the corps at Cowdale, so that if they ever meet as a battalion at a review there will be four bandmasters, four big drums, and fifty brass instruments at four different pitches.

"Pretty band, eh?" said the doctor. "We had six hundred pounds to begin; band instruments, band uniforms, and music, two hundred; thirty uniforms at eight pounds ten for members who could not provide their own; drill-sergeant thirty shillings a week; bandmaster a pound every time he comes—that's the way we do it in Wakup! But I'll tell you something," and he screwed his mouth to the side of his face nearest me, looked round to see that nobody was listening, and repeated, "But I'll tell you something," when Private Stalker staggered him by asking him to take a whitewash, and before he recovered himself the band struck up the "Conquering Hero," we all put on our caps, and made a move into the air.

The parade was to have taken place in a large field near the river, but there had been a shower of rain in the course of the morning, and the grass being still rather wet, and several of the members being in patent leather boots, the corps assembled on a lawn behind the bank. The company was formed and told off by the drill-sergeant.

"Ease off to the left a little, if you please, gentlemen. Mr. Gayman, be good enough to change places with Mr. Smith—number from the right—seventeen files? Recollect you are a left file Mr. Parker, and you are a right, Mr. Jones."

After an inspection, the evolutions began, consisting of company and light infantry drill, in which everybody corrected his neighbour, and one smiling, good-natured member was pulled three different ways before being put into his wrong place. There was some confusion in the end from members joining almost up to the last manœuvre, and taking their places wherever they saw an opening, so that the drill-sergeant himself, from the Rifle Brigade, and at thirty shillings a week, did not know the sections of fours, or where the right subdivision ended or the left began. However, we managed to get through a complicated sham fight and ten rounds of blank ammunition, during which there were perpetual rallying squares and skirmishings behind the rhododendrons.

I have arranged to visit the different corps in the battalion on the following days: Wakup on the first Saturday in each month, Pringle on the second, Cowdale on the third, and Dabshott on alternate Wednesdays. Nothing settled about Yakerley. Wrote to Rodds, the commanding officer there, to say that unless he named some other day I would visit his corps on the 29th of the month by the train, at half-past three.

September 24th.—Rose early and found my boots cleaned. Susan thinks she can manage them in future, (she does not know I cleaned hers the day before yesterday by mistake,) if I will hire a man once a week for the yard and the lower windows, and once a fortnight for the upper ones. If she will keep the man out of the house, I will give her an extra ten shillings a quarter, and save four pounds ten shillings by the arrangement. Men have such creaky boots.

There is a curious trait in servants, men and women, and I like them for it. A work is only menial when done in the service of those who are not much above them, or whom they do not respect. Hence it is that servants will do any sort of work sometimes, rather than see it done by their masters. But Susan did not quite take to the boots without a struggle, for she asked me in the afternoon for a pair of old kid gloves, which made me put this question to myself—which does most harm to a young woman's hands, black lead or blacking?

Mr. Fairfax met me at the station, and we travelled twenty-four miles by train to see the corps which has only been lately raised at Cowdale. After passing Pringle, the scenery became greatly diversified as we ascended the valley of the Dare. At one time we were closed in by terraces of limestone rock, which cropped out at all angles; then we were in a natural wood of birch and alder; and in a few minutes we were among the moors, with scarcely a tree to be seen, except now and then round a shooting box. The lights and shadows were flitting over the country, and I had my head out of the window all the way. At last we came to an open country with stone walls, and shortly afterwards stopped at the station of Cowdale, or Cuddle, as it is called by the natives. Mr. Prescott was at the station to meet us, and as we were all in uniform, we made his acquaintance. He is a good-looking man of thirty, dressed in a plain grey uniform, with the correct badges and lace of his rank on his cuffs and collar; a singular instance among Volunteers.

The parade was at three, and as we had an hour to spare we went to the armoury, a small room under the Town Hall, where we found a new set of arms, in racks against the wall, marked according to the circular, and ticketed with the men's names. I asked about the state of the funds of the corps. Mr. Prescott said that he had had very little money to spend, and that he was trying to make the corps as much self-supporting as he could. When the corps was raised his neighbours had subscribed £95—that was all. Ten members provided their own uniform, and he had advanced the money to pay for sixty sets at £3 18*s.* 6*d.* each, and for six targets, which cost £20;—altogether, with some small items, amounting to £270. To meet this sum there was the £95 subscription; each member paid ten shillings every year, and

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there were eleven honorary members, who each paid two pounds a-year; so that he was out of pocket £123 for the first year, most of which, however, he hoped to be repaid by the subscriptions of the effective and honorary members. He had not thought how the ammunition was to be paid for—there was plenty of time to consider that. Mr. Fairfax hoped that he might be allowed to become an honorary member at ten pounds a-year, which sum Mr. Prescott accepted, with many thanks, and the subscriber's name was put down at once in the book, with "paid" after it. I asked how the drill-sergeant was paid. They were trying to do without one. Mr. Prescott had been through a short course of musketry with a company of Royal Engineers, and had at the same time picked up sufficient company drill to teach his men. He had induced eight of them who attended parade most regularly to learn by heart different parts of the squad and company drill, and he made sergeants of the four who had learned their parts quickest, and put them best into practice, the other four being made corporals. Two of these sergeants were now learning by heart the manual exercise; one was learning the platoon standing; and the fourth, who was the quickest of the whole, and who could nearly repeat the three practices of the position drill, would most likely be made colour-sergeant. The corps had been divided into squads, and there was much emulation among all ranks. The men were being taught to clean the rifles in the armoury, the key of which was kept at the police-station. The only difficulty he had had was with his subalterns, the appointing of whom rested with the members, and they had elected for subalterns two very respectable elderly men of business, who never attended parade. Some of the men here came to the armoury door, and begged hard for their arms, but they were paraded without them in the Castle garth. After we had walked up and down the ranks, the men were divided into squads, and placed under the new sergeants and corporals, who were rather nervous at first at the sound of their voices, but gained confidence with a little encouragement, and did very well.

I must get into the way of giving Mr. Fairfax the title of colonel, at any rate on parade; but he is so retiring in his manner, and so deferential in what he says, that I can hardly identify him with any rank: and, as far as he is concerned, I am certain he would be very much alarmed at being called colonel with any degree of abruptness. Not that he is silent from want of thought, for he thinks strongly at times, when he is smoking for instance, but he wants confidence, and seldom speaks before strangers, unless he has something pleasant to say, and then only in a shy negative way.

When we entered the train he lighted a cigar, and, after pulling at it for twenty minutes without speaking, he turned round and said, in a tone, as if doubting his opinion:

"I have hopes of that lot."

The more I see of Volunteers the more I am satisfied that they should never be drilled by drill-sergeants from the Line, with their everlasting repetitions and cautions. It is quite sufficient to see the seedy clothes of a batch of recruits just caught by a recruiting-sergeant, or to be in a town the day on which a Militia regiment meets for embodiment, to know that all a man's trades must fail, and that he is at the end of his resources before he enlists in the Line or the Militia. The surgeon may report that he is good, physically speaking, but there is a weakness of the mind or purpose, a want of self-control, or a bad habit which prevents him from remaining long in one abiding place, or gaining a continuous daily bread. It is of no use trusting to the man's intellect, or to the retention of his memory, so the corporals drill him three times a day for three months, repeating the instructions over and over again, till the words go mechanically from his ears direct to the feet and fingers without troubling the brain.

Generally speaking, a Volunteer is the man who *is* gaining his daily bread, and whose trade has not failed, and to put him once a week through the process which a soldier undergoes three times a day, is to dress silk and unwashed wool with the same machinery. At the end of a long rigmarole of instructions of how to seize the rifle with the left hand, and what is to be done with the ball of the right *futt*, including something more to be done at the word *tow*, the Volunteer mind is chaos, and though the time is short, all has to be repeated.

The Dabshotts meet for drill two evenings a week in the school-room; sometimes there are thirty members present, and sometimes three; the drill-sergeant always attends, sober or not; I am happy to say that he is going shortly to the place from whence he came, wherever that is; the Tanner frequently attends, and so do I; the corps is going through a course of preliminary drills in musketry, before shooting for a Whitworth rifle offered to the whole battalion by Mr.—I beg his pardon—by Colonel Fairfax, and I find the drill is good practice, and also that this is the most effectual plan of drilling a squad of Volunteers. First repeat the instructions for each motion, doing it at the same time with the rifle or feet; repeat the instructions making the squad do the motion; and then see how much they remember, giving them plenty of time and never prompting them till they have fairly broken down. I also find that though the drill-sergeant knows most of the drill, including the difference between the ball of the *futt*, and the ball of the toe, I can give him a fortnight to start with a squad, and beat him easily. At my suggestion Mr. Potts is trying Prescott's plan of making non-commissioned officers. Hitherto they have been elected by the men, and with the exception of one who knows his drill and can drill others, the Dabshott sergeants are highly respectable tradesmen, who keep gigs, know nothing whatever of drill, and only attend parade every other Wednesday. Already one of the corporals, a tailor of the name of Backfitt (truth being more appropriate than fiction), takes a squad at the manual exercise, and I hear of others rubbing off their shyness by practising upon squads of two Volunteers in back-parlours, so that I am not without hopes of this lot.

Mr. Potts and I agree pretty well, except on

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one point. He delights in the pomp and circumstance of imitation war, and has tried more than once to get me to draw my sword, and to collect the reports for him on great occasions. He may depend on my assistance at drill when he breaks down, which he is not likely to do; but I am adjutant to the battalion, and his corps has no more claim on my services than any of the others, a view which the colonel also takes. Not that I am above doing adjutant for him now and then, for I try to make volunteering pleasant to all hands; but as he cannot claim those services from me, I mean to wait till he asks me for them, which he does not seem inclined to do.

September 26th.—My Aunt Boodle has been fidgetting for the last few days. Having nothing in the world to do but amuse herself, she makes herself unhappy by arranging twelve months beforehand her plans of duties, visits, and occupations, from which she never deviates. Her dividends from the docks at Fenton-in-the-Sands, not her best investment, are due to-morrow, and she makes a point of being at home to receive them. Her winter celery also requires earthing up. This morning I saw her to the station, and she departed by the train.

The post brought War Office forms for the adjutant's diary. There is a vacant space for every day in the month, and columns headed Where employed, How employed, and columns also for the numbers of each rank on parade. Four of the corps parade on Saturdays, so that I can only attend four times and the alternate Wednesdays at Dabshott. The afternoon was wet, as usual in Cowshire, but I went to parade in the High Street. There were present on parade five Dabshotts, and the drill-sergeant in a state of beer, which was not very observable until he gave instructions for the formation of fours and the place of the odd man. Made my first entry in the diary. The figure 5 looks small under the head of Rank and File, but it is not my fault. Also entered my visits to the other corps, having, luckily, taken the numbers of each rank on parade.

September 28th.—Walked to Pursopen with the monthly returns for the Colonel's signature. He was out, but Mrs. Fairfax was at home, and in one of her grand humours. She must have had some champagne at lunch, for she seemed flushed, and talked pedigree and heraldic talk. She then made a long speech, which began by her saying how glad it would make her to be of any service to me, and ended by taking a note for fifty pounds out of a writing desk, and asking me to accept it. I hardly liked to say no, for she is rather touchy by all accounts, but I thanked her for her offer and then declined it, saying that I was flush of cash at present, which was not the truth. She stared at me, took up the returns, asked where they required the name of her husband, whom she expressed by nodding to the door, and walked out of the room. In about five minutes she returned, with his name signed with a strong hand in five places. The papers were open in my hand, for the ink was still wet, when I met the Colonel on the road from Pursopen. He had been to my house to ask me to pay them a visit from next Monday to Thursday. Did I want his name to any papers or returns? and the answer was no.

September 29th.—There has been no letter from Yakerley, so I started this afternoon by the train, and walked from the station to the town, or rather to the township, for it consists of a number of detached and straggling rows of factory-cottages, with every here a mill with a chimney, and there a chapel called Ebenezer. There was some difficulty in finding Mr. Rodds' house, for there were several of the name, and I did not catch all what the natives said. However, I found his house at last, and found him out. He had gone somewhere on business by the very train by which I had arrived, and would be back by ten o'clock.

A boy weeding the gravel walks told me this; also that he did not know where the lieutenant lived, and that there was no other officer in those parts; also that the rifles were kept in a loft over a stable about a mile off, and the key was kept by the policeman. Having nothing else to do for two hours, I went there, and found the policeman's wife at the station-house, the husband being expected home every minute. She pointed out to me the armoury, which was a high loft over a stable in the back yard; but she said the stable door was locked, and her husband could not show me into the armoury without his tea.

"How long would he be before he got his tea?"

"He would have to fetch it."

"How far?"

"To Farmer Morton's, who was stacking."

"How long?"

"Mebbies twenty minutes."

A cigar clears from my mind the fogs of many riddles; so I sat down on a wheelbarrow, and lighted one. The policeman made his appearance in about ten minutes. His wife told him who I was and what I wanted, and he started off at once.

The cigar was finished, and the fog was as thick as ever when the policeman returned, rather out of wind, and said that Farmer Morton was *thrang*, and would not be done till dark.

"What has that to do with it?"

They looked at each other, and the wife asked, "How can he do it without his tea?"

I lighted another cigar immediately, walked to the railway station, and smoked on the bridge till the train arrived. The people at the station hotel have never seen any of the Yakerley Volunteers, and I begin to think the corps is a myth.

Made the following entry in the adjutant's diary for the perusal of the Inspector of Volunteers: under the head of Where Employed, wrote "Yakerley;" under How Employed, wrote "No parade in consequence of the inclemency of the weather."

(To be continued.)

JUNE.

PROUD lily—peerless lily—pearly-leaved!
A sceptre thou, a silver-studded wand
By lusty June, the Lord of Summer, waved,
To give to blade and bud his high command;

Nay—not a sceptre, but a seated bride,
The white Sultana of a world of flowers,
Chosen from all their pageant and their pride
To reign with June, queen of his azure hours.

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Ah, vestal-bosom'd! thou that all the May
From maidenly reserve would'st not depart,
Till June's warm wooing won thee to display
The golden secret hidden in thy heart;

Lay thy white heart bare to the Summer King,
Brim thy broad chalice for him with fresh rain,
Fling towards him from thy milky censers—fling
Fine fragrances—a bride without a stain.

Without? Look, June, thy pearly love is smutch'd!
That which doth wake her gentle beauty, slays:
Alas! that nothing lovely lasts, if touched
By aught more real than a longing gaze.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE JEWEL-CASE.

On a bright December morning, long ago,—never mind how, never mind where, and never mind when,—I felt that I was really too busy to do aught but please myself; a gratifying sensation seasoned with a spice of conscience, for had I not performed sundry and manifold household duties? Had I not made the breakfast, and eaten my own good share of it? Had I not done all, and said all, that was necessary, even to informing my old nurse, housekeeper, lady's-maid, confidante, and tyrant, Mary Bennet, that my long raved of and beautiful friend, Lora Gardiner, was coming that very day to commence, organise, and grace a whole series of Christmas festivities? Had she not, as was her wont when any far-famed star was mentioned, said: "Nae doubt, nae doubt; but I'm thinking she'll nae be like the Lady Janet Johnstoun o' Johnstoun Ha'!" and had I not mentally ejaculated, "Bother her!" but to the old woman, "You'll see; she's prettier, Mary, far, and I know you'll say so?" Whereupon, of course, she had said: "Nae, nae, there wer but ae Lady Janet in a' the warld, and she's gane," and wiped her eyes; so then I knew the curtain had fallen on that act of the drama, and went on my way.

I suppose every one, at some period or other of their lives, has known what it was to feel the heart lightened, step quickened, and cheek flushed, with nothing more or less exciting than a fine frosty morning! Such was my own case: and after my little confab with Mary—or Mrs. Bennet, as she was usually termed—I hastened to put on a jaunty hat, warm coat, gloves, &c., and sally forth rejoicing; but while my kirtle was undergoing the process of "kilting a little above the knee," I could not resist again asking Mary, "Was Lady Janet really so *very* beautiful?"

The old woman gave a deep sigh; and then, apparently searching for some one string which had deserted its post, catching it, losing it again, and again reclaiming the wanderer, which she tied with a jerk, continued:

"Aye, she wer maire beautiful than ony I'se e'er seen; she wer winsome, and blithesome, and bonnie, wi' the eye o' an eagle, and the heart o' the dove, but" (and here her voice sank to a tone which made me creep all over), "they do say, up in my ain countree, that though the Lady Janet Johnstoun is aye dead and gone, she nae sleeps!" After this last remark, she observed, taking a bird's-eye view of me from a far corner of the room, "I'm thinking yer a' richt noo."

All right!—what a mockery! All right! When I felt that the only safe mode of transit from one room to another was by planting "my back agin the wa'," like Lewie Gordon, and progressing by a crab-like movement, thus having the comforting assurance that there was nothing more or worse than bricks and mortar behind me.

'Twas useless to indulge (what an indulgence!) in such superstitious fancies. I had a walk to take, and "things" to do; so off I set, with a brave look, a craven heart, and a somewhat flitting colour. The crisp road under foot, and the bright light of God's mercy over-head, tended somewhat to reassure me, though I could not refrain once or twice from feeling that I wished Mrs. Bennet had been less communicative respecting that bright, particular star of hers, the Lady Janet Johnstoun; and making up my mind that I would know the whole history before I was many days older, went on, and on, and on, like the old woman in the story book, until I came to our town—a straggling, ill-built place, with more children than mothers to look after them, more dogs than owners, and more dirt than drains; but yet it boasted one or two good shops, with civil tradespeople, who informed you, with the blandest of smiles, that they had not got whatever you might happen to want, but would get it "with pleasure" a fortnight later than the day on which you required it; and in addition to these well-to-do emporiums was one wretched little jeweller's or pawnbroker's shop, kept by the most miserable, thievish-looking Israelite that ever disgraced a Christian country. Now this shop I somewhat affected; for, softly be it spoken, I have a weakness for old China! and Benjamin frequently meets with rare specimens at a far more moderate price than I should have to pay for the same in London; therefore I confess to hanging about that dirty old shop. I confess to poking my nose into that offensive little hole. I confess to holding long conferences with that dingy old dealer, Benjamin Lye! And on this particular occasion I went a quarter of a mile out of the direct road to have a gaze through his foggy window, where my attention was immediately riveted by the unusual sight of a queer-shaped morocco jewel-case. I at once stepped in, requesting Benjamin to gratify my womanly curiosity by opening the closed lid;—for, if there is one thing which teases me more than another, it is a mystery. I always consider a closed box, when you do not know what is in it, a decided mystery. If other people had had the same feelings as myself, we should never have had that catastrophe of the Mistletoe Bough. But in the mean time the obsequious Benjamin was doing his best to make me happy, by a sight of the contents of the faded case; but no, it resisted all his efforts, until he had recourse to a knife, which seemed of but little more avail, for so fast as he moved it from one side to the other, so quickly did that obstinate box close after it; and Benjamin grew redder and redder in the face, until crimson began to shine below the dirt, as between each attempt he gaspingly gave me the information that "been in ish possesshion a vary long time—brought by a lady

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—vary larsh shum—quite forget it—beautiful goodsh"—when snap went the knife, open flew the lid, disclosing a set of lovely antique ornaments, of enamel, gold, and rubies; the set consisting of ear-rings and four clasps, varying in size from a five-shilling piece to a sixpence, evidently for the front of a lady's robe. I was charmed with them: the case was old, worn and faded, but the jewels were clear, bright, and beautiful, sparkling in a way that only finest rubies can do. Then, where did these antique Austrian (which I at once knew they were) ornaments come from? Benjamin, of course, was in a state of benighted ignorance on this point; but, noting my flushed cheek and greedy eyes, did not omit to ask a very fair sum, but still so little in comparison with their real value, that I saw he did not appreciate them; and after a very short parley with that individual, I walked off, with the little queer-shaped, faded case in my muff, elated and happy as a child with her first doll.

How often so small an incident as the foregoing may render us sad or gay: however charmed I might be with my new possession, a weight lay on my heart when I recollected that the only person to whom I could show it, or that would be pleased with my pleasure, was faithful Mary Bennet.

On that excellent lady's inspection I was more than usually gratified, for the good dame's cheek varied from the yellow tinted codling to the rosy ribston pippin, and back again to the russet, as

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she pronounced the highest encomium her lips were capable of. "They minded her strangelie of a set the vary same, worn by the Lady Janet Johnstoun o' Johnstoun Ha'."

The afternoon was fading from the jovial crispness of a frosty day into the chill air and clinging damp of a steady thaw, when I set myself about expecting Lora Gardiner, with the sort of restless preparation one is instinctively guilty of when it is for some loved one. Four o'clock! the day is closed, and night—or rather darkness—coming on. Tea things are on the Sutherland table by the library hearth; the room is long, and, I think, somewhat dark; the two fire-places, though logs are bright and blazing on each, seem as though one was for visible, the other invisible, folk. I don't like to think of the latter, and have just placed the teapot inside the visible mortal's fender, when I hear quick, cheerful carriage wheels grating on the drive. I burn both face and fingers in an attempt to replace that Madame Follet of domestic life, the teapot, on her tray, and spring forward, so heartily glad to greet my beauty—dear, dear Lora Gardiner!—with her fair face and serious eyes, her winning smile and atmosphere of sunshine. Yes, though since we parted, Lora, your life has been past and done, and though your young blood has done its part to lave the walls of Lucknow, in many a noble hall, in many a lowly home, your name is breathed with blessings, and your memory hallowed with a tear. Whenever I now think of Lora, the familiar epitaph in a country churchyard at home comes to my recollection:

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"Fear no more the summer's sun,
Or the stormy winter rages,
Thou thine earthly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages."

To say that Mrs. Bennet's heart was won by Lora does not express it—she was her slave! and I almost felt jealous to see how quickly the stranger had wound herself as much into Mary's good graces as myself, her nursling; but then Lora crept swiftly into every heart, while I—but I am but myself too apt to forget the old adage, "Love gets love."

In the meantime, I was revolving a scheme for persuading Mrs. Bennet to unravel the history—the bare hint of which always so much unsettled me—respecting the family in which, or rather among whose descendants, she had been brought up, but of whose deeds of daring she was generally, with characteristic caution, somewhat shy: and I thought to myself, would a new ribbon (bright red) open her heart and subsequently her lips?—would a douceur of greater magnitude be necessary?—under what cloak could the coaxing, wheedling measure be best disguised? When, judge of my surprise on going into Lora's room on the morning after her arrival, to hear (but it was not this which startled me), "for a' the warld just like ane Lady Janet Johnstoun o' the Johnstoun Ha'." Lora's sweet voice replied gently, "Was Lady Janet very fond of you, Mrs. Bennet?"

"Nae, nae, my dear," expostulated Mrs. Bennet, somewhat taken aback at this interpretation of her words, "I ne'er had glint o' her bonnie face, but she wer cradled at the same time wi' my ain gude mither, as wad gladlie ha' died for her, and her name's been the same to me as I've heard say the Vargin Mary's is to some o' them papishers ower the water."

Lora smiled at the old woman's words; but my entrance interrupted their flow, and it was not until Lora and I were leaving the room together that my astonishment reached its climax.

"Then you won't forget your promise, Mrs. Bennet, and tell us the Johnstoun history, to-night?" said Lora.

"Weel, weel, my dear," was the reply; "it's ower hard to deny ye onything, I'm thinking, and ye'll get yer ain way wi' me fast eneuch."

I could hardly restrain my curiosity until we were out of hearing.

"My dear Lora," I then exclaimed, "how on earth did you do it?"

"Do what?" she said, looking surprised in her turn.

"*Do?*" I reiterated. "Get Mary to promise the Johnstoun history? She is always so shy of mentioning more than their mighty names."

"Well, I suppose," replied Lora, "that it was a verification of the old proverb, 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' I had not the least idea of any difficulty, therefore, when she spoke so frequently of the Lady Janet Johnstoun, I simply asked her to tell us the tale to-night, when I hope the rendezvous will be your boudoir as usual. But, do you think," said Lora, becoming anxious, "that it will pain the old woman to rake up the memory of bygone days, because, if you do, I'll run back and put a stop to it at once; there is no use in letting the poor thing brood over the thought for the whole day."

I answered somewhat pettishly:

"Nonsense, Lora, come along; if she doesn't like it, I'm sure she won't do it. I don't believe she has any objection, only she likes to be coaxed into doing a thing, and I never could learn how to do that."

But as I gazed on my companion's transparent face, and noted the unselfish purity which shone through, I recognised for a moment what it was which made her irresistible to most people, although she herself was so unconscious of the attraction; and a pang shot through my heart as I felt how much more loveable she was than my selfish self, for this very incident had called my *amour propre* into play, and the thought never left me during the next twenty-four hours—"Mrs. Bennet promised at once for Lora, although *I* have never been able to get her to relate me the story," and once or twice jealous tears welled up into my eyes.

Lora was so merry, and fresh, and amusing, that the hours flew past unheeded, as every one knows they do when a party of ladies get together. But when two girls meet, Time's pinions must ache again with the rapidity of his flight.

Lora was so deeply interested in everything—horses, dogs, books, ferns, flowers, music; she did everything so well, and sang, at all hours, at any one's request, anything and everything, so charmingly, and with so much enjoyment of the music herself, that I did not wonder at her being idolised, for the crowning point of her attractions has yet to be told—she could be as charmingly *quiet*. And let me give this hint to all whom it may concern: quietness, repose, or what our neighbours term *retenu*, is the most difficult—nay, I had almost said impossible—attainment. There are some very young girls who, in the fresh buoyancy of youth, take hearts by storm—they are few, and their conquests doubtful; but a woman, be she young or old, who charms, simply and quietly, by saying and doing *nothing*, ought to be ticketed "dangerous."

But once more let me take up the thread of my narrative. The day passed over so happily, that I had almost forgotten the Christmas-box which I—poor, lonely woman—had made myself a present of, namely, my antique ornaments, until the dressing-bell rang. Guests had arrived, to be welcomed and ushered to their respective chambers, where fires burned bright and cheery. And as I passed through the great hall on my way to my own side of the house, I saw the holly and mistletoe, with red and white berries reflecting each from their bright leaves the flashes of warmth wrung from their dismembered kindred on the hearth; and I wondered within myself if the dead logs were recognised by the fresh boughs, or exchanged a kindly greeting on this Christmas Eve, before fading into dust and ashes. It may be so.

After travelling up the long staircase, I paused to recover breath by the side of the table in my room, on which still lay the faded case, and, taking it in my hand, once more tried to open the

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obstinate lock, which resisted my most strenuous efforts, until, becoming quite vexed, I sat down determined to conquer it, whether I was thereby rendered late for dinner or no. At some time or other, the case had evidently been wet, consequently the snap was somewhat rusty and out of order. After devoting more time to the indulgence of my irritated temper than I had to spare, I succeeded in forcing the lid open, and was again struck with the beauty of the workmanship and the brilliancy of the stones in the ornaments; the largest clasp was peculiar in form, and somewhat thickly made, and as I passed it meditatively between my thumb and finger, testing its actual depth, I wondered what other hands had done the same—who was the original possessor—was she young or old, or beautiful or ugly? The ornaments were peculiar in device; perhaps some rich old woman had designed and ordered them for her own personal adornment, wearing them on her rich dress, where the jewels had flashed and sparkled with every rise and fall of her stout matronly bosom.

But this idea was unpleasing. I preferred to think them the property of some fair and gentle Austrian maid, who had—but, good gracious! here my surmises were interrupted by my thumb nail slipping into a chink hitherto indiscernible at the back of the large clasp, and prosecuting my discovery carefully, though with breathless interest, I removed a slide thin as a wafer, and there, in all its simple glory, lay a lock of golden hair, covering a miniature painting of a man's face. There was nothing to mark the character or station of the original, therefore I say "a man's face;" but if ever physiognomy showed the distinctive traces of nobility, this was a king's! And even in the bright warm atmosphere of my room, amid the noises of a house full of people, I quailed before the indomitable eyes and silent majesty of the picture.

The dinner-bell pealed, but it was not its sound which made my hands tremble as, swiftly replacing the little slide, and ringing loudly for Mrs. Bennet, I commenced a far more hasty toilette than was my custom. Her exclamation, on entering the room, "Ech, sirs! My puir bairn, but yer pale and wearie, I'll just ha' to trick ye up like a babie!" did not rouse me. I drank the sal-volatile administered by her, and ran down stairs; long after the gong had growled its hospitable summons, feeling as if still in a dream—a dream of which the golden-haired chief, knight, or noble was the mysterious Alpha and Omega. The chatty Life Guardsman, who had the honour of handing me in to dinner, must have considered me a remarkably stupid person, as my interest in him was but to judge from his well-turned head whether the chief (so I will call him) of my Austrian jewels would have been worse looking with any covering on the throat, and I arrived at the conclusion that the portrait was so small that to have introduced drapery would have been impossible. Even the sight of Lora's radiant beauty, so prettily set off by white silk, looped up with the large red cactus flowers, failed to divert my mind from the kingly face and lock of yellow hair. And it was a relief when the last song had been sung, the last reel footed, the last good-night uttered, even to that very last in the rooms of my guests where courtesy obliged me to see if they had everything they needed: but the last came at last, and I flew to my chamber to prepare as quickly as possible for the history, which somehow appeared to have a greater interest for me than ever; staying a few moments, however, with secured door to contend with the obstinate clasp, and take another look at my treasure. With reverent hands I lifted the lock of silky hair and gazed on the stedfast brow, when it occurred to me to use a powerful magnifying-glass which I had to see if I could discover any inscription or name; when, judge of my surprise, nay, almost terror, when I read in distinct little white letters these three words: "Archdale. Mon Cœur," written immediately beneath the face, where drapery would have commenced! The inexplicable feeling of sorrow which I had on deciphering these words almost drew tears from my eyes, and I replaced the lock of hair as gently and tenderly as though it had belonged to—well, *mon cœur;* and once more closing the obstinate case, which I had conceived a respect for, knowing what it so jealously guarded, I went into the adjoining room to await the entrance of Lora and Mrs. Bennet.

A strange feeling rendered me silent on the subject of my discovery, and my thoughts were far away during the earlier part of Mrs. Bennet's narrative, which, however, soon attracted my wandering attention, the name of Lady Janet being in itself a talisman.

"Peace was an unco' strange word for a Christian countree," commenced Mrs. Bennet, "in the Lady Janet Johnstoun's day. Mony a braw lad, understanding not its meaning, wud fain be lying stark and cauld on the muir than be thocht a mon o' peace, believing it to be what we ca' coward! There was never but ane o' that likes in the Johnstouns, least o' a' amang the women, matron or maid; for if it was nae the ca' o' their time to strike the blow, there was ne'er an ane but could stan' like the rocks theirselves to endure; and I'm thinking that wer the courage o' the martyrs! The Lady Janet Johnstoun's father wer a soldier and a saint if one e'er stepped this earth—what in my ain countree they aye ca' 'leal and loyal and trew'—and oh, Gude save us! if ever saint wer worshipped here, he wer, the brave, trew, old soldier, by his child the Lady Janet Johnstoun. He had several brothers, but they a' died away wi'out leaving any survivors, except his youngest brother Kenneth, who lived to pruve his sel' ane o' the deil's handy tools, and wha liked his master. This one, Kenneth, had a son and a daughter, Joan; the son's name wer Patrick. I mind me not distinctly o' a' the bye ways and sly ways by which Kenneth mair na' half ruined the Lady Janet's father; but I have heard my mither tell that if the Lady Janet could ha' gien her heart's bluid drop by drop for her father, 'twould ha' been dune, wi' thanks to Heaven for the privilege. And sae she did, puir thing! but nae in a way as she recognised. Sin' the time she wer cradled, there had been troth plighted 'twixt her and her cousin by her mother's side, the Lord Archdale of

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Evry, the ainlie son and chief o' a' that ilk—ane as wad ha' conferred honour to onnie throne he sat upon; and next to her father, the Lady Janet luved him, for he wer worthie of a' a woman's faith and love. When Kenneth and the deil together had rendered Lady Janet's father nigh upon a ruined man, wha suld come forwards then but the son Patrick, saying, 'Only be my wife, Lady Janet Johnstoun, and your father's a free mon again—free in his castle and in his ha'—free frae debt and all that he shrinks frae,' or words to that effect; for," continued Mrs. Bennet, humbly, "it's nae likely that my puir tongue can say the things as they would be said by the Lady Janet, and nobles, and yerls o' her kin. I ken but the facts, and maun be content to relate them as best I can, craving yer remembrance that they of whom I speak wad nae utter sounds like yer auld nurse, Mary Bennet."

We begged her to proceed in her tale, Lora leaning her chin on her hand listening with breathless attention.

"Weel a day," continued Mrs. Bennet, "her father wad nae ha' said a word to cross his darling's heart, but she *kenned* a', and that wer enough for the Lady Janet, and she spake up, honourable and bold, to Sir Patrick. Said she:—

"'Ye ken, Sir Patrick, that I hae nae heart to give ye; sin' I was a wee babe, it has been in my cousin Archdale's keeping; but, for my father's sake, gien ye will accept of sae puir a thing, sae loveless a gift, here is my hand, and I will be yer wife, faithful and true, till death.' He took her at her word, and her father never kenned 'twas ought agin her inclination, for she'd never do a richt thing by halves: and but twice after that saw she ever her cousin Archdale. The first time 'twas to bid him farewell. They met on the open muir, the sun shining bright abuve their heads, and my ain mither stood by her side, and grat, puir thing! as if 'twer *her* heart wer breaking!—grat sae, that she heard but little of a' they said. But for a' sae braw and lustie as Lord Archdale wer, when he cam to meet the Lady Janet, stanning before her wi' his bonnet in his hand, and the fresh breeze blowing his golden hair like a glory frae his brow; for a' sae brave a mon as he wer, when 'twas ere a foe or the oppressor of his clan as stood before him, he quailed and sank before the doom o' parting frae his true love, the Lady Janet Johnstoun. And my mither said that, with her ain characteristics, even in her sorrow, she thought but o' comfortin' him. At last the Lady Janet tuke his hand sae fondlie in baith o' hers, and said, 'Archie, *mon cœur*, God be with ye, and lighten every pang that I had hoped to share. Farewell! ye'll think nae mair o' me, Archie!' Lord Archdale luked in her face as tho' 'twer his last luke at ought below, and saying, 'Nae mair than Heaven, Janet,' turned awa' a tremblin' heartbroken mon. My mither led her hame. She never spoke a word, or seemed to *make* a sorrow o' the parting frae her cousin, but her bonnie face, where the red rose used to dwell, turned like marble, and no one ever saw a gleam o' colour in her cheek again, save once, as ye will hear.

"Sir Patrick was very proud of her, and so far as it lay in his niggardly, ungenerous, coward's nature to be so, wer kind to her, and preparations for the wedding went on brawlie; kinsfolk cam speeding ower the hills, gentles o' a' high degree frae far and near; but the Lady Janet sat in her bower alone, and never seemed to care for ought but tending on her father. She who'd fly a hawk, or hunt a hound, or rein a horse better and braver than the best, had lost all heart for onnie, save her duty to him. 'Twas in the winter time, and each cauld blast seemed to shake the auld mon waur, and Sir Patrick hurried on preparations for his wedding, in such a fashion as mony deemed unseemly. The day cam at last, and the Lady Janet, wi' her voice as firm as her heart wer cauld, said the words that gave herself away; but her eyes ne'er sought the bridegroom, dark and lustrous as they were; they ne'er turned on ony but the auld mon by her side, her father.

"The blow cam at last," continued Mrs. Bennet, wiping her eyes, for during the latter part of her story they had frequently overflowed. "The Lady Janet's father wer found dead on the floor o' her chamber, when she had na' been a wedded wife a month. They feared to tell her the sad news; for them as kenned him best, said as how it wer the loss o' his child as killed him—the loss o' her who sold hersel' to save him! But when she heard it, she took it a' like a stane, and ne'er a muscle o' the white face muved; but when she saw my mither, she said—and I often mind me of her words—'A' the rivers rin into the sea, Mary, and are lost! All my trouble's lost in this, and I shall never feel again.' Puir thing, she wer mistaken! Her father wer a stern, just mon; fierce, if onnie wrang'd him, mair gentle still, if onnie needed: but none dare say the word that was untrue within his ken, or lichtlie him so much as a shadow, e'en when seas rolled between, so long as he were standing on the hill's blue heather! But when he wer dead and gone, without or kith or kin, save the Lady Janet and his brother, the deil put into the mouth o' Kenneth to speak slightingle and wi' disparagement o' the auld mon, the Lady Janet's father—put it into their cowardlie hearts to say what the father o' lies would; because there wer nane but a puir woman to gainsay him. And the Lady Janet heard—heard all they would invent, wi' nought but her simple word, simple and trew as her puir father's would ha' been, to contradict them. And they who saw her, said the Lady Janet's face, mild and gentle, and brave, and queenlike as it alway wer, became strange, wi' an eerie glance in her large dark eyes,—a look like the look of a stag at bay!

"'Twas unco' remarkable, to say nothing more o' the matter," continued Mrs. Bennet, who, like many Scotch women, was somewhat superstitious, "'twas unco' remarkable, to say nothing more o' the matter, that about this time, in a' the glens, and in a' the ways, might be heard the auld Johnstoun strathspey: sometimes ye might find the instrument and the mon, oftner not; but what wer remarkable wer, that a'most every Hielandmon o' a' the clan wer heard singing strange words to the auld tune, and nane could

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tell fra whence they came. I mind me of them noo.

We answer to thy voice,
Lady Janet o' the Ha';
Be it late or earlie,
We answer to thy ca'.

Sweethearts, wives, and mithers,
We leave them ane and a';
We're comin', Lady Janet,
We answer to thy ca'.

O'er the muir and mountain,
O'er the water's fa',
We're comin', Lady Janet,
We answer to thy ca'.

Frae distant land or countrie,
Frae near, or far awa',
We're comin', Lady Janet,
We answer to thy ca'.

Ha'e we hames, or wives, or bairnies,
Or ha'e we nane at a',
We're comin', Lady Janet,
We answer to thy ca'.

We'll fire nae licht or beacon,
We'll need just nane at a',
We'll ha'e the licht o' yer eyes sae bright,
Lady Janet o' the Ha'.

We'll need nae pibrochs ploying,
We'll say just nought at a',
But strike, and live or die for
The Johnstouns o' the Ha'.

Then, we're comin', Lady Janet,
Do ye hear us, ane and a'?
We answer to thy spirit,
Queen o' the Johnstouns a'!

"Sir Patrick took it a' darklie and silentlie, as wer his fashion, and ne'er stood up for his wife's father, or so much as turned his head to save her a pang, but contrarywise, seemed as if 'twer something he would e'en brave out; and 'twer about this time, when every one belonging to the Lady Janet, or any o' the Johnstouns, felt that something wer hanging o'er the clan, though they didna richtlie ken what, that he must needs summon a' the folk round about for mony a mile to a gran' ball! At that time naebody could mak' oot for why.

"My mither, wi' mony anither o' the people, wer there in the great ha', to see all as wer to be seen, and there wer more than Sir Patrick reckoned for, before the nicht wer over.

"They say the Lady Janet looked like a spirit in her white satin robe (ane o' Sir Patrick's petty oppressions being that he wad na permit her to wear the garb o' sorrow for her father), a' fastened like her hair, wi' jewels, which wer dim beside the glittering hunted gleam o' her eyes; and next to her, for remarkableness, wer Sir Patrick's sister, the Mistress Joan; her face wer dark and heavy, like her brother's, wi' a look in it that alway turned a child or dog away. My mither, of course, could only see, nae hear ought except the music; but when the nicht wer far advanced, and the earlie winter's morn wer comin', she saw the Lady Janet (as had been standin' wearie against ane o' the pillars of the ha' for half an hour or more) speaking to Sir Patrick's sister, Joan. And gradually the music ceased, and folks gathered round to hark to what they wer saying; and my mither, for a' she wer but a servant, wer the Lady Janet's foster sister, and so she forced her way in, and stood amang the lords and ladies too, unnoted of, and listening. She just cam in time to hear Mistress Joan say scoffinglie, 'And is't for this ye glour sae stranglie upon me, my Lady Janet?'

"'It is,' said Lady Janet, 'because ye're your father's dochter! I ha' nae power,' continued she despairinglie, 'I ha' nae power, for I am but ane puir simple woman again a powerful craftie mon, assisted by the father o' a' such lies. But I can show what I would do had I the power' (and here her sma' hand clenched sae that the flowers she held fell withered at her feet); 'and may your father, Mistress Joan, be ten thousand times dishonoured, in his life and in his death, for every word by which he's tried to lichtlie mine!'

"Mistress Joan looked almost afraid as the words were said, and a stillness fell over a' as the Lady Janet leaned wearilie back again the marble pillar, which wer white like her face; when suddenlie a clear voice spoke like a clarion in the hush of all around, and him as had ne'er been seen sin' they parted on the muir, Lord Archdale, stood amang 'em a', and his hand grasped his dirk as he said, 'For ae kiss o' yer bonnie moo, cousin Janet, I'll tear his lying tongue out frae his lips, and fling it to the dogs!'

"Lady Janet sprang forward, saying, 'A hundred, Archie! and God bless ye!'

"I'll no' say he took sae mony less, ere he loosed her from his arms, and left the ha', followed ane and a' by the nobles and gentles, and his ain men, but none could tell for why the music maun ever add its voice to the rest, and struck up the auld Johnstoun strathspey. And there wer fierce muttering, and hurrying to and fro, and the dark nicht wer lichted by eyes and blades mair na torches. The Lady Janet, mair proudlie than had e'er been seen, followed her husband frae the deserted room, and what passed between them nane may tell, for strange as it may seem she wer but seldom seen again.

"Troubles followed fast upon her footsteps; the Lord Archdale wer found foulie slain, and nigh upon hacked to pieces by the road-side on that same nicht, and nane could tell by whom the cowardlie deed had been done. And there wer hardlie any but what rejoiced—strange rejoicing!—when Kenneth, Sir Patrick's father, wer found in his ain braid chamber, decked about wi' every device to pamper the heart o' mon, but dead, and wi' his tongue cut oot frae the mouth. Nane can tell or imagine the deadlie vengeance or horror of a Hieland feud; it wer characteristic of such that in the dead hand wer a scroll o' paper, and written on it i' bluid wer these strange words:—

'Lords and gentles hearken,
And remember what ye've heard:
Be it late or earlie,
Archdale Evry keeps his word.'

"The perpetrator o' the deed wer ne'er dis-

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covered, but 'twer evident that retribution had followed the dead mon, and the orphan's tears had furrowed a track for sorrow up to his ain threshold. The Lady Janet's gleaming hunted eyes wer about to close on the path once sae bright, and then sae dim, and I'm thinking, puir thing, that she might, and perhaps does now," said Mrs. Bennet, in a voice that thrilled through me, "sigh for the rest which folks say she's never found.

"Soon after this time, Sir Patrick maun e'en choose ane o' the cauldest, bitterest days o' winter, when storms o' wind and snow wer raging fierce, to drag the Lady Janet frae the ingle-nuik where she aye sat noo, dreaming nane could say o' what;—maun drag her to gang wi' him to visit his ill-favoured sister, Mistress Joan.

"The Lady Janet, ne'er in a' the days that passed sin' Lord Archdale's death, sae long as she lived, ne'er gainsayed her husband in ony thing, and some even went sae far as to say that a shadow o' sorrowful tenderness for her wer sometimes seen athwart his savage face;—it wer but a passing gleam, called forth by some act of obedience, perchance, or unselfishness on her part, or maybe some service performed for him by the thin shadowy hands, which had never sought his in love for a' they'd been mon and wife a year.

"Be this as it may, they started in the face o' the beating hail and drifting snow, though warned by a'most a' the men about that a fearful nicht wer comin' on. There were twa roads ye maun ken to Lowereslie, where the Mistress Joan held her rigid sway. The langest road wer the onlie one as wer passable except in summer weather, and by this they started, arriving safe at the frowning Ha' where Mistress Joan were closeted long, long wi' her brother, leaving the Lady Janet alane, in the cauld room, wi' as sma' courtesie as could be observed, until the gloom o' the short winter's day closing in, warned Sir Patrick to hasten his departure; but the gloom o' winter wer as sunshine compared wi' the gloom upon his browe, as he persisted sternlie and obstinatelie, as wer his wont, in ganging hame by the nearer road, by which they'd have to cross the ferry.

"I've often heard," said Mrs. Bennet, gazing steadfastly into the fire, "that when the shadow o' death is closing round, the mightie One is permitted wi' his huge wing to touch those he is about to grasp, so that unconsciouslie to themselves they are warned to make their peace wi' a' men before departing on their lonely road. The Lady Janet might ha' felt the icie touch, or read her doom in Sir Patrick's face, for as she turned to leave the inhospitable ha's o' Lowereslie she stopped, then hurried back to where Mistress Joan stood wi' the sinister smile upon her face, watching their departure; and wi' her foot upon the threshold, held out her little trembling hand, and the hunted eyes looked up beseechinglie at her sister-in-law as she said quicklie, 'Joan, let us part friends this winter's night; for a' that I ha' wronged ye in, in thought or word have mercy, and forgive me now.'

"Joan looked at her as though she wer demented, and said sneeringlie, 'The Lady Janet Johnstoun sue for pardon! What new game is this? Forgive! and wherefore *now*, may I make bold to ask?'

"Lady Janet clasped her hands together. 'I canna say, Joan, but in the name o' Him that rules seedtime and harvest, frost and snow, part friends wi' me the nicht.'

"Sir Patrick had also turned back, and hearing the last words, seized her roughlie by the arm, and dragged her away, the fiendish laugh o' Mistress Joan wringing in their ears. She said na mair, and nothing in reply to his taunts at her strange humilitie—her silence seeming as though it provoked him more na words would hae done—until when they came to the ferry the mon Sandie ventured to say that 'twer as much as a mon's life wer worth to ferry him o'er the nicht, nearlie dark as it wer, wi' nae but the fitful light o' the moon, which the clouds were so continuallie crossing, that 'twer but little better than total darkness. When Sandie ventured to say that 'twer unsafe, Sir Patrick made as though he wad ha' struck at him, and shouted as if beside his sel', 'Art afraid, hound, to ferry the Lady Janet Johnstoun, when she stan's waiting?' The coward made use o' her name to attain his miserable object. As soon as he said the word, Sandie sprang up, and unmoored the boat, and lifting the Lady Janet in, wi' mair care na ceremonie, said, 'Nae mon e'er ca'd Sandie M'Clinton coward before, and I hope ye may live to repent it, Sir Patrick!'

"The boat sped bravelie on her way, until they wer nigh upon where the current ran, when it became evident that 'twer more than ony twa men could manage to steer across it. And Sir Patrick's face grew white and pinched as the thought obtruded itself upon his mind, that the statelie ha' they left i' the morn might never echo to his tread again. The wind howled like the howl o' spirits, but still Lady Janet sat silent and calm wi' her dark eyes fixed upon the sky, and never seemed tohave a fear that she wer sailing down that stream into eternitie, until she observed Sandie begin to take off his upper claithes, and pointing to a rope which lay i' the stern, he said, 'I am the stronger mon o' the two, bind the Lady Janet fast to me, and wi' the help o' Him that rules, she shall be safe in her ain ha' to nicht. There's nae wife or child to make their mane for me gin I'm missing i' the morn; and, as ye ken, I'm no' the first o' my name as has been gey to sink or swim wi' the Johnstouns, sae lose na time, Sir Patrick.' But the Lady Janet's face for the onlie time flushed a bright red, as she exclaimed hastily, 'Too late, too late, Sandie; the time's come, ye can na detain me—the time's come!' And as she uttered the words, the boat capsized, and they wer a' struggling again the torrent for their lives. The Lady Janet must ha' gone down speedielie, but Sir Patrick and Sandie fought bravelie, and Sandie perilled his life to save the Lady Janet, but when she disappeared altogether, he, like one o' the clan as he wer, after a sore ficht wi' angry elements, wer flung upon the bank wi' the senseless form o' Sir Patrick in his grasp.

"Their shout for help as the boat gaed down had been heard at a fisherman's cottage ower the cliff, and they wer baith taken up to it, and wi' much care brought to life; Sir Patrick's first

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question being aye thought a strange one: for, instead o' demanding, as folk thought wad be natural, 'Is she saved?' his first question to the auld fish-wife, as she bent ower him, wer, 'Is the *body* found?' And he did na seem sae cut up as might hae been expected when they tauld him 'nae.'

"But a' the day and a' the nicht he wer wandering backward and forward on the shore o' the lake, as if he sought for treasure.

"At the first news o' the disaster, Mistress Joan had come, and niver left her brother, and wer always at hand, biding him 'bear up, bear it bravelie.' Now, 'twer never expected he wad mourn for the Lady Janet; he'd never been the loving husband, generous and tender to the frail piece o' womankind that o' his ain free will he'd taken frae them as loved and tended her.

"'Twer never expected he'd mourn the loss o' a companion; though unmurmuringlie, and wi'out fail she'd been his slave!

"Therefore, why should he 'bear up bravelie'? 'Twer soon explained, for it became evident that he wer *terrified*—just as though a keeper had lost some wild animal, and alway feared it might spring upon and devour him—and wi' a' Mistress Joan's care, and tending, and courage, and face, that seemed as though they could beard a lion in his den, he quailed more and more, until they brought the news, as he wandered by the lake, that the 'body o' the Lady Janet had been recovered lower down the stream,' and a' that remained o' the queen o' the clan, the darling o' sae mony hearts, wer laid in the Johnstoun Ha', ance again for the last time. Then wer his terror seen in its true licht; and when he and Mistress Joan entered the solemn chamber, where the stillness o' the marble form seemed to rebuke his fear, he sprang wildlie at it, and tearing off the covering, pointed, with the yell of a demon, to a gash in the left side, which, with his touch, began to ooze forth big drops o' bluid.

"Mistress Joan had need to bear up bravelie then, for Sir Patrick sank down whimpering like a craven hound, and ne'er again had the licht o' reason vouchsafed him; sometimes wild wi' terror, sometimes cowed and feeble like a child, but alway a thing to dread, for he wer mad!

"Mistress Joan micht weel speak awsomelie o' 'the wound the sharp rock had made in her puir sister's breast.' Folk kenned weel eneuch that a sharper instrument than the rugged rock had struck the blow, which made the Lady Janet sink down like a stone when the boat capsized. And for a' that he wer questioned Sandie wad never say a word except that 'a' things wad be made clear, wi'out the testimony o' a puir Hielandmon,' but he wer a silent altered mon frae that day forward, and ne'er wad cross the ferry wi' any human being again. He went out alone, on the stormiest nichts;—gossips said he wer wandering in his mind, for he alway took a piece o' rope wi' him, and when he cam back i' the morn the neighbours wad speer, 'What for did ye gang yer gait, Sandie?' His reply wer alway the same, 'To be ready gin he wer ca'd for.'

"The Lady Janet Johnstoun, the last o' her name, in her twenty-first year, wer buried solemnly in the presence o' them as had served and loved her; kith or kin she had nane, near, but the Mistress Joan. And sae the young girl, whose earlie promise had been brighter and gayer than most, had lived a bitterer life, and died a crueller death, than is often heard of, and wer maist truthfullie and deeplie mourned by her foster sister, my ain mither.

"And now, my dears," said Mrs. Bennet, after a long pause, which we had been too deeply impressed with her story to break in upon, "I dinna ken whether I'm richt in telling you what folks say, except it may be that ye winna place ower much stress upon it, but set it down to the superstition o' a puir woman frae the north countree; and therefore, wi'out further preface, I maun tell ye that the Lady Janet Johnstoun nae rests in a grave o' mon's delving, but is still seen seeking for, nane can tell what. If it is permitted her to work retribution upon ony that so much as hurt one hair o' her head, I wad say wi' my whole heart may it be dune. But I fear this maun be impossible, as there's nane we ken of to reap either ban or blessing by her name.

"But 'tis said by some, that every mortal has their span o' life given wi' its portion o' joy and woe, and gin the life be cut off by ony unexpected stroke, still the spirit maun do its work, and, invisible to a', perform its task unseen and unrewarded. And so, perchance, it may be wi' her, and if it is, puir thing, surelie it maun be joy she'll hae noo, for 'tis hard to think her share o' sorrow wer not consumed while she walked here; but in ony case, I say as I've often heard my mither, 'Peace to the Lady Janet Johnstoun.'

"And now, my bairns," said Mrs. Bennet, rising and stroking my head, as I sat on a low stool by the fire, "gang awa' to yer beds, and think na mair to-nicht o' the auld woman's story, for it's getting very late, and ye'll hae to be up betimes, because of a' yer companie, and ye look pale and wearie noo, my dear."

To describe the effect which Mrs. Bennet's history had produced upon our minds would be impossible; it was the lifting of the curtain which revealed a life of bitterness hitherto unknown; and, obedient to her word, we separated for our respective chambers, after simply thanking her for the recital.

But would I not rather have remained in ignorance respecting the object of my former curiosity, the Lady Janet?

Assuredly I would.

Perhaps my readers may have arrived at the same conclusion with myself respecting my Christmas box, the Austrian ornaments. I had no doubt in my own mind that, strangely and by accident, I was in possession of what had formerly been the property of the Lady Janet, and the golden-haired chief was no other than himself, Lord Archdale Evry!

Pondering over these surmises, I entered my room, where the fire burned brightly, and the "Sleepy Hollow," by its side, tempted me beyond my strength of resistance to sit down and give way to speculative conjecture on the subject; and I freely confess that, although the faded case lay in solitary grandeur on the table in the centre of

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the apartment, I shrank with a feeling somewhat akin to horror from touching it; in fact, I should have been glad to know that it was in Mrs. Bennet's chamber rather than mine. But yet it exercised a fascination over me, and, raking the fire together and throwing on more wood, I lay back in my chair, and, with my head half turned towards it, dreamed, and dreamed its history over again, until the hours passed by unheeded, and I still lay back in the cosy fauteuil, and watched the faded case. I say *watched*—but what was I watching? Of course I was watching nothing but the case, which I could not always see the whole of. Was it partially covered by something? I tried to raise my hand to my eyes, but it felt heavy, and I could not lift it from the elbow of my chair. Surely the candles were burning blue and pale; but not so pale but that *now* I could see the *other* side of the case. The room grew cold and chilly, as if a gust of air came in. Did the curtains move with the draught?

Bluer and dimmer burned the candles, fainter and fainter gleamed the fire: but still my eyes were riveted to the faded morocco case. What was it that moved slowly from side to side, as if seeking awkwardly for the clasp? It was a hand! and shrieks for help rose to my lips, but fell soundless, and I was paralysed to my chair, and watching—still watching—that thin, shadowy, little hand. Small and exquisite were the taper fingers which were pressing on the clasp; and with the fascination of horror, I wondered where was the other hand; and, redoubling the earnestness of my gaze, I traced from the little hand on the case, slowly up the wrist, arm, shoulder, until "Oh, help! help! she's come!" I yelled. But no sound escaped my dry lips, as I recognised the Lady Janet Johnstoun.

There was the small broad head, with its raven tresses hanging down to her feet; but they were dishevelled and dripping with water. I could see and *hear* it trickling and dropping on to the floor. I saw the pure oval face, the eyes cast down, so that the jetty fringes rested on the cheek, as still that one hand moved on the clasp. The dim light around me became dimmer and dimmer, and my hands and feet were heavier and heavier—they were like stone. I could not fly from the presence of the *thing*—I could not stir or breathe—and I dare not divide my attention with it so much as to raise a prayer for aid and strength, knowing that if the eyes once met mine I was undone. I glared on it.

As the light around me became fainter and the atmosphere colder, so it became brighter and bluer around the *thing*, until the space behind was not the walls of my chamber but mist. I could not tell what, but—oh! sickening horror!—I *now* saw that the other hand was pressed over a wound in the side, from which the blood was oozing through the fingers on to the white drapery, which fell wet and shadowy like the hair. Whether this for one moment diverted my attention I cannot say, but I heard the faint click of the case opening, I saw the little hand take up the larger clasp, and, resting it on the velvet of the case, slowly withdraw the miniature and the lock of golden hair. The case was closed again, and I knew that the fringed lids were rising, and the eyes, strange and dilated, *hunted*, met mine. I felt that the thing was advancing towards me, the light around it becoming dimmer; but the eyes were on me. I could not cry or scream, but sat with hands grasping the elbows of my chair, knowing that the spirit had attained its ascendency over me, and awaiting my doom. Nearer it came, and nearer, colder and colder was the air, I saw the drapery of the chamber lifted as by a blast of wind which pierced through me, and as I crouched before the advancing thing it raised its bloody hand off its breast, as if to take hold of mine—but I knew no more.

* * * * *

So long as the world lasts, there will be a "tomorrow morning." Late on this particular "tomorrow morning," I was roused from what appeared to me a deep sleep by the ejaculations of Lora and Mrs. Bennet, and was surprised to see the medical man of the district bending gravely over me; moreover, it is somewhat startling to feel a dabbling of sal-volatile, &c., on your temples, when you are not aware of any necessity for the attention! And when I inquired the meaning of all this from Mrs. Bennet, my voice sounded as if it came faintly from the other end of the room, and I was promptly informed that I was not to be allowed to exercise it.

To make a long story short, I had been discovered by Mrs. Bennet some four hours before, that is to say about nine o'clock in the morning, stiff and senseless on the floor of my room; how long I had been so, of course she was unable to tell, but not finding that I "cam to" so quickly as she expected, she sent for Doctor Blount, thanks to whose care I escaped the brain fever hanging over me. So soon as he had taken his departure from the room, enjoining the strictest quiet, I begged Lora and Mrs. Bennet to sit down by my bedside, when I solemnly related to them all that had passed, commencing with my discovery of the contents of the clasp, and ending with the visitation of the previous night, but interrupted by the tears and sobs of Mrs. Bennet.

When I had slowly and with some difficulty finished my recital, I said: "This may all have been but a distempered dream, brought on by fatigue and over-excitement, but I feel very weak in mind as well as body, and if you will reach me the case, it will be a satisfaction to me to find the miniature and the lock of hair untouched; besides which you have neither of you seen them, and I confess I cannot believe it a dream, until I have the proof, by their being still in their former place."

Mrs. Bennet said persuasively:

"Never mind it noo, my bairn, it wer all a dream, tak' your auld nurse's word for it."

"No," I said, "Mary, I cannot believe it a dream, until I have the proof that Lady Janet had not got them in her hand, so let me have it," I persisted.

Mrs. Bennet looked sadly at me without moving, but Lora rose, and went to the table, returning with the case in her hand, saying as she did so, "it appears to have been wet!"

Her words thrilled me with horror, and shuddering, I took hold of it, opened it, lifted up the

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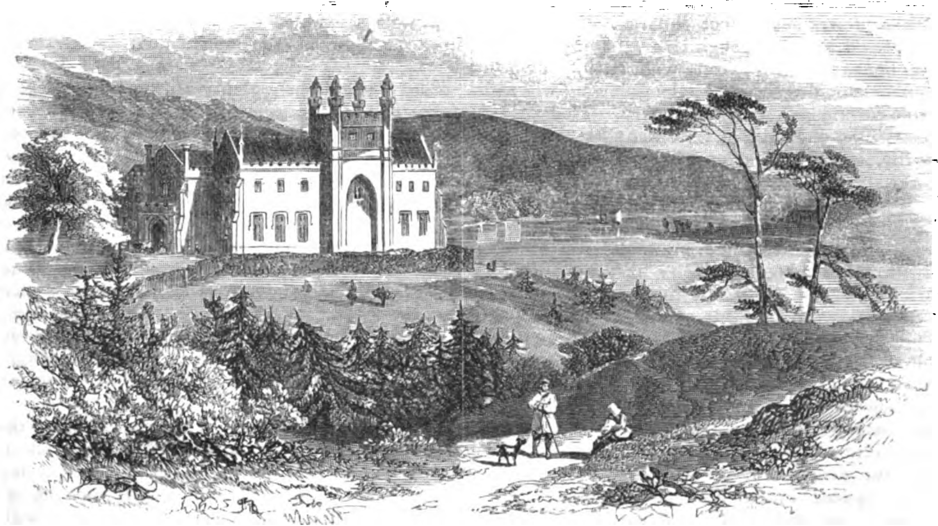
larger clasp, and with a shriek fell back again upon my pillow; for the miniature and the lock of golden hair were both gone! B. B.

SIR JAMES TILLIE, OF PENTILLIE.

THERE is scarcely any spot left in our island at once so beautiful and so retired as the Cornish side of the River Tamar, between Pentillie and Cothele. There are deep valleys, shut in by great rounded hills, which are well clothed with forest trees; the glens crossing and recrossing, intersecting each other at various angles, and each with its own little gushing stream buried in moss and fern. If you have not been in Cornwall, you don't know what moss and fern are: so green, so soft and luxuriant the moss, rejoicing in the mild, damp atmosphere which seems to cling to it, and draw out that peculiar mossy smell. And the fern—it is impossible to describe the beauty of its great spreading leaves, bending gracefully over the chattering stream underneath—the one so still and majestic, the other so restless and noisy.

I feel as if it were almost sacrilege though to take you into these haunts at all. Their chief attraction to me is that they are utterly solitary, shut out from the great bustling world around us all. It is not that I dislike the energy and activity which seem to be ever on the increase in our London streets, but it is most soothing, even to one untinctured by any morbid sentimentality, to find a place abounding in lovely scenery, and yet



Pentillie Castle.

but rarely visited by one's fellow men. It is not easy to find such a place in all Europe at the present day. I recollect a carman telling me one day, as he was driving me through the pass of Nant Francon, North Wales, that it was a place not frequented by ordinary tourists, and truly at that time Lake Ogwen did seem solitary enough, but has not the Saturday Review told us all about it? Surely in future you will be in danger of meeting there Mr. Sarcasm on his summer tour. But our valleys on the banks of the Tamar are not yet penetrated by the excursionists, who throng the steamers for Weirhead and the celebrated Morwell Rocks. I frequently take a walk in these valleys at all seasons of the year, and as yet I have met no one but some school-boys going to their home by the river-side, or the woodman at work among the trees. The Church town, as the country people call our little hamlet, is placed just at the head of one of these valleys. The grey old tower, covered with green and orange lichens, which grow everywhere in this moist climate, is surrounded by a little knot of fir-trees. A walk of about a mile and a half from the church, through the valleys, brings you to a well-rounded hill, covered with larch and spruce-fir.

As we follow the road which winds up this hill, we can look back over the retreating valleys through which we have passed, and at last, when we get to the top, we have a glorious view over Dartmoor—its distant hills bounding the horizon with a bold undulating outline. From hence we can see Brent Tor, mentioned by Kingsley in his "Westward Ho!" You can just distinguish the church

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on the top of the Tor, where a congregation still assembles every Sunday afternoon for public worship.

I remember being present once at the service there, when a boy, and the peculiar impression it made upon me; how the wind rattled round the windows of that lonely church! But to return. This hill which we have just climbed is called Mount Ararat. We turn a sharp corner and the whole view is changed. Below us the river, making a grand sweep under Pentillie Castle, and opposite the bleak Devonshire sides of the Tamar, sprinkled here and there with tall mine chimneys, and crowned with a desolate-looking slate-roofed village. We are no longer out of the world here, for this spot is one of the lions which the good people of Devonport and Plymouth are in the habit of visiting. Close on our right there is a great, solid-looking, square tower surrounded by a low wall and a fosse. The whole building is grown over with ivy, and buried in thick brushwood and trees of large size, some of which start out of the wall. You can go up a flight of some half-dozen broken-down steps which brings you to the wall of this tower. In the wall there is a little window, about a foot square, with a granite mullion. Looking through this window you see a stone figure on the opposite wall, sitting down in a stone-chair, dressed in the long flowing wig and quaint costume of the last century. That is Sir James Tillie, of Pentillie! He was a bon vivant in his life, and, it is commonly supposed, laughed at the possibility of any future state of rewards and punishments. So opposed was he apparently to all religion, that he ordered this tower to be built where he might be buried, not in a recumbent position, like an ordinary mortal, but in a sitting posture. It was, as far as can be ascertained, his own intention that he should be put in a chair in this tower, with a table in front of him, on which were to be placed bottles and glasses, pipes and tobacco, as emblems of a sensual life. This was not done, however. Some years ago, the father of the present owner of Pentillie Castle opened the vault, and found there the remains of his ancestor in a sitting posture, indeed, but enclosed in a coffin. There his bones rest still! There stands the old ivy-mantled tower,—the monument of a man who dared to scorn the mysteries of

> The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
> No traveller returns.

It is a glorious spot which this singular man chose for his bones. The castle in which he lived has been rebuilt, and stands yonder on that rising ground. So that nothing remains to mark the existence of Sir James Tillie, of Pentillie, but this gloomy tower which stands sentinel over the River Tamar.

J. L. S.

WRESTLING AT WHITSUNTIDE.

If any of the readers of Once a Week imagine that wrestling is a low, vulgar amusement, little removed above the level of the prize ring, their pre-conceived ideas on the subject are the same as mine were previously to witnessing a wrestling match.

Easter and Whitsuntide are the two great seasons for London wrestling. The Easter meeting is generally the best, as at that season the country does not offer much inducement to the holiday-makers, and anything which can be seen in or near London generally proves most attractive.

The two kinds of wrestling which appear to be most attractive to the Londoners are the Cumberland and Westmoreland style, and the Devon and Cornwall style; and if we call them in this paper the "North Countrymen" and "West Countrymen," it will save the repetition of very long words. The North Countrymen hold their sports at Hornsey Wood House; and the White Lion, at Hackney Wick, seems to be the favourite locality of the West Countrymen. Without the slightest wish to disparage the heroes of the Hackney Wick, the Hornsey Wood House sports appear to be the more aristocratic, owing, probably, to the difference of localities.

To revert to the wrestling. On a certain day during the Easter holidays, I found myself one of a large crowd of several thousand people, who were assembled round a spacious roped ring, in a meadow at the back of Hornsey Wood House.

There was clearly plenty of sport in prospect, as a long list of competitors for the light and heavy weight prizes was advertised, and the programme was very fairly carried out. The heavy weight prizes were for men over eleven stone, and the light weight prizes for competitors below that weight. The light weights, who were victors in their own class, were allowed to compete afterwards with their big brethren, and, as a proof that weight is not the sure criterion of a good wrestler, it happened on the occasion of my witnessing the wrestling, that the winner of the first light-weight prize threw all the heavy-weight men, except one, and carried off the second heavy-weight prize.

The thing which struck me most was the appearance of the wrestlers. The bull-necked, low-browed genus peculiar to the prize-ring seemed wholly at a discount, and a large proportion of the competitors looked like peaceful, well-to-do citizens of the world, and bore the stamp of respectable tradesmen, as no doubt many of them were. There was also a sprinkling of Life Guardsmen among the wrestlers.

On being paired, the men who were going to wrestle stripped to their shirts and trousers, and some to their drawers, and took off their shoes. Each of the men leaned towards the other, as if he were giving a back at leap-frog, and putting his head against the other's shoulder, threw his arms round him, so as to get a grip round the other's back. The position was thus:—A's head was against B's shoulder, and A's hands were clasped round B, meeting at the small of B's back, and *vice versâ*. When both men had a firm grip, the wrestle commenced. Nothing could exceed the excitement of the spectators. Old gentlemen, who doubtless had received and given many a good fall in their time, were frantic with delight as the

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struggle proceeded. The fluctuations of the different bouts were very great. Sometimes A would have B up in his arms like a child, without the power of throwing him. There was one intensely exciting bout of this kind,—a man who looked like a modern Hercules had lifted his antagonist, a young Life Guardsman of about nineteen or twenty years of age, off the ground, and to all appearance the youngster was done for. He had contrived, however, to get his foot round his adversary's thigh, with a firm purchase inside the bend of the knee. The heavy man was quite powerless to move without falling, and after a long struggle it was clear that the knee was giving way, and at last down he came with the young Life Guardsman on the top of him. This quite confirmed what old Abraham Cann, the West Country wrestler, used to say:—"There's many a man in England who can lift me up, but there's ne'er a one who can set me down." The rule of the North Country wrestling is, that the man who is down first loses the bout. It matters not whether he falls on his back or side, as long as he is first down.

The West Country style is quite different from the North Country wrestling. The men put on canvas-jackets, which are made very strong and loose, and are such as the Cornwall miners wear. They do not take a grip beforehand, like the North Countrymen, but catch hold how and when they can. Kicking, which is a great feature in the West of England, is virtually abolished in the London ring, as the men play in stocking-feet.

Many of the men who wrestled at Hackney Wick looked like bonâ fide miners, and appeared to be a commoner stamp of men than the North countrymen, but the interest in the sport was quite as exciting, and the sports were as quietly and well-ordered as at Hornsey Wood House.

On the men's entering the ring after a very hurried shake of the hand, they walked round one another like two dogs in the street previous to a battle. The caution and quickness of each wrestler, as he dodged and watched his antagonist, were intensely interesting. Sometimes a minute or two elapsed before the men got a hold, and then only with one hand, and a second grip had yet to be taken; it was like a death-struggle between two men striving to get possession of a fallen dagger. When the grip was obtained with both hands, the contest fairly commenced. It was surprising to see how a little additional strength on one side or the other told. The men apparently had exactly the same advantage; but the careful observer could remark how one man was dragging the other gradually within his power, inch by inch; and how the other man's strength was failing. The next best thing to throwing a man at the West Country sports is to know how to fall. Nothing short of a fair back-fall decides the bout, and it was very curious to see how a man whose chance was gone would contrive by a dexterous twist to come on his side or hands, and avoid the back-fall.

It was quite delightful to witness the good humour and kindly feeling which prevailed amongst the wrestlers, both at Hornsey Wood House and Hackney Wick. The readiness with which the victor ran forward to pick up his fallen foe, and the heartiness with which conqueror and conquered shook hands was well worthy of a true English sport. During the actual struggle, a slight sign of hot blood on one side or the other might be shown, but it was like a passing cloud, and was gone in a moment.

I am not unobservant; nor have I been a rare frequenter of London crowds; in fact, for many years I made it my practice to see and mix with London crowds, and I can safely say that I never saw a large concourse of people in which the lower orders were numerously represented, more orderly, sober, and quiet, than at these wrestling matches. A great deal is said about the Sports of the People in these days, or in other words, a great talk is made about things which have almost ceased to exist. Public opinion has long ago been too strong for bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and all cruel sports. The railways have so amalgamated town and country, that village fairs and wakes have ceased to exist; and, judging from the specimens of wrestling which are exhibited in London, it seems almost a pity that so old and national a sport should not be again introduced into all parts of England. The requisites for a wrestler are pluck, patience, and determination. Wrestling combines all the good points of pugilism without any of its brutal accompaniments. It does not appear either to depend upon betting and gambling for support, which is another recommendation. I heard lots of bets made in sixpences and shillings, but that horrid animal, the "sporting gent," and his dreary accomplice, the "betting man," were not discernible at the wrestling meetings at which I was present; and their "*conspicuous absence*" was a matter of no little congratulation to every honest man who was out for an afternoon's pleasure.

F. G.

LYRICAL LINES.

As I wandered beside the blue measureless tide,
While the waters and winds were at play,
A woman, forlorn, pale, weary, and worn,
Arose like a ghost in my way.
Her famine-wrung sigh, and her grief-dimmed eye,
Were heavy with moan and tear,
As I placed in her palm a drop of the balm
Which the world holds so preciously dear:
And this blessing she gave as she turn'd to the wave
And gazed up to the azure dome,
"May your happiness be as deep as the sea,
And your heart as light as the foam."

Few words they were; but they seemed to bear
A magic to cheer and to save:
A beauty was flung by that sorrowful tongue
Like a spring-flower reared on a grave.
And Time, who estranges by chequers and changes,
Kind thoughts that have wish'd us good will,
Has left warmly imprest on my brain and my breast
The words of that pale woman still.
They held Music and Feeling, whose echo-tones stealing,
Yet whisper where'er I may roam,
May your happiness be as deep as the sea,
And your heart as light as the foam.

ELIZA COOK.

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LAST WEEK.

THE Whitsuntide holiday-makers were fortunate in their weather, this year. In some parts of the country, where no serviceable rain had fallen for several weeks, superstitious hopes were entertained of the usual wet Whit-Monday. Sometimes it happens for years together that the Whit-Monday brides, who may be seen flocking to church to be married by scores in a row, are doomed to have their white ribbons and new shawls drenched before the day is over, while the bridegrooms' glossy new hats have the shine taken off them, however carefully they may be covered with pocket-handkerchiefs. Monday of last week was, however, a fine day everywhere, as far as we have heard, and the agricultural longing for rain had to be patient.

The Volunteer displays were very animating all over the country. It is a great change that has come over the face of our holidays, within five years. The aspect of the holiday-makers has wonderfully altered, and so has the spirit and character of the day. It is impossible to avoid being struck with it at any of those centres of recreation to which the multitude resort. Instead of the loitering, aimless idleness of pleasure-parties, and the inane play which so surprises cultivated observers, we now see as much purpose put into play as into work, and as much energy infused into recreation as into the daily business of life. We see the manly march in the place of monkey tricks, and strenuous bodily exercise instead of lazy excess. The benefit extends beyond our generous spontaneous soldiery to those who look on and admire them. There are dozens of places where the crowds of pleasure-seekers seemed of a higher order LAST WEEK than ever before. The men look better, and walk better, not only in the ranks, but among the imitative multitude. There is less drunkenness, less vulgar horse play, less quarrelling, less of the mischief of all sorts which comes of people not knowing what to do with themselves on a holiday. In such company one also learns something of the collateral effects of Volunteering. It appears that clubs for manly sports may probably multiply, from men having found the advantage of combining to improve their time of recreation. One hears of delightful acts of effectual kindness done by an aggregate force of neighbours,—as the hoeing of the field of a sick farmer, or the setting of his potato-crop, as we heard last year of the harvesting,—kindly done, in more than one place, under threat of bad weather. These pleasant new features in our social condition give a fresh zest to our established holidays.

There was, however, the usual drawback, of bad accidents. It seems to make no difference that these accidents are almost always unnecessary. Though nine out of ten are the result of carelessness, or intemperance, they go on happening, in spite of all that can be said in warning. The most painful, perhaps, was that which spoiled the day for the Devon Artillery and Riflemen, who had their sham fight on Woodbury Common. Two of the artillerymen forgot to keep their sponge wet, and their gun burst. Besides the three men injured, one fatally, by this, a fourth wounded himself with his sword. At the Lakes, the usual holiday tidings of a drunken man being drowned, spread in the afternoon of Tuesday; and, moreover, there was the news of a steamer having sunk on Windermere. Nobody was drowned, for a wonder; but everybody was in the water. The little steamer, the Lady of the Lake, was overcrowded; and, being found sinking, was directed towards the shore. In a few minutes more, only her funnel was seen above the surface, and the passengers had waded to shore as they best might. For excursionists from the manufacturing districts such a wetting is no trifle.

Of all the holiday-making, the most striking, perhaps, was the trip to Paris of nearly two thousand British working-men. A committee of operatives had been for some time engaged in organising the party. A meeting held at the Whittington Club, at which several gentlemen, including some members of parliament, afforded their countenance and advice, matured the scheme; and of these gentlemen some accompanied the party,—some ladies being present also. The muster on this side was made in the most punctual and orderly way, though the men arrived from all parts of the country. From Paris, the account was that the English residents were looking on Whit-Monday for the batch of excursionists, in the throng of the streets; but that they were indistinguishable,—it was supposed from being well-dressed. It should be a red-letter day in the calendar of the two countries when the working-classes of each meet for friendly intercourse. We are accustomed to hear that the absolute sovereign of a military nation has no choice between a peaceful or a warlike reign, because his armies, drawn from the working-classes, must be employed and gratified in their thirst for glory. If this were the truth in regard to France, it would be the best thing for everybody to turn the thoughts of the working-classes in the direction of peace and its interests. But facts seem to show that the people who demand military glory and territorial aggrandisement for France are not the industrial classes, nor anybody of nearly so much social importance. They are probably a handful of officers, like the colonels who made such a noise a few years since. The variations in the funds, and many other signs, indicate a strong desire for peace, and leisure to cultivate industrial interests, among the French people generally.

There is hope of some improvement now in the condition of the depressed agricultural class by the relaxation of the corn laws; and the new tariff opens a prospect of increased employment to the working people of both nations; this therefore is just the time for such a beginning of intercourse to be made as we have witnessed in this trip of our countrymen to Paris. The visit of the French amateur musicians was sadly mismanaged in several ways; and Mr. Rowsell's scheme of a Volunteer invasion of Paris was condemned as a mistake by everybody. We may therefore regard this Whitsun trip as the beginning of popular sociability between England and France; and, considering the excellence of the management, and the prosperity of the adventure, we may well call it the crowning event of the

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Whitsun holidays. At the close of the week, the men were coming back delighted with what they had seen.

It seemed we remembered at last that the President had appointed a term during which the revolted subjects of the Federal Government might return to their allegiance. That term was, by the latest dates, on the point of expiring; and it was already clear that the Government had never been irresolute, apathetic, or in any way unworthy of the occasion, as many European censors had assumed. We received all possible evidence to the contrary.

Without repeating here the items of news which appeared in the journals of the week, we may form a general view of the state of affairs, at the expiration of the period of grace offered to the Secessionists.

We had before nothing authentic but the proclamations of the President and of Mr. Jefferson Davis, who cannot henceforth be called a President in any sense. We now have the despatch from the Secretary of State to the ambassador at Paris, which lays open the Federal case and doctrine and announces the purposes of the Government. The case is one of rebellion, and not of secession at all, on the grounds which ought to have been understood in England long ago. It is as individuals, and not as subjects of States that the American people are connected with the general Government. This is one great fact. Another is that the Southern leaders have not ventured to make the necessary constitutional appeal to the people before deciding on secession;—nor since, except in one or two cases, in which the Union interest has shown itself to be very strong.

The general Government therefore regards its Southern antagonists as rebels, and calls them so, and means to treat them so. They are conspirators, who have long matured their plans of embezzlement, treachery, and revolt, without the shadow of a pretext. This view was confirmed last week by the arrival of Mr. Jefferson Davis's message to his Congress at Montgomery. If any man was doubtful before about the substantial character of Southern grievances, he needs only read that message to perceive how purely a matter of passion and prejudice the secession is. He will not fail to supply, as he reads, the facts which we all know of the aggressions of the seceders, and the long patience of the government and people of the North.

These omissions and mis-statements of the Southern Message are owing to the necessities of Mr. Davis's position. The case is not at all understood by the members of his own congress; and the Southern public is by no means to be allowed to understand it at all. This is, to our minds, the most melancholy feature of the whole business;—the enormous lying that is going on,—bottomless, boundless, shameless! The only comfort is that it is a sign of weakness, and that it must therefore be temporary. The case is this. The Southern press has long been under the control of the enemies of the Union; and the telegraph below Washington is now entirely in their hands. They have also possessed themselves of the mails. The people of their own party are ignorant in the extreme. The readers of Mr. Olmsted's books know what they are like. The local newspapers are written for them; and it is for them that the telegraph brings the most tremendous false news every day. The educated class, and the planters especially, get no Northern newspapers or letters, and are in total ignorance of what is doing beyond their own horizon. It is thus that the game is kept up. For instance, in order to turn an election in Tennessee within three weeks, the telegraph announced, at a critical moment, that the great Seventh Regiment of New York had been cut to pieces by the Secessionists of Maryland. When any point is to be gained, news is sure to arrive that Mr. Lincoln has fled, or is taken prisoner; that General Scott has gone over to the Confederacy; that New York is to do the same the next day; that every man who has Southern connections is imprisoned, or ruined by fines, or (the most common news) cut to pieces by the military officers or police in the streets. The Northern forces are obtained by impressment, these newsmongers say: they consist of paupers, who are sent South to be food for powder: and the officers commit suicide every day. Philadelphia is to be taken to-morrow, and New York would have joined yesterday but for the certainty that the mob would burn the city at a word from Lincoln's emissaries. No pains seem to be taken to reconcile these notifications with Mr. Davis's protests against the "subjugation" apprehended from the North. Such lies as these appear in the Southern newspapers, or are reported by the fugitive planters on their arrival across the line. It seems as if the whole quarrel might be stopped, if only it were possible to set the truth before the people; but this conspiracy against the truth excludes all hope of any reasonable procedure.

There may be plenty of prejudice, and plenty of exaggeration in the popular mind of the North: but there the people are intelligent; they are all readers; and the newspaper press is free. There may be much passion and much nonsense in their newspapers; but there can be no suppression of any important facts, and no systematic fabrication of news. It would be well if the whole people could know as well as the Yankees that the President has declared his intention of treating the case as one of rebellion; and that the idea of the Union being severed is not to be admitted.

The significant facts of the week were various and very important. No debts were to be collected from the South; and most of them were repudiated. Warnings were issued to the public against new Virginia bonds, which it was attempted to insinuate into the market, though the debt of Virginia already amounted to forty millions; and her repudiation of this debt, as soon as convenient, was expected. Fugitive gentry, alone, in families, and in groups of families, were arriving from the plantations, alarmed for their lives, or ruined by the confiscation of their property, and the seizure of their plantation stock. The first military execution on a civilian had taken place in Florida, where a post-master was shot for delivering the mails to a Federal officer. The reign of terror in the Southern cities continued. A French

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resident of Charleston had been seen to shed tears at the hauling down of the Union flag under which his father had fought: and in the morning he was found hanging before his own door. Privateers were preparing in the Southern ports, and one had been captured by a government cutter. In every Southern or Border State in which any appeal had been made to the people, the split seems to have been as marked as in the Union itself; but the significant circumstance in each case is that the Governor is in favour of secession, while the Union party is strong enough to set up for itself, in one way or another. Thus, Missouri and Kentucky have offered regiments to Mr. Lincoln; and Maryland and Virginia have largely testified allegiance to him, while all the governors assume them to be seceding States.

It is surprising that one most important fact has thus far attracted but little notice. The scarcity of food in the Southern States must determine the course of affairs; and yet we hear it spoken of in the same tone as the scarcity of any other article. Of the fact there is evidently no longer any doubt. In the State of Mississippi actual dearth exists, and the people are going without sufficient food. The same evil exists in other districts. A good deal of cotton-land was proposed to be given up to corn-growing; but, besides that industry is nearly at a stand throughout the plantations, there is a long interval before the harvest. From this difficulty there is no prospect of relief, for the Mississippi is now in the hands of the Federal force, from the mouth of the Ohio upwards. No food can therefore be procured by the Southern people from the north-west; and every port on the seaboard is now blockaded.

This circumstance of hunger points to the war being carried on beyond the frontier of the Slave States, if at all. It is the opinion at Washington that the Southern leaders had rather delay the clash of arms, being sure of defeat in conflict, but that their peculiar sort of force cannot be restrained. The President's government would certainly prefer to await the issue of the blockade, about which no rational man has a doubt. But the exhaustion of the Southern food stores, the ignorant arrogance of the Southern recruits, and the prevalent dread of negro risings will drive the Confederate troops northwards, and probably make Virginia the seat of war.

A fortnight since we spoke of the probable split of Virginia at the root of the mountains. The thing was becoming true while we wrote. The people of Western Virginia have declared their intention of being no longer united with a slaveholding community, and have claimed the liberty to constitute themselves a separate state in union with the North and allegiance to the general Government.

During the week, the first confederate flag seen in England was hoisted in the Liverpool dock. It was with great regret that the inhabitants saw signs of the fitting out of vessels for privateer service; and great indeed will be the disgrace to any British port which shall afford countenance or aid to piratical enterprise in any part of the world. The unarmed California steamers have reached New York in safety; and all gold from the Pacific will henceforth be conveyed in well-armed vessels.

The accounts which arrived from Russia during the week were more painful than surprising to those of us who know how invariable has been the failure of attempts to emancipate bondsmen by degrees. In twenty-seven of the governments or departments of Russia there is trouble with the serfs, who cannot understand how they can be required to go on just as they were before, now that their emancipation has been proclaimed. They are sure this cannot be the Emperor's will; and so has every subject of gradual emancipation thought, wherever such an accommodation between two incompatible systems has been tried. We ourselves could tell the serf-owners how it was with us; how our apprenticeship system broke down in the West Indies, amidst dreadful suffering and abuse, while in Antigua, where immediate emancipation had been preferred, there was no difficulty at all. The thing is plain enough. The released person is either a man or a chattel: and, having once been admitted to be a man, he cannot submit himself to the old chattel-treatment, more or less. The only safe way is to appoint a day,—the earliest possible,—for slavery to cease entirely; and then to pay wages, in one form or another, for all work done henceforth. The stupidest negro can understand that process: whereas the more intelligent Russian serf cannot perceive himself to be a free man, if he can be compelled by his master to perform the same services as before without pay, in order to possess by-and-by the dwelling and garden which he has always possessed. The state of affairs in Russia on this question looks as threatening as possible.

The great and eternal Home-question,—the Food question,—had some light thrown upon it during the week. In some counties rain and warm days revived the appearance of the crops; while elsewhere the continuance of drought almost extinguished the last hope of an average harvest. The frosts had spoiled the promise of the orchards, and the hay crops were not getting on much. On the other hand, the herring and mackerel fisheries were good, and cheap fish was enjoyed in close alleys of inland towns, and wherever railroads penetrate. For the richer classes first, and for everybody else afterwards, a prospect of plenty in salmon was opened. While waiting for the Government Bill, which is to give a fair chance to our river fish, upwards of a million of fine young salmon, able to shift for themselves, have been dismissed from their breeding depôts into the Scotch rivers. The nearer we approach the diligence of our French neighbours in the culture of fish, the further removed we shall be from the peril and disgrace of popular hunger.

At Cambridge there was a noble festival of honours,—degrees being conferred on a remarkable group of distinguished men, as diverse in their opinions and party connexions as could well be, and brought together by the honourable gratitude of the University for public service. The most popular of the guests seem to have been Lord Elgin and Mr. Grote. Mr. Motley, the American historian of Holland, also held a distinguished place.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

"WELL, why have you come, Charles Hawkesley, and why have you brought him with you?" was Urquhart's first speech, as they moved out of Lygon's hearing.

"To know the truth, and to have justice done," was Hawkesley's reply, given somewhat coldly, for he was irritated at Urquhart's demonstration of feeling against Arthur.

"The truth is soon told," replied Robert Urquhart. "As for justice, we'll say nothing of that until we can meet face to face with those whom we have to deal with. You sent for me?"

"Certainly."

"Well, I am here."

"I thank you for coming."

"Keep back thanks, and keep back everything else except what *must* be said. What do you want with me?"

"Is that the way to meet me, Urquhart? At the least you might remember that if I mix myself up in the sorrows of yourself and others, it is only from sincere and earnest sympathy, and this entitles me to be received with courtesy, to say no more."

"I have no wish to be uncourteous. But I am in no mood to receive sympathy, or to exchange compliments. I should have been better pleased to see you, had you come alone."

"We can none of us act alone in this miserable business, Urquhart, and my object is to manage, if possible, that we should all act together, as becomes those who are so closely connected."

"Am I speaking to the friend of Arthur Lygon?"

"And to your own friend."

"Either, Charles Hawkesley, you are but half instructed by your friend there, or you came to insult me. I have not known very much of you, and I have known a good deal too much of him, and I would rather believe that he is keeping you in the dark, an art in which Mr. Arthur Lygon is a master, sir."

"I am glad that you believe in my good intentions, Robert. I have a right to assume that you regard me as a man of honour?"

"You have never given me any right to doubt it, until to-day, when I find you consorting with a man who is nothing of the kind. Well, I will suppose that you cannot well get rid of him, as yet.

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Now then, will you tell me what you want with me?"

"Come up into my room."

Urquhart obeyed without answer, and they went up. Robert Urquhart seated himself, and waited until Hawkesley should address him.

"In the first place, Urquhart," said Hawkesley, "it is right to inform you that Mrs. Urquhart, who arrived in England, and took temporary refuge in my house—"

"Whence you thrust her into the street," said Urquhart, sternly. "You need not ask my pardon for that."

"I should have had to ask God's pardon if I had done aught so wicked," replied Hawkesley.

"What? You received her, welcomed her, comforted her, perhaps, and allowed your own wife to meet her."

"Welcomed her, no—for the rest, yes."

A bitter, almost a malignant smile came, for a moment, over the face of Urquhart.

"Ay," he said. "Well, you will doubtless reap your reward. All in good time, Charles, all in good time."

There was something offensively scornful in his manner, and yet his words were uttered in a tone of encouragement, almost commendation. But Hawkesley had strong mastery of himself, and had resolved that no provocation should stir him until he had sounded all the depths of the story which he had come to fathom.

"My reward, Robert," he said, quietly, "will be, I trust, in preventing wrong from being done."

"And is it as the ambassador of yon woman that you come to me?" asked Urquhart. "And does she send your friend with you as a witness to her virtues?"

"You have no right to speak to me in that tone, Urquhart. If it is necessary for me to say to you that the fearful affliction that has come upon you is also the heaviest sorrow of my own life, why, there it is said, man. God help you! But I had indeed thought that you would have felt all that said over and over again in my coming to you at a time when ninety-nine men in a hundred would have sent you some letter of sympathy, and avoided your presence like a plague. I have come to you—are we to bandy words over sorrow like ours?"

He spoke with earnestness and even indignation, and the defiant expression faded from Urquhart's face, but he only answered:

"You have come to me, but I know not why."

"Then I will tell you why. And if I speak to you more harshly than I ought to speak to a man who is so unhappy, it is your own desire, Robert. You have before you as loyal and true a friend as you have ever known in this world, and you meet him with suspicion and insult. But he will not be the less true to you for that."

"I thought I had as good a friend yonder," said Urquhart, quietly, and with a slight sign indicating that he alluded to Lygon.

"Yes, you have indeed treated *him* well," said Hawkesley, reproachfully. "And I don't wonder that you would avoid meeting him. For what amends can you make to him for having permitted yourself, in an excess of rage and grief at your own affliction, to poison all the happiness of his life?"

Robert Urquhart listened to the words, and then seemed to be repeating them to himself, as if his own voice might give them a meaning which they had not brought to him. Then he said:

"As I had supposed. Read your brief, Charles, and then come and talk to me if you dare."

And he rose to go.

"No," said Hawkesley, firmly. "We do not part in this way. I put all relationship, all old friendship on one side. As one man of honour who requires an explanation from another, I call upon you to answer me the question why you have sought to make a wreck of Lygon's home?"

"Are you mad, too, like the rest?"

"Bah," said Hawkesley, "I am not to be met with scowls and mystic phrases. It is my trade to invent them, Urquhart, they have no magic for me. I ask you a question, and as you shuffle away from a reply, shall I help you half way with one. Shall I ask you whether it is possible that Robert Urquhart, whom we have esteemed and loved as the type of all that was just and honourable, has been so maddened by his own wrong, that he has descended to a revenge upon the only person within his reach?"

"You are a bold man, Charles Hawkesley."

"I thought so, before I met you, but there is little boldness, after all, in confronting a man who has been made a coward by his own act. What, that scowl again, Urquhart? Do not treat me like a school-boy. I thought that I was speaking to a man of the world, and he meets me with muttering and black looks. At least make me a man's answer, if we never speak again."

"Hawkesley," said Urquhart, with a painful laugh. "I have heard that your wife loves you."

"I hope so."

"And that you value her love somewhat highly."

"It has brought me face to face with you—put your own value on it."

"Well, then, I will show you that I am your friend. Go back to England, and go to her, and if you think you know of an oath that will bind a woman's conscience, make her swear that oath never to speak again to a couple of women whom she can't help calling her sisters. That is my counsel to you, in return for the trash you have been led to talk to me, and there's coals of fire heaped on your head, my man."

He looked doggedly at Hawkesley while saying this, but the counsel sounded as if tendered in earnest.

"I am not surprised now, Robert, at this obstinate pretence—this affected persistence in injustice. The change that has come over you should have prepared me for language like this. My journey, so far as you are concerned, will be ineffectual. I find you resolved to abide by the wrong you have done. Be it so—we must undo that wrong without you. If I do not use strong words of protest against your cruelty, it is because I see for myself that you are not, in the fullest sense of the word, responsible for your conduct,

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and that the caution which was given me by M. ——, at the bureau, was not so gratuitous as I had believed."

"What caution's that?" said Urquhart, fiercely.

"The words are of no consequence. The inference was that it was not without consideration how far it was safe to entrust important duties to you that the Government had decided on preferring some contract tendered by M. Desgleaux —was that the name?—to one which you sent in."

The powder had been fired at last. Robert Urquhart sprang to his feet, with flashing eyes, and with an expression of rage before which a brave man might have recoiled without stain to his manhood. The veins of his forehead stood out like rope, and his lips quivered so convulsively that they were almost useless in aiding his utterances.

"They have given a contract to Desgleaux!" he exclaimed, hoarsely.

"I think that was the name," said Hawkesley, affecting to consider.

"You know it was the name, man!" stormed Urquhart. "And perhaps it was this that the infernal impostors wished you to tell me, and therefore they took such pains to find me out, and bid me come here. Soh! They give the contract to Monsieur Desgleaux, one of the greatest thieves who ever cheated his masters and his men."

"I know nothing of his character," said Hawkesley, calmly; "indeed, the gentleman's name came to my ears for the first time at the bureau—"

"And what were you doing at the bureau, my man?" said Urquhart, eyeing him askance.

"I had inquiries of my own to make, and among them the inquiry where I could meet with you."

"And how dared you go to a gang of police to ask after me?"

"'Dare' is a silly word, and surely one may ask after one's brother-in-law's address in the place where that brother-in-law went to ask after the character of his wife."

Urquhart glared at him for a moment, and then, sinking down upon a chair, dashed his hands upon his face, and groaned, and the strong man's suffering was a terrible thing to behold. All the concentrated agony of the interview at which the proof of Bertha's guilt had been laid before him came back at the words of Hawkesley, and Urquhart writhed as he sat.

"It is for *her* sake," said Charles Hawkesley to himself, gazing remorsefully upon the man whom he had tortured. "He would have defied me to the last. It is for her sake, Robert."

"Hold your tongue. I will speak with you presently."

Some minutes elapsed before either spoke again. And when Robert Urquhart removed his hands from his face it was deeply flushed with the intense pressure he had unconsciously put upon it, and he looked through dim eyes at the face of Hawkesley, and his large fingers were marked with the tears which he had vainly striven to keep from breaking forth. The look at Hawkesley was more touching than it seemed possible for those strong features to assume—the proud face looked, for once, as if the brave, defiant nature had battled to the last point of endurance, and must give way. Yet that look must have called up a fitting response in the face of Urquhart's companion, or the haughtiness of the Scot would have still struggled on. As it was, Urquhart looked earnestly at Hawkesley for a moment, and striding across to him took his hand in a warmer clasp than Robert Urquhart had for many a day given to man or woman.

"You have a sharp knife, my man," he said, with a strange smile, "and you cut deep with it; but it's the kindest way with a bad case. But, go home, Charles—go home. You are basely deceived, and you are sent to try to deceive others. Cast away the cursed job; go home to your own good wife, and both of you forget that she has sisters, and that they have husbands. Would I say this to you if the thing were not?"

"You believe it, my dear Robert," said Hawkesley, in his turn taking his companion's hand for a moment. "You believe it, and are only doing your duty in striving to impress it upon me. But my duty, on the other hand, tells me to spare no pains to bring you, and those whose hearts are crushed by the sorrow that has come on us, to confess that we have wronged one who is innocent."

"You have been at the bureau," said Urquhart, in a low voice, and hastily. "What I learned, I doubt not you have learned too."

"I am not speaking, Robert," said Hawkesley, kindly, "of the sad story of one who is now lying, perhaps on her death-bed, in my house. Let no word of her be said between us. But we may speak—we must speak of her sister."

"A worse woman than herself," said Urquhart, in a low, but judicial tone. "Yes," he continued, "a worse woman by far, Charles, because, without temptation, with a husband who was her constant companion and friend, which I could hardly be to yon poor feeble wretch that is gone, with children at her knee, which poor Bertha never had to comfort her, that woman gave herself over body and soul to the enemy."

"If it were so, Robert, what you have said were indeed a charge that should sink her beyond all reach of mercy. But does not the very blackness of that charge scare you from the belief that it can be just? With all that love, and honour, and happiness at home, is it conceivable that a wife should rush headlong to destruction?"

"The proofs have been laid before me, Hawkesley."

"I would not pain you by recalling the circumstances, but do yourself the justice to answer one question. You read those proofs, Robert, and what was the result? You consulted a second person as to their validity, and you were satisfied —so satisfied that you replaced that person in your unlimited confidence. What is *now* the value of that person's testimony?"

"But I read with my own eyes that which was all-sufficient to condemn. You hinted that my mind is not what it was, Charles,—pooh! that's all over, you meant to rouse me at any price—but there had not been much to disturb it then.

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Would I have written to Lygon, had I doubted —had I had the blessing of being able to doubt?"

"No. But you, an honest man, were dealing with one of the most finished scoundrels in Paris, and at that moment he was playing a terrible game which I believe as yet you do not see."

"I can speak of it," said Urquhart. "I shall be ready to speak of it at fitting time and place until one day comes, and then I shall speak of it no more, because we will let the dead rest. That scoundrel *was* playing his last game, and seeking to hide his wickedness from me. He might have succeeded for some while longer, but for the chance that took me to yon accursed bureau."

"Chance," repeated Hawkesley; "may I ask what chance?"

"I wished to know what I could learn about him, and I thought I would write and ask his character. I was invited to call," he added in a low voice, "and I called, and all was over."

"Do not dwell upon that," said Hawkesley, observing the flush that came over the Scot's face at the recollection. "I would only ask you whether you see nothing but chance in the discovery?"

"You are right, no doubt," said Urquhart, "and it is inconsistent to use the word, when we know that there is no chance, and that all things are pre-ordained; but—"

"You mistake me," said Hawkesley, "I was not speaking in a religious sense—I should not have thought of making that suggestion to *you*; but I meant that the invitation to you to visit the bureau, and the preparation to receive you there, seem to me to hint at a determination by others that the character of this man should become known to you. While you imagined yourself a free agent, you were working up to the point to which it was wished to lead you."

"They were strangely prompt, that is certain," said Urquhart, thoughtfully. "And there were some preparations made, or *she* would not have been warned," he muttered. "It may be so, but I do not see that it was," he said; "I mean that I do not see that the police had aught to do with it, beside the answering my questions."

"I do, Robert; but all that I would impress upon you is that there is room for doubt even here, and that you may have been once more deceived."

"If it were so?"

"Then, does it not seem both reasonable and just to allow that having been deceived twice in matters under your own eye, you may have formed a hasty judgment on another and the most important? You believe yourself convinced by the proofs tendered by that scoundrel against Mrs. Lygon, but you lacked confirmation of them, and obtained a confirmation that was worse than worthless. Is it too much to say that you will reconsider that evidence?"

"Hawkesley," said Urquhart, turning suddenly on him. "This woman,—this Laura, has laid a strange hold upon your heart-strings."

"My own Beatrice excepted, Robert, there is no woman whom I ever loved so well, or for whom I would do so much."

"You come to France in the hope of clearing her character?"

"Yes, and I will come again and again for any shred or morsel of evidence that can serve her; unless, as I hope I shall, I take back with me all the proofs in one, that is to say, I take back Laura and her husband together."

"Does *he* believe—what you wish to believe?" asked Urquhart, in a curious voice, almost under his breath.

"He dares not, yet."

"Listen to me, Charles Hawkesley. I am one of the people called Christians, and I know what I am talking about when I tell you that I hate Arthur Lygon."

"I am deeply shocked to hear you say it. If it were not for wounding you again—"

"You cannot wound me again, because you do not intend to wound me. I have learned more of your nature, Charles, in half an hour, than I had ever known before. I would have been glad that we had been more intimate; but that is over now. Still, I will be your friend, if you will. You may say fearlessly what came to your tongue. I told you that I hated Lygon."

"I will not say it, Robert, exactly as I might have done on the moment, but I will remind you that when we have injured a person we are naturally disposed to think ill of him."

"It is neither once nor twice that you have charged me with doing wrong to Arthur Lygon," said Urquhart, gravely. "Do you know the wrong that he did me? Do you know that he was aware of the wickedness that had been practised upon me, that I was taking a false woman to my arms and my heart, and that he could nevertheless come under my roof, and could take my hand, and keep silence as to my dishonour. Do you know that he accepted services from me—that is little or nothing, except that it shows his nature—that he could admit me to his confidence, and sit by my side, and at my table, and let me talk to him of the happiness of a home sanctified by a true woman's love, and beg him not to misjudge this very Laura—and that all this time he was jeering at me from the corner of his heart, knowing that *I* was the blind and cheated husband?"

"Was it for him, Robert Urquhart, to betray Bertha to you? He believed that she had repented, and he remembered that his wife was her sister."

"Is that your defence of your friend?"

"You will not hear him make his own."

"No. Do not let him come near me. I shall remember the parting when I almost prayed him to discharge all vile suspicions from his mind, and some day to tell his happy wife that Robert Urquhart had pleaded for her when appearances were against her. He looked kindly and gratefully into my face, and I, blind fool, could not read that he was mocking the dishonoured man who was trying to comfort and reassure *him*. This is the man whom I have wronged, because I was truer to him than he dared to be to me, and because, when I discovered his dishonour, I was enough his friend to prevent his being longer deceived."

"Robert, he could answer all this to you far

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better than I can answer it for him; and it may be that you are once more deceived, and that while you suppose him to have ample knowledge of the sad story, he had but suspicions—perhaps less evidence than you have obtained against Laura. But let us grant that the worst is true, and that Arthur, from timidity, or what cause you will, concealed that which a friend ought not to have concealed—will you still, will you therefore, do an injustice. Will you refuse to help me to re-investigate this melancholy case, only because the clearing this poor girl's character will restore happiness to a man whom you say you hate?"

"Whom I *do* hate."

"Put it so, and answer me."

"It is a frantic and a useless course, Hawkesley. The evidence that was shown to me will not have been laid before your own eyes for five minutes, before you pronounce the same sentence that I was forced to pronounce."

"Letters, I think," said Hawkesley, in a low voice.

"Letters. I understand you. Letters—not one or two, though," said Urquhart, with compressed lips; "those few lines were enough to damn a fame on which I would have risked my own life, here and hereafter. No, Charles, but a volume—a series of accursed letters in which that unhappy woman made known her guilty passion, and branded herself as—well, shall we say——?"

"No matter for the word," said Hawkesley, impatiently.

"But it does matter," said Urquhart, looking at him once more with a strange expression. "For in the vile jargon of those who make delicate distinctions in crime, and shadow away the blackness of the sin to which God has given one name only, there are offences of the heart, it seems, as well as mere shamelessness. Some of you—I mean some of you writers, Hawkesley—I am told make apologies for the adultress if she can excuse herself by saying that not only did she hate her husband, but that she loved some one else. I would call this a fearful aggravation of crime, but sentimentalists know better. Well, you will find that there is ample scope for apology when you come to read those letters."

"How?" said Hawkesley, eagerly.

"I do not know that there is any mention of her husband; but not only is there plenty of love for another, but it is expressed so plainly that—you do not seem to like to hear it, Hawkesley—so I will only say that if the one lover was not in the way, I doubt that the writer would have broken her heart, unless it were just impossible to find another. Why do you clap your hands, man? Is that so good a hearing?"

"Is it *not?*" said Charles Hawkesley, excited. "Urquhart, Urquhart, you have given me more comfort than you can imagine. Now, you must help me to a sight of these letters."

"And what have I told you that gives you such a comforting assurance?"

"Do you not see, my dear Robert? You have described the letters of a sensualist, of a profligate woman. Look in the eyes of Laura Lygon, and ask whether they could ever have guided her pen through such vileness. She write such letters! Robert, you have indeed done her wrong, and you will help me to repair it."

"I have not had occasion, in my life," said Urquhart, "to be much acquainted with women," and he spoke with a simple, natural pathos that at once arrested the attention of his excited companion. "I wish it had pleased God that I had never had aught to say of them beside that they were my fellow-creatures. I know but of two types, the chaste and the unchaste, and I was bid to honour the one and despise the other. It seems that I know far too little, and that there are bad women whom we are to esteem, and good women whom we are to detest. I will not live long enough to come over to that new belief—the old one that I was taught as a lad is quite good enough for me. But since you seem to have taken up with the new doctrine, and can find comfort in the distinctions of sin, I will do what I can for you. But when the Dead Sea apple turns to ashes as you crunch it, Charles, do not blame me, who bade you leave it where the Devil had flung it. I believe that I see more, now, than you will tell me; nor is it right that you should tell me what is in your heart."

"I do not comprehend you, Robert."

"Maybe as well as I comprehend myself. But let that pass. If you deem I have done wrong, it is fitting I should clear myself. But I will have neither part nor lot in the matter, if Arthur Lygon comes into our council."

"Assuredly I shall not press that, Robert. I have perfect liberty to act as I may think best. Now, where are these letters?"

"There is but one way of getting at them, which is through yon bureau."

"What, they are not in your possession?"

"Thank God, they are not."

"But in whose?"

"Nay, I know not. They were laid before me, and my—before me and Mrs. Urquhart in the drawing-room at Versailles by the scoundrel, who made it a condition that they should be returned to him when I had read them; and they were."

"By the scoundrel! Who was this?"

"Is there more than one such a villain, man? Why, this Adair."

Hawkesley gasped as if a weight had suddenly been lifted from his chest.

"Adair *He* produced the letters? And you permitted any letter that he could produce to weigh one grain in the balance against Laura Lygon? Thank heaven that I came over to sound this matter to the bottom. O Robert, let me say it again, you have indeed a debt to pay to Arthur Lygon."

"I will be ready to own my obligation when I comprehend it," said the Scot.

"We'll talk of that another time. The first thing is to lay hands on Mr. Adair. I shall have to use the police after all; but what matter if I can only secure these evidences? Robert, I beg your pardon," he said. "In the excess of my pleasure at seeing, as I believed, the exculpation of Laura, I ought not to have forgotten that in your presence a member of her family has no right to be aught but humiliated."

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"I understand you better than you will own," said Urquhart, sadly. "Do you wish me to go with you to the bureau?"

"Certainly not, my dear Robert," replied Hawkesley, shocked at the humility of the tone in which Urquhart spoke. "But when I obtain these letters, I shall be entitled to call on you to read them once more."

"You will not ask it, but go your own way."

And Charles Hawkesley's way was to the bureau again, as speedily as he could be conveyed thither.

"So soon returned, Mr. Hawkesley?" said M. ——, as the Englishman was again ushered into the presence of the chief of the police. "You are the more welcome, and promptitude is an inestimable gift in this world."

"I must risk the chance of your thinking me easily turned from the views I held this morning, M. ——."

"That means that you are prepared to permit me to assist you, I hope?"

"Indeed it does."

"I expected no less from your common sense. I was only afraid lest the proud insular nature,"—and M. —— laughed at his phrase,—"might prevent you at once acting upon the dictates of your judgment. You have seen Mr. Urquhart?"

"He has been with me, and has made a revelation which, had you been kind enough to add to what you told me of this man, Adair, would have perhaps spared you the trouble of a double interview."

"I suppose that I understand you. But I preferred that you should hear from your brother-in-law what perhaps you would scarcely have been inclined to believe from me. I am to infer that if you had any hostility to this ill-advised M. Adair when you and I parted, it has not been decreased by anything which you have since heard."

"He is a double-dyed miscreant, M. ——. But I should be past the stage of using hard words."

"Then it becomes more and more my duty to keep him out of the way, I conclude."

"Pray let me speak seriously. When I was here before I said that I would not hold out a finger to save him if he were in the hands of his worst enemy—"

"Mr. Urquhart?"

"Yes, he was so then, in my judgment. But others have a right to hate him more deeply."

"Your brother-in-law, Mr. Lygon?"

"And myself. But it sounds almost childishly for me to say that Adair would now be safer in my hands than in those of any man in the world."

"Yes, until he has given certain explanations. Now, to get hold of him."

"My dear Mr. Hawkesley, we must be orderly and rational. I could place him in that chair in seven minutes from this time, but what good do you imagine would result to you?"

"He has documents which I must see."

"Do you think that he would bring them—or send for them—or acknowledge their existence?"

"Under your eye I suppose that a negotiation might be arranged," said Hawkesley. "I conclude that he is open to bribery?"

"What!" said M. ——, with an affectation of surprise. "A police agent bribed, and under the eye of his chief. Your practical good sense is scarcely serving you at need, Mr. Hawkesley."

"I perceive," said Hawkesley, "that you intend to assist me, M. ——, and I acknowledge I was wrong in not asking you to do so in your own way."

"Meet me here to-morrow, at one. In the mean time take no step whatever."

"I place myself in your hands, and I rely upon your friendship, M. ——."

"You shall repent neither the act nor the trust, Mr. Hawkesley."

CHAPTER LXIX.

"WHEN I have mentioned, Madame, that I have the honour to hold one of the higher offices under the Minister of Police, I shall, I trust, do away with any idea of indiscretion or intrusion."

The words were addressed by M. —— to Mrs. Lygon, who received him in a small parlour leading off from the room which served as hall, kitchen, and general place of assembly in the house in which she lodged at Versailles.

Mrs. Lygon received the official with a certain tremor, which did not escape his watchful eye, but his manner was reassuring, and she replied, with a smile,

"Has so quiet a person as myself done anything to call for the censure of the police?"

"Pray think better of our appreciation of those who honour us by a séjour at Versailles. My sole object in alluding to my official position was to relieve myself from any suspicion of impertinence. I may add that I have the honour of being known to Mr. Urquhart, and to Mr. Hawkesley, who has just arrived in Paris."

"Charles Hawkesley has come over?" said Mrs. Lygon.

"Yes, and I think will soon be Mrs. Lygon's visitor."

"Was it to tell me this that you have been kind enough to call?"

"In part; for without troubling Mrs. Lygon with reasons and histories about things gone by, I have ventured to feel a strong interest in certain matters which concern her, and have even indulged in the hope that I may be useful. Meantime, it occurred to me that Mr. Hawkesley's visit would probably take Mrs. Lygon by surprise, and I wished her to know that he might be expected."

The conversation between M. —— and Laura was protracted for a considerable time, and the kindly manner of the official produced its effect upon one who had for so long been living in a state of excitement, who had found it needful to guard herself against others, and who had in short been exposed to the atmosphere least congenial to a frank and affectionate nature. M. —— slightly sketched some of the incidents with which the reader is acquainted, but did so in a way that showed that he was perfectly acquainted with the whole story, and he gradually led up to the revelation of his earnest wish that she should return to England. Mrs. Lygon listened with earnestness, spoke little, but thanked M. —— for the interest he took in her welfare.

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Just as the interview was concluding, and the courteous official had risen to go, he said—

"I had forgotten something which I ought to have remembered. I have a trifling matter to place in Mrs. Lygon's possession. It came into my hands by accident, and I am glad to restore it."

He placed a small sealed packet in her hand, and took his leave.

Laura opened the packet.

It was a photograph, in which her three children were grouped together. A photograph that had been taken in her own presence on some happy holiday—Walter's birthday—and that had been one of her little household treasures ever since. With it came to her all the recollections of home, of love, of children's laughter, of—

"Oh, my darlings, my darlings!" cried the mother, and her tears fell like summer rain. "I *must* see you again."

(To be continued.)

SPIDERS.

It was no ungraceful fable, that of the Greeks, of the metamorphose of the maiden, or should we say spinster Arachne, who too rashly entered the lists with a goddess, and for her presumption was changed to a spider; for what more exquisite woof can art produce than the delicate network seen shining, wet with dew, on the hedges in the early autumn mornings. Let us try and spin a short yarn about the weavers of them. Walcknaer divides Araneidæ into hunters, vagrants, sedentaries, and swimmers. The habits of the two former species seem very similar, their method being to lurk in ambush and dart out upon their prey; that of the sedentaries to lay webs and snares of the viscous substance produced by their secretions to entrap their victims. Lurking in or near its web, when the victim approaches the spider runs up and tries to pierce it with its dart, and to instil into the wound a drop of its fatal poison. If resisted, he retires, and waits till the strength of his adversary gradually ebbs or he becomes hopelessly entangled, when he easily despatches his victim. A single sting of an ordinary sized araneid will kill a domestic fly very soon. In South America the bite of the crab-spider is fatal to small birds. Much has been said of the venomous bite of certain species of Araneidæ. In the island of Hyères a farmer sixty years of age was bitten by a large spider in gathering in corn, and after slight inflammation, mortification and death ensued. Every body has heard of the Terrantola, or Tarantula, of Southern Italy, whose bite caused the Ταραντισμὸς, or dancing mania of 1374: this was a kind of melancholy to be cured by music, to which the patients were so peculiarly sensitive as to leap and dance without intermission till they sunk exhausted. Meetings for the cure of those thus afflicted were constantly held, at which the flute and cithern seem to have been mostly used. Becker, in his "Epidemics of the Middle Ages," gives a very interesting account of this mania. The large spiders of Hampton Court, known as the Cardinal Spiders, are known to every boy who is the happy possessor of a Jesse.

The white silky flakes waving about in spring and autumn, and known in some counties as Virgin's Threads, are the produce of young araneids, and especially of a species called the Diadem Spider. The silvery threads on the furrows of a ploughed field, seen glittering in the morning sun, are produced by the vagrants. These threads when analysed are of the same substance as the silk of the spider. When a spider is about to weave, it emits a drop of silky fluid, applies it to a wall or tree, and removes from it spinning; this material, though emitted in a fluid state, hardens in the air, and is glued by the spider to the opposite end of the wall or tree.

The Diadem Spider makes a perpendicular web, with radii of threads leading to a common centre, suffers it to hang in the air till the wind carries it to another tree, to which its natural gluten cements it, after which the rest of the web is completed, and a sort of little lodge at one extremity, from whence it can watch for and pounce upon its victims. Lister asserts that spiders ejaculate these threads, just as porcupines do their quills, but it has been proved by experiment that they are powerless when the atmosphere is perfectly still, as under a glass; but there seems no reason to doubt that they can ejaculate to some extent. Every medical student knows how useful these webs are for stopping bleeding, the glutinous substance which they contain being very efficacious. From this, too, gloves and stockings have been made. Lebon, a Frenchman, found thirteen ounces of it would produce four ounces of silk. His method was this. Having caused it to be beaten with the hand and a small stick to expel the dust, he washed it in tepid water, after which it was put into soapsuds, into which saltpetre and gum arabic had been dissolved. The whole was boiled for two or three hours, till the soap with which they were impregnated was extracted; they were then dried, and gently manipulated to enable them to be carded. The carded silk was spun on a spindle, and the thread resulting was finer and stronger than common silk, and was readily dyed. The Academy of France, however, did not encourage the experiment, as it seemed to promise no permanent result. Reaumur tried unsuccessfully to rear spiders on vegetables, and finding that nothing but insects would serve to feed them, and foreseeing the embarrassing result of having to rear flies to support spiders, gave up the task. It was calculated that 700,000 spiders could produce one pound of silk, and that ninety spiders' threads were equal to that of one silkworm, and the thread of 18,000 of sufficient substance for manufacture. A fabricator of stuffs at Paris is said by Wilhelm to have made stockings from the cocoon of the Diadem Spider. He reared 800 in a room whose ceiling was covered with packthreads, interlacing each other; and it is said that the spiders were so tame as to descend as he entered the room, and take their food from a plate. Pelisson, it is well known, tamed a spider in his prison in the Bastile, so that it would come at the sound of an instrument, and the governor of the Bastile crushed it at the moment it was displaying its docility. A very pretty species found near Paris is the Diadema relucens, small and cylindri-

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cal, with thorax covered with silky purple down; the abdomen is bluish green and red, with metallic reflexions, and two cross lines of golden yellow.

Of the swimmers the most interesting is the Argyroneta aquatica, found haunting stagnant pools, and often seen in the fens of Cambridgeshire. It swims on its back, and envelopes itself in a tiny globe of air similar to a diving-bell, under which they can respire freely, and which serves as a nursery to their young. Of this species there is a very excellent illustration in the last publication of the Ray Society, which will well repay the curious observer of these little creatures. The task set for spiders was to keep under the insect population, and there is no doubt that through their tiny agency we have escaped many a plague of flies.

ARACHNE.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

SOCIAL REFORMERS.—II.

JOHN HOWARD: ELIZABETH FRY: WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

It seems scarcely necessary to say that, in forming a judgment of any Representative Man, it is essential to observe the spirit and manners of the time in which he lived: yet it is the commonest thing in the world to overlook this necessity, and to interpret the man by the ideas and customs of our own day. The term Philanthropist is not now the title of honour that it was when John Howard became known by it; and the career of the man will have no justice done to it if it is classed with that of the philanthropic order which has grown up within this century as a distinct class in society. The proceedings of the class have become so conspicuous amidst the business of the world, the organisation is so thorough, affording a professional subsistence to so many thousands of persons, and the whole apparatus and spirit and manner of this way of "doing good" is so alien to the old conception of helping one's neighbour, that the honourable title of lover of his kind has sunk so low that persons of unsophisticated feeling shrink from applying it where it is most truly deserved. If we continue to John Howard the name of "the Philanthropist," by which he has been known for a hundred years, we must strip the word of all the cant, and the vulgarity, and the ridicule which has gathered about it, and remember that he was no offspring of a fashionable social movement, no wheel in a great machine which gives out as much profit to its own officers as to the unfortunate classes it undertakes to help. John Howard was an original, if ever there was one. He did what nobody else was thinking of doing; and he did it in a singular way. This it is which makes him a Representative Man, in the first place; and which, in the next, prevents the forfeiture of that quality by his eccentricity. No doubt there have been many men as benevolent before his time and since, who are by no means representatives of anybody: and doubtless John Howard's eccentricities operate, as far as they go, to prevent his representing anybody but his strange self: but he is still a Representative Man by having, through his own vigour and freshness of mind and heart, disclosed new social relations, and thrown open a new department of human life to the conscience and feelings of civilised man.

It is only within a few years that we have obtained any clear notion what the man was, though what he did is known to the end of the world. Most people felt that there was something odd and mysterious about him; and his career was a sad puzzle to young people who have always supposed, as young people do and must suppose, that virtue and merit consist in forming an ideal, and striving to live up to it through all opposition from within and from without. Being confident in this notion, as they have a right to be up to a certain point, their experience has not yet shown them that there is a higher quality of character still than this. They do not perceive that the highest virtue is that which issues from a nature so congenial that it has no opposition to contend with from within, does not suffer from weakness, or doubt, or disgust, but is more of a taste than a principle. It is, in fact, the flight of genius,—a steady, prolonged, and effectual flight in free space, instead of a toilsome and stumbling progress through the straight gate and by the narrow way. Constitutional nobleness is a great stumbling-block in the path of youthful moralising: but, as the fact cannot be got rid of, it is wise and profitable to study it; and a stronger illustration of it can hardly be conceived than John Howard.

In his case another disturbance to ordinary associations arose. Our fathers had read his books, and found them full of plain sense and business-like detail; and they brought up their children to marvel at the union in one man of a passionate concern for the miserable with so eminently practical an ability to help them. Some years ago, when we had made up our conception of him as a dignified and reserved sympathiser with the miserable, always at work on their behalf, but with a reticence due to the very strength of his feelings, we were confounded by the appearance of a book which threw our whole conception into confusion. The common practice had been followed of publishing such facts only of the great man as suited the taste of his friends or his biographers; and when the time came for the whole to be known, the mischief of such partial disclosures became painfully apparent. The case somewhat resembled that of Doddridge. Orton's "Life of Doddridge,"—one of the falsest books ever put together, and not the less for every portion of it perhaps being true,—had for many years wrought powerfully, and often most mischievously, on the piously disposed youth of the kingdom. They strove to emulate the saint of that book,—a man living under their own circumstances, and therefore a pattern for them: none of them could possibly succeed, for no such Doddridge could have lived: and some died young, some went into lunatic asylums; and no doubt many must have turned away altogether in despair from a devout life before they grew old enough to see that the book could not be true, and that it was in no sense good for guidance. In the midst of all this, about five-and-thirty years ago, a relative of Doddridge's published his correspondence, on a different principle of selection from Orton's. We were presented with plenty of love-

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letters, plenty of fun and gaiety, plenty of foibles, and of simplicity and natural grace and secular sense. The horror of the religious world was extreme; and the editor was denounced as the enemy of piety and sanctity. He was in fact a benefactor to multitudes by his courage in substituting the portrait of the genuine Christian minister, with his practicable devoutness and his human qualities, for the ghostly image which had before scared or deluded so many. Much the same effect was produced by the publication of Howard's Diaries and Correspondence, some years since. It then appeared, not only that Howard could not write grammar, or express himself on paper better than any scullion, but that he was in the habit of religious raving, to an extent irreconcileable with any previous conception of his reserved and dignified bearing. It is better to know the truth than to misapprehend the man; and in this case the disclosures were important, as letting us into the miseries of his life, strengthening our sympathy with him, and enabling us to deal with the one grave charge against his character,—that of cruelty to his only child. The imputation is false; but it was sure to arise out of the mystery in which the life and the mind of the man were at first shrouded by those who professed to put us in possession of them. The true and permanent impression of the man is different from that given to our fathers, nearer to Howard's day; and we may be thankful that all mystery is cleared away before it is too late. The editor of his Diaries does not deserve our thanks in the same way that Doddridge's relative did. It was unnecessary, gross, and even cruel, to publish MSS. which make the reader blush and groan over the great man's educational deficiencies and spiritual conflicts. The book is in many ways objectionable; but, painful as it is, it has been the occasion of our learning to understand the character of one of the purest of men, and one of the greatest of the apostles of humanity.

John Howard's father ought, as it seems to us, to have educated his son better. He was a rich London tradesman; and, unless the boy could not learn, which there is no reason to suppose, it was very strange that he should be sent out into life with a handsome fortune, and without the ability to write a letter with common propriety. His father meant him to be a grocer; but before John's apprenticeship was over, his father was dead, he had bought up the remainder of his term, and had the world before him, with plenty of money with which to enjoy it. He first travelled for the sake of his health, and then got his earliest glimpses of life on the continent, which he was to explore so thoroughly. On his return, his eccentricity soon showed itself. He lived in lodgings at Stoke Newington; and his landlady, a woman old enough to be his mother, nursed him in illness and took good care of him. The young man's tender conscience was perplexed by such a debt of gratitude as he owed; and he satisfied his sense of duty by offering her all he had. She married him, and by that act certainly loses our respect. She died three years after. At every turn of Howard's life he appears keenly looking out for human suffering, from an urgent impulse to relieve it; and we see him, in 1756, when he was about thirty, starting for Lisbon, with the view of doing what he could to alleviate the miseries left by the earthquake. He did not get to Lisbon. He got instead within view of his life's work, though he was unconscious of it, as men are in the real crises of their lives. He was captured by a French privateer, and set ashore at Brest. Howard was a prisoner; and in the interior of France he first made acquaintance with that condition of life. It was not for long. There must have been somewhere a just and enlightened reliance on his honour. He came home on parole, pledged to return if a suitable exchange could not be obtained from our government. It was obtained; and then Howard entered upon the seven years which he always afterwards looked back upon as a term of heavenly rest amidst the conflicts and sorrows of life. He married a woman whom he loved with his whole soul, and who deserved such love. Under no circumstances could he brook the delays and impediments to action which arise from conflicts of will and opinions. He had to bear more of this than most people when he came to deal with great men and governments; but he guarded against it within the sphere of his own influence. He obtained a promise from his wife before marriage that, whenever their views and wishes differed, his will was to rule; and she faithfully observed the engagement. They lived on his estate at Cardington, in Bedfordshire; and they were a blessing to their neighbourhood. They opened schools, built good cottages, and made war with bad ones, and took charge of all the sickly and feeble people round them. Howard gardened a great deal; and in the early morning, when his spade was heard, a fine cabbage or two or a loaf of bread would fly over the wall just when somebody who was glad of such help was passing along the road. Howard rebuilt his house, planted his land, and lived like a domestic country gentleman till his home was rendered suddenly desolate. His wife died in giving birth to their only child,—the miserable son whose wretched lot darkened his latter days.

For a few years he remained at Cardington, for the child's sake. He was High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1773; and then he saw in the prisons of his own county what reminded him of his French prison and the sufferers he saw there. He denounced to the magistrates the abuses and bad government of their gaols, and urged certain reforms. They did not see why they should begin, and doubted of every scheme suggested: so Howard went to one county gaol after another, in search of specimens of good management: and thus he became a visitor of prisons. He had seventeen years before him before he should sacrifice his life to his object: and it did not take long now for his object to engross him wholly.

It did not make him narrow or shallow, as a philanthropic pursuit is apt to do. He went to work on a wide range, not merely measuring cells, and calculating cubic feet of air, and weighing the diet of prisoners. He attended with all possible earnestness to all details that he could reach

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which bore upon the condition of prisons and prisoners;—the damp, the dirt, the closeness, the sickness, the revolting food; but he looked abroad over the whole field, while neglecting no detail. His books show how closely he could attend to the smallest particulars which involve health of body or mind: but he studied lazarettos as closely as gaols, and investigated epidemics as zealously as the damps of dungeons.

This was the kind of work he did for the rest of his life. He chose to see everything for himself; and all bolts and bars gave way before his power of will. He commanded Emperors, when it was necessary to put forth his powers of command, to show him the iniquities of their prisons; and, sooner or later, he saw them all. He was down among the damps and stagnant puddles, far below the ground, hunting out the rats and handling the chains, and scraping the mould off the walls, on one day; and on the next, he was looking King or Kaiser full in the face in palaces, rebuking him for the cruelty of neglect, or for faithlessness to promises. At one time, when he turned his back and walked off indignant, and Emperor and Empress ran after him to the stair-head to call him back, he would not be pacified,—knowing that it was best for the prisoners that he should not. At another time he was equally stern with disorderly or dissolute convicts, who made their prison more of a hell than it need be. At other times he was spending days among fever patients, helping them with his own hands, giving them medicines, throwing away dirty bedding, standing over them to see their persons washed, and, when they were dying, wiping away the death-damps from their faces. The filth of prisons in those days was something worse than we ever see or hear of. The vermin, the stench, the vile infections, the cold which mortified the limbs or the close heat which fevered the brain; the horrible food, the brutal talk, the foul language, the ferocious passions of the place,—all these Howard went through, and in a manner lived in, as if they were a matter of course,—a puddle, or a bit of broken pavement in the way to his daily business.

At the outset of his course, he had laid his facts before the House of Commons, and had obtained some beginnings of reform. He made several long journeys on the Continent, with the double object of getting things mended there when possible, and of bringing home information for the English public: and, as soon as an opening of leisure offered, he included hospitals in his search and his reports. The character of his mind and his mission is shown with special clearness in one of his enterprises five years before his death. He was going into such danger that he chose to go alone. He denied himself the comfort of his servant's attendance,—which was usually indispensable in his case. The state of his clothes was enough to demand that attendance, without considering the value of his time. But he was going into the midst of the plague at Smyrna, in order to get into the lazzaretto at Venice, and learn by experience what the strictest quarantine was like. He came safe out of this venture, and published the facts of foreign quarantine.

It is quite true, and it ought to be freely admitted as truth, that by this time Howard could not occupy himself in anything but these researches, and the ministrations to which they led. It is a matter of old remark that he saw nothing but prisons and hospitals wherever he went. There could be nothing at Rome or Moscow, nothing perhaps in Egypt or Jerusalem, if he had gone there, which could interpose fresh thoughts in the accustomed train. He saw no pictures in Italian cities, scarcely looked up at the churches, and could give no account of the lions when he came home. This has been treated as Vandalism, and as narrowness, from his own day to this; and I remember, by the sensations of my own youth, the sort of shock which the fact occasions to students at that time of life. But the fact was simply a necessary one. What would an artist or an antiquarian think of an invitation, offered in the Vatican or on the Nile, to give up hours or days to an inquiry into the condition of the Pope's or the Viceroy's gaols? No man could give his mind to both these classes of objects at the same time; and the enthusiasts of either must have patience with the followers of the other. It should be remembered, too, that Howard was an uneducated, or, at least, an illiterate man. He did not meddle with other people's tastes, and did not want to spoil their pleasure; but he had his own business to do, and it was as much as he could undertake.

Still, it was, as it ever must be, a misfortune to be interested in an exclusive pursuit. It is the tax paid by great men for the honour and blessing of rendering great service: but it is a grave and pernicious tax. Howard once endeavoured to enter parliament, of course to promote his reforms. He and his friend Whitbread stood together; and one wonders what would have been the result if, as only one was to get in, Howard had been the one. He could hardly have found himself in a congenial scene there, accustomed as he was to an undisputed prerogative of will; and he had abundant occupation outside. But it might have somewhat slackened the tension of his mind. As it was, we see him at length at that painful pass which he was sure to arrive at,—of being restless, unable to adopt new objects, and yet finding no immediate means of furthering the old one. His first biographer, who knew him well, says that Howard had no special object in one of his latter journeys; but that he was habituated to continental research, and had become unable to rest long at home; so that he went forth for the chance of what might turn up in his way. This used to be another shock to young readers; but, besides that they were inexperienced in the habits of the mind, they were unaware, as all the world then was, of the occasion that Howard had for uneasiness in his home, and desire to get away from it.

His only child, who seems to have been odd from his infancy, had been early led astray by a trusted person, and had sunk into dissoluteness in his very boyhood, and under his father's very eyes, during his visits to his home. The wretched boy became hopelessly insane; and this frightful relic of his happy marriage scared the heart-stricken widower from his home and country. He

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is hardly likely to have been a particularly genial companion for a child: but he was full of domestic affections, as well as of general benevolence; and no enlightened reader of human character will have ever believed in the once-current stories of Howard's cruelties to his boy. His ascetic piety may have made him strict; and his occupied mind may have made him too grave a companion for his motherless child; but his habitual justice and sympathy must have secured to his son a treatment of a properly fatherly kind. All was over now, however, and he went forth, eager to find in a further search for abuses and miseries which could be relieved, a refuge from personal griefs which were incurable.

Long before we had any special interest in the Crimea, its scenery and that of the neighbouring provinces was very interesting to many of us from Howard's life having closed there. To me, his has always appeared a dreary death. After publishing his last work on prisons in 1789, he set out on an eastern journey, the object of which was never clear to his friends. He meant to go to Turkey again, but by way of Russia. From the summer to the winter had been thus occupied; and when Christmas came he was on the shores of the Black Sea. At Cherson he was unwell,—then ill,—then showing no signs of rallying, and convinced that he should die. There seemed no sufficient reason for despondency. It was low fever. He said he had caught it from a lady for whom he was asked to prescribe: but it might be easily accounted for. The anguish of the case to his servant and to the few who were about him, was that his ascetic mode of living now left him no chance. He was a vegetarian, and an ascetic one; and he lived so low that there was no reducing his diet in fever. It is a mournful image,—that of Howard cowering over the stove, so far from home, and in a land so barbaric, and so thoroughly unlike home. There he sank, dying on the 20th of January, 1790; and near Cherson he lies buried,—his grave being preserved and honoured by the Russians, from that day to this. We had read of the little pillar raised over his remains, and had thought of it as of a grave in the wilderness; but some of our officers, during the Crimean war, or after the peace, went to Cherson, found the place, and seem now to have brought us nearer to the death-bed and tomb of our apostle of the prisoners.

When Howard died, there was a lively child amusing herself at Norwich, with little notion that she was destined to any serious achievement in life; and of all wild dreams it would have seemed the wildest that that gay little Quaker girl,—Quaker by courtesy,—should be the successor of the absorbed, devoted, melancholy old man who was dying on the shores of the Black Sea. Three and twenty years were to pass first. Elizabeth Gurney was to make a full trial of the vanities and pleasures of the world before she turned to the contemplation of prisons. While she was dancing at balls, and appearing gaily dressed in conspicuous seats at concerts, and pacing through Norwich streets in showy riding-habit and scarlet boots (the joke of her after years), Howard's efforts were operating more or less, after his death, in improving our prisons. But the process flagged; and while Elizabeth, at twenty, was marrying Mr. Fry, and afterwards living for nine years in the heart of London, bringing up her young family, and becoming a stricter and stricter Quaker, her future work was accumulating only too surely and rapidly.

It was in 1813, when she was three-and-thirty, that she first saw Newgate. The spectacle of three hundred women—and such women—crowded together, with swarms of their children, in dirt, idleness, and noise, amidst constant clamour and quarrelling, was enough to send anybody home impressed and appalled. The difference between Mrs. Fry and other women was that she immediately imagined she could do something to mitigate the horror. It was winter-time, the cold was severe, and many of the women were lodged on the floor, without sufficient covering. She began with making them more comfortable; and her gifts and her visits together presently improved their manners. They were glad to see her, and were less noisy and rude in her presence. By degrees, she taught them, and she employed a few who were willing. I can remember something of the way in which this was received in society. Gentlemen after dinner agreed that there was something very wild in such projects; they admired the lady's courage, but there were many ways of doing good—as no one could tell better than the Gurneys—which were safe and well explored; and this eccentricity was a pity. The ladies were more eager, and spoke more strongly. A woman ought to have enough to do at home; it would turn out that she neglected her daughters, and displeased Mr. Fry; there was something offensive in such parade of philanthropy; and so on. In three or four years, however, the Governor of Newgate and the Sheriffs of London were so far won, that they gave her liberty to do what she could in the prison, though they could not assist her. When there was a committee of ladies at work, and a daily school in the prison, and a manufacture established, opposition dropped into silence, or nothing worse was heard than a hope that Mr. and the Misses Fry would be no worse. After what I had heard of the first day's adventures—the crowding upon this new visitor, the inconceivable impudence, the clamour, the frightful turmoil—which the jailor was certain would drive away the decorous and dignified lady for ever—I certainly found the state of things, some years later, very impressive. I was struck with the air of reality in the intercourse between the women and their benefactress. Her quiet, cheerful good sense and sincerity seemed to extinguish cant, as by necessity. Her manner was calm and cool, and her air business-like. They had their applications ready, and she made brief replies. They were clean and quiet, and many of them diligent at their sewing. It was difficult to believe, in looking round upon them, that all these women had committed some crime, and were in an outcast condition, and knew themselves to be so. One class of them enjoyed particular notice from Mrs. Fry—a large party under sentence of transportation, and on the point of being shipped for Sydney. They were seated on

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benches, row behind row; and Mrs. Fry and I, and a clergyman who accompanied us, were at a table in front. Mrs. Fry's selection of a chapter rather surprised us. She took a chapter of prophecy, and expounded it in a way which I believe must have been utterly incomprehensible to her class of hearers; but when she passed from exposition to exhortation, her address was altogether admirable. She cheerfully pointed out, for those who wished to discharge a duty and cherish in themselves a grace, the opportunities that would occur on board ship of accommodating and comforting one another, and contributing to the peace and cheerfulness of the voyage, and the good repute of the company. The contrast between the wild, rambling, mystical treatment of a topic quite inaccessible to the minds of her special class of hearers and the excellent sense of her direct address struck me very much. She finally prayed —a short plain prayer in her singular intonation— and she and those unhappy women parted for ever. Her manner, as cool to the women as it was kind, her dignified appearance, and her business-like bearing, were exactly fitted to impress them. Any sort of agitation in her would have been fatal to her work. Her Memoirs show what her excitements were, and what she did with her sensibilities. When I joined her that morning in Newgate she was well inured to the scene; she could not have so much trouble with her emotions as at first, and she certainly wore the very best countenance and manner that could be imagined for the benefit of her ungainly scholars.

Like Howard, she impressed her facts and her aims on Ministers and Parliaments. Her plans were adopted in prison after prison; and if, after Howard's time, the fearful jail-fever and other extreme abominations disappeared, there has been also a marked advance, in consequence of Mrs. Fry's efforts, in the classification of prisoners, and in the provision made for their instruction and employment. If it should prove true, as some apprehend, that a more hardy treatment of criminals, in some pet prisons, would be better for the men themselves, it should always be remembered that neither Howard nor Mrs. Fry ever tended to any excess of consideration. Their aims were sober, their schemes were practical, and, as far as we know, their spirit and manner chastened and calm in their dealings with their charge. In these respects, as well as in their originality, their devotedness, and their apt ability for their special object, we would fain regard them as representative philanthropists.

No character can be more marked and distinctive than that of the man who has, for half my life, appeared to me the greatest social reformer on record; and if his greatness makes us doubt his Representative quality at this day, it may not prevent his being one of a class hereafter. If William Lloyd Garrison has been heard of only as an abolitionist, it may easily be considered strange that such eminence should be assigned him. It is so easy to be an abolitionist, we are now accustomed to think: so many of us have always been abolitionists! And, when it was more difficult,— in the days when the West India merchants at Liverpool tried to hustle Clarkson into the dock, —there were still several men in England who devoted themselves to the cause of the negro, and achieved his emancipation. Why set Garrison so high above these men, and their fellow-labourers in France and elsewhere?

The question may be best answered by the facts of Garrison's career. Not even that kind of evidence,—nothing short of a study of the polity and people of the United States on the spot,—can make it understood in Europe how wide the difference is between testifying and operating against slavery in its presence and from a distance. Garrison began the crusade; and he has brought it to the revolutionary point which it was always certain it must reach and pass before the echoes of the great man's first shout could die away. Negro slavery is now virtually doomed. It had implicated with itself the liberties of every white man, woman, and child, on American soil. All were fast going down together into political depravity and social barbarism when Garrison arose, to avert, thus far, a servile war by becoming (without intending it) the ideal Moses of the bondmen, and by raising the general conscience against the national sin, till the right and wrong came to open conflict, as we see them now. We may have been abolitionists all our lives in one way; but this is quite another.

When Garrison was young, there were no abolitionists in his country. There were plenty of people who found the inconvenience, and saw the evils of slavery; but nobody thought of putting an end to it. The now notorious Colonisation Society had canted a good deal about getting rid of it by getting rid of the negroes altogether, in course of time: but that society was the device and the property of slave-holders, and it was instituted for the perpetuation of slavery. Such was the state of things when Garrison was reaching the years of discretion.

I, for one, and doubtless many others, first heard of him from the agent of the Colonisation Society, Elliott Cresson, who complained wherever he went of the hostility of William Lloyd Garrison, who was lecturing against the Society and its agents, all over England. It was natural to suppose this adverse lecturer to be a coarse, abusive sort of adventurer, who had ends of his own to serve by thwarting the friends of the negro. Till the nature of Cresson's enterprise was understood, such was the impression about Garrison in England,—to a great extent; as it is in the Southern States of America to this day. It was in 1832 that the two Americans were lecturing in mutual opposition. I went to the United States in 1834; and it was not till the next year that I had any idea at all of the character, the views and the aims of the man who will be fully treated of in history as having saved the soul of his country, and dared the breaking up of the Union in order to do so.

It was in 1829 that Garrison first began to know himself in the character in which he was to pass his life. He was then a youth, obtaining a meagre education at a little country college. He had always disliked the treatment of the negroes, and reprobated their position, both as slaves in the South and as an oppressed and insulted ele-

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ment of society in the North. At that college he heard of the Colonisation Society, and was taken in, like most other people, by its professions on behalf of the negroes. He hoped to work under the Society for the redemption of the people of colour, and went down to Baltimore to see about it. His sagacity, which has always seemed to be exalted by his enthusiasm, soon discovered the cheat; and when he had satisfied himself, he began his long course of exposure of all cheats and hypocrisies which bear upon the condition of the negro race. He knew that a New England merchant had freighted a vessel in his own port with slaves,—illegally, of course,—for the New Orleans market. Garrison published the facts in a newspaper. He was tried for libel, and sentenced to a fine of 1,000 dollars, and to imprisonment till it should be paid,—he having no money, nor prospect of any. This treatment of a young man of high character created some sensation. Much sympathy was shown him; and an entire stranger, Mr. Arthur Tappan, a wealthy merchant of New York, paid his fine.

On issuing from his prison, Garrison lectured on the abolition of slavery, finding some liberty of speech in New York, but little prospect of it in Boston. As Boston wanted him most, there he went. He and two or three friends, as poor and humble as himself, determined that slavery should be abolished. They did not see how; but it should be done. Many a night and early morning did Garrison and one of these friends walk under the trees on Boston Common, anxiously consulting about what could be done. He and another lived in a garret, having laid out their earnings on a press and some old type, and devoted their overtime to issuing "The Liberator." They wrote it and worked it off themselves,—Garrison being able to put his articles into type without the delay of writing them. They lived on bread and water usually; and when the paper sold particularly well, they treated themselves to a bowl of milk. Excellent as all this is, it is nothing uncommon. The distinctive character of the man appears in his opening article of his first number, which appeared on New Year's Day, 1831. Some words in that "Address to the Public" have stirred whole societies of men in Europe,—have kept the healthy and happy awake all night, and permanently affected the temper and aims of young men's lives in England as well as in States where they might seem to be more wanted. Among the things he then and there said are these:

"I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead. It is pretended that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures. The charge is not true. On this question my influence, humble as it is, is felt at this moment to a considerable extent: and it shall be felt in coming years—not perniciously but beneficially: not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear testimony that I was right."

Few men speak in this way; and in smooth and decorous companies it was taken for granted that the man must be conceited (that is always the first charge), violent, impracticable, and so forth. Such genteel persons, who abhorred any serious mention of such a low sort of people as the negroes, were struck, about that time, with a portrait, without a name, which appeared in printshop windows, representing a singularly attractive countenance,—serene as it was vital,—happy as it was devout. One at least bought it, and hung it up as the ideal of an apostle, till startled by discovering that it was Garrison's portrait. On steam-boats, in stage-coaches, and wherever he went, and his voice was allowed to be heard, he made a deep impression; so that many who met him accidentally, and who would have gone a long way round to avoid him, think him the most delightful social companion they have ever met with. They have been seen looking after him with puzzled faces as he walked away, unable to believe that he could be the terrible agitator, the bloody revolutionist, the conspirator leagued with slaves on the one hand, and the enemy of mankind on the other. He was so fiercely avoided that few saw him singing over his work, or frolicking with his children, or leading the festivities at a pic-nic; but those who have known him best and longest see best how natural such innocent gaiety is in a man of the purest life, the most trusting spirit, and the most thorough carelessness of self that they have ever known.

All about blood and conspiracy and revolutionary desires is simply nonsense. He is a non-resistant: he has never had any sort of correspondence with the slaves; he has published all his proceedings for thirty years: and he has wholly abstained from political action, even to the exercise of the suffrage. From the first year of the publication of "The Liberator," negro insurrections entirely ceased, after having occurred, on an average, monthly for a long course of years. In 1856, the Southern leaders excited the slaves in certain districts to conspiracy (or they say they did) by imprudent public speaking about Col. Fremont's election: but from 1831 to that date, there had been a complete cessation of negro risings. It is true, the depressed people soon learned to worship Garrison's name as a Deliverer who was to lead them out of bondage: but this was from the hatred and fear with which their masters spoke of him, and not from any communication with him. His object was to move the conscience and heart of society, and not to spend time and effort in smaller enterprises; and to this aim he has devoted the last thirty years of his life. "*I will be heard*," he said. He has been heard. Present evils and dangers might have been escaped if he had been listened to from the first. He always said what must happen if wrong were preferred to right. Wrong was preferred to right: the pain and danger have come: but meantime, Garrison and the band of abolitionists who have faithfully helped him in his work, and done much of their own, have so far prepared the general mind and conscience for the existing crisis that we

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may hope for a glad new birth for the republic;—for the Free States first, and for the rest when they also shall have thrown off their curse.

On the Statute-book of Georgia stands, at this day, an enactment of the Legislature by which a reward of 5,000 dollars is offered to any person or persons who shall bring in the head of William Lloyd Garrison. When this was duly communicated to Massachusetts, the authorities asked one another, "Who is William Lloyd Garrison?" Nobody knew; and when inquiry was made, it was found that he was a poor young printer, living in a garret on lower than prison fare. The Governor of Georgia was right, however, in alarming the Legislature, though their procedure might be imprudent. It was a right instinct which showed him that slavery was doomed if a man was allowed to speak who had declared that he would be heard. In time, Boston took the southern Governor's view; and Garrison was hauled through the streets, with a halter round his neck, towards a hot tarkettle, by gentlemen who did not choose their southern trade to be embarrassed by the discussion of any questions that the South did not like. A stalwart truckman pushed the victim into the gaol, and saved him for that time. I saw that aristocratic mob from a stage-coach window, and was told that it was a press of merchants to the post-office,—it being foreign post day. This looked like shame at the outrage: but next day I heard two eminent divines,—professors of divinity and of moral philosophy at the two first universities in the country,—say, as I sat between them at dinner, that there was no harm in the mob,—that they had merely meant to intimate that they would not allow a troublesome neighbour to live beside them. Such was the society which Garrison had to bring back to the first principles of liberty!

This was in 1835. For many years this illustrious citizen could scarcely walk the streets of his own town without insult, or go in any direction without danger: but that kind of probation has long been over. In his candour and courage, he early adopted the singular practice of publishing, in the first columns of his newspaper, all the censures of himself and his object, in all quarters, which came in his way. People had only to look into his own paper to see the worst that could be said of him. Thus he placed the material for judging of the cause and himself before the community; and the result has been the success that we are now witnessing. I was much impressed by an incident of those early days, which recent events have vividly recalled. Three ladies in Dr. Channing's drawing-room had, in a mocking spirit, drawn out a visitor who was an abolitionist, and were amused at her honest replies to their questions as to the proceedings of Garrison and his coadjutors,—and especially Mrs. Chapman. I was admiring the lady's good humour under the bursts of laughter of her interrogators when Dr. Channing spoiled the sport. He was reading the newspaper by the fire, with his back to the gossips. He turned his head, and said, in the tone of quiet sternness which he could use on great occasions,—"You may laugh now; but there is more to come. It is easy to sit at home, and laugh at great deeds;—easier than to go abroad and do them." There was a dead pause, and he resumed his newspaper. Before he was in his grave, I believe, the tide had turned. For many years Garrison has been habituated to honour, deference, and admiration. It makes little difference to him, except that his work goes on faster. He could hardly live without love; but everybody that is near him has always loved him. As for the rest, he never quailed before menace and insult, though he suffered from them, as a man of keen sensibility must; and he can never be spoiled by ease and praise. Nothing has changed him. He and his whole band have always been superior to their neighbours in sagacity, in comprehension of mind, in candour, and capacity to learn. The abolitionists are the best political philosophers, the best political economists, the best students of society in every way that the community contains. Each one of them must have learned and unlearned much in the thirty years of Garrison's career: but the quality of the man is the same as ever. He is like a child, and as like an apostle now as in his first manhood; and he is still like a bridegroom in his home, with all his elderly wisdom.

We are looking at him, however, as a reformer: and I repeat that, looking at the length, and the steadfastness, and the sufferings, and the ultimate magnitude of the results, of his course, it seems to me to be the greatest and highest ever fulfilled by any reformer of any social institution whatever. Garrison is not yet an old man. His health has never been strong; but it seems reasonable to hope that he may live to see the abolition of slavery in America; an event which cannot be long in following upon that release of the Free States from implication with it which is the work of many brave and devoted men and women, but in which History will tell that Garrison led the way.

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

MAIDENHEAD AND CLIEFDEN.

THERE are few places on the beauteous Thames more to be admired than the neighbourhood of Maidenhead. Here the river is divested of its London impurities, and flows tranquilly past aits or little islets covered with willows in which the sedge-bird and willow-wren warble their notes of love. Banks adorned with numerous wild and pretty flowers may be seen. Here and there are scattered punts containing patient anglers trying to catch barbel or gudgeon, while young and athletic men row rapidly past in their dangerous prize wherries. Swans, now, alas!—few and far between—may occasionally be seen, and they are great ornaments in river-scenery. It is to be regretted that the small sums—formerly paid to watermen and others for the preservation of their eggs and young ones in the Maidenhead district—are now withdrawn, and they are left to their fates—a piece of economy perfectly uncalled for.

But let us pursue our course between Maidenhead and Cookham. Here as our boat is propelled against the stream, we pass Poulter's Lock, the largest lasher and perhaps the best fishing-station on the river. We hear and see the water rushing into the pool with great impetuosity, foaming and raging through the piles, near to which expert

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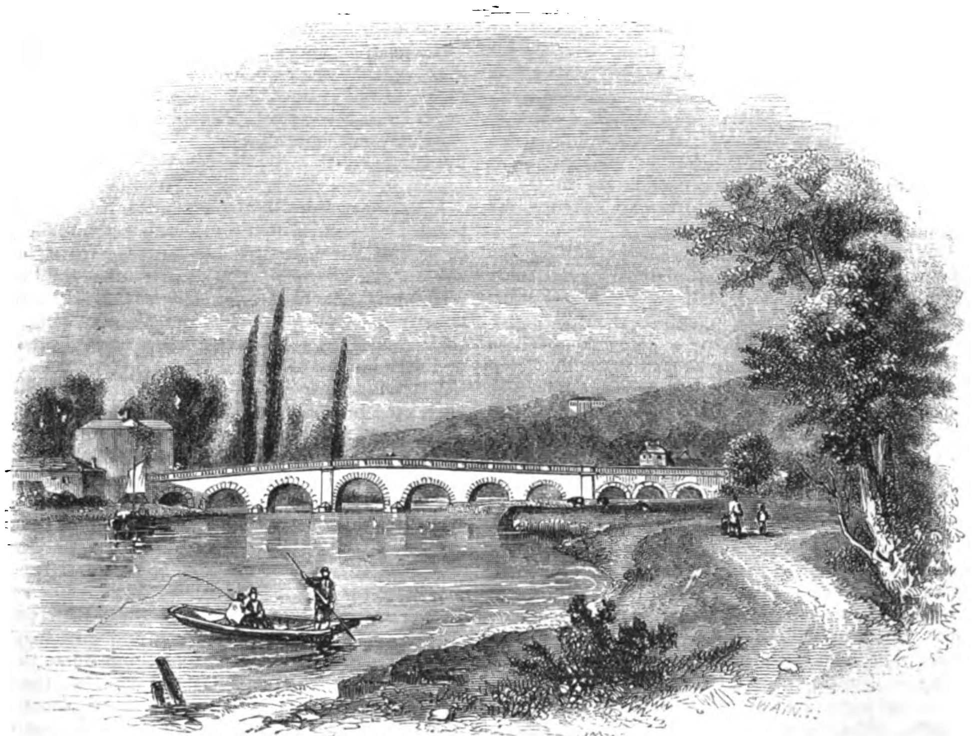
anglers are spinning for trout, for none but an expert angler has any chance of taking them here. Many, however, are caught in the season.

Leaving Poulter's Lock, the fine woods standing on a precipitous bank and attached to the residence of Mr. Grenfell, at Taplow, are passed, and then the noble mansion of the Duke of Sutherland, standing on a considerable elevation, bursts into view, surrounded by noble trees, and chalky banks peep out here and there from amongst them. Ancient yew-trees grow amidst the chalky and precipitous cliffs, and the earth from their roots having been washed away, they are left perfectly bare, matted, gnarled, and interwoven to a considerable extent. The points of these roots have, however, again penetrated the soil, many feet from the tree, and have thus afforded it nourishment. It was a curious and interesting sight, and so much so, that we were informed that when her Majesty visited Cliefden Court she was taken to see these trees.

As we approached Cliefden Court, we were landed at what are called the Springs. It is a beautiful and secluded spot, with a cottage in perfect good taste built near them. The water from the springs is so cold that no fish will live in them. They flow, winter and summer, with a considerable degree of force.

Further on, Hedsor Lodge, the seat of Lord Boston, is to be seen, and is a pretty object



Maidenhead, with Cliefden in the distance.

from the river. The grounds are in fine order, and Monks, the historian, is buried in the secluded churchyard of Hedsor.

In returning, we pass the pretty bridge of Maidenhead, with its numerous arches, and soon afterwards we see the two noble arches forming the viaduct over the Thames, and which are allowed to be the *chef d'œuvre* of Brunel, for they are said to be the largest arches built of brick in the world. Their proportions are most beautiful, and cannot fail of exciting both wonder and admiration. On a former occasion a sight met us here, which appeared to us equally unusual and interesting. Along the electric wires which pass above these fine arches, at least half a million of young sand-martins were seated, evidently congregated for their annual migration, the parent-birds having previously taken their departure. On disturbing them the martins took short flights, but immediately returned to the wires. It is a curious and interesting fact, that these newly-hatched birds should be able to take their unerring flight across wide seas to the groves of Italy and Greece; but so it is. Sand-martins roost on the willows on the aits in incredible numbers. When they have simultaneously taken their departure, scarcely one is to be seen.

But it is time to land after enjoying one of the few sunny days we had last year, and taking leave of our agreeable companion who had caught, between Maidenhead Bridge and Monkey Island, with his own rod while spinning with bleak, twenty-two pike and some perch,—a feat in angling on the Thames not often performed.

EDWARD JESSE.

MAY, 1861.

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VOLUNTEER DRILL.—AN ADJUTANT'S DIARY.—IV.

Pursopen, October 1st. — Sent the monthly return and the adjutant's diary to the Assistant Inspector, and the claim for pay and allowances to the War Office.

Came here in the afternoon to stay till Thursday. There are also three young men in the house, Cambridge pals of Tallboys, come for the shooting this week. The big wood below the house is to be beaten to-morrow, before it is disturbed by the hounds, which meet here for cub-hunting on Wednesday.

Tallboys' friends roast him on all subjects till he nearly loses his temper, particularly about his eating, in which he is very piggish. They say that at Cambridge he was always called "The herd of swine feeding;" but that they always know when he has been living for any time at his own expense, for he then dines on two cutlets, and loses flesh rapidly. Such is his dislike to paying for his own dinner, that though he hates Mr. Fairfax, and Mr. Fairfax has a great contempt for him, yet his friends say he would even dine *tête-à-tête* with his stepfather if he could have his dinner for nothing.

When Tallboys' friends have gone a little too far with him they smooth him down by flattering him about his style of following hounds. His figure, his weight, and the roundness of his thighs, all prevent him from being a horseman. There is some joke about a bootmaker in Piccadilly being obliged to have large pieces of mahogany leather specially tanned before making Tallboys a pair of tops, which even then were not large enough. In spite of all this, and in spite of being as numb with his hands as a seal, and of never riding over or through a fence, and of always going home to lunch, he likes to be flattered on his horsemanship and his eye to country. His mother keeps his servants, and as many horses as he chooses to buy; they are generally young ones—four and five years old, and he keeps them till they are six, when he sells them, without perhaps ever having been on their backs, and puts the profits into his pocket.

Towards the end of dinner I told Mr. Fairfax of my expedition to Yakerley, of the mythical state of the corps, and of the curious reason given by the policeman and his wife for not taking me into the armoury. Why could he not do so without having his tea? At first, Mr. Fairfax was as much puzzled as I had been, but he brightened up at last on my describing the exact position of the armoury, and that there were no steps or staircase up to the door, which, as the stable door was locked, was the only access to the armoury. He was delighted when he explained to me that the man did not want *his tea*, but *a stee*, which in Cowshire means a ladder. One of the footmen was also so much delighted that he went to the side-table and swallowed his napkin.

October 2nd.—Not having a licence did not shoot, but helped to beat; found it slow work looking on, and returned to lunch.

October 3rd.—The hounds met in front of the house to draw the big wood. I never saw such a ridiculous figure on the outside of a horse as Tallboys. His breeches are those in which he first hunted at Cambridge, and very tight; his hunting-cap is quite low and fits his head, looking like a velvet skull-cap with a peak; his boots (*the* boots) reach to the lower part of his calves, and cannot be pulled on any further, showing four inches of blue worsted. When everybody—mounted and on foot—had refreshed, the hounds were thrown into the wood, and there has been too-tooing and lunch going on all day. The three Cantabs and I were on foot till lunch time, when we returned, and found Tallboys asleep in the library.

October 4th.—Received orders to proceed to the School of Musketry at Hythe. A long course begins on the twelfth of the month, so there will be no more Adjutant's Diary till I come back.

Dabshott, January 22nd.—Left Hythe December 23rd, and, after a month's leave, arrived here last night, so full of lines of sight and fire, figures of merit and theoretical principles, that unless I vent myself immediately on a squad, I shall blow up.

* * * * *

[The Diary from January 22nd to March 29th is filled with visits of the adjutant to the different corps, and the difficulties he had in carrying out the Hythe system of musketry with Volunteers who could not be induced to attend when the novelty of the thing had worn off. At some of the parades as few as six rank and file were present; but by persuading the captains to forbid ball practice, except to members who had completed the prescribed course of preliminary drills, about sixty per cent. of the whole battalion, not including the corps at Yakerley which he never could see, appear to have been pushed through the course by the end of March. The weather seems to have been against out-door drills, and the Diary is very dull.]

March 30th.—Made another effort this afternoon to see the corps at Yakerley. Rain had fallen all the morning with a driving wind; but Mr. Rodds having said he would be at home and glad to see me, it would have required something worse than Cowshire weather to have stopped me. Mr. Rodds was at home, and is not a myth, but a pleasant, well-informed man of five-and-thirty, with a pretty wife and a house full of young people. There were twenty of us at lunch, which was served half hot and half cold, with spring chickens, plovers' eggs, and all sorts of delicacies, and I never passed a more agreeable afternoon. Out of doors it was raining furiously, but inside we eat, we drank, we sang songs to a piano in the hall, and we danced, till Mr. Rodds' carriage came round to take two of the young ladies to the station for the train at half-past six. I begged a seat, and the train had begun to move, when I remembered that the Yakerley corps was as much a myth to me as ever.

Easter Tuesday.—This has not been a glorious day for Dabshott, but the weather has been fine for the crowds of holiday folks who came to see the review and the rifle shooting. The train from the east brought the Cowdale and Pringle corps with their bands about eleven o'clock, Mucky Mac being at the station to receive them. Bates not being in

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uniform, but in his black satin waistcoat; the two corps were marched at once to Pursopen under Prescott, which was preferable to their getting into the public-houses of the town. The Wakups never came through the town at all, but arrived at the park, some in their own vehicles and the remainder in two omnibuses hired for the occasion. The Dabshotts mustered strong in High Street. There were about fifty members present who had not done any of the preliminary drills, but who contented themselves by attending the number of drills on the alternate Wednesdays required to make them effectives. There were several whom I had never seen on parade before, and also about eight elderly men with stomachs, who could scarcely hope to learn the drill at their time of life, and who would have been of much more use to the corps as honorary members, each at a guinea a year. The crowd was great, and Mucky Mac, in his now patched and seedy uniform, tried in vain to keep the ground clear. The Tanner was fussing, and wanted to be off; the companies were equalised, but there was a difficulty in telling them off, for some of the new members did not know how fours were formed, and one had to be taught his facings, this being his first appearance.

"Take post, the officers," said the Tanner, as if he was speaking to a brigade, and he turned to me as if he would have liked me to collect the reports, but I took post on the steps of the Town Hall.

Tallboys never goes to parade; one of the lieutenants was sick, and the commission of the other was vacant; so that there was an ensign in command of each company, and no officer to collect the reports. Having called the corps to attention the Tanner said:

"Number one, are you all present?"

"All present, sir," said the ensign.

"Number two?"

Before the second ensign could answer, Mucky Mac shouted: "All present!" saluting with his stick. "O yes, we are all present at a pudding parade."

The bitterness of the remark was in its truth. The bloom was off the uniforms, the novelty of volunteering was gone, and the men had attended drill badly during the spring, but now that there was a review of all the corps in the battalion, and prizes to be won, and what Mac called a pudding parade, every man was present, except a few who were ill in bed, or out of the town on business. The laugh being with Mac, fours were formed at once to the right, and the corps was marched to Pursopen.

The programme was that three members from each company were to compete for the rifle and other prizes at 300 and 500 yards. The shooting was to begin at one o'clock, and was expected to occupy two hours; then eating and drinking for another hour, and after that marching past and such other manœuvres as the time allowed, so as to enable the corps to return home by the regular trains at seven o'clock.

At the targets we found the two corps from the dales and the Wakups. Mac was delighted with the spinach green of the latter, and told Mr. Gayman that he would be glad to join his corps, adding that he could get as much of an old billiard cloth as would make him a suit complete.

The men who had to shoot were formed in single rank. I had taken their names, and tested the pull of their triggers, which was not to be less than six pounds, when something induced me to count them. There were fourteen men instead of eighteen. A Pringle man was found in the booth, which looked odd, as he had given me his name a few minutes before; and then it struck me that there were no men from Yakerley.

"Lor, yes!" said Mac. "Where's them Yakerleys?" The colonel proposed waiting, but as the only train which could bring them had arrived before the Dabshotts left the High Street, as they would never think of marching the distance, and as it was getting late, the shooting began. We were in the middle of the second round, when a telegram arrived from Mr. Rodds to say that his corps had missed the train, and could not be present at the review. I expect to die without seeing "them Yakerleys."

At 300 yards, Dobbs, a Pringle man, made 8 points. This was the man who aimed so steadily at my eye the first time I saw the Pringle corps, and also the very man who was found in the booth. Two others made 5 points. One was a Dabshott, and the other was a slight boy, named Starkie, from Cowdale, apparently fourteen years of age, but in the Volunteers everybody is eighteen, at least. The rifle was rather too much for him, but he had a good position, and fired quick, which was an advantage to-day, for the wind was blowing in gusts across the range. There were two or three scores of four, and the others diminished down to nothing. It was any odds on Dobbs; but it is curious to see how a man will vary with a rifle at two distances on the same day. Dobbs made no score in the first four rounds at 500 yards. He then examined his sights, rubbed out the barrel with dry tow, and was sure it was nearer six hundred yards than five. Starkie had scored two in the four rounds, and was one behind Dobbs, who in the last round made an outer, and rose up smiling. It was the lad's turn. He knelt down, took a deliberate look at the target, fired at once, and stood up at the shoulder. We could hear the bullet strike the target. The red flag was hoisted, and then the three men in the markers' butt were to be seen with their heads together, looking closely at the edge of the centre. Then they ran back to the mantlet, down went the red flag and up went the blue. It was a tie.

The crowd, which all along had been rather unruly, now formed a lane almost up to the target, and some time was lost in putting them back. The old soldier was cool, but the suspense was too much for the boy. His face was fallen and his mouth screwed up. In the first round of shooting off the tie, they both missed. In the second Starkie fired first, and it was almost painful to see the boy's eager face, as, after firing, he bent forward on both knees with his ear to the ground to catch the ring of the bullet on the target. My sympathy was with him, as the representative of the best-drilled corps in the battalion, and I wanted *position* to win. But he missed.

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"Keep back there!" said Mucky Mac to the crowd. And coming close to me as Dobbs was kneeling, he whispered, "Try his trigger." Dobbs scored an outer. As he was turning away I took hold of his rifle, and, on putting the test to the trigger, I found the pull was a little over 2lbs.

The fact, without a doubt, was that as soon as Dobbs saw me trying the triggers, he had slipped away to the booth, from which he meant to emerge as soon as the process was over. He tried to get up a wrangle, but the Colonel promptly decided that he was disqualified, and the rifle was given to Starkie. The other prizes, which were in money, were won by another Cowdale and a Wakup. The practice was bad. The wind was strong, and the men were nervous before the crowd, several of them firing without raising the flaps of their sights, of which they were too jealous of one another to give a hint. The Dabshotts were nowhere. Contrary to my wishes, the six chosen to compete had had as much ball practice as they liked; the worst thing they could have had, for if a man has a bad habit, ball practice makes it permanent. The Tanner agreed with me, but he gave way to the men.

There was a dinner in the booth in the usual Pursopen style. Mrs. Fairfax thought of having lunch for the officers and her friends in the house; but I persuaded her to give a good cold dinner with ale in the booth, of which she and her friends might partake with the battalion. In the ranks of the Wakups there were several gentlemen of good standing who were personal friends of Mr. Fairfax, and if any of them were invited to the house, offence might be given to those who were not. So we all dined in the booth. After which a line was formed, the ranks were opened, and the battalion presented arms. Then the corps were wheeled into open column for marching past, the band of each corps being in front of it. It never would have done to have had four bands with four big drums playing four tunes in the marching past line. After a deal of persuasion, the four bands were drawn up in a line two deep, facing Mrs. Fairfax's carriage. There was a difficulty here, as each band wished to take up its own march in turn on the approach of its corps. As three of the corps consisted of one company each, only a few bars of a march could be played before it was time to begin with the next. There was much more jealousy among the bands than among the men at the target, and no one bandmaster would play under the leadership of any other. It was by taking on myself to say that they should not play at all, which would have been a great disappointment, unless as I directed, that they were induced to play in several keys a local air called "the Cowshire Heifer," which was the only one they all knew, under the German bandmaster of the Wakups. There was beer in three of the big drums, but they all joined, and the crash was amazing. The five companies got round the flags in quick and slow time, cheered by their partisans who had come from all parts, and at six o'clock the last section was outside the gate on its road home.

April 8th.—Dined at Pursopen yesterday, and there was one at the table whom I was not to see alive again.

This morning there were some papers for signature, and I walked to Pursopen. As I turned through the gateway with the roaring lions, Doctor Dearden's four-wheeled dog-cart left the house, and I waited till he reached me.

"Where are you going?"

"To the house."

"Whom do you wish to see?"

"Anybody."

This was correct—for the Colonel's signature.

"You will not see Mr. Fairfax or the young gentleman. Mrs. Fairfax was taken ill last night, and," looking at his watch, "has been dead just twenty minutes. You had better return with me," which I did.

About a quarter of a mile from home he said:

"I have earned my last fee in that house."

"Indeed!"

"And you have eaten your last *vol-au-vent.*"

"Indeed!"

"The property goes to Tallboys at once; Mr. Fairfax has a life interest in it of twelve hundred a-year, and he will probably not return to the house after the funeral on Saturday; the climate here is not suited for roses."

"Indeed!"

"The young gentleman is not likely to entertain much."

And the doctor looked at me over his spectacles as if he was telling me something which might possibly be known to me.

"Indeed!"

Wrote to Bates that he was not to expect me at Pringle on Saturday, in consequence of Mrs. Fairfax's funeral.

April 9th.—Accepted an invitation to the funeral.

There must be something radically wrong in my idiosyncracy, for I am always more cheerful—mentally only, of course,—at a funeral than at a wedding. To me the latter is a doleful occasion, at which no one ever seems really happy under less than a bottle of champagne. The bride is white all over, except her eyes; the man looks doubtful, there is not even a forced smile in the whole party, and there are hot scalding tears running into the lukewarm soup of Paterfamilias, the first which have been seen since he was flogged at Eton. Having been brought up with a cousin much older than myself, whose father lived to ninety, the idea was early instilled into me that at the death of every one somebody must come into a kingdom—a little kingdom perhaps, but still a kingdom. I was in the same carriage with my cousin at the old man's funeral, and ever afterwards I knew the meaning of the expression of a smiling face in a mourning-coach.

April 10th.—Received the following note from Bates:

PRINGLE, *3rd April*, 1861.

DEAR SIR,—Yours to hand. I regret that you cannot be at Pringle as per agreement. But, as I wish to speak to you, I shall esteem it a favour if you will be at the Dabshott station on the arrival of the train from this, at 11.33. Yours obliged,

B. BATES.

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April 10th.—Bates arrived by the train as per letter. The mill hands at Pringle and the neighbourhood are in rather an unsettled state, and as he does not know what turn affairs may take, he wants to get the rifles of his corps out of their hands into an armoury; but, not knowing how to set about it, he came to consult me, which would look better than my going to see him at Pringle. He has cleared out a room behind his office, but has not provided racks or informed the men of his intentions, for he thinks it probable they will not bring their rifles into store, but that they will give a sort of passive resistance if he orders them to do so. The hands have not the very best feeling towards their employers, and they are also in possession of plenty of ammunition. He is not a little alarmed, and wants to know what he is to do.

I suggested that he should issue an order, and then summons any refractory members before the magistrates, and I pointed out the penalties of fine and imprisonment in the Act; but he thought the process too slow.

"Are the men at work?"

"Most of them."

"And there are none on strike?"

"Not yet."

"Then have a parade on Saturday."

"Very few will come."

"Give prizes for the best shots at two ranges."

"Perhaps thirty of the best will attend."

"Make it a pudding parade."

"A what?"

"Cold beef and beer."

"I see; catch 'em like flies."

"After firing, read to them the War Office circular of January 7th, 1861, about keeping rifles in an armoury as if it had just been received; tell the men you have a room ready, and before they have time to think, give 'fours right—quick march.'" And, finishing the sentence, he said, "And pop the arms under lock and key before the cold beef."

"Yes, *full* or not," and he jumped into a train just starting for Pringle.

April 13th.—Attended poor Mrs. Fairfax's funeral, which was a grand affair, the first of the carriages being at the church before the last left the house. I was in a coach with two surgeons and a man from London, who, when the funeral was over, hoped I would hear the will read. This I declined, but on his saying it was the wish of Mr. Fairfax, I returned to the house. There was an early dinner in the chef's best style, and then we went into the library. The will was short; she had nearly everything at her own disposal, and she left all to her son, with the exception of a few small legacies.

Mankind may be a mathematical problem in will-making as in everything else; so many in every ten millions leave their goods to one set of relations to spite another; it is known to a decimal how many leave all to building churches to spite everybody; and there are thirty-two thousand five hundred and seventy-five who, not being able to carry off gold in their coffins as a sportsman sometimes carries wads in a gun-case, tie it up so that those whom they loved and esteemed can neither use principal nor interest, which enables a babe unborn to be as rich as Crœsus. But an individual man is a riddle, for who can tell the springs of the human heart when he is moved to make his will? All we know is negative; money never goes where it has been going, or where it is wanted, because it is wanted. What was the spring in your heart, Pauline Penny Fairfax, which induced you the day after I declined your kind offer of fifty pounds to sit down and leave me that identical sum in a codicil?

Just as I was leaving the house Mr. Fairfax sent to say that he wished to speak to me in his room. He was dressed for travelling, and said that he was going abroad for the present; that having no further interest in this part of the country it was not probable he would return to it, and he thought of seeing the Lord Lieutenant, when in London, for the purpose of resigning the command of the Volunteers. He then wished me good-bye, got into his carriage, taking with him his portmanteaus and three favourite roses in pots, which were all that belonged to him about the house, and drove off. There was a cold north-east wind blowing, the only quarter which does not bring rain in Cowshire, when I left the house the last of the guests. The blinds were down and the place looked dismal. The rooks were swaying on the trees and cawing as if they had not been fed for a week. In the village there were several people about who had been living rent free, and with small allowances from Mrs. Fairfax; they had reason to be sorry for her, for she had been very kind to them, and they will now have to pay rent and work for their living.

April 20th.—Hired a gig and drove to Wakup. On parade there were seven rank and file, with eight bandsmen, and the drill-sergeant with a long face. I asked the latter a few questions, but he was not very communicative, and after waiting twenty minutes I walked to Mr. Gayman's house, which is about a mile from the town. I could not find him or either of the subalterns; but as I was standing at the door of the inn, thinking what was best to be done, the honorary surgeon, in a long blue coat, buttoned up to the chin, turned the corner.

"Booh! I told you so; they all wanted to be officers; the appointments hitherto rested with the members, but a new set of rules came from the War Office, and the promotions are now in the hands of the captain. Well, the lieutenant, who was clerk in the bank, has gone as cashier to the branch at Pringle, and about thirty members have resigned because they were not made ensigns—booh!"

Drove home.

One sergeant and seven rank and file make a small total in the diary. Ought the eight bandsmen to be added? Parading with instruments and not with arms, are they effectives? They are all enrolled but have never been sworn. Do the same privileges and penalties attach to a Volunteer whether he takes the oath or not? If so, what is the use of being sworn?

Wrote to Pipps.

April 22nd.—A letter from Bates. On the Saturday after I saw him, the whole corps paraded with the exception of some of the miners, who

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usually devote from Saturday till Tuesday to beer. After shooting for some prizes he marched the men to the lawn in front of his house, where a cold dinner was spread on the grass; but before they were allowed to begin, he read the War Office circular, and the arms were handed at once into the empty room, without a word, and were locked up.

The letter reads like the report of an Indian general, after disarming a regiment of sepoys, but written in a cotton yarn phraseology. Up to Tuesday he thought the affair had been well managed, but on that day the mill hands began to send in their accoutrements and clothing, and at the usual weekly parade, the day before the date of the letter, the only men present were a few miners in their working clothes, with their uniforms in bundles, which they placed in the armoury with their rifles. The miners kept the leggings, which might be useful, and which Bates says were of a superior quality. His corps has vanished, but he seems relieved by having so easily got rid of that for which he was not fitted, and which was no little expense to him. His only regret is the leggings.

Mem.—It is a bad plan ever to allow a Volunteer to keep possession of his rifle. At first he takes great care of the new toy; when the novelty is worn off, he puts it dirty into a corner after firing, till it is wanted again; the lock is tampered with, rust grows in the barrel, and the rifle becomes unserviceable.

May 1st.—The battalion seems bewitched, and if an effort is not made by somebody with influence, it will tumble to pieces altogether. The resignation of Colonel Fairfax was accepted in yesterday's Gazette. Now that Tallboys has to pay for the keep of his own horses, he has given up hunting. He has also shut up the front rooms at Pursopen, and lives in the small one with oak panels, which was used for smoking. He talks of buying a yacht and going to the Mediterranean. Now that Mrs. Fairfax has gone, the funds of the corps are in a bad way. Tallboys does not like spending money for the amusement of the Tanner, and the Tanner has a great dislike to spending his own. The latter has been trying to induce each member to pay ten shillings a year, which might have been done at the beginning, but it is too late now. A great many members have resigned, and no fresh hand has offered except Mucky Mac, who says he will re-enroll and provide his own uniform, several sets being for sale at reduced prices.

The strength of the battalion, according to the return in the diary sent in yesterday, is as follows:—Cowdale, sixty-seven, of all ranks; Dabshott, fifty-four; Wakup, twenty-one; Pringle, seven; total, one hundred and forty-nine, not including the Yakerleys, whom I have never seen. I wonder what will become of me! C.

OUR CRITIC UPON CRICKET.

FIRST INNINGS.

HURRAH, lads! "summer is icumen in" at last (there were some of us who feared it would not until lately), and as summer articles are rather in request, I propose to let you have an article on cricket.

Cricket! There's a wholesome English smack about the word which no one but an Englishman, I think, can rightly relish. To my notion a cricketer *nascitur, non fit.* Men must be British-born to play the game and like it. Your Frenchman is too volatile, your German too phlegmatic for it, and as for other nations, they mostly are too lazy, or else too luxurious. Cricket requires steadiness as well as strength and quickness, and the union of these qualities distinguishes the English. I repeat, then, none but Englishmen know how to play at cricket, and only in their ears will the mention of it waken any pleasurable echoes.

Quæ cum ita sint, as one used to say on "theme days;" *haud dubitandum est*, that Englishmen, wherever they may be, must be rejoiced to find that cricket shows no symptoms of decay; on the contrary, indeed, yearly seems to show increased vitality. Despite the march of intellect, perhaps rather because of it, the pastime still continues our chief national recreation, and the severest course of study admits of proper leisure for it. What was true in Æsop's time is true of human nature now. Brains, as well as bows, will weaken, if kept always on the stretch. Wholesome exercise becomes therefore a part of education, and the wholesomest is that which joins amusement with activity. Now, cricket healthily relaxes the tension of the mind no less than it invigorates and braces up the muscles, and our school-masters are wise to sanction and promote it. Obviously, cricket is a far better recreation than sitting down to dominoes indoors, like the French, or playing "Buck! buck!" at street corners in the manner of the Italians.

But while I rejoice to see my favourite sport flourish, and its votaries each summer more and more increase and multiply, there are some points in its progress I am not well pleased at, and as I call myself a critic I intend to speak my mind about them. In the first place—though perhaps I may lose caste by the confession—I own I liked the game much better when it was not played so well; and though Science has, in most respects, assuredly done much for us, I really almost wish that she had meddled less with cricket. As a lady, Science could not have known much about the game (when did you ever hear a woman talk as though she, in the slightest atom, understood it?); and as persons should not interfere with what does not concern them, I wish that Science rather had amused herself with *crochet*, than had condescended to come and play at cricket.

The first step Science took in cricket-shoes, I think, was a *faux pas.* She invented a machine called, classically, a catapult, which woefully tormented me when first I formed acquaintance with it. The catapult was made to supersede the art of bowling, and my mind was sorely harassed with the thought of what might come of it. I was haunted for a while by the most hideous of dreams, foreboding that the days of cricketers were numbered, and that, ere long, matches would be played by steam, as hatches are achieved, not less in violence of nature. Happily, however, my fears have not been realised, for the machine was too infernal to find favour with my countrymen. But

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I regret to see that Science still meddles with their game, and, to my thinking at least, does little to improve it. Play is now-a-days becoming a mere matter of hard work, and what should be amusement is too often the reverse of it. A match is really quite a serious and solemn piece of business, and grave faces are seen in it more frequently than grinning ones. I think the fun of the game went out when fast bowling came in, which it did with that infer— Well, that infer—ior catapult. Men now go armed into a cricket-field, as though it were a battle one, and they may thank their lucky stars if they bring their limbs safe out of it.

Now, don't let it be thought that I object to skill in field-sports, and advocate a clumsy, lazy, slovenly pursuit of them. On the contrary, I hold that the better a man plays a game the more he will enjoy it, and that this is true of every sport from pitch-and-toss to grouse-slaughter. But surely cricket might be played with skill, and yet without such serious looks as it appears now to occasion. There was fully as much skill in the old three-quarter bowling as there is in the more modern catapultive system; and, without gaining in skill, I fancy the new style has caused some loss in the amusement. There is certainly more danger in the game now than there was, and this may be a reason why there seems to be less pleasure in it. Besides, it seems to me, men make more a business than they did of it. The laws are strict and stringent; but this I don't complain of. What I object to chiefly is the spirit they are construed in. Play is now too cut-and-dried a piece of work to please me. A ball is bowled and hit, and fielded, as by steam; and if a player fails to do precisely what is wanted of him, he does not now get jeered at so much as he gets sneered at. To my mind this is not a wholesome alteration. When I am at play I like to laugh and enjoy myself, and half the pleasure of the sport is gone if you abstract the fun from it. We learnt at school that "*Dulce est desipere in loco*," and if the cricket-field is not the place for harmless, healthy fun, I should like to know what is, pray?

For thus avowing my dislike of the new-fangled way of playing, kind people will, of course, be prone to call me an old Fogy, and to fancy that my nerves and knees are getting somewhat shaky. But I was young enough, last year, to draw a stump or two at Lord's, and to stand up, without flinching, to a few "overs" from Jackson. It is not then from funk that, now-a-days, I find less fun than formerly in cricket; but I like games to be games, and not all work and worry. However vulgar and degrading the confession may be thought, I own I used to like to hear a clumsy cricketer assailed with a shout of—"Now, then, Butter-fingers!" when he missed a catch; and to see the game of cricket played by merry men, and not by solemn mutes, all swathed in gloves and greaves, so that they almost look like mummies.

Cricket is not a theme to be pumped dry in some six paragraphs, but I shall reserve what more I have to say about it until Once a Week allows me to have a second innings.

H. Silver.

A PORTUGUESE TRAGEDY.

As few who will read this will have travelled from Lisbon to Cintra, it would be useless to occupy half a column with details to enable them to identify the house in which the tragedy I am about to relate took place. Moreover, those who have made the journey will identify it if I merely say that it is a roofless building of large size, with very solid stone walls, standing in a field near the roadside.

About eleven or twelve years ago this house was occupied by a Senhor da Pena, who, though born in Brazil, was of Portuguese extraction; and on the death of his father in that country he realised the property he had left with the object of returning to Portugal, which he regarded as his native land.

The introductions he brought with him to Lisbon soon introduced him to such society as exists there, more especially as he was known to possess considerable property, and was still unmarried, a condition which, from his behaviour towards women generally, it was presumed he would not long continue in. This presumption was not long in being verified. About six months after his arrival it became rumoured about that he was going to be married. The report was true. Among the families then residing in Lisbon was one which comprised a man, his wife, his three daughters, and his nephew, the last a young man who was chiefly employed by his uncle as secretary, but who also spent much of his time in superintending an estate near Cintra, which was planted with vines. What the exact age of Senhor da Pena was at that time was not known, but from his appearance it was supposed to be about thirty; his intended wife being about twelve years younger. She was not at all remarkable for beauty, as, indeed, none of her countrywomen are, but her attractions appear to have been quite up to the average among Portuguese women. The courtship was not a long one, and, as far as people could judge from appearances, the bride went to the altar willingly enough. Two or three days after the wedding, da Pena went to live with his wife in the house I have alluded to at the beginning of this narrative. Everybody imagined they lived together happily, and she was not a little envied by many of her sex for the possession of a husband so amiable and gallant. In truth da Pena was made to be popular among women. He was not the man who could have replied to the question of What is the matter?—Nothing! only a woman drowning herself. Though not a whisper was ever heard against his morality, he was remarkably kind and gentle to all women, old as well as young, and he treated them with such respect that it was recognised that his conduct arose from a principle of reverence for the sex as such, so that no man was ever known to be jealous of his attentions to his wife.

They had been married about two years when the senhora introduced to the world a little boy; followed, after about the same period, by a girl. For some time after this, things continued to go on as smoothly as before. The only change which the senhor noticed was, that his wife seemed even more indifferent about going away from home,

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and could seldom be induced to accompany him in visits to the neighbours. This he attributed to her love for her children, and this was the reason he gave when questioned respecting her absence from parties at which he was himself present. Madame was not, however, alone on these occasions. The presence of her supposed cousin, the nephew I have already alluded to, whose name was Fernando Arcos, had always been frequent in the house ever since their marriage, and gradually became more and more so. I have said "supposed cousin," the fact being, according to the tradition, that their relation to each other was much closer, and that he was in truth the produce of an illicit connection of her father with a woman residing in Madeira. Of this da Pena is imagined to have been cognisant, and to have presumed that Fernando was equally well aware of his origin; hence the perfect freedom with which he allowed his wife to associate with him. Had Fernando possessed the least portion of proper feeling, this confidence alone would of itself have compelled him to act honourably towards his relative, even admitting him to have been ignorant of the exact degree of relationship subsisting between them—which indeed it is pretty certain he was; but the temptation was too strong for him to resist, and the relations between himself and the senhora, there is little doubt, ceased to be of an innocent character. Still, as far as is known, no suspicion of this occurred to anybody. People had been so accustomed to see the cousins together, that the affection which they exhibited for each other was regarded as perfectly natural, and excited no scandal. This did not last but for a few months after the birth of the second child.

One afternoon, at the time of wine harvest, the men and women employed at a *quinta* at no great distance noticed volumes of smoke which seemed to ascend from da Pena's house, but which they supposed to be produced by the burning of weeds and refuse; and it was not until there could be no possible doubt that it was the house on fire that they ran across to try to extinguish it. By this time the fire had taken so firm a hold, and blazed so fiercely, that they could not approach it, even if there had been a supply of water available, which there was not. There was nothing for it but to watch it burn itself out. Some of the villagers present averred that they had heard sounds issue from the fire like the screams of a human being; and it has been often reported since that persons who have passed near the ruins at a late hour have heard a shrill, wailing cry come from them.

Late on that evening, and when the entire contents and roof of his house were converted into a glowing mass of cinders, from which little flames darted forth occasionally, crept a short distance up the wall, and then expired, da Pena presented himself on horseback among the lookers-on. He was deadly pale, and trembled so visibly that they thought he would fall from his horse. Everybody was anxious to describe what had happened, but he appeared to take no notice of what they said, and sat on his horse, his eyes fixed on the ruins, and buried in the deepest thought, without asking a single question. Either then, or afterwards, this was noticed and spoken of as a singular fact. It was one of the villagers who first suggested to him that possibly the senhora might have been in the house when it took fire, and proposed that an attempt should be made to rake out the embers, but her husband did not encourage the idea, and was the first to say that even supposing this were so, she must have been consumed long before.

The morning succeeding the fire da Pena was nowhere to be seen. Search was made in every direction, but no trace of him was ever discovered. Opinions were, of course, divided as to what had become of him, but the one most generally received was that he had, after the spectators had gone home, thrown himself on the still red-hot mass, and been reduced to ashes. Two or three days elapsed before the embers had cooled sufficiently for men to dig them out, and by that time even the very stones that had fallen in had been calcined to powder, so that nothing whatever was discovered which could decide the question whether anybody had been burnt or not; but the general belief was that the Senhora and her infant had certainly perished, until an element of doubt was introduced by the discovery that Fernando Arcos was also missing.

The affair remained buried in profound mystery until about eight years ago, when it was cleared up in a very unexpected manner. The person who related the foregoing to me also related in substance that which follows, but as I was shown the MS. of da Pena himself when I visited the Cork convent, some three months ago, I prefer to give an abridged translation of that document rather than to relate his statement in my own words:

"Passionately attached to my wife, she never had the slightest reason to suppose that my love for her had diminished in warmth or intensity since the day we were married, nor did she give me any reason to imagine that she was less attached to me; on the contrary, her manner was even more affectionate than formerly, and when I returned, after an absence of only a few hours, she would overwhelm me with caresses. God of Heaven, how could I suspect that these were the fruit of calculation, or it might be of remorse for having betrayed the most devoted and confiding of husbands in his absence! I worshipped that woman. I had no thought of the past or future. I lived only in her—in the present. For her sake I would have uncovered my head to the vilest beggarwoman in the land—to be of the same sex with her was sufficient to constitute a claim on my services, which were rendered without waiting for solicitation. My whole soul was bound up in her, and I would have died a thousand deaths to have shielded her from the slightest pain. How happy I was then! There was not an object in nature in which I did not see something to admire. Whether it were the dark, lowering clouds, or the bright blue sky, the wild flower in the hedge, or the insect humming in the air, all spoke to me of a great and loving Creator, and it seemed to me that I lived in his presence. Not even in Heaven itself can I by the utmost stretch of imagination conceive greater beatitude to exist than I enjoyed then.

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"When I told my wife and Fernando that I intended going to Collares that afternoon, it was really my intention to go there. Not the faintest shadow of a suspicion had ever crossed my mind that there was any reason for my playing the spy. It was unusually hot that day, and after playing awhile with my little son I sent him to the nursery to learn his lessons, and lay down on a rug which I had thrown on the ground just under the window. All the sitting-rooms were nearly on a level with the ground, and the windows opened within a foot or so of the floor. I lay here smoking until my cigar went out, and then fell into a kind of doze, but was still awake sufficiently to enjoy the gentle sounds caused by the flitting of the bees and other insects from flower to flower. I heard footsteps coming towards the window, and the voices of my wife and Fernando. I lay still, but not for the purpose of listening to what they said, and had they not been very close to the window I should not have distinguished their words. Security in sin had doubtless made them bold, and seeing that I was not in the room, they, I suppose, concluded I had gone away somewhere. Almost the first words Fernando uttered contained a request which almost struck me dead. My heart ceased to beat, a cold sensation ran along my spine, and I thought I was dying. Still my ears were open to hear the answer of my wife. It was made in playful language, and though she refused his request it was because she thought it possible I might only have gone to the stable, and would return to say a parting word as usual. Then I heard him speak again, and her reply that she would come to him in the afternoon in my study. Nothing more was said, but after an instant I heard them leave the room. I could not move, and my great fear was that one of them might return and see me lying there. I felt as if I were being stifled. I rolled over on my face, and the moment I did so blood flowed from my mouth on to the ground. At the thought that death would overtake me before I had had time to punish the destroyer of my happiness, strength returned to my body, I got upon my feet, raked some earth over the spot which would have caused inquiries, had it been seen, and dragged myself with painful exertions to a place where I was sure of being alone, for at least some minutes. As soon as I felt myself capable of moving I walked to a field where one of my labourers was at work, and sent him to the stable for my horse, and taking out my pocket-book I tore out a leaf and wrote on it a request to my wife that she would send the coachman into Lisbon to inquire if a steamer had arrived, by which I expected some things from Brazil, and suggested that the women servants might be glad to ride with him if she thought proper to send them. This I gave the man on his return with the horse, with instructions to put it into the senhora's hand himself.. I felt that she would not neglect to avail herself of the opportunity of being entirely alone with her paramour. I had not decided then on the method I would employ to punish their guilt, and my only thought was to remove the possibility of any obstacle intervening between us when we stood face to face, as I was determined we should do before the sun had set that day. I rode slowly along to Collare called at a friend's *quinta*, but without dismoun ing, then turned my horse round and returne towards my house. By this time I had decided c my course of action. Riding round by the fiel on the opposite side of the road to that on which m house was situated, I got down when I was abo a quarter of a mile distant at a cluster of oliv trees, and tied my horse to one of the branches. had no difficulty in approaching the house fro this side without the risk of being observed. entered by one of the windows and listened, b could hear no sound. I took off my boots an crept noiselessly to my study. The door w slightly open, sufficiently to allow me to see in the room through the opening between the hinge I looked through. The infant was lying asleep one end of the sofa, at the other her mother w half-sitting, half-lying, her dress in disorder, an Fernando's head lying on her knees. I belie they were asleep. I walked into the room an shut the door with a crash, which caused them start to their feet. We stood looking at ea other without speaking a word. I cannot descri what I felt when I saw the woman, whom I ha always regarded as an angel of purity, in t guise of a harlot. My voice left me, I was unab to articulate a word. God alone can read t heart; but I think, as I write this, that the e pression in her face at that moment was rather o of sorrow for my evident suffering than of fear f the consequence to herself of the discovery I ha made. I turned my eyes from her to the partn of her guilt—the man who had eaten of my brea and drank of my wine for so many years—whom had regarded as a brother, and to whom my pur and everything I had were as free as to myself. H stood pale and trembling. Then my voice returned the hot blood rushed to my face so that I felt as struck with nettles, and I spoke. I did not inten to say much to my wife. I knew it would be sufficient punishment to her to be told of t real relationship in which she stood to her suppose cousin. On hearing this she looked at h destroyer with a haggard stare, as if entreatin him to deny it, but I gave him no time to speal I charged him with having known of this all alon and loaded him with the bitterest reproaches. T words poured from my mouth in a torrent, wit out an effort of thought. Suddenly he walked a corner of the room, took down a gun from t rack, and fired at me. I had not time to preve him, even if the idea had occurred to me. Th he missed me must have been owing to the has with which he fired. There was a Moorish batt axe lying on a table by my side, with many oth old weapons of which the room was full. I snatch this up, and before I had time to think Fernan lay upon the floor with the blood streaming fro his face. I had not meditated this. I thoug that life—after they knew I had discovered the treachery, and had covered them with reproach —would be the greatest torture that could be i flicted upon them; but now that he lay the before me a devil took possession of me. I rais him, and threw him into a recess at the end of t room, where I kept gunpowder and such thing My wife lay insensible on the ground; her, too,

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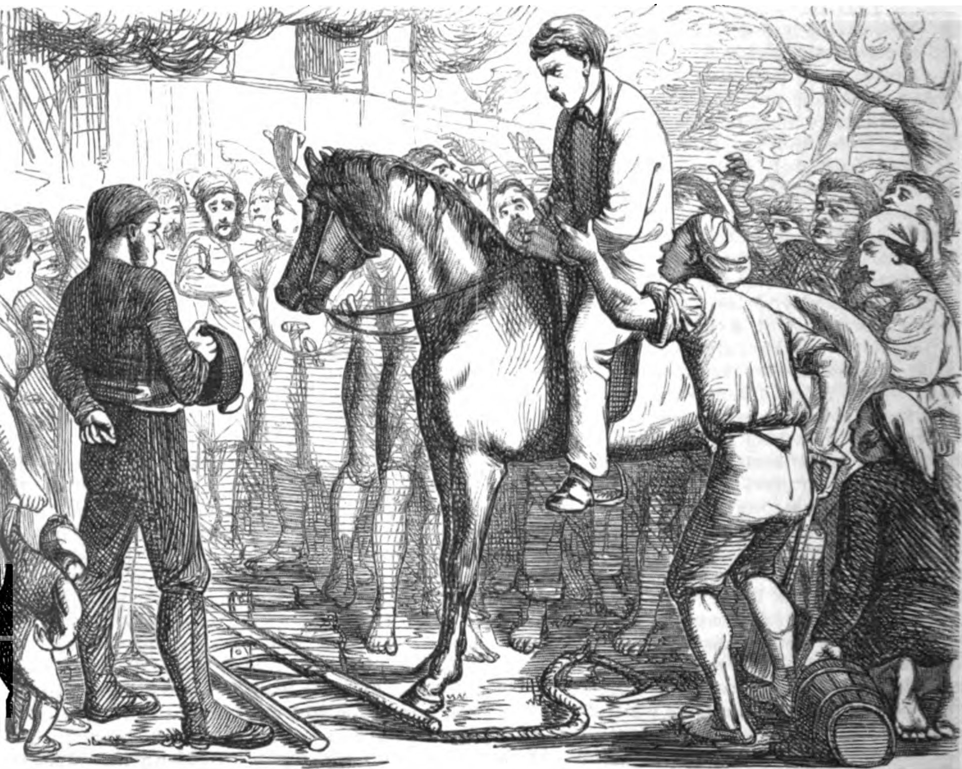
took and cast into the recess. Then I shut the shutter, and heaped up the furniture against the opening of the place into which I had thrown them and set it on fire. I fetched faggots and piled on the heap to feed the flames. Next I went to my bed-room, took what little money I had there, and left the house, first setting it on fire in several places that not a trace of it might remain. Even as I did so, I could hear the screams of the victims of their own evil passions, and it was with a keen sensation of pleasure that I distinguished the voice of a man. I fled from the place, mounted my horse, and rode across the country to some fishermen's cottages near the mouth of the Tagus. A vessel was anchored close to the Bar waiting for the ebb. I had myself taken on board and soon agreed with the captain for a passage to Genoa to which port she was bound. I then returned to my *quinta* to see the progress made by the fire, and found it surrounded by the villagers, most of whom were employed on my estate, and whom I sent away to their homes as soon as I could find an excuse for doing so. My servants had not then returned from Lisbon, so that I was able, as soon as these people had disappeared, to make my way without being seen to the fishermen's village. I got off my horse about a mile or two from this place and turned my horse loose. I walked the remainder of the distance, and within an hour was on board the ship. On the pretence



of guarding against sea-sickness, I shut myself up in my cabin and never left it until we arrived at Genoa. I don't think I suffered then from remorse at what I had done. When it first flashed across my mind that the infant had perished with its mother, I grew sick as death; but then came the thought that she might have been the fruit of a crime too horrible to think of, and I no longer grieved.

"When I landed in Genoa, rumours were already afloat touching an approaching outbreak in Italy, and that it was the intention of Charles Albert to throw himself into the movement. I had myself no hatred to the Austrians, but I was eager for the success of the Italians—not that I cared for liberty, or whether Austria or any other power governed Italy; but I would have assisted in doing anything that could cause misery and suffering. Such was my state of mind at that time, that if a word of mine could have reduced the whole world to its original chaos, I would have uttered it. I soon became acquainted with some of the leaders of the insurrection. What tests they subjected me to, to prove my trustworthiness, I know not, but I was soon entrusted with missions from town to town, as important as they were dangerous. I did the work well, perhaps the better that I was utterly careless and indifferent whether I was discovered or not. I had neither hope, joy, nor fear. To me death and life were alike unimportant.

"I arrived in Paris with despatches from the chiefs of the democracy at Rome, Turin, Florence, and other large Italian cities, which I delivered to

those for whom they were intended a few days previous to the revolution (of 1848). What part I took in some of the bloody encounters which followed this outbreak is of little consequence. After a time I returned to Italy, and was directed to attach myself as closely as possible to Charles Albert, whom they suspected of treachery to the cause.

* * * * *

"It wearies me to recall the frequency with which I voluntarily placed my life in jeopardy during these years of strife, intrigue, and treachery. I might reveal many things which would prove how much the causes which led to the events of this period have been misunderstood, and how unfairly praise and blame have been apportioned, but what signifies the opinion of creatures whose life is so short and judgments so erring?

"When the fighting was over, and the Austrians were wreaking their savage vengeance on those who had taken part in it in opposition to them, I left central Italy for Genoa, from whence I proposed to go to Algeria. There was no vessel for that country which would leave the port for at least three weeks, and in the meantime I proposed riding into Modena—Parma—anywhere for the sake of movement. In the reckless life I then led, I took no heed of the hours for eating and sleeping. I ate when I was hungry, if there was anything to eat, and I slept when I felt disposed. Thus, I sometimes spent whole nights in wandering about the streets; one hour in a den of infamy, the next in a dimly-lighted church, where a few sleepy monks were chanting the midnight service; and finally, perhaps, lying among the scum of the Roman populace on the stones beneath the shadow of St. Peter's, or falling asleep while looking at the dark water beneath the Bridge of Sighs. Sometimes I was taken to the guard-house by the patrol; but my papers were always right, so that it was nothing to me but a compulsory walk in a certain direction. On the night of my arrival in Genoa—on the occasion I refer to—I felt indisposed to sleep; and, after writing a letter to one of the principal of the Italian revolutionists, who had escaped to London, I went out; and, without knowing where I was going, I found myself at last on the quay. The night was dark, but not so dark as to prevent me from distinguishing a boat lying about twenty yards from the wall. A minute afterwards a group of four or five persons passed within a few yards of me. I suppose they suddenly caught sight of me; for they stopped, and one of them stepped briskly towards me, as if to ask me a question. I felt a blow on my chest, and sparks of fire seemed to flash before my eyes, and I remembered nothing more.

"The next thing I remember after this was waking from what I supposed to have been a sound sleep; but when I tried to move I found I could not. I had no control over my limbs. I had no recollection then of what had happened to me, and lay quite motionless, without even attempting to account to myself for being where I was and so helpless. Presently, a woman came in, looked at me, poured a few tea-spoonsful of some liquid into my mouth, and then left me to have some conversation at the other end of the room with a man who had followed her in. This was all the attention I received at intervals during that day and many succeeding days. Still I grew stronger; and, strange as it may appear, with each day the recollection of my ruined home and my wife occupied my mind more and more, and I began to feel remorse for what I had done, a feeling that had never entered my mind till then. Day by day this feeling grew stronger. I tried to convince myself that what I had done was right and just. I tried, too, to return to my former state of indifference, but I could not do this either. At last I could bear it no longer—I felt that I should go mad if I laid there without a human being to speak to. Then I decided on sending for a priest."

It is not necessary to translate further; the remainder of the wretched man's career may be stated in a very few words. He never recovered from the effects of the wound, but he gradually became strong enough to bear the voyage from Genoa to the Portuguese coast, from whence he was conveyed by his own desire to a deserted convent among the rugged mountains in the neighbourhood of Cintra, where he lingered a few months, and then expired. It was when visiting this convent—which consists of a number of cells cut in the rock, each about six feet square and lined with cork—during last summer (there really was a summer in Portugal), that the manuscript from which I have translated the above was handed to me by a Spanish gentleman who took it from a drawer in the refectory, which likewise contained some odds and ends, and among them a paper of English pins, which, from their appearance and that of the paper in which they are stuck, may have been there for any number of years. How they came in such an out-of-the-way place, and who put them in the drawer, is a mystery which has occupied my mind while smoking many a cigar since, and may that of many another man who may visit the place, and look into the musty drawer which occupies the lower left-hand corner of the nest in the refectory.

G. L.

CONFESSION.

My first false love has married a churl.
"Love, thou'rt a juggle and lie,"
I said, as I sent her back that curl;
"Fool! to be fooled by a foolish girl,
Tho' her lips *were* sweet and her teeth *were* pearl,
And she gave me sigh for sigh."

The grave of the maiden that next I wooed
Lies far across the sea;
For, oh! too weak in her womanhood,
Her kinsmen's wrath might not be withstood—
Heav'n rest her soul! she was fair and good,
And pure as God's angels be.

But the love of all loves sits here by my side,
Our baby on her knee;
Four fair children have we beside
(Seven sweet years she has been my bride),
She is my darling, my joy, my pride,
And I know that she loves me.

W. W. F. Synge.

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LAST WEEK.

THOUGH all news from almost every country in the world is at present interesting to us, there were no tidings last week of such engrossing importance as to put our own affairs out of sight. We talked over our commercial and political interests, much as in ordinary times, and found leisure for a good deal of pleasure, on the race-ground, in music-halls, gardens, floral-halls, and opera-houses.

The prominent commercial topic is the cotton-supply. It seems strange that the Lancashire men should have been so slow in moving to preclude the danger which now alarms them so much. They have been warned for years past that the American supply would be in sudden peril some day; but they took no steps, while not venturing to deny the probability of the need. They seem to have been like the sort of people who shrink from making a will, lest the preparation for dying should bring on death. There might be some apprehension that any hint of slavery being unsafe might hasten its doom. Now that the American planters are sowing corn on their cotton lands, or neglecting the soil altogether, our capitalists may be sorry that they did not institute their precautionary measures a little sooner. Thus far, everything seems to be done in India that can be done in a hurry. We are importing thence four times as much cotton as usual, and are likely to have a good deal more: but a great proportion of it will disappoint both buyer and seller. Till English capital sets up the necessary apparatus for preparing the cotton on the spot, the product will answer only for inferior fabrics. That this will be done, and that good roads will be opened from every cotton district to the ports, there is no doubt; but this is not done yet; and it will take some time to do it. The topic of getting a due supply of labour to our colony of Queensland is daily discussed; and it is not an easy question to settle, as it involves all the pros and cons of introducing Chinese labourers, with their admirable industry, but with their rising notions of the wages we can pay, and with the drawbacks of domesticating in a fresh colony a race of Asiatic heathens who are unpopular, and apt to become dangerous wherever they have hitherto settled in considerable numbers. On Tuesday evening, Lord Brougham spoke, in the Lords, on the subject of cotton supply, addressing to the Government the arguments we are accustomed to hear from the parties interested in the growth of cotton in the West Indies. There seems to be no doubt whatever of the fitness of several of our colonies for this branch of industry. The highest qualities of cotton can be obtained there; and the supply might be almost unlimited. The Duke of Newcastle rightly says that the real question is of the labour-supply. But those who best know the West Indies, and Jamaica especially, are most thoroughly convinced that there is plenty of labour on the spot, if it is properly invited to work. There were, some time since, 75,000 able-bodied labourers in Jamaica, who had shown every disposition to work for hire, even on sugar plantations, if offered wages which would make it worth their while;—wages equal to their gains at home, and punctually paid. They are anxious to get their children employed, and would give up their valued schooling for it: but the old habit of slighting the labourers, of keeping them waiting for their pay, and of expecting them to be satisfied with ninepence a-day when they can make two shillings at home, has kept tens of thousands of them out of the labour market. The culture and picking of the cotton plant are work for women and children, as the wives and families of the Germans in Texas show; and, as men alone are reckoned as labourers in the case of sugar, here is a great resource in favour of cotton. If the present price of cotton, or the price to which any scarcity will raise it, suffices to pay Jamaica labourers the very moderate wages which they are wont to ask, there will be an increasing production of cotton in the colony. Already the negroes grow a good deal in their own gardens; and there can be no doubt of their readiness to make terms for their crop with any capitalists who may set up the necessary apparatus for preparing the cotton for our market. All the elements are ready: the soil and climate, the seed, and (whatever doubts have existed in the case of sugar) the labour; and now, we are told, capitalists willing, on proper evidence, to set up the means of cleaning and packing. The English character will have lost its well-proved energy and courage if, under these circumstances, we do not get cotton enough to keep our four millions of fellow-citizens, who are dependent on that manufacture, employed and maintained; and more securely than they could ever be while we had only America to resort to for the raw material. In a few years, millions of bales will be coming in from a dozen different countries. It is probable that nobody doubts about that. The pressing anxiety is to preclude any blank interval, during which we may be left without a supply. We have nearly enough for this year's restricted use; but there must be very energetic action, to get enough grown and properly prepared for next year's demand.

The reports of the silk crop are better than for several years past. The efforts of last year to obtain eggs from new sources have apparently put a stop to the disease among the silkworms. We hear from various quarters of their being very fine, and of the market price of mulberry leaves having doubled in consequence, in the south of France and Italy. Thus we may hope to hear no more of the miseries of overworked weavers from the toil and vexation caused by bad silk.

Something is doing in Spitalfields which we must hope the Americans, occupied as they are, will find time to note. Just when their Northern representatives have instituted a tariff worthy of the Middle Ages, the staunchest adherents of Protection in this country have come to an end of their system in a way which should be instructive to all the world. The Spitalfields and Coventry weavers—like the old Norwich worsted weavers,—stood out for their old notions, old ways, and old wages, while the world was getting on with its machinery and new knowledge all round them, till their trade left them, and went to newer seats,

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where the people were less prejudiced. The misery of Coventry in the winter will not soon be orgotten: and we still see ladies mischievously forcing a sale of Coventry ribbons with their own fair hands and thoughtless zeal, to the injury of fair production and regular trade. While we see the artificial costume of Coventry charity,—dresses made of hundreds of yards of ribbon, with prodigious labour and a bad effect,—we shall not forget the Coventry distress. And none who know Spitalfields can ever lose the impression of the lifelong, wearing, and generally patient misery there. The peculiar people who live in those rooms with long lattices, under roofs curiously fitted for keeping birds and flowers, were once—very long ago—a happy set of people. They not only wove the best velvets and brocades, but could show the greatest variety of pigeons, and the most magnificent auriculas and tulips, that could be seen. It was so long ago, that before Mr. Huskisson's day parliament had been periodically appealed to, to relieve the distress in Spitalfields. The distress occurred occasionally when there was a prohibitory duty on foreign silk goods, and it re-appeared under every subsequent phase of the duties. The old-fashioned body — once foreigners, and always peculiar — could not suit themselves to the necessary changes of the times; and ruining the employers by demands of the old wages, without modern advantages, only hastened their fate. No hope is now left. The world could not stand still for them; so they have to follow the world. The Bishop of London, Miss Burdett Coutts, and other benevolent persons, have organised a plan for removing such of the Spitalfields weavers as wish to go to the modern seats of their manufacture. We are told they are anxious to go. The wrench of quitting their singular quarter, with its long windows, and its dovecotes, and its little hanging-gardens, would once have been terrible; but now they are reduced too low not to hunger first for bread. Everybody grieves for them. Everybody will wish them well in their new homes; and those who can will help to carry them there. In the history of the Reformation, in the history of London, in the history of Industry, the Spitalfields Weavers will always be an important feature: and now they yield an important lesson by their fate. The choice is only between expiring in pauperism and merging their body in that of the general population of busy and prosperous silk-weavers; and we ought not to be sorry to lose sight of this antiquated class, if it is to be by their growing so comfortable that we should not know them. Some of the friends of the Coventry operatives have endeavoured to establish the cotton manufacture in their town, as well as to convey the people to Lancashire. Time will show whether this is a wise measure. There is less doubt of the wisdom of those among the people who give up old prejudices, and resist bad counsels, in order to adapt themselves to the modern conditions of the manufacture. By hailing new machinery, studying new economy, and using their own judgment about wages, the wiser part of the Coventry men may yet save a portion of their trade; and if they do, they ought to have the credit of it. It should be an immortal honour to them to have seen and done what was wise and right when popular leaders were goading their victims into folly and wrong.

It is almost beyond all expectation that the French manufacturers, who were a year ago mourning in advance over their own ruin, should be already in a state of amusement at their own fears. The men of silk, of cotton, and of wool are alike satisfied that they are not going to be ruined by us or by anybody. They not only expect to hold their ground, but perceive advantages springing up on every side which they had not imagined. We knew they would arrive at this state of satisfaction in time; but the growth of conviction has been remarkably rapid in their case. One excellent consequence will be the speedier conversion of the rest of the world, wherever Protection is still undetected, from Massachusetts to Pekin.

Some people have been in too much of a hurry to believe what they wished in regard to the dissensions in the building trades. A large meeting in the Surrey Theatre, on Tuesday evening of last week, showed that however many workmen approve and enjoy the new arrangement of payment by the hour, there are still very many who oppose it. The plan undoubtedly meets the alleged aims of the men, and fulfils all the ostensible objects of the nine-hour movement; but it is not acceded to the more for that. It in fact supersedes the despotism of trade unions; and this will not be permitted by the despotism of trade unions. It is better to perceive and admit this, however formidable and discreditable to our civilisation the fact may be, than to pretend that the conflict is over, as regards the London building trades, when the antagonism is as determined as ever. We may see the Exhibition building and the main drainage, and the great new edifices, public and private, proceeding during these long days; but the Surrey Theatre would not have been crowded with opponents of the hour-payment system if the dispute in the building trades had been "finally adjusted," or "virtually at an end," as we have been so often assured since last March.

The resort to law in defence of orthodoxy against the authors of "Essays and Reviews" must be noticed at the outset, because there is no knowing what consequences may arise from it. It had been announced for some days that the Bishop of Salisbury had taken steps to bring one of the seven authors before the Ecclesiastical Courts, when the Bishop of Chester adopted a course which drew yet more attention to the case. The Rev. Mr. Wilson, one of the Essayists, had been engaged for two years to preach a sermon on a special occasion at Liverpool; and he had prepared three sermons,—two for Sunday of last week, and one for the preceding Friday. At the last moment, the Bishop served on him a prohibition to preach. The incumbent read the notice from the pulpit, and announced the intention of Mr. Wilson and himself to obey, without committing themselves to any opinion as to the legality of the prohibition. Mr. Wilson's sermons were read by the incumbent, on the three occasions. The spectacle of the

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inhibited preacher in a pew among the congregation, on such an occasion, was felt to be a portentous one; and the excitement in Liverpool was great. If, thus late, the Bishops resort to law in regard to this book, after having allowed an appeal to opinion for nearly a year, they must have made up their minds to the grave and immeasurable results which the entire history of opinion shows to proceed from such a course. However powerful authority may be in guiding opinion, it has never yet succeeded in restraining or resisting it, after one moment of collision. The spectacle, then, of the Rev. Mr. Wilson sitting in a pew while his own sermon was read to an excited congregation, is one which marks a period; and the more, that the sermon contained no controversial matter whatever.

All sects in the country will agree in being pleased that a monument to John Bunyan is to be set up in some leading thoroughfare in London. A public meeting was held last week, with Lord Shaftesbury in the chair, which decided that this honour should be shown to the memory of the author of the great Christian allegory.

The week had its pains and pleasures. A fearful powder-mill explosion at Waltham, and a prodigious fire at Yearsley's rice-mills in Whitechapel were the chief accidents. The grand pleasure day was, of course, the Derby Day—a most prosperous Derby Day, fair without glare, with the animation of an unprecedented crowd, and the amusement of a slighted colt proving the winner. Grisi was listened to with mingled pleasure and pain in others of her last representations. The Queen was known to be enjoying the society of her relatives from Belgium, and the Princess Alice's betrothed to be recovering from his ill-timed attack of measles. The day is approaching when the Queen will reappear after her period of deep mourning, her consideration for the interests of trade and the feelings of the wide circle of her guests having induced her to appoint a Drawing-room before the close of the mourning.

The general eagerness for news from America was not met by tidings of any great battle or other critical event; but there were indications of considerable importance. These pointed to a great subsidence of menace on the part of the South, and an increasing approximation towards the cause of the Union in all the frontier states. The letters of the "Times" correspondent were the most interesting of all the despatches from the other side of the Atlantic. It is true he cannot tell us much, from the difficulty of his position. In the Crimea and in India he was at home in camp or bungalow. In the slave-holding part of America he is necessarily, in great measure, a guest. He obtains his information through the courtesy of hosts, and he can neither disclose their counsels nor criticise their cause. But he tells us something, and in no other way can we learn anything from the interior of the seceding states.

Two things of importance could be learned from his letters last week. It is plain that there must be an end of all talk of the dissolution of the Union being a result of democratic government. The thoroughly aristocratic character of the hitherto dominant party and its policy is plain enough now to the most hasty talkers on American affairs. The other point is—what we were longing to know—the effect produced on the mood of the Secessionists by the news of the uprising of the North at the President's summons. Now that the leaders are known to admit that their menaces of Washington, and their vaunts of floating their flag from Faneuil Hall were "a feint," the world will set a proper value on all their future threats and boastings.

There are other matters worth a passing word, —such as the notion that "England and France will not allow this sort of thing to go on;" and the strange notion of political economy shown in the cotton-reserve policy of the South. The inventors of both these fancies are perhaps by this time perceiving that it was wild behaviour in them to kindle a civil war, in a baseless confidence that foreigners would interfere to stop it. They must be aware that at Washington no mention of mediation is tolerated for a moment, or can be, for sound reasons. And, as for their cotton resource, —there remains for them the painful discovery that the world is learning to do without their staple,—taught by themselves to look elsewhere for a supply.

The news that privateers are offered from New England ports, in the service of the South, is not surprising to those who are aware of the secrets of the American slave-trade, or of the depth of pro-slavery corruption in certain classes of Northern society. The lesson to be derived from such facts is,—not to admire too much now, and not to condemn too much hereafter, in observing the conduct of the North. The corrupt element is at present absorbed or invisible, amidst the genuine patriotism of the hour. It will reappear by and by, to disgrace the future, as it has disgraced the past, of Northern history. The institution of slavery has demoralised more than the South: hence the mobbing of abolitionists so lately as last winter, and the offer of privateers from the merchants of Maine or Rhode Island, and the whalers of New Bedford. That there should be virtue enough to retrieve the Republic is as much as could be expected; and that there is enough, everybody is now satisfied.

Our domestic politics were angry last week. A mail-packet company which wholly and hopelessly fails to fulfil its engagements must, for the public service, be dismissed. This is the case with the Galway line. Unreasonable Irishmen are angry, and their anger was last week utilised by Opposition to alarm the Government, and once more menace the Budget. After the expenditure of more than a month on the Paper-duty controversy the subject was argued again on Monday and Thursday. On the latter night, or rather Friday morning, the exhausted topic was finally dismissed, the Government having a majority of 15 in a very full house. The reappearance of Mr. Cobden in the House was hailed by all parties with kindness, and from Mr. Gladstone he received the eulogium on his public services—disinterested and of incalculable importance—which passing years and growing generations will constantly confirm.

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THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

CHAPTER LXX.

"The photograph was a good thought, M. Adair," said M. ——, the same evening, "and I compliment you on the forethought which secured it at the moment when Mrs. Lygon was leaving her house, under circumstances that might have made her companion unmindful of small matters. But it is in trifles that the true artist is seen."

Adair listened undemonstratively. He had his own game to play now, and knew that evil eyes were upon him, and he had small attention to bestow upon words, except in so far as they indicated the intentions of those with whom he had to deal. But he had resolved to be his own friend for once, and the graceful condescension of the head of the department had no fascinations for him. In earlier days he might have deemed it a fortunate omen that he was summoned to that presence, and might have dreamed of a confidential trusting, or at all events, of a recognition of talents that should thereafter be employed with distinction. But, ambitious and vain as he was, Ernest Adair had learned too much in the hard and cruel school to which a bad man places himself, to believe in any future save that which he should himself create. And he sat in M. ——'s presence, not only prepared, but resolved, to sell himself and aught he had, or was thought to have to sell, to the very best advantage his cunning might obtain for him.

"I have chosen to be frank with you, M. Adair," said M. ——. "There is a class of men, rarer, I am sorry to say, in our sphere than they should be, who can but be dealt with in a straightforward manner. I need not tell you that it has been M. Wolowski's duty to make me aware of your antecedents."

"So far as the poor man knows them," said Adair, with an excellent imitation of the laugh with which, in talking to an equal, a man derides the blind zeal of an inferior.

"So far as the poor man knows them," replied M. ——, with a smile. "I dare say he has taken all pains to be well-informed, and we will not expect miracles."

"I trust, M. ——, that you will appreciate the motives that prevented my affording the worthy man the assistance which I should have offered to any other inquirer."

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"You consider that Wolowski has ill-treated you, and you hate him," said the chief.

"You have exactly expressed my feelings, sir."

"Of course I must regret the circumstance that those who act for me cannot act harmoniously with one another, but so long as their differences do not interfere with their duties to me, I have nothing to say. I am bound, however, to observe that M. Wolowski has made no complaint against you, M. Adair."

"A forbearance in which I recognise his habitual cunning."

"You are resolved to see no good in him," said M. ——, smiling. "Perhaps you don't like ugly men. I share somewhat of that prejudice myself. But we must take men as we find them, my dear M. Adair. Now to talk business."

As if we had not talked business already, thought Adair.

"You desire to abandon a profession in which you have had many chances of distinguishing yourself—and some of which chances you have not thrown away—and you propose to take to the stage. Mr. Aventayle is, I think, rather favourably disposed towards you, on account of the extreme frankness with which you laid your propositions before him."

"Yes, I spoke plainly enough."

"The only point of importance which you seem to have omitted, and which of course I take it for granted you reserved for discussion with me, is the probability of your obtaining your *congé* from the bureau."

"I had reason to think that I should have little difficulty on that head, after the pains which M. Wolowski had taken to convince the bureau that my services were valueless."

"And when did you form the opinion that I permit myself to be convinced by the representations of M. Wolowski? So far from that, M. Adair, I tell you without hesitation that I regard you as a very valuable officer who has been injudiciously employed, and that I had resolved to accredit you upon a task of a very different character from anything that M. Wolowski had employed you to perform."

"Earlier, M. ——, such information would have been very flattering to me."

"Now, you care neither for appreciation nor trust, and you are dying for the *coulisses*. Happy enthusiasm—it shows that you are too young to be spared. You must continue to serve the public, M. Adair, a little longer, after which you will be at liberty to delight them."

"I have to ask you, formally, for dismissal, M. ——."

"As formally, M. Adair, I have to refuse it."

Ernest Adair smiled, and slightly bowed. He merely said, "I regret your determination, sir. That is all that it is necessary for me to say."

"Yes," said the chief, looking hard at him. "That is all, because I can read the rest without your aid. Refused permission to leave the service, M. Adair dissembled his anger, and affected to resign himself to the wish of the bureau. He even undertook a duty of some delicacy, and soon afterwards, availing himself of the numerous resources at his command, he made his escape to England. There he sought out the theatrical manager with whom he had been in negotiation in Paris, and who, as Mr. Adair had justly concluded would be the case, regarded only the interests of his theatre, and engaged the refugee. He made his first appearance on the stage with a success which, had he been permitted to follow it up, might have inaugurated a triumphal career. But—" And M. ——, who had been speaking off, as it were, from a newspaper record of some catastrophe, was suddenly silent.

Ernest Adair did not reply.

"Have you no curiosity to hear the end of the paragraph that will interest so many persons when it appears in our journals?"

"As you please, sir."

"You have guessed the conclusion, then?"

"Indeed I have made no attempt to do so."

His chief looked at him rather dangerously.

"Try to guess it now, M. Adair."

"I used to be good at riddles, M. ——, but I have told you that I am not what I was, and shall do you but little credit in future."

"You please me much, on the contrary, M. Adair, and show me that you have shrewdness, determination, and courage. Decidedly we shall not part with you. Still, I should like you to finish my paragraph. Why did not the name of M. Ernest, or whatever name M. Adair took, appear twice upon the bills of the English manager?"

"For the same reason, perhaps," said Adair, with the utmost coolness, "that a certain M. Silvestre, formerly in this honourable service, spoke once only at a debating society near Leicester Square."

"Ah! you recollect that fact."

"I was not, however, in England at the time, M. ——."

"Nay, my dear Adair, zealous as you doubtless have ever been for the honour of the service, it would have been unreasonable to expect you to carry your devotion to the point to which some friends of poor Silvestre carried theirs. By the way, his head was never found."

"No?" said Adair, smiling. "He could do without it. He lost it when he trusted one of his employers. It was a sad weakness in poor Silvestre."

"You are a brave fellow, Adair," said his chief, warmly. "And though, as matter of business, I beg you to forget no part of our conversation, it is much more pleasant to me to discuss business in another way."

"I am at your orders."

"How Wolowski and you could have misunderstood one another I cannot think," continued M. ——. "For, prejudice apart, Adair, he is anything but a fool, and must have seen what good stuff there is in you."

"He has quite brains enough to discover the men of whom he had better be jealous," said Adair; "but I have no wish to discredit the bungler in the eyes of his patron. When there is question of employing him in a really serious matter, it might be worth while to ask me for proofs of his fitness to conduct it—meantime he is

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quite good enough for the pocket-picking, key-forging, letter-stealing business."

"The affectation of contempt is a little overdone, my dear Adair; but I am glad to gather that you are content to stay in the service in order to be ready to expose M. Wolowski when the time comes. Would you like his place?"

The sudden demand made Adair look up with surprise, but he immediately suppressed all evidence of emotion.

"I could not fill it with advantage. Besides, though I hate M. Wolowski, I would not wrong him, and I know that you have promised him that his place shall be given to a person of his own recommendation."

"You are misinformed."

"I am bound, of course, sir, to accept your statement; but M. Wolowski, doubtless supposing that he has authority, has promised the post to his intended son-in-law, or whatever relative a man is who marries a girl that may possibly be one's illegitimate daughter."

"Do you allude to M. Chantal?"

"That is the fortunate person, as I need not tell M. ——."

"He will neither marry the girl nor have the place, M. Adair," said the chief, with a curious smile.

"All the same to me," said Adair, in French.

"But you ought not to speak with so much indifference of the lady," replied M. ——, "as she, like yourself, has a vocation for the theatre, and for reasons which it might not greatly delight M. Chantal to hear, is likely to have her wishes indulged at an earlier date than yours will probably be gratified. She only requires some preliminary instruction, which I have reason to think that a friend will procure for her."

The smile on M. ——'s face as he said this told Adair a little story of temptation and infidelity which gave him sincere pleasure, inasmuch as the person to be chiefly injured was his friend M. Chantal. But he had still sufficient self-command not to permit his natural gratification to put him on better terms with his artful companion.

"Poor M. Chantal! You will need to make him some reparation," said Ernest, "for she is an exceedingly pretty personage."

"And that is something to be admitted by the fastidious admirer of lofty English beauty," replied M——. "Now, Adair, how are we to satisfy the grave Arthur Lygon that he ought to take home his fair wife to England with him?"

"I have really given no consideration to the question."

"I request your best consideration to it, M. Adair," said his chief, gravely, and in a voice that was full of meaning.

"In that case," said Adair, answering the tone of the speaker, rather than his words, "I have to revert to my own undesirable position here, and to my wish to be released from it."

"You are so wrong on all that, Adair, that I am sorry you re-introduce the topic. But for the purposes of conversation, suppose that the public could dispense with your services, or could employ them in England—what advice do you give to the friends of the amiable Lygons?"

"We are still at some distance from the consideration, M. ——. Pardon me if I say that it may be beneath the dignity of your position to discuss details with a subordinate on the eve of discharge. The friends of the Lygons had better come to me."

"That has been proposed," said M. ——, with a mocking look. "But in truth the interview promised so little that could be agreeable to yourself, that I thought it a friendly part to decline it on your behalf."

"I dare say that I can manage to avoid brutality, should it be menaced," said Adair.

"Nay, I know your bravery, Adair. A man who disarms one enemy and stabs another in the same fortnight can afford to assume a pacific attitude without reproach. But I wish you to be the gainer by this transaction; and, therefore, I have taken it into my own hands. Consider *me* the friend of the Lygons."

"You, M. ——?"

"Yes, and as both qualified and desirous to make the best terms with you. It will never do for you to go to the English theatre with a tainted reputation, and to read in a criticism on your performance that you played the villain so well as to surprise those who were unacquainted with the advantages you had enjoyed in studying the part."

"I do not accept that suggestion as intended to diminish my terms, M. ——."

"No. But the idea is worth your keeping in mind. Well, you have the power to make this British lily as white as the snow—what is your charge for the detergent process?"

"You take that power for granted."

"I take your word for it."

He struck the bell, and Mr. Aventayle was ushered into the apartment.

"I understood you to say, Mr. Aventayle," said M. ——, continuing the conversation as if the manager had been present all the time of the interview, "that M. Adair assured you he had the means of removing the unpleasant doubts which interpose between Mr. Lygon and the lady who bears his name."

"With a certain qualification," said Aventayle, "which I did not like at the time, and like still less the more I think of it."

"Will you explain?"

Adair slightly smiled.

"I see nothing to cause amusement," said Aventayle. "Mr. Adair did not say to me, like an honest man—the lady is perfectly innocent, and the victim of mystery and slander; but he merely offered to make the husband believe that this is the case. The more I think of that speech, the more I seem to see a fraud and a cheat in the transaction."

"I make no doubt," said M. ——, "that M. Adair will explain to you that he merely used a certain diplomatic reticence, and that he meant all that you wished him to mean."

"Reticence, or whatever you call it, when an honest woman's character is at stake, seems to me d—d like scoundrelism," said Mr. Aventayle. "I see you look as if you thought I used strong words, and I am glad of it, because I mean them to be strong."

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It may here be remarked, that though there was no part of any day, or night, in which the excellent Aventayle would not have entertained the sentiments which he now put forth, the fact which tended to his expressing himself somewhat more bluntly than he might otherwise have done, was the fact that he had dined.

"We all speak in our own way," said M. ——. "Adair speaks cautiously; you, Mr. Aventayle, with honourable frankness; but we have only one object."

"It may be so," said Aventayle. "But before I take a single step in this business, I have made up my mind to have a straightforward answer from that man,"—and he pointed to Ernest Adair,—"in reply to one straightforward question which I mean to put to him."

"Before you put it, Mr. Aventayle—and I may say that I have no doubt of your receiving the most satisfactory answer—let me inform you that Mr. Hawkesley has been with me, and has seen fit to entrust to me the obtaining the evidence which is to exculpate the lady whom we all desire to serve."

"It is taken out of my hands, then? I am heartily glad of it."

"It is in no sense taken out of your hands, Mr. Aventayle. My only reason for mentioning the fact is, to show you that we are working together. Now, suppose you ask the question which you are anxious to put."

"I see the business is handed over to others," persisted Aventayle, "and I am glad of it. But it can do no one any harm for me to have my mind satisfied. Now, Mr. Adair, will you be good enough to tell me in plain English, and without any d—d reticence, as your friend calls it,—will you be so good, sir, as to tell me this? Is Mrs. Lygon really a good woman, or are you only going to try to make it believed that she is a good woman? Answer that, sir, as you sit in that chair."

"All women are good, Mr. Aventayle," replied Ernest Adair, "only some are less fortunate than others in having their goodness detected. I believe Mrs. Lygon to be a very good woman. I hope the answer is plain enough?"

"It is nothing of the kind, sir. You keep the word of answer to the ear and break it to the hope. All women are not good, and I myself have known, and do now know, some infernally bad women. But you are eluding my question, and I am more glad than ever that I am to have nothing to do with the matter in hand."

"Mr. Aventayle," said M. ——, "I do not think that you will be able to justify yourself in abandoning a task which you undertook voluntarily, and which you can perform with great benefit to your friends."

"Not if I am refused the truth."

"I am unable to see in what form of words M. Adair can meet your demand, if you are at present unsatisfied. I understand you to wish to know whether the imputation which is supposed to rest upon the character of a certain lady be false or just."

"Yes, that is it. Let him answer with one word."

"Will you do so, M. Adair?"

"I will. And I answer, Both."

"There comes the accursed riddle again," said Aventayle, fiercely.

"A riddle which it will be M. Adair's pleasure to explain. I invite him to do it," said M. ——, looking at Ernest Adair with an expression which meant command if not menace.

Ernest Adair rose, pushed away the chair in which he had been seated, and drew towards him one of a more luxurious kind, a sort of lounging-seat. Placing himself in this—with no ostentation of swagger, but rather with the calm demeanour of one who has serious business to consider seriously, Adair leaned back, joined his fingers, and, after a pause, said:

"I have no wish to be obstructive, or unreasonable. But I find myself invited,"—and he laid stress upon the word,—"to offer some explanations which may undo all that I have been endeavouring to do for my own advantage for many months past. I am perfectly sensible of the force of all the arguments that have been used in this room, before Mr. Aventayle's arrival, and since he did us the honour of joining us, but I have heard nothing that induces me to think that the time has come for me to take an active part in the business we have been discussing."

"But you have taken that seat that you may sit at ease and be convinced, I suppose?" said Mr. Aventayle, and the remark drew an approving nod from M. ——.

"Yes," said M. ——. "M. Adair desires to show that he will be patient in listening to argument."

"It makes me indignant," said Aventayle, "that such a matter should be a subject of bargain and sale, for that I conclude is what is meant."

"M. Adair is not a rich man, and desires to be a rich man," said M. —— : "I believe I state his position accurately."

"Mr. Aventayle," said Adair, "has only himself to thank for any scandal or annoyance that may arise from this negotiation. I did myself the honour to see him, and to explain to him the terms upon which I would act. I now find that Mr. Lygon has been placed under far more exalted patronage,"—a glance at M. ——, "and information that was to be obtained upon very easy terms this morning has since risen in value."

"With certain drawbacks," said his chief.

"Which make it the more necessary that the price should be kept up."

"I swear," said Aventayle, "that it makes my blood boil to hear the subject treated in this way. Call it your play, man, and fancy that we are higgling about the price of that; put it on that footing, and don't sit there saying that you know how to save a lady's honour, but you will not do it until we have bid up to your mark. You have got a play to sell. What's the price of it?"

"Is that put fairly enough?" said M. —— to Adair.

"No," said Ernest, with effrontery. "It may surprise you to hear me say this, but it pleases me upon the present occasion to be treated with deference and gentlemanly courtesy. I have the

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power to compel them from you, Mr. Aventayle, and as it may be the last opportunity I shall have of asserting my social position, I shall maintain it to the best of my ability. I refuse to make a vulgar bargain, under pretext of selling a play, and I demand to be treated as M. ——, and no one better knows how to treat a gentleman."

"You are growing a Sybarite, my friend," said M. ——, with a slight manifestation of disdain.

"My humour must be indulged, nevertheless."

"Or?" asked M. ——, "for there is an alternative to everything."

"Or M. ——, having undertaken to manage a delicate arrangement for his English friends, will have to confess himself baffled and defeated."

"There being no one who can give the information but yourself?" said M. ——, carelessly.

"I have not said so, M. ——," replied Ernest, smiling.

"Impossible that I should ever consent to part with you, M. Adair," said his chief, admiringly. "Well, Mr. Aventayle, it appears to me that the best course in all cases of difficulty is to consider the object we have in view, and then to take the readiest means for gaining it, no matter whether these are the means that we should willingly have selected. Our object, at this moment, is to procure the exculpation of a lady, and our friend here proffers his aid upon the not very hard terms that he shall be treated like a gentleman, and rewarded as a gentleman should be. He has not met us unfairly, for he has revealed to us that there is a mixture of truth and falsehood in the charges that have been made against that lady, and I dare say will not object to tell us that there is a great deal more of falsehood than of truth in them. In return for that statement, and for the information which we require, we shall be happy to show ourselves grateful in any way he will point out. As he has been kind enough to refer specially to me, perhaps it may be as well that I should conduct the negotiation, and I will now suggest that you, Mr. Aventayle, see your English friends, inform them of what has passed, and remind Mr. Hawkesley of his appointment with me to-morrow."

"I don't see what better I can do," said Aventayle. But when the door was closed upon him he clenched his fist, and shook it in a menacing manner in the direction of those whom he had left inside, and he went out muttering an expression of the strongest conviction that one of the parties, and not impossibly both, would hereafter come in for the benefit of any arrangements that may have been made in conformity with the Calvinistic scheme of final retribution.

CHAPTER LXXI.

AVENTAYLE hurried back to the hotel in quest of Hawkesley. The anger and excitement which had been caused by what the honest-hearted manager regarded as the cold-blooded and calculating villany of Adair had operated to dispel the slight fumes of the dinner, and when he reached the court-yard he felt in a strangely uncomfortable condition. He had mixed himself up in an affair of which he by no means saw the end, and his straightforward nature revolted against his being made a party to a scheme which did not now appear to him in the bright and chivalrous light in which he had at first regarded it. However, he resolved to give Hawkesley the full benefit of his doubts and fears, and the moment he found his friend, Aventayle plunged *in medias res.*

He gave an account of his meeting with Adair, and a tolerably faithful narrative of what has been already told, except that his extreme dislike of Adair perhaps induced him to colour up the affected insolence of the latter into melodramatic effrontery.

"We know him to be a rascal, my dear Aventayle," said Hawkesley, "and what matters his swaggering a little more or less? The point I want to get at from you—only you are a little too angry to be precise—is whether M. —— succeeded in bringing him to terms?"

"Bless you, he is M. ——'s master, at least in this instance," said Aventayle. "Threw himself back in an arm-chair; declared that he would be treated like a gentleman; would not state his terms; and gave himself as many airs as if he had the Koh-i-noor to sell, and didn't care a farthing whether anybody bought it or not."

"Then nothing new was learned from him?"

"Not in my hearing, except new proof that he is a scoundrel. That is the fellow who wants to come to me!"

"How do you mean, Aventayle?"

"Wants me to bring him out at my theatre."

"Ernest Adair!"

"Well, not by that name. He was good enough to propose that I should call him Aventayle, if I liked, and produce him as a lost child of my own, I suppose."

"He proposed to you that he should be brought out in London?" repeated Hawkesley.

"Yes. What do you make of that, besides impudence?"

"I scarcely know. Yet, if he is half the villain which we have been believing him, it seems a strange course that he should make such a venture as that. I wonder whether it was made in earnest, Aventayle; you are always thinking that everybody has a design upon your theatre."

"That's right — that's right," growled the manager. "Because I try to protect myself a little, and never succeed, you taunt me with suspicion."

"My dear fellow, do not speak in that manner. I rather charged you with credulity."

"If you are speaking in the way of apology, I will quarrel with you outright. But listen to me. When I say that nothing new came out, just now, I ought to mention one thing, because the Frenchman laid a stress upon it, though I did not see much. I insisted on driving home a question which you will perhaps be angry with me for having asked, but there was such a confusion and contradiction in my mind that I could not help it."

"You spoke for the best, I know. What was the question?"

"I asked—I ventured to ask—don't be angry with me, Hawkesley."

"I will not, I swear to you."

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"Well then, I demanded to know whether the charges that had been made against—against *his* wife—had any foundation in truth."

"And what was the miscreant's answer?" said Hawkesley, turning very white.

"As you say, it can matter nothing what such a villain utters—"

"He did not dare to say that they were true?"

"He said that there was both truth and falsehood in the charges, Hawkesley, and at my risk of wounding or offending you, I have thought it my duty to tell you this."

"Offending is out of the question, and a wound from him is impossible," said Hawkesley; "therefore give yourself no further concern."

"But you do not tell me—to be sure, I have no right to expect you to do so."

"What I think of what he said? Yes, I will tell you. I believe, and every hour confirms me more and more in the conviction, that there is a mixture of truth and falsehood in the case. That is to say, that this wretch has acquired some real and genuine secret, and has been using it, God knows how, but in furthering some devilish contrivance of his own. Were it not so, Aventayle, the very first moment that my sister-in-law comprehended the fact that a suspicion had come around her, would she not have indignantly trampled upon the lie? What the tangle may be into which he has entrapped that woman I cannot and dare not guess, but when the scoundrel said, in your presence, that he had not been using lies only, he said what I have made up my mind to hear for many a day."

"But you believe her—I am ashamed to ask you—"

"I believe her to be innocent and good, as God shall judge me. But whether some act of folly of her own, or some treachery that has twisted a natural action into a meaning and form away from its nature has helped this Adair to place her in her present position, it is now for us to discover."

"You will have to bribe the man, and bribe him high. I tell you that."

"That I expected."

"Of course, and I did not mention it as any new discovery, but for another reason."

"What's that, Aventayle?"

"Well, I suppose I may mention it. I have no idea what Mr. Lygon's means are, but perhaps it may be more convenient to a gentleman in Somerset House to pay a sum by instalments than in one lump; and if there is anything of that kind, I should feel hurt and wronged if you did not make me your banker."

"You are the best fellow in the world, and I shall make not the slightest hesitation in asking you for anything I may want. Did the fellow hint at terms?"

"No, he was much too haughty, and his master was obliged to say that he would take it on himself to negotiate. I suppose that they will go halves in whatever it is."

"Is not that a bit of good suspicion?"

"Well, one is a Frenchman, and the other is half a Frenchman."

"Arthur," said Hawkesley, entering the room in which his brother-in-law sat, "it is enough to tell you that we are at work, and I hope to good purpose. There, do not look so very disbelieving, because that tends to put one out of heart. Come out with me for a drive."

"I would rather remain here until you come to me and say that you have accomplished all that you intended to try, and that we return home by the next train," replied Lygon, calmly.

"You will not hear those words from me for many a long day," said Hawkesley. "Why not come out?"

"I am better here."

And Lygon so obstinately refused to accompany his brother-in-law in the excursion which the former suggested, that Hawkesley, only anxious to get rid of the time that must elapse until he could again meet M. —— at the bureau, wandered out alone.

"It is surely taking no step in the affair," said Hawkesley, "to go down to Versailles. I will not even go near the house. But I have a strange inclination to visit the neighbourhood, and if—"

It ended in his taking the next train for Versailles.

True to his compact with himself, Hawkesley did not turn down towards the Avenue, but proceeded to the Palace, and after walking slowly through a few of the rooms, that day nearly deserted, he went into the gardens.

It was as if destiny had impelled him thither, and the sensation which he experienced a few moments after entering was that which comes to us in a dream of the dead. We feel no surprise, we address them as those whom we expected and desired to meet, and we part without sorrow.

For, turning to one of the side walks, Charles Hawkesley beheld Laura coming towards him.

There was no thought of avoidance. They advanced to one another, as calmly as if they had been meeting in London after passing the previous evening together, and they had shaken hands before the re-action came.

And then neither could speak for many minutes. Hawkesley made the attempt more than once, but found no word that seemed fit to commence the conversation. At length Laura, with an effort, broke the strange silence, and it was with a mother's question.

"When did you see the children?"

That was enough, and Charles Hawkesley, greatly relieved, hurried into a flood of detail. Walter was well, and Freddy was well, and Clara was well, and they were at his house, and they enjoyed themselves as much as children could —and Hawkesley, grateful for every memory that he could bring to bear, every tiny fact that he could think of, went on with such a budget of child-news as he could at another time have believed it impossible that he could have collected, and which Laura listened to with an eager ear and a tearful eye.

"Thank God, they are well, and happy."

"They are well, indeed. Happier they shall be one of these days, and soon, dearest Laura," said Hawkesley.

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They sat down on one of the benches in the shade, and another silence followed, but this time it was Hawkesley's turn to break it.

"Arthur is with me."

"Here?" exclaimed Laura, starting.

"No; in Paris. He will not come hither—fear nothing, Laura."

"He *will* not!" repeated Laura.

"Nay, I mean that there is no reason for his coming—so far as he knows. There will be a reason, soon."

And they spoke long and earnestly, and hour after hour passed before they left the gardens.

(To be continued.)

VERRIO AND LAGUERRE.

POPE, denouncing the vanity of wealth and the crimes committed in the name of taste, visits Lord Timon's villa, and finds plenty of pegs on which to hang criticism, ample scope for satire. With depreciating eyes he surveys the house and grounds, their fittings and garniture, almost as though he were going to make a bid for them. "He that blames would buy," says the proverb. Then he passes to the out-buildings, taking notes like a broker in possession under a *fi. fa.*

> And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
> That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
> Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
> Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven.
> On painted ceiling you devoutly stare,
> Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
> On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
> And bring all paradise before the eye, &c.

Who was Verrio? Who was Laguerre?

ANTONIO VERRIO was born at Lecce, a town in the Neapolitan province of Terra di Otranto, in the year 1639. Early in life he visited Venice to study the colouring of the Venetian masters. He returned a successful, not a meritorious painter. In 1660 he was at Naples, where he executed a large fresco work, "Christ healing the Sick," for the Jesuit College. This painting, we are told, was conspicuous for its brilliant colour and forcible effect.

Subsequently the artist was in France, painting the high altar of the Carmelites at Toulouse. Dominici says that "Verrio had such a love for travelling that he could not remain in his own country."

Charles II., desiring to revive the manufacture of tapestry at Mortlake, which had been stopped by the civil war, invited Verrio to England; but when he arrived the king changed his plans, and entrusted the painter with the decoration in fresco of Windsor Castle. Charles was induced to this by seeing a work of Verrio's at Lord Arlington's house at the end of St. James's Park, the site of Buckingham House. "In possession of the Cartoons of Raphael," Fuseli lectured, angrily, on the subject, years afterwards, "and with the magnificence of Whitehall before his eyes, he suffered Verrio to contaminate the walls of his palaces." But there was raging then a sort of epidemical belief in native deficiency and in the absolute necessity of importing art talent. In his first picture Verrio represented the king in a glorification of naval triumph. He decorated most of the ceilings of the palace, one whole side of St. George's Hall and the Chapel; but few of his works are now extant. Hans Jordaen's lively fancy and ready pencil induced his critics to affirm of him, "that his figures seemed to flow from his hand upon the canvas as from a pot ladle." Certainly, from Verrio's fertility in apologue and allegory, and the rapidity of his execution, it might have been said that he spattered out his works with a mop. Nothing daunted him. He would have covered an acre of ceiling with an acre of apotheosis. As Walpole writes, "His exuberant pencil was ready at pouring out gods, goddesses, kings, emperors, and triumphs over those public surfaces on which the eye never rests long enough to criticise, and where one should be sorry to place the works of a better master. I mean ceilings and staircases. The New Testament or the Roman History cost him nothing but ultramarine; that and marble columns and marble steps he never spared."

He shrunk from no absurdity or incongruity. His taste was even worse than his workmanship. He delighted to avenge any wrong he had received, or fancied he had received, by introducing his enemy, real or imaginary, in his pictures. Thus, on the ceiling of St. George's Hall, he painted Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, in the character of Faction dispersing libels; in another place, having a private quarrel with Mrs. Marriott, the housekeeper, he borrowed her face for one of his Furies. Painting for Lord Exeter, at Burleigh, in a representation of Bacchus bestriding a hogshead, he copied the head of a dean with whom he was at variance. It is more excusable, perhaps, that when compelled by his patron to insert a Pope in a procession little flattering to his religion, he added the portrait of the Archbishop of Canterbury then living. In a picture of the "Healing of the Sick," he was guilty of the folly and impropriety of introducing among the spectators of the scene portraits of himself, Sir Godfrey Kneller, and Mr. May, surveyor of the works, all adorned with the profuse periwigs of the period. But he could not transfer to his pictures a decorum and a common sense that had no place in his mind. Hence he loved to depict a garish and heterogeneous whirl of saints and sinners, pan-pipes, periwigs, cherubims, silk stockings, angels, small-swords, the naked and the clothed, goddesses, violoncellos, stars, and garters. A Latin inscription in honour of the painter and his paintings appeared over the tribune at the end of St George's Hall:—"*Antonius Verrio Neapolitanus non ignobili stirpe natus, ad honorem Dei, Augustissimi Regis Caroli Secundi et Sancti Georgii, molem hanc felicissimâ manu decoravit.*"

The king lavished kindness upon this pretentious and absurd Italian. He was appointed to the place of master-gardener, and lodgings in a house in St. James's Park, to be afterwards known as Carlton House, were set apart for his use. For works executed in Windsor Castle, between the years 1676 and 1681, he received the sum of 6845*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* Vertue copied the account "from a half-sheet of paper fairly writ in a

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hand of the time." It particularises the rooms decorated and the cost. For the king's guard chamber, 300*l.*; for the king's presence chamber, 200*l.*; for the queen's drawing-room, 250*l.*; for the queen's bed-chamber, 100*l.*; and so on until the enormous total is reached. He employed many workmen under him, was of extravagant habits, and kept a great table. He considered himself as an art-monarch entitled to considerable state and magnificence. He was constant in his applications to the Crown for money to carry on his works. With the ordinary pertinacity of the dun, he joined a freedom which would have been remarkable, if the king's indulgence and good humour had not done so much to foster it. Once, at Hampton Court, having lately received an advance of a thousand pounds, he found the king so encircled by courtiers that he could not approach. He called out loudly and boldly:

"Sire! I desire the favour of speaking to your Majesty."

"Well, Verrio," the king inquired, "what is your request?"

"Money, sire! I am so short in cash that I am not able to pay my workmen, and your Majesty and I have learned by experience that pedlars and painters cannot give credit long."

The king laughed at this impudent speech, and reminded the painter that he had but lately received a thousand pounds.

"Yes, sire," persisted Verrio, "but that was soon paid away."

"At that rate, you would spend more than I do to maintain my family."

"True, sire," answered the painter; "but does your Majesty keep an open table as I do?"

Verrio designed the large equestrian portrait of the king for the hall of Chelsea College, but it was finished by Cooke, and presented by Lord Ranelagh. On the accession of James II. he was again employed at Windsor in Wolsey's Tomb-house, which it was intended should be used as a Roman Catholic chapel. He painted the king and several of his courtiers in the hospital of Christchurch, London, and he painted also at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

But soon there was an end of his friends and patrons, the Stuarts. James had fled; William of Orange was on the throne; a revolution had happened little favourable to Signor Verrio's religion or political principles. There is a commendable staunchness in his adherence to the ruined cause, in his abandoning his post of master-gardener, and his refusal to work for the man he regarded as a usurper, though there is something ludicrous in the notion of punishing King William by depriving him of Verrio's art. He did not object, however, to work for the nobility. For some years he was employed by Lord Exeter at Burleigh, and afterwards at Chatsworth. He was true to his old execrable style. He introduced his own portrait in a picture-history of Mars and Venus, and in the chapel at Chatsworth he produced a dreadful altar-piece representing the incredulity of St. Thomas. He painted also at Lowther Hall. For his paintings at Burleigh alone he was paid more money than Raphael or Michael Angelo received for all their works. Verrio was engaged on them for about twelve years, handsomely maintained the while, with an equipage at his disposal, and a salary of 1500*l.* a-year. Subsequently, on the persuasion of Lord Exeter, Verrio was induced to lend his aid to royalty once more, and he condescended to decorate the grand staircase at Hampton Court for King William. Walpole suggests that he accomplished this work as badly as he could, "as if he had spoiled it out of principle." But this is not credible. The painting was in the artist's usual manner, and neither better nor worse—and his best was bad enough, in all conscience. His usual faults of gaudy colour, bad drawing, and senseless composition were, of course, to be found; but, then, these were equally apparent in all his other works. Later in life his sight began to fail him, and he received from Queen Anne a pension of 200*l.* a-year for his life. To the last royal favour was extended to him, and he was selected to superintend the decorations of Blenheim. But death intervened. The overrated, over-paid, and most meretricious painter died at Hampton Court in 1707. There is evident error in Dominici's statement that the old man met his death from drowning on a visit to Languedoc. Walpole, summing up his merits and demerits, says rather contradictorily, "He was an excellent painter for the sort of subjects on which he was employed, without much invention and with less taste!"

The father of Louis Laguerre was by birth a Catalan, and held the appointment of Keeper of the Royal Menagerie at Versailles. To his son, born at Paris, in 1663, Louis XIV. stood godfather, bestowing on the child his distinguished Christian name. The young Laguerre received his education at a Jesuit college, with the view of entering the priesthood, but a confirmed impediment in his speech demonstrated his unfitness for such a calling. He began to evince considerable art-ability, and, on the recommendation of the fathers of the college, he eventually embraced the profession of painting. He then entered the Royal Academy of France, and studied for a short time under Charles Le Brun. In 1683 he came to England with one Picard, a painter of architecture. At this time Verrio was in the acme of his prosperity. He was producing allegorical ceilings and staircases by wholesale. He had a troop of workmen under him, obedient to his instructions, dabbing in superficial yards of pink flesh, and furlongs of blue clouds. Verrio was happy to secure forthwith so efficient an assistant as Laguerre, and soon found him plenty to do. In nearly every work of Verrio's after this date, it is probable that Laguerre had a hand. He seems to have been an amiable, kindly, simple-minded man, without much self-assertion or any strong opinions of his own. He was quite content to do as Verrio bid him, even imitating him and following him through his figurative mysteries, and floundering with him in the mire of graceless drawing and gaudy colour and ridiculous fable. He had at least as much talent as his master—probably even more. But he never sought to outshine or displace him.

"A modest, unintriguing man," as Vertue calls him, he was quite satisfied with being second in

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command, no matter how ignorant and inefficient might be his captain.

John Tijon, his father-in-law, a founder of iron balustrades, said of him, "God has made him a painter, and there left him."

He worked under Verrio in St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and at Burleigh; he executed staircases at old Devonshire House, in Piccadilly; at Buckingham House; and at Petworth; assisted in the paintings at Marlborough House, St. James's Park; decorated the saloon at Blenheim; and in many of the apartments at Burleigh on the Hill "the walls are covered with his Cæsars."

William of Orange gave the painter lodgings at Hampton Court, where it seems he painted the Labours of Hercules in *chiar 'oscuro*, and repaired Andrea Mantegna's pictures of the Triumphs of Julius Cæsar.

The commissioners for rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral unanimously chose Laguerre to decorate the cupola with frescoes. Subsequently this decision was abandoned in favour of Thornhill; but, as Walpole says, "the preference was not ravished from Laguerre by superior merit."

Sir James Thornhill received payment for his paintings in the dome of St. Paul's at the rate of forty shillings the square yard. The world has still the opportunity of deciding upon the merits or demerits of those works. Vertue thinks that Sir James was indebted to Laguerre for his knowledge of historical painting on ceilings, &c. For decorating the staircase of the South Sea Company's House, Sir James received only twenty-five shillings per square yard. By speculating in the shares of the same company, it may be stated that another artist, Sir Godfrey Kneller, lost 20,000*l.* But prosperous Sir Godfrey could afford to lose: his fortune could sustain even such a shock as that: at his death he left an estate of 2000*l.* per annum. He had intended that Thornhill should decorate the staircase of his seat at Wilton, but learning that Newton was sitting to Sir James, he grew angry. "No portrait painter shall paint my house," cried Sir Godfrey, and he gave the commission to Laguerre, who did his very best for his brother artist.

On the union of England and Scotland, he received an order from Queen Anne to design a set of tapestries commemorating the event, introducing portraits of her Majesty and her Ministers. Laguerre executed the requisite drawings; but it does not appear that the work was ever carried out.

In 1711, he was a director of an academy of drawing instituted in London, under the presidency of Kneller. On the resignation of Kneller, there was a probability of Laguerre being elected in his place; but he was again defeated by his rival, Thornhill, probably as much from his own want of management and self-confidence, as from any other cause.

He drew designs for engravers, and etched a Judgment of Midas. Round the room of a tavern in Drury Lane, where was held a club of *virtuosi*, he painted a Bacchanalian procession, and presented the house with his labours.

He had many imitators, for there are followers of bad as well as of good examples. Among others, Riario, Johnson, Brown, besides Lanscroon, Scheffers, and Picard, who worked with him under Verrio.

His son and pupil, John Laguerre, manifested considerable ability, and engraved a series of prints of "Hob in the Well," which had a large popularity, though they were but indifferently executed. He was fond of the theatre, with a talent for music and singing; painted scenery and stage decorations. He even appeared upon the boards as a singer.

Laguerre, in his age, feeble and dropsical, attended Drury Lane on the 20th April, 1721, to witness his son's performance in a musical version of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Island Princess;" but, before the curtain rose, the poor old man was seized with an apoplectic fit, and died the same night. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The son subsequently quitted the stage, and resumed his first profession. He etched a plate, representing Falstaff, Pistol, and Doll Tearsheet, with other theatrical characters, in allusion to a quarrel between the players and patentees. He died in very indigent circumstances, in March, 1748.

Time and the whitewasher's double-tie brush have combined to destroy most of the ceilings and staircases of Signior Verrio and Monsieur Laguerre. For their art, there was not worth enough in it to impart any lasting vitality. They are remembered more from Pope's lines, than on any other account —preserved in them, like ugly curiosities in good spirits. To resort to the poet for verses applicable though familiar:

"Pretty in amber to observe the forms
Of hair, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms;
The things we know are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil they got there!"

Dutton Cook.

AN EXPERIENCE OF JERSEY LAW.

MY IMPRISONMENT AND ESCAPE. A TRUE NARRATIVE.

In the beginning of 18—, we—that is, *ego et conjux mea*—came to Jersey, intending to go on to Dinan in the spring. Jersey was to be our halting-place, as there was then no steam communication between it and St. Malo in the winter. Before leaving England I had had a serious quarrel with a former friend and medical attendant, and no long time elapsed after our arrival in the island, before this gentleman sent me in a bill of monstrous proportions—a true "*compte d'apothicaire*," as the French express it. At that time I was quite ignorant of the singular constitution of Jersey law, and how it placed me in the power of any man who chose to sue me whether I owed him money or not. I wrote to the doctor, refusing to pay the full amount of his claim, and referring him to a solicitor in London. He was, however, better acquainted with the Jersey law than myself, as the result will show.

Here, before proceeding with my story, I will enter into some explanation of the law of debtor and creditor as it exists in Jersey. This law enables the creditor to enforce his demands summarily, depriving the party sued of his liberty, and leaving him in gaol till the costs of his

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imprisonment have swelled the amount to be paid: and further, supposing the defendant ultimately gains his suit, and proves his non-liability, no damages for false imprisonment are obtainable. The law leaves him no remedy, for the plaintiff makes no affidavit; and a simple letter from England, requesting a Jersey advocate to enforce payment of a claim, is enough to cast the defendant at once into prison, prior to any judicial investigation into the merits of his case.

Thus, in Jersey, every man (unless he be a landed proprietor) is at the mercy of every other man, both in the island and out of it. In short, one man can arrest another simply by drawing up an imaginary account on a common bit of paper, and handing it to the nearest lawyer, who will send his clerk with the sheriff's man and imprison the unfortunate victim in default of immediate payment. What is worse still, an arrest can be carried into effect, by means of a simple letter sent through the post.

The exception in favour of land-owners of course includes the owners of house property, an exception which mostly benefits Jersey-men, as few but natives possess property in the island. It is only a proprietor who must be sued *before* he can be imprisoned. If the Jersey laws confined the persons merely of strangers sued by the inhabitants of the island, in the arbitrary manner described, the justice of such a practice might still be defended on the plea of preventing them from leaving the island; but no excuse can be found when the Jersey law is made an instrument in the hands of strangers, living out of the jurisdiction of the island, and when it is used to enforce payment of debts incurred in another place, and in which no inhabitant of the island is interested, and when (as sometimes happens) it is employed as a means of extortion. In the first case it can be urged that, at least, it gives protection to the islander, which may be all proper enough, though the system is liable to abuse. In the second, the injustice and folly of the law is flagrant. By what right or reason ought the Jersey code, without previous inquiry, to deprive one man of his liberty at the demand of another, when both are strangers, and when the dispute relates to matters wholly beyond its pale, and in reference to which it has no means of obtaining information on oath?

Yet such is the case, and thus the Jersey law is converted into a mere tool of iniquity and oppression.

In speaking of this strange anomaly in Jersey law, I am not referring to bills of exchange, or to securities of any sort, but merely to simple debts, free from any acknowledgment or signature whatever. In any other court, such claims would not be entertained for a moment.

Surely the law is barbarous enough for the people of Jersey, without its consequences being extended beyond its circumference. But, as matters stand at present, the case stands thus: A and B fall out together. Now B is a rogue. They go to law together, and B demands of A more than he is entitled to. The courts in England are about to decide upon the merits of the case. Meanwhile B learns that A is gone to Jersey for a short time on business, perhaps connected with this very affair, such, for instance, as looking up an important witness. What does B do? he immediately sends off a letter enclosing his "little account" to a Jersey lawyer, instructing him to demand payment or lock up A forthwith. The lawyer obeys, of course; A storms—protests—all in vain. He is incarcerated, and is told he may explain as much as he likes afterwards; but, in the meantime, must go to prison, or *pay*. At last poor A, whose liberty is important to him, wearied with the delays which it is the interest of the Jersey lawyers to raise in his suit for judgment, pays the demand into court (au greffe) to be adjudicated on—costs of law, costs of imprisonment and all. The latter item includes 10*s*. every time the prison-door is opened to let him pass on his way to court—a journey he has too often to perform without much approach to a *dénoûment*, and whither he is obliged to go under escort like a criminal; and this process is repeated several times, without the cause even being called on for hearing. Worst of all, when A comes out, he has no remedy against B, who, of course, being satisfied, withdraws his suit at home.

But to return to myself and my story. As the Jersey advocate was instructed not to accept the only compromise that I had to offer, I was suddenly arrested and became an inmate of the Jersey prison, where I remained for five months without my case being once called for trial.

At the end of that period I made my escape in the manner I am now about to describe.

The uncertainty and suspense I had so long endured had very seriously affected my health, and on this account I was allowed to inhabit a cell alone, my servant being permitted to sleep in the prison, on condition of his remaining in the ward after locking up. I had thought more than once of effecting my escape, as my position became every day more intolerable.

There was a tradition among us (whether true or not, I cannot say), that several of the prisoners in the criminal ward below, had effected their escape, by forcing up the flagstones of the storey above, getting up through the aperture, filing the bars of the window at the head of the staircase, and carrying off with them some of the debtors in their flight. There was another tale also of a debtor, belonging to the weaker sex, who had escaped by getting down a sewer leading towards the sea-side.

These stories were so many incentives to me; and, at last, I determined on risking a plan proposed to me by my wife, and carried into execution by her assistance.

In Jersey all that the authorities provide for a debtor is safe keeping, four stone walls, and the pavement to sleep upon. For the convicted criminal there is a bed to lie on, however coarse, and clothes to cover him; and if he is sick, an infirmary, where his illness can be properly attended to; for a debtor there is none of these, if he cannot afford the hire of a bed, or has none of his own to bring in with him. Amongst the hired furniture which my wife had sent in for my use, was a turn-up bedstead, forming in the day-time a chest of drawers in appearance. Matters were now arranged between us, in the

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following manner,—for she was allowed to visit me daily in my debtor's cell. I was to seem more ill than I really was, and to keep my bed for a few days. We were to damage the bedstead, which was already in a shaky condition, and then I was to ask leave to send for a new one, and to be carried out in the old turn-up bedstead, if it should be allowed to pass the doors without examination. Besides, if one bedstead came in, the other being sent out would seem a matter of course. Nevertheless to make all sure, I thought I would try if we could not gain over a friend, from among those in charge of us. After a good deal of delicate negotiation carried on by means of my servant, we succeeded, and in the usual manner. It was the old story of the silver key. From reasons, which must be evident to the reader, I refrain from entering into this part of the subject farther. I need only add that it was necessary to keep Mr. Kendish, the gaoler, wholly ignorant of my intentions, as from what I had seen of him, I entertained such a respect for his probity, that I should as soon have thought of insulting him, as of proposing any transaction of the kind. I believe him to be a very honest man, and every way trustworthy; and my object in the present instance was to seize a moment for the accomplishment of my project when he was not at the gate.

Two strong porters had been promised on the morning of the day a sovereign a piece, if they would bring the new article of furniture, and carry away the sham chest of drawers, without asking any questions. At the same time they were warned not to be surprised if it was rather heavy, and they were told, moreover, that they must walk away with it, smartly and jauntily, making it appear light and easy to carry. They were quite content to know no more than was told them, and promised to perform the job. So far, so well; but one question, the gravest of all, remained to be solved, and this was—how to get free of the island?

The steamers were not to be thought of, a strict search being sure to be instituted on board, the moment my escape should become known. The only plan would be to hire a boat or small sailing vessel to take me over to France. I was obliged to trust my servant with the management of this part of the business also. The whole of the arrangements were superintended all through by my wife, but some of the details, and this one unfortunately among them, were left to others. The next thing to be done was to secure the co-operation of persons outside. This also was effected, not till after the principal party concerned in the plot was mean enough to take advantage of my helpless position, and to double the price first named at the critical moment. In answer to my inquiries, William (my servant) assured me that the boat hired was perfectly seaworthy, and fit for the purpose proposed. He was no judge of nautical matters, but I was obliged to take his word about it. A carriage and coachman also were hired, and told to be ready at a certain time and in a certain place. None of the parties employed in the minor details of the plot were informed as to the true nature of the business for which they were engaged, in order to prevent treachery or hesitation. The secret, however, belonged necessarily to several persons, but, for a wonder, it was well kept. The day was named, and my heart began once more to beat with hope.

We were much too wise to allow even a hint of what was in contemplation to escape in the ward. Prisoners are notoriously jealous of such attempts; and many a similar plan, on which all that ingenuity and skill could devise had been brought to bear, has been betrayed at the last moment by the jealousy of others who could not bear that one among their number should succeed in obtaining that liberty of which themselves were to remain deprived. I carried my precaution so far as at present to conceal my intended escape even from a chum, who, I believe, would have been quite incapable of playing a treacherous part. The man I most feared was Meerschaum; to my surprise and secret annoyance, but a few days before that fixed upon for our attempt, he walked into my cell, and after binding me to secrecy, informed me that he and another had formed a plan of escape, and requested to know if I would make one of the party, and contribute towards the expenses. I had a shrewd suspicion that my money was required far more than my person, and that if I trusted him I might find myself at the last inside a wall with my purse on the outside. He refused to tell me the particulars, but warned me that once embarked, I should have need of resolution. This extraordinary coincidence of plans by no means pleased me: nevertheless, I did not allow Meerschaum to perceive my feelings, but professed myself ready whenever he should be, and so the conversation ended for the present.

On a certain evening Mr. Kendish (the gaoler) came to my bedside to inquire after my health, which I pronounced to be in a very delicate state, as indeed it was. He had always been civil and kind to me, and I could not avoid reproaching myself with the dissimulation I was practising towards him, and the trouble I was about to bring upon him. As he sat talking to me, I pointed out the state of my bedstead, and he recommended me to get a new one. I assured him I would lose no time in following his advice, and he left me, feeling that this little conversation had gone far towards disarming suspicion on the part of the person most interested to prevent my escape. This was a great step in advance; all the money in the world would not have done more for us, and I hope Mr. Kendish may see through the pages of ONCE A WEEK that I am not ungrateful for the interest he more than once showed in my condition when under his charge. As I was not on my parole, or on bail, I considered myself perfectly free to practise any ruse I could think of, in order to regain that liberty of which no crime had deprived me. It was now all fair play. Those only who have been in a similar position can understand the emotions of such an hour. The night before we were to put our scheme into execution we broke up the inner part of the bedstead, and hid the pieces under the sofa on which my servant used to sleep.

The next morning my wife made her appearance; and about half-an-hour before the porters were

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expected, I sent for my chum Stewart, and telling him what I was going to do, requested his aid, begging him to draw off the attention of the other prisoners, whilst I was being carried out. He became rather agitated at such a startling piece of news, and at the risk I was about to run. However, he willingly promised his help towards the success of the undertaking. The false chest of drawers opened at the top, and half of it turned back upon hinges, so as to form a sort of lid. The front part slid into a groove when the lid was shut down upon it, and closed the whole. The chest was to be well corded over all; but I dreaded lest some over-inquisitive turnkey, or perhaps Kendish himself, should order the fastenings to be loosened, and lift up this cover, to assure himself that all was right inside.

To avoid discovery in such a case, I hit upon a plan for concealing my person, in spite of the top being opened. I nailed across the inside, at a little distance below the lid, several pieces of tape. Upon this network were placed a blanket and pillow, giving the chest an appearance of being well stuffed with bedding. Underneath this I was to be curled up. The space was "cribbed, cabined and confined," but a greater security was gained. I now got into my box, without coat or waistcoat on, and my wife, and the servant Stewart, proceeded to pack me up, and cord me down. The buttons of the sham front had been pulled out, to give me air to breathe. I remained in the chest about a quarter of an hour before the porters arrived with the new bedstead. It was rather hot and oppressive, but that signified little, provided only I could get clear of the island and its prison. Shortly before concluding the last preparations for flight, I signed my will, drawn up in legal form. I had had a good deal of experience in boating at sea, and I alone, I may say, of all the party, was really aware of the risk attending such a voyage as was contemplated, at such a season of the year, for we were now arrived at the month of October. As I reflected that in such an undertaking more or less danger was an ordinary ingredient, I determined that the prize I was striving for was well worth the risk, so I made up my mind to go through with the attempt in spite of winds and waves. Stewart was to go and talk with Meerschaum while the chest passed through the corridor. My wife was to remain in the cell for at least two hours after my departure, in order to prevent my absence from being discovered too soon, and to give me at least that amount of time to get a-head of any pursuit which might be made. And so we remained for some time, in agitation and suspense awaiting the steps of those who were to seek their living burden and bear it away, perchance to life and freedom, perchance to closer captivity, or to end the struggle for ever by quenching in the waves of a winter sea the hopes and the fears, the cares and anxiety, which now tumultuously strove together in my breast.

I sat doubled together with my head bent down, and my knees drawn up, inhaling an air which became heated at each breath I drew. I could see no one, and had already bid good-bye to my wife and Stewart. They were still near, and I could hear them, but I might never see them again, and Stewart I never have seen, to this day. At last they came; a murmur of several voices fell on my ear, and I felt myself lifted up and borne along with a slightly balancing movement. I heard the footsteps of the prisoners and the noise of their conversation around, as we came down the corridor. Presently I felt the chest sink at one end and rise at the other, and then it became inverted exactly in the opposite manner, and I knew we were descending the stone staircase and would soon emerge into the open air in the court below. I was half afraid that, in going down, they might let me fall, when, from the cramped position in which I was, I stood a chance of breaking my neck. In great suspense I waited for the clink of the first gate as it opened to let us pass; there were two more to go through; but I heard only *one* turn upon its hinges, and a few words between my servant and the turnkey on duty. I listened in vain for the sound of other locks drawn back, and began to wonder when we should get clear, and whether I was already discovered or betrayed, and was being carried back to my cell, when suddenly I felt the chest placed upon the ground, and the cords being rapidly unfastened: the front was withdrawn, and to my utter astonishment I found myself in the back kitchen of the house where my wife lodged, when I scarce supposed we were yet outside the prison walls. The porters were already gone, so I never saw them at all, nor did they see me, which was just what was intended. A cloak was thrown quickly over me, and I was hurried through the passage in this incomplete dress. At the foot of the stairs, I found my child in its nurse's arms, who doubtless brought it there to bid me farewell, and scarcely expected to see me alive again. I gave it a hearty kiss and stepped into the coach that awaited me. The blinds were put up, so as entirely to conceal the persons inside, and I completed my toilet as we went along. While in the town, the horses were kept at a moderate trot, to avoid attracting any remark which might hereafter be the means of setting the pursuers on our track. Soon our motion became more rapid, and at length the carriage stopped, and we had to get out, being obliged to continue our road on foot. We were standing on the brow of a steep hill overlooking the sea, which foamed at its base a considerable depth below. A fresh breeze was blowing, and several boats danced upon the waters as they washed against a tiny pier which jutted out from the shore, forming a sort of harbour for the insignificant craft that anchored there. For many months my range of vision had been confined to a few feet of earth enclosed within walls and gratings, and *now* it extended far away over the hills and beyond the sea to where the distant coast of France was to be discerned, a long low line upon the horizon. As we descended the abrupt and difficult path leading to the little port, I anxiously scanned the size and appearance of the boats, and pointing out one with a half deck and some standing rigging attached to its mast, I inquired of William if that was the craft we were to sail in? I thought it rather small, but still it had a certain breadth of beam, and it would not do to be too particular. No, it was not that, it was another. I looked in vain some time, for the one he described

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as being there, all ready for its passengers, till to my great consternation, I discovered a small boat lying close to the pier, which he declared was the one he meant. It was no bigger than a captain's gig, and to see it rocking upon the wavelets in commotion from the sea outside, it seemed little fitter to contend with the larger waves of the channel, than a Thames wherry. When I beheld the frail nature of the little bark, I confessed to myself that to attempt making the passage in it would be the very height of rashness, and I deeply regretted the circumstances which compelled me to trust to William for providing the means of crossing over, for his ignorance upon such matters was evident. Yet freedom was before and captivity behind me; and with such a choice, retreat was not to be thought of. As for him, though about to accompany me in my perilous trip, he did not seem the least aware of the folly he had committed in hiring such a cockle-shell as this in which to spend a winter's night upon the sea.

Neither did matters appear more reassuring when we got on board; the old sailor who owned the boat, and was to take us over, stated, that he had shipped a considerable quantity of water in coming round to meet us, from the sea that was already running, while another grave cause for anxiety came to light also. We had neither of us a watch, and the boatman had reckoned upon our possessing one, to enable us to tell when the tide would turn, during the night. This was important, as we must shape our course accordingly, or we might miss the opposite port, and run great danger of driving down channel. Besides, about midway, there was a notoriously dangerous reef of rocks which we should have to pass in the night, and to which we must give a wide berth. Out at sea, too, here and there, the crest of some wave more turbulent than the rest, might be seen to rear up in a mass of white and feathery foam, and then come toppling down, surging and bubbling in most ominous tumult. But I would not and could not return; so we hoisted our single sail, and boldly stood away, for France and liberty! leaving our accomplices behind to take the best precautions in their power, to avoid compromising themselves with the authorities.

We were compelled to make one or two tacks, before we could gain an offing, and lay our course for Saint Malo. This prevented us leaving the land as fast as I could have wished, and the height of the hills lining the coast in that part, caused the shore to appear nearer than it was in reality. My anxiety and impatience to get out of sight of persons on land, rendered these preliminary manœuvres very tedious, and I kept my eye upon the shore, fearing every moment to see our pursuers run down the hill to man a boat in chase. At length we put about for the last time, and our little craft began to leave the island behind in good earnest.

The evening was rather cold, and the wind grew keen and cutting to one who, like myself, had kept to my bed for several days past, while the change from the confined atmosphere of a cell was very great. I was by no means exhilarated, for I felt that half our difficulties were still to be overcome, while the channel between Jersey and France was yet to be crossed, and uneasiness as to our accomplishing this in safety, almost destroyed the hope I might otherwise have felt. But a sort of dogged feeling remained, which hindered me from flinching at the very outset of our dangers. There was already a good deal of motion, and I was slightly sea-sick; but I determined this would never do, and managed to make a tolerable meal from the provisions on board, washing it down with some brandy and water. William was not so fortunate, and lay completely prostrate at the bottom of the boat. Out at sea, the prospect was gloomy, and large black clouds began to lower on the horizon. In short, appearances betokened a storm. Our situation was a serious one; still we steadily kept on our course, and the waves washed past us and surged away behind in our wake, the mast bending to the breeze, which was gradually freshening. As the sun declined amidst the gathering masses of vapour, the sea got up, and the white horses, as breaking waves are termed, increased upon the distant line of water, destroying its uniformity.

From the boatman's conversation, I could perceive that a rough night was before us. The strain upon our slender mast was augmented, and the little boat plunged bows under, till she shipped more water than was acceptable. At length, with all our care, sea after sea came on board of us, and I occupied myself in baling out the water. Still we kept her head towards France; night was drawing on apace, and lights began to twinkle in long lines upon the shore behind us. They seemed warm and homely in the distance, while before us all was black and threatening. To add to our discomfort, it was getting very cold, and I was now completely drenched, from the waves that continued to break over us. I took a spell at the helm, while the boatman went forward to watch the sail, such attention becoming more and more necessary.

All the skill I had ever gained was required to steer in safety over the seas which rose in succession across our bows.

My companion's warning voice was constantly heard, as a huge mass of water would threaten to overwhelm us, unless we seized the right moment to thrust her bows slap into the midst of it. Had we once failed in this, we might have received the whole shock upon our broadside, and broaching to, in the trough of the sea, been rolled over and over in the angry waters, and so have gone down in the deep, like many better men before us. The wind being nearly abeam, we kept breasting the waves upon a taut bowline, the boat staggering from stem to stern with every shock she encountered. A sea was now running which threatened to engulph our little bark at every moment, if we persisted in sailing as close upon the wind as our course required. I took another turn at baling, and as I sat upon a thwart with the water in the boat washing round my legs, and my back exposed to every wave as it broke over us, my teeth chattered with the cold. The prospect of spending the whole night in such a situation, if we lived, indeed, till morning, was far from cheering. The boatman remained silent, and I did not like to be the first to propose returning. At length we held a

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short consultation, and I found that he, too, considered it very dangerous to proceed, so we determined to put her head round for the shore. I promised him the 5*l.* he was to have received for the trip, if he succeeded in placing me safely on board the steamer for France, which, I knew, would leave the harbour next morning.

It was a critical moment, as we came round, and paying off the main-sheet, stood back again for Jersey, scudding before the rising gale.

It was now dark, and a regular storm was blowing, which lashed the waters into fury. The Island of Jersey is surrounded for a considerable distance out at sea by numerous reefs and sunken rocks. As I sat steering through the danger and darkness, chilled to the marrow and oppressed with anxiety, I several times wished myself safe back in my cell, as I thought of the alarm my wife must be feeling on my account, at sea, in such weather as this. I heard a deep exclamation of thankfulness from my companion, who tended the sail, when we had passed within an oar's length of a sunken rock which I did not see in time. Had we struck, which of us would have survived to tell the tale? Another cause for disquietude presented itself: the number of lights upon the shore and near the harbour puzzled us: the boatman was afraid we might mistake those placed on purpose at its mouth, and be obliged to scud down channel for the rest of the night, such being by this time the force of the wind and the sea, that it would be utterly impossible to beat up for our port, if once we got to leeward of it.

At last we entered the harbour of St. Helier's, and most thankful were we to land in safety after so many perils. As we sailed up the harbour we boarded the St. Malo steamer, which was to leave next morning, the boatman wishing to speak to the engineer about receiving me on board. Unfortunately, there was no one in the vessel, so we were obliged, however unwillingly, to defer the arrangements for my flight. I was to pass the rest of the night at the boatman's house, a small place in one of the outlying suburbs near the sea, and so obscure as to make it little probable I should be discovered there; but in order to gain my place of refuge, we had to pass right through the town. In my position it was running the gauntlet; and I hardly dared look up, though I had good reason for hoping that my escape would not necessarily be discovered till ten o'clock at night, when the prisoners would be locked into their respective cells. I despatched William to inform my wife of my return, and reassure her as to my safety. After a meal made on the provisions brought from the boat, with some grog to wash the salt water out of our mouths, I lay down upon the floor of the boatman's humble parlour and fell asleep. The boatman departed on his errand to the engineer. When he returned it was broad daylight, and, setting out in a small boat, after a short pull, we gained the gig in which we had sailed the day before, but which was now moored in the centre of the harbour. We had to lie alongside of her, and pretend to busy ourselves with getting her in order, as if we were a party about to take a sail for pleasure. We remained in this position completely exposed for more than a quarter of an hour. The pier was crowded, as usual, with passengers embarking, and friends there to see them off. Little was it suspected who was calmly looking on from the little boat on the water. There were officials set to watch every person who embarked, in the hope of laying hands upon the fugitive (whose escape meantime had been detected), and the steamer underwent a thorough search from bows to stern. I dreaded lest they should think of a telescope, and sweep the quays and the rest of the harbour itself too closely. William, my servant, looked very much as if he were going to be hanged; I told him so, and laughed at his pitiful face. It was no joking matter, though, and the suspense was great, as we sat watching for the steamer to cast off, in order to make our rush. At last a movement on the pier, and she came slowly round; pointing her head towards the sea, she began her voyage. "Away" was the word with us: a cap held up a moment in the air, and our oars dipped in the wave; and a short but energetic spurt brought us close alongside. The heavy plash of the paddles subsided at our signal. Hastily handing 5*l.* to our worthy boatman, I sprang up the ladder, and fairly boarded the vessel; the little bark that brought us rowing hastily off. The steamer drawing a mighty breath or two from her iron lungs, panted on again out of harbour and gained the open sea, and Jersey and its bastille, thank God, were left far behind; and I need scarcely add that I have never revisited that interesting island, of which my readers will agree with me in thinking that its singular system of law is its greatest curiosity.

DIO.

THE CAVALIER'S ESCAPE.

TRAMPLE! trample! went the roan,
Trap! trap! went the grey;
But pad! *pad!* PAD! like a thing that was mad,
My chesnut broke away.—
It was just five miles from Salisbury town,
And but one hour to day.

Thud! THUD! came on the heavy roan,
Rap! RAP! the mettled gray;
But my chesnut mare was of blood so rare,
That she showed them all the way.
Spur on! spur on!—I doffed my hat,
And wished them all good day.

They splashed through miry rut and pool,
Splintered through fence and rail;
But chesnut Kate switched over the gate—
I saw them droop and tail.
To Salisbury town—but a mile of down,
Once over this brook and rail.

Trap! trap! I heard their steel hoofs beat
Past the walls of mossy stone;
The roan flew on at a staggering pace,
But blood is better than bone.
I patted old Kate, and gave her the spur,
For I knew it was all my own.

But trample! trample! came their steeds,
And I saw their wolfs' eyes burn;
I felt like a royal hart at bay,
And made me ready to turn.
I looked where highest grew the May,
And deepest arched the fern.

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I flew at the first knave's sallow throat:
One blow, and he was down.
The second rogue fired twice, and missed;
I sliced the villain's crown.
Clove through the rest, and flogged brave Kate,
Fast, fast to Salisbury town!

Pad! pad! they came on the leve sward,
Thud! thud! upon the sand
With a gleam of swords, and a burning match,
And a shaking of flag and hand:
But one long bound, and I passed the gate,
Safe from the canting band.

WALTER THORNBURY.

THE DOOMED COTTAGE.

NORTH WALES.—To be SOLD or LET, a COTTAGE RESIDENCE, situated in one of the most romantic parts of this beautiful country, containing dining, drawing, and breakfast rooms, four good bedrooms, and dressing room, servants' rooms, kitchen and scullery; replete with every modern convenience. The above most desirable residence stands close to the sea, in its own pleasure grounds of about an acre, within a mile of church, and five miles of a railway station. Rent only £50 per annum. Address Mr. J. Snooks, &c., &c.

"There, Emily, don't you think that is the house for us?" I exclaimed, after reading the above advertisement aloud with all the emphasis I could give to voice and manner.

My sister's only answer was a sigh, deep, prolonged, despairing. To explain the cause of that sigh, I must inform the reader that for the last two months we had been engaged in all the pleasures of house-hunting. Daily had we waded through the never-ending columns of the "Times'" advertisement sheet. Innumerable were the letters we had written and the answers we had received. I had travelled north, I had travelled south, I had travelled east, I had travelled west, I had travelled to every intermediate point of the compass within the limits of this island, in the character of Cœlebs in search of a House, and all this travelling had resulted only in the detriment of my purse, the wearying of my body, and the disappointment and vexation of my spirit. Daily had we met with some advertisement which described "the very place for us," as I daily repeated to Emily, and every time I went to prove it, my feelings received a shock similar to that which Messrs. Chuzzlewit and Tapley experienced when they first set eyes on the real Eden. Either the "excellent drawing and dining rooms" dwindled into mere closets, in which, to use elegant language, it would have been impossible to "swing a cat round," or the "park-like pleasure grounds," stood confessed neither more nor less than a solitary turnip-field; the "magnificent views," commanded a dreary, uninhabitable waste, or the "moderate rents" varied from 150*l.* to 300*l.* a-year.

Then, again, there was another thing which made our choice yet more embarrassing and diffi-

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cult; most people have a preference for some particular county, or, at all events, for some parts of the country above others; but in our case "the land was all before us where to choose," from John o' Groats to the Land's End, from the Irish Channel to the North Sea. Inland or marine residence, we were indifferent: the only point upon which we had a preference was in favour of a country above a town one.

And now, the better to explain our present quest, I must give a brief retrospect of our personal history. Emily was the only relative I had in the world. She was many years younger than myself, being quite a child at the time we lost both parents, within a few weeks of each other, by cholera. The property they left behind was very small, and was to be divided equally between my sister and myself. I was between seventeen and eighteen years of age at this time, and had not yet made choice of any profession. I had long had a hankering after Australia, but my parents had set their faces against it. Now, however, that they were no more, it seemed the best thing for me to do, without friends, as I was, to forward my career in England. But what was to become of Emily? At this juncture, a kind-hearted woman, the proprietress of a fashionable boarding-school, who had known and respected our mother, stepped forward and offered to give Emily a home and education for much less than her usual terms, which our small inheritance would have been quite inadequate to afford. So it was settled. The walls of the boarding-school closed upon Emily, while I embarked myself and fortunes on the broad waves for Australia. There I toiled many years, and prospered; had I remained as many more, I might have become a rich man. But Emily, meanwhile, had grown up; Emily wrote me word she could burden her kind benefactress no longer, and was about to look out for a situation as a governess. This must not be. She should not eat the bread of strangers. I could, and it was only right that I should, provide a home for my sister. The question was, should I send for her to come to me, or should I go to her? After due consideration, I decided that Emily should act the part of the mountain, and I would be Mahomet.

What a happy meeting ours was! I could scarcely believe that the tall, womanly girl I now led forth in triumph from the gates of that grim boarding-school, itself so unaltered, was the same little sister I had carried in there that long time ago. *Then* she had thrown her arms round my neck, and tearfully begged me not to leave her, with many a fond caress; and *now*, she had grown so shy that she could scarcely bring her lips to utter my name, and under the shade of those long dark lashes I had no chance of seeing whether the large violet eyes were still the same. If the fairies, however, had substituted a changeling (and Precision Court did not look a likely place for them to carry on their tricks), I was quite satisfied with their performance. And very soon the shyness wore off, the violet eyes were raised to mine in trusting confidence, and we both felt that we belonged to one another, and that there was no mistake about it.

It was early in the month of May when I landed. We had taken lodgings at a small watering-place on the south coast, and it was thence we carried on our search after a permanent abode.

And now, I must hurry forward. I went to see this "most desirable residence" in North Wales, and—took it. I was, indeed, so delighted with the first view, that the agent nearly persuaded me into buying it. But when I reflected that I might not have Emily so very long with me (I am not like most men who think nothing of their sisters' looks; *I* thought *my* sister so beautiful that I was as silly as a school-girl where she was concerned, and expected her to captivate an earl, or a baronet, at the least, in no time); when I considered the probability that I might then desire to return to Australia, it seemed wiser not to cumber myself with house property, and only to rent the place by the year.

I returned and told Emily what I had done. She seemed nearly as much surprised as if I had told her I had taken a house in the moon. I believe she had quite made up her mind that we should remain in our present lodgings till the end of time. But, on the contrary, our time there was soon at an end. We went up to London almost immediately for the purchase of furniture, and quickly transported all our goods and chattels along with our own persons to Aberport, North Wales.

Emily was just as much delighted with the house at first sight, as I had been. It was built of rough grey stone, in the Elizabethan style, with high pointed gables, and projecting porch. I have said the material was grey stone, but at the time of our arrival, in the middle of summer, this was difficult to discern, so profuse was the covering of leafy green which spread itself all around. There were roses and jessamine scenting the air, and climbing round the porch and about the windows, while the tall chimneys and the higher gables were mantled in the clustering evergreen of the ivy. The garden was a little wild and out of order, but bright with flowers of every hue, which looked as if they had sprung up spontaneously in spots where the hand of man had never been; and this air of careless nature was much better suited to the place than the most artistic arrangement would have been. There was scarcely a square yard of level ground in all the little domain: here was an abrupt descent and there a gentle slope, both verging alike towards the edge of the bold headland, which was the distinguishing feature of that part of the coast. At the base of the cliff the deep sea made an everlasting murmur.

It was a lonely spot we had chosen for our dwelling; the village, consisting principally of small thatched and white-washed cottages, lay nearly a mile distant. The church spire formed a pretty object among the trees, and close to it stood a house of higher pretensions, evidently the parsonage. There were one or two more such houses to be seen more remote from the village, but ours stood alone, none other near it.

Sunday came, and we obtained the first view of our neighbours in church. In a pew on one side of the chancel sat, or stood as the case might be (it

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was while they occupied the latter position that my observations were taken, as all the pews were of the old-fashioned, high-backed construction, and presented nothing to view beyond the tips of certain feminine bonnets, and, with the exception of a son of Anak here and there, but little more than the uncovered crowns of the masculine heads, when their occupants were sitting)—in this pew then on one side of the chancel were three young ladies, whose extraordinary likeness to the officiating clergyman proclaimed them unmistakeably the parson's daughters. The thing most striking about all four faces was their vapid colouring, the hair being extremely light, the eyes extremely light, eye-brows so light as to be scarcely definable, complexions pallid, and lips very slightly less so. They reminded me of pictures in a dissolving view when just fading away, and about to change into something else. I wondered whether the young ladies' voices were as much like their father's as their faces: his was a trifle nasal, but they sat at too great a distance for me to catch the whisper of their responses as they were gently breathed forth into the air.

The pew on the opposite side of the chancel was occupied by the family of the Audleys of Audley Court, situated in the parish, although more than three miles off. There was an elderly gentleman of the genuine outward type of the English country squire, his wife, son, and two daughters. Though it had not been possible to hear the sounds which issued from the lips of the parson's daughters at the same distance, it was impossible *not* to hear those which began to issue from the squire's nostrils almost before the parson had fairly launched into the first head of his discourse. I saw the squire's lady give not a few admonitory reproofs with her elbow—she was very thin, and I should have guessed their points must be sharp, and no joke, thus applied; but the jolly fat sides of the squire seemed scarcely to feel it all, he but just opened his eyes and then went off the next minute comfortably to sleep again. Mrs. Audley, though too thin, was good-looking, and so were both their son and daughters. I perceived that young Mr. Audley's eye had remarked Emily before we had been ten minutes in church. There were several respectable-looking families occupying lower seats in the synagogue, whose position in society I was not able quite so definitely to determine. Moreover, I did not spend all my time in looking about me; I profess myself equal, even at this distance of time, to repeat a great part of Mr. Merwyn's sermon on that occasion, only I think my readers would rather I did not. It was not at all an extraordinary sermon.

In a few weeks we felt quite settled in our new home.

I think it was towards the end of the fourth week that our first callers, Mr. and two of the Misses Merwyn, were announced. Hands were shaken, seats were taken, and then, by-and-by, Mr. Merwyn "hoped" we "liked our house," and the Misses Merwyn in a sisterly duet echoed the paternal remark. I thought their hopes sounded faint and shadowy, almost despairing, but then the three physiognomies indicated but a small proportion of the sanguine in their respective temperaments. I answered decidedly we liked it very much indeed.

"You don't find it cold?" inquired Mr. Merwyn.

"Bleak and exposed?" chimed in Miss Merwyn.

"Isolated?" suggested Miss Penelope.

As it was now about the hottest time in a particularly hot summer, the thermometer showing above 80° in the shade, the idea of cold was refreshingingly original. I looked again at those pale countenances, wondering whether they could possibly have been generated under an Indian sun, before I disclaimed having suffered at all from cold.

Emily took up Miss Penelope's cue of isolation.

"My brother has but just returned from many years' residence in Australia," she said, "and I have been for the same time shut up without relief in a boarding-school, so that it is a pleasant change for us to be together, and we don't feel at all lonely."

"But aren't you frightened?" was Miss Merwyn's next question.

"At being 'out of humanity's reach,' I suppose you mean," returned Emily, smiling. "Is this a dangerous neighbourhood, and do you advise us to get an alarm bell?"

Miss Merwyn declared this was not what she meant, but she didn't proceed to explain what she did mean.

"I should like to try to find something to do among the poor," said Emily, turning to Mr. Merwyn; "if you will allow me."

"Certainly," returned he, "if——" and he stopped short hesitatingly.

"Perhaps you mean if *they* will allow me," continued Emily. "Tom and I have both thought they seemed rather unwilling to hold any intercourse with us."

"The common people in this part of the country are very superstitious," remarked Mr. Merwyn. We were fairly puzzled,

"But, my dear sir," I said, "we have done nothing to shock their superstitions. We have not forced them to eat the leek, as Fluellen did Ancient Pistol."

"No," said Miss Penelope, mysteriously, "it's not *you*, it's the *house*."

Emily and I stared, and begged for an explanation.

"You will hear the story before long," said Mr. Merwyn; "it is, of course, an idle superstition, and I would rather not be the one to tell it, if you will excuse me."

We were thus forced to repress our curiosity. Before they took their leave we asked our visitors to walk round the garden. Emily was leading the way towards a point of the cliff where she had erected her favourite seat, the finest view of the sea and coast being obtained from thence, when Miss Penelope held her sister back.

"That's the very spot!" she exclaimed in a tone of horror.

"Hush!" whispered Miss Merwyn; but she stopped short, nevertheless, saying aloud that they had a long walk home before them, and she

thought they had better not tire themselves by going further. The two sisters, accompanied by their father, took their leave.

A few days later the Audleys called upon us, not the squire, but the young gentleman, with his mother and one of his sisters. We had not expected this condescension, and I was secretly of opinion that it was young Mr. Audley who had persuaded the ladies to do Emily this favour, in order that he might discover whether she looked as pretty seated *vis-à-vis* to him in her own drawing-room as she did in the church, with half-a-dozen pews intervening. He wanted to see her eyes when she should have no prayer-book in her hand on which to bend them so pertinaciously. We had, however, no fault to find with the ladies' manner, it was extremely cordial.

The old question did not fail to occur in our catechism. "How do you like your house?" inquired Mrs. Audley.

"Very much indeed," I answered as before.

"It is such a pretty place," added Emily.

"And in size and every other respect suits us very nicely," I went on.

"But," inquired Miss Audley, "are you not afraid of something happening? I am sure I should be if I lived here."

Her brother laughed.

"'*Lasciate ogni speranza voi che entrate qui,*'" he said, in a tone of mock solemnity, turning to us.

"Herbert!" exclaimed Mrs. Audley, "don't make a joke of it. Too dreadful things have really happened here."

"Oh, do tell us what things," begged Emily.

"Yes," I continued, "we do very much wish to have the mystery solved. The Misses Merwyn gave us some dark hints of a tragedy, but shrank from being explicit. I think I may promise that my sister's nerves will be strong enough to bear the narrative."

"But those of my mother and sister will not suffer them to be the narrators, so I suppose I must undertake the office," said Mr. Audley.

And thus he opened the chronicle of the Doomed Cottage:

"About eight or nine years ago this house was built by a person—nobody knows whom. He called himself an Italian Count; but I believe the aborigines hold that he was the devil in human shape. He was certainly a dark, forbidding-looking man, who, arriving here one day as a stranger, saw, admired, and purchased the site on which this house now stands. The walls were raised by ordinary workmen and by ordinary labour; there was none of the magic speed which attended the erection of Aladdin's palace. The stranger came and went while the work was going on, one day here, to approve, hasten, or suggest alterations, and the next gone, nobody knew where. When the house was ready, he prepared himself to inhabit it; but after a residence of only a few weeks, he suddenly disappeared, and after being absent several months, one day as suddenly returned with a gentleman who, it was shortly announced, had become the purchaser of the place. The *soi-disant* Count after that disappeared altogether from the scene of action, and the new owner brought down his wife and family. He was a retired captain in the army, in delicate health: both he and his wife were quite young people, and they had three of the loveliest children that ever were seen. All the neighbourhood called upon them, and Captain and Mrs. O—— speedily made themselves popular. The place suited his health, and both seemed delighted with it. They had lived here about six months, when one day it became known their eldest child, a sweet little girl of about nine years of age, was very ill, and the disease was soon pronounced to be typhus fever of the most malignant type. Mrs. O——, and the two younger children successively caught the infection, and within a month they all died of it. Poor Captain O—— did not take the fever, but his mind gave way before this dreadful bereavement of those he so tenderly loved, and he is now, it is said, the inmate of a private lunatic asylum. Those who undertook the management of his property tried in vain to dispose of this house: at length, after standing empty for more than two years, it was let to a Mr. and Mrs. B——."

"You have no more horrors to relate, I trust," said Emily, who had grown quite pale while listening to the foregoing.

"Indeed this story is not less shocking. Do you still wish to hear it?"

Emily gave a sign of acquiescence; and he proceeded.

"Mr. B——'s antecedents were wrapped in almost as much mystery as those of the Count. In this part of the world, however, we don't stop to inquire about people's antecedents. The human species is so rare, that every individual possessing the outward marks of civilisation receives the *entrée* into our *beau monde*. (I took the cap and fitted it on, though it was not thrown at me. Mr. Audley was quite unconscious of having made what might be considered a very rude remark; but I observed his mother looked uncomfortable, his sister blushed. Of course there was no pause in his narrative.) Mr. B—— was a very plausible man, a fluent talker on almost every subject; but he had a restless eye, which never looked one steadily in the face. His wife was pretty, lady-like, and of an extremely gentle and retiring disposition; her love for him had evidently a slight mixture of fear in it. They had no family, and had lived here rather more than a year, when the crash came. The Merwyns were giving an evening party; we were there, and Mr. and Mrs. B——, among others. During the evening, Mrs. B—— was solicited to seat herself at the piano. I have never heard a voice like hers off the stage. Quiet as she was at all other times, when she sang she seemed a different creature, and appeared to be breathing forth her whole soul in a flood of passionate feeling. All her songs were of this character: she never chose anything softly plaintive, or tranquilly tender. On this occasion her voice was thrilling, even more richly and wildly than usual, in the midst of the most profound silence, when loud and angry tones became audible in the hall, in apparent dispute with the servants. The singing abruptly ceased, and the voice outside exclaimed,

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"'I *know* he is here, and I *will* see him."

"In another instant the door was pushed violently open, and a coarse but handsome woman, her features inflamed with passion, entered, and marched straight up to Mr. B——.

"'How now, my husband?' she cried. 'What are you doing here?"

"'You are mad, woman!' he returned, in a calm voice, though his face turned deadly pale. 'I have never seen you before.'

"'Ha!' screamed she. 'You will have difficulty in proving me mad; but I can prove you a villain in any court in England. Where is she you now pretend to call your wife?'

"That lady, who had hitherto remained seated at the piano, pale and trembling, now rose, went up to Mr. B——, and putting her hand into his with timid, touching confidence, said,

"'I am his wife. What do you want with my husband?'

"'Your husband!' shrieked the virago; and she burst forth into a torrent of abusive and opprobrious epithets.

"Everybody else in the room had till now been struck dumb by this scene. But Mr. B——, whose countenance had betokened alternations of rage and fear, now turned to his host.

"'Mr. Merwyn,' he said, 'do you allow your guests to be thus insulted?'

"'No, indeed,' replied that gentleman; and advancing to the infuriated female, he bade her leave the house. 'If you do not do so quietly,' he added, 'I shall summon those who will remove you by force.'

"The woman raised her hand threateningly, as if she meant to defy him, but, after a moment, seemed to change her mind, and, scowling round on all the company, retreated as far as the door. Arrived there, she turned to say,

"'I go; but you will hear of me again,' and then departed.

"You may imagine, after such a scene, it was difficult to make a show of returning to the former tone of light and easy conversation. Mr. B—— almost immediately regained his wonted self-possession, but his wife was quite overcome; and about half an hour afterwards he gave her his arm, and, taking leave of Mr. Merwyn and everybody, as though nothing had occurred, he led her from the room; and, as we supposed, they went home. The next morning a tragic occurrence was revealed. Mrs. B——'s dead body was found lying at the foot of the cliff, beneath this house. Mr. B—— and the woman we had seen the night before had both disappeared, and no trace of either was ever discovered. A note, in the handwriting of the unfortunate deceased, addressed to Mr. Merwyn, was found on her dressing-table. In this note, she said 'she prayed God to pardon her for seeking to avert a life of shame by a voluntary death;' and it was generally believed she had really died by her own deed, having discovered that the villany imputed to him she called her husband was but too true. This occurred about three years ago, and the house has stood empty ever since, until you took it. The ignorant people about here believe there is an evil doom upon it; and the story, as related by them, was widely spread, and had the result of frightening all would-be tenants. I wonder you never received any warning notice."

"I am not sure we should have been strong-minded enough to disregard it, if we had done so," I returned. "It has rather a depressing effect on one's spirits to be living in a house where so many sad events have taken place. How do you feel, Emily?"

"Oh, I wish they had warned us," she said; "I hope they do not believe we are in league with the Count."

"The Count," I remarked, "seems to me to have rather undeservedly received a bad name. We don't hear of any trait in him of at all a diabolical nature, unless it be his '*going to and fro, and walking up and down on the earth.*' And now this practice, as far as is known here, he has abandoned."

"True," returned Herbert Audley, "but you would find it difficult to convince the poor people here that he is not at the bottom of all the mischief. They say the house was built with unhallowed gold, and therefore nothing prospers that comes into it."

"Dear Tom," said Emily, turning to me, "couldn't you give notice to leave immediately?"

"I have taken the house for a year," I said, "but if you don't like it that need not oblige us to stay in it so long. We will go whenever you like."

Mrs. Audley and her daughter seemed to think this the most natural thing to do, but young Mr. Audley appeared quite distressed at the idea.

"You surely are not in earnest," he said. "There is not another house in the neighbourhood at liberty that would suit you."

"But there is no reason why we should stay in this neighbourhood rather than any other," said Emily.

Mr. Audley looked as if *he* could have named a reason, but he did not,—at least not *the* reason. He said there was no part of Wales, or of England either, which was so beautiful in his opinion, that it was the most healthy place in the world, and that he should be sorry if he had been the means, by what he had said, of depriving Aberport of such agreeable neighbours. He should feel he had done a wrong to society.

"Oh, society will soon forgive you," observed Emily, "and we must have heard the story soon from somebody if not from you."

But Mr. Audley refused to be comforted, and was continuing his self-reproaches when Mrs. and Miss Audley rose, saying that they "had made a call of most unconscionable length;" and they all three took their departure.

After they had gone, Emily and I discussed the subject *unter vier Augen*, as the Germans say. I don't think she seemed so anxious to run away as she had done when our visitors were present.

"It is such a pretty place," she said, "I should be sorry to leave it, and yet—I suppose the house is still the property of that poor Captain O——," she continued, after a pause.

"Yes, so I understand."

"It is very well we brought servants with us," resumed Emily; "I fancy we should have found

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it difficult to get any to live with us from this neighbourhood. I hope nobody will try to frighten Jane and Sarah."

"It would take something more than four deaths in a family from typhus fever, one case of insanity, and one of suicide, however dreadful, to frighten Jane, I fancy. She looks to me the sort of woman to serve a fever hospital, make a round of the cells of Bedlam, and behold all the horrors of the *Morgue* with unmoved countenance. Of Sarah I don't feel quite so sure."

But I must not dwell on our conversation further, or I shall never get to the end of my story. Time passed on, Autumn "laid his fiery finger on the trees," and found us still in the doomed cottage at Aberport. The Merwyns were amazed we could know all and yet think of remaining, though they seemed truly glad to have us for neighbours. We got to know other families. Everybody was very kind to us, and no ill happened to us. The poor began at length to open their hearts and their cottages to us; whether it was the nice jellies which Emily sent to those that were sick, or the frocks she made for the children, or the flannel petticoats for the old women, or her own bright smile and gentle words, which found the key thereto, I have no means of knowing, but am myself rather inclined to believe in the last. I believe it to be a calumny that the poor only love you for what they can get, as some persons maintain. I sometimes looked back with regret to the active life I had led beyond the seas, sometimes but not often, for the thought would then steal over me that it might not be so very long before I should be free to return to it, and then I doubted not I should in turn regret my sweet sister and our happy English home, where we two had lived together. Our intimacy with the Audleys had progressed, and I saw what was happening under my eyes. It was the old story, as old as the hills, as the world itself. What brought Herbert Audley so frequently to our house? Was it friendship? I am not one of those cynics who profess to regard that sacred tie as all moonshine, but this I do believe, that where friendship will bring a man two miles, love will carry him twenty; friendship rides at a gentle canter, and love will bear no other pace than a gallop. And why did Emily look so much oftener in her glass than she ever used to do? Why was the colour in her cheek so much more variable? Why was she so much more capricious about her dress?

"And thinking this will please him best,
She takes a ribbon or a rose;
For he will see them on to-night,
And with this thought her colour burns,
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right."

And what said the Squire and Mrs. Audley to this state of affairs? Could it be that they did not perceive it? Parents have commonly as many eyes as Argus where their sons and daughters are concerned in these matters. Could they then think such an alliance suitable for the future head of the house of Audley? The Audleys were an old family, were proud of an ancestry which in unbroken and untarnished links they could trace up to the time of him of the name, who came over with William the Norman, and covered himself with glory on Hastings' field. And we? I have kept back our family name; I have not thought it necessary to state the calling by which our father was supporting his family at the time when the cholera snatched him untimely away from them; I have no intention of going back to our grandfather; it is better to confess at once we were *nobodies*. These thoughts, and such as these hopes and fears about my sister's future happiness, often were in my mind.

One day, (it was a bright warm day, such as is rare in the month of November), Emily and I were sitting on the cliff together, on the seat I have referred to before, looking at the great water which stretched itself calm as a mirror at our feet, and counting the milk-white sails which were dotted numerously upon the blue surface.

"Hark!" exclaimed she, suddenly, "did you not hear a cry in the distance?"

The sound had struck my ear at the same instant, and as we paused to listen we heard it again—a long, shrill, ringing cry, like that of a child in distress. We rose and began to walk quickly in the direction whence it proceeded, to the right, in the opposite direction from the village, being guided all the way by a constant repetition of the cry at short intervals. In less than a quarter of an hour we reached the spot where a little boy, about eight or nine years of age, was bending in an agony of grief over the prostrate form of another some two or three years younger. We recognised them immediately as the children of the village blacksmith. The elder boy's voice was so choked by sobs that it was some time before we could learn from him what had happened. It seemed, while playing in a field at some distance, the children had been frightened by a bull, and were running at full speed towards home, when the younger lost his footing and fell to the ground, hitting his head against one of the projecting pieces of rock, which all along the cliff broke the surface of the grass-grown ground at intervals.

"Can you carry him home?" asked Emily.

I lifted the poor little fellow as gently as I could, and bore him in my arms towards our house, Emily and the other child walking silently at my side. His sobs were now exhausted, but as we reached the gate and I raised the latch to enter they burst forth afresh, and, seizing hold of my arm, he exclaimed:

"Oh! don't take him in there! He will not get better! He will die if you take him in *that* house!"

"But, my dear Johnny, it is the nearest place, and we will send immediately for a doctor, and do all we can for your brother. It may hurt him to remove him further; indeed, I must carry him in, the house cannot hurt him."

Again he implored that I would take him "home." It was hard to disregard his entreaties, but "home" was a mile further, and I thought it best and wisest to follow my own purpose. So we entered the house, and despatched a servant for the doctor, while we laid the little boy on a sofa, and tried every means we could think of to

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restore animation. In vain; it was not so to be. In a short time the doctor came, only to confirm our worst fears. He was of opinion that the concussion of the brain had caused instantaneous death. As he heard this the living child rushed with a wild shriek from the house, and the doctor, seeing there was no demand for his aid, likewise soon took his departure.

A few hours later the father himself came to bear away the corpse. He spoke no word, but he gave us a look we shall never either of us forget. It was such a look as a man might have cast on the supposed *murderers* of his child.

"We cannot stay here any longer," said Emily to me the next day. "I have been down to the blacksmith's cottage, and when they opened the door and saw it was I, they shut it in my face; and the mother looked at me as dreadfully as the father did yesterday. I saw in the faces, too, of all the people I met on the road that they thought we had killed the child by bringing it into this house."

Such superstition seems incredible, but it was the fact. The doctor repeated his opinion that death had been instantaneous; Mr. Merwyn tried to reason with his parishioners; and Herbert Audley frantically abused them, calling them idiots, fools, and what not, to their faces. It was all no use. The aborigines shook their heads, and knew very well how it had been.

A few days more passed, and our servants came to us to express their desire to quit our service immediately.

"It's not that *I*'m afraid, ma'am," said the redoubtable Jane, "but it's so dull like. Never a body will come into the house. The butcher's boy stood outside the door this morning while I took the meat of him, and the miller wouldn't bring the flour any further than the far gate; and as for women folk, why I think they're scared at the very sight of the house. I can't live no longer among such fools."

"I hope, however," said Emily, "that you won't leave us until we either find somebody else to come to us, or until we leave the place ourselves, as we probably shall do before long. Sarah and George"—(the latter a great stout boy of sixteen or seventeen, whom we kept to clean shoes and knives and work in the garden)—"both of them declare they won't sleep another night here. You won't leave us without a servant in the house?"

Jane was not of a very obliging disposition, but she was mollified by this account of our forlorn situation, and gave the desired promise.

Meanwhile we hastened our preparations for departure. The Miss Merwyns, the Miss Audleys, and all the ladies in the neighbourhood expressed their sympathy to Emily, their regret at losing her. But there was no help for it. She was looking pale and depressed; I feared for her health, and that was another reason for wishing to get away as soon as possible. Then, too the post brought us frequent ill-spelt anonymous letters, warning us to "flee from the abode of evil," likening our pretty little dwelling to Sodom and Gomorrah, and prophesying the descent of fire from heaven within a short time to consume it. There was no little fanaticism in the religion of Aberport; and, thinking it not unlikely that the deluded creatures might persuade themselves that they had a special commission to execute the judgments of heaven, I adopted what precautions I could as long as we remained, and wrote to the agent from whom I had taken the house, telling him of our intended departure on such a day, and of the probable mischief which might be impending, for which, of course, I could not be answerable. I stated further that we should not return to the house any more, but that I should, of course, be prepared to pay the whole year's rent, when due, as I had taken it for that term.

The day of our departure came; but before it came, Herbert Audley had declared his love for Emily—had asked her to be his wife.

"But do your parents know who I am, and, knowing it, can they approve?" she had asked, in return.

"Yes, they know that you are the loveliest, the best and dearest of womankind; they know *that*, though not quite so well as I know it; and they have charged me to say that, in making me happy, you will make them so."

Then Emily, without further reserve, promised to do her best by that same endeavour. The heads of the House of Audley had not acted after the way of the world, but was it not a better way?

"Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple truth than Norman blood."

And where could be found a kinder heart than Emily's, or a simpler or more inviolable truth?

We had fixed to spend the winter at Brighton; the whole family of the Audleys were to follow us thither, in a few weeks' time, and in the spring it was arranged the wedding should take place from thence. One of Emily's former schoolfellows resided at Brighton,—one whose praises had many a time sounded across the seas to me in another hemisphere,—one who should be her chief bridesmaid, and with whom I was, of course, to fall in love. It was quite affecting to behold the embrace of the quondam schoolfellows, when they first met after their long separation, and I was the one sole privileged witness of that indescribably touching scene. Did I fall in love with "dearest Marian," and did "dearest Marian" fall in love with me? To that question I decline giving an immediate answer.

Of course Herbert's letters to Emily were frequent. We had been at Brighton little more than a week, and she was reading at the breakfast-table one morning—let me see, I think it must have been the fifth she had received from him—(I wonder if "dearest Marian" would expect me to write as often to her, if we were to fall in love with one another, and if she were to be away from me?—it would be rather a bore, I think). Well, Emily was reading her letter, when she exclaimed, suddenly, "Oh, Tom!" in a tone which caused me to put the cup of coffee, which was raised half-way to my lips, again on the table.

"Well, Emily, what is it?"

"They have burnt our house at Aberport down to the ground!"

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And she proceeded to read me the account from her letter. It was, however, so often interrupted by irrelevant passages,—passages over which Emily stopped, blushed, and hesitated, taking up the thread of the story in a very confused manner, that I am unable to give it here in Herbert Audley's own words. The sum of the whole matter was as Emily had stated. The house had been burnt down. There had been a rising one night of nearly the whole village; they had marched, lighted torches in their hands, *en masse* towards our late abode, had set fire to the building in several places, had watched the spread of the flames, shouting and demeaning themselves more like madmen than rational creatures, preventing the approach of any who would have sought to avert the catastrophe. There they remained until the flames had spent themselves, because there was nothing more to glut their fury, until the last blackening ruins of the once lovely cottage had tottered and fallen even with the ground. Then the host had dispersed itself, every man retiring quietly to his own homestead.

I proposed to write the chronicle of "The Doomed Cottage;" it is finished, and I hold my pen. The account of my sister's wedding must be sought elsewhere, as also the answers to the questions whether I returned any more to Australia, and whether or not I married "dearest Marian."

THE POLES AND THEIR PRISON.

WHEN, a few weeks back, the wretched Poles had been shot and sabred down in the great squares of Warsaw, when the Cossacks had charged through the wide streets, trampling down the children and the women, we read how numerous arrests were made, "and the prisoners conveyed to the fortress of Modlin." To most persons, probably, this announcement conveys very little. They may, perhaps, catch a glimpse of the unhappy men as they are led off, chained, across the creaking bridge of boats over the Vistula; but they soon cease to follow them upon that dreary, dusty road along which they are wending, and turn away with a sigh, perchance, as they see in the distance the last of the sad forms toiling towards the bourn of captivity. Some of us may, however, like to follow these wretched men a little further, and see whither they are bound. Sympathy with the Poles—the most ardently patriotic of all the denationalised European people—is so common amongst us, that I am willing to believe that a short account of the place where the most distinguished of those who took part in the recent disturbances are now confined will have an interest for several readers. We can go, if we like, beyond the creaking boat-bridge, and further upon the dusty road; and though it is but a sad task listening to the jingling of chains for eighteen miles across the flattest, poorest, and most dreary country in Europe, we shall be rewarded at the end, I think, by a glimpse of a fortress, the like of which very few of us have ever seen before.

Is it generally known, I wonder, that, eighteen miles from Warsaw, stands the largest fortress in the world—a fortress with casemated and bomb-proof barracks for 40,000 men, and with a circumference of eleven miles? I believe not; but, whether this fact is generally known or not, it is certain that very few Englishmen—very few persons of any country but Russia—have been allowed the opportunity of inspecting this wondrous stronghold. Nor, I believe, is our Government at present in possession of any plan or sketch of the immense works; and as evidence of the jealousy with which it is hidden from the eyes of strangers, I may mention that special permission from the Czar is requisite to enable any foreigner to enter it. The fortress is called Modlin, or the New Georgien (in Russian, Novo-Giorgievsk). Let us pay a visit to it.

We cross the boat-bridge in a post carriage, and proceed for some miles along the Great Northern road which runs to St. Petersburg. It makes one shudder to think of travelling the whole way to the latter capital along such a road as this—desolation and poverty exemplified. A light, poor soil, just fertile enough to give birth to crops here and there of trees so scant and small that the woods have a thin, pinched aspect; a country with a scarcity of everything, it seems, not excepting water, and with a house and a man (the former generally wooden, the latter generally a Jew) at intervals of I do not know how many miles. We may follow the political prisoners along this weary road, and the clanking of their chains is but in keeping with the scene through which we are passing.

Presently we change horses at a post-house, which for dirt and discomfort I imagine has not its equal out of Poland and Russia; and we again continue our journey along a road, similar in character to the Great Northern Road, from which, as we leave the post-house, we branch off. At last, we near our destination: signs of the vicinity of a great fortress become visible; peeping through the bushes appear some detached works, little fortresses in themselves, and very snakes in the grass, as they lie there half-hidden with tangled brushwood. We are now facing a great work; surely we have arrived. Not so; this great work is only the *tête-du-pont*, a mere dependency and small vassal of the giant who lives beyond—a vidette keeping watch while the giant slumbers. We pass through the work, and the fortress at last begins to make itself appreciable: to our right runs the river Narew, to our left the Vistula; they meet a little further on, for we are driving up towards the fork which they form at their junction; and on the further bank of the Narew, and stretching away by the allied rivers beyond, lies the monster fort, which we have come to see. I have heard a sportsman, talking of the first elephant that he shot in Ceylon, describe how his more experienced companion tried in vain for some time to direct his attention to the great beast which towered above him in the jungle, not twenty yards off. Instinctively his eye, accustomed to look for smaller game, refused to take in the huge animal which stood before him. He had come out purposely to shoot an elephant, but by no previous mental effort had he accustomed himself to realise the proportions of the beast, and if the

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elephant, as he faced him, had appeared no larger than a deer, or a bear, it would have astonished him less, for the moment, than to find him of elephantine size. So it was with the fortress of Modlin: "a circumference of eleven miles, and casemated barracks for 40,000 men." These facts had fallen with but little force upon my ears, as "a million" scarcely conveys a definite idea of the number which it represents. A fortress to the minds of most persons, means a compact work, more or less extensive, but which the eye can embrace without great effort. Here, however, it seemed that as far as one looked to right and left, fortifications met one's eye; most noticeable among them the huge bomb-proof barracks, a magnificent parallelogram of casemates, and approached by a suspension bridge, which in case of an attack would be easily destroyed by the besieged to cut off communication. Flank defence is provided for this barrack by means of masonry *caponnières*, placed in the centre of the two long faces, *i. e.*, those parallel to the river. Around this barrack, and at a distance perhaps of a quarter of a mile from it, runs a chain of fortification which in itself is a study. To attempt anything like a detailed account of this gigantic piece of military engineering would be both tedious and unsatisfactory; it will be sufficient to say that it is mainly a combination of the French and German systems of fortification with Carnot's walls. We have thus two complete forts, one within the other; the casemated barrack forming the citadel, as it were, and the line of fortification, just named, the body of the work. But this is not all: before this can be arrived at another chain of fortification must be passed, semicircular like the first, embracing the whole at an average distance from the second line of about three-fourths of a mile; and with its two flanks resting upon the river, supported by two huge forts, or as a companion not inaptly, though unclassically, called them "*dollops* of fortification." This third, or outer front of fortification, like the one before named, is somewhat irregular in its construction, Carnot-walled, and very strong. A thick wood of young trees completely screens the one line of fortification from the other; and, scattered in front of the different bastions, and before the weak points, lie outworks and advanced works in such profusion, as quite to suggest, if not to form, a fourth complete chain of fortification.

If I have made myself intelligible, it will be seen that the fortress occupies a semicircular position on the right bank of the rivers Narew and Vistula, covering the point of junction. The huge bomb-proof parallelogram forms the kernel of this great coarse husk, which is composed, it will be seen, of successive layers; and the highest engineering talent that Russia can produce has been employed in strengthening this tremendous fortress, until sharp and strong teeth indeed would be required to crack it.

An eye little practised in such matters will discern at a glance the great strength of a position such as that which Modlin occupies; but it was no unpractised eye that selected this site. Napoleon Buonaparte needed no second examination of the spot to tell him that here was a position which Nature had contributed largely to make impregnable; and at the present time, built up and almost swallowed by the monster works around, stand three little redoubts, which Napoleon caused to be erected—the seeds from which this mighty fortress sprung. But it is not merely positively but relatively that the position occupied by Modlin is so important. It defends but one angle of the triangulated system of fortification by which Poland, and, by implication, Russia, is defended. The other fortresses are Evangerod, at the confluence of the Wiepsz and Vistula, about 100 yards lower down the latter river than Modlin, and upon its right bank, somewhat similar in plan to the fortress which I have just described, though smaller;—and 3rd, a fort rejoicing in the euphonious name of Bérzesc-Litevski, (anglicé, Lithuanian Brest), and situated at the junction of the Bug and Muchawiec. This latter fort is the smallest of the three, but contains extensive stores and an arsenal.

The important part which Modlin and its sister forts are destined to play in future operations in Poland, should such occur, will be readily understood. But it is a position rather than a fortress. A place *requiring* a garrison of 25,000 men, or, to develop fully its strength and resources, 40,000, ceases to fall within the designation of a fort, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. And such a place as this—a monster with so capacious a maw,—would to most nations be a weakness, rather than a protection; but to Russia, who can pour her grey-coated hordes into the place as she may wish, what are 40,000 men? The garrison, however, is seldom or never kept up to its full strength, and at the time of my visit amounted to no more than about 7,000 men; only about 300 guns were mounted, out of a total requisite for complete armament of about 1400, but some 400 guns are constantly kept in store ready for use if required.

It is almost tedious and overpowering to wander about the huge works. Mile after mile one may explore stores and magazines, and batteries—pass from ravelin to ravelin, from work to work, and one half of Modlin is not seen. There is something very Russian in this crowding of fort within fort. At the Malakoff this fault—I think I may call it one—was apparent: traverse upon traverse, parapet upon parapet, defence crowning and crowding defence, till it seemed as though the labyrinth at Hampton Court had been thickened and petrified into a fortress—such was the Malakoff. On a large scale this description, to a certain extent, holds good for Modlin; though on this more extended scale it is less remarkable, and the defects less appreciable; there is no crowding certainly, for there is room for them all, but one within the other are collected the works, and it seems to be the opinion of the Russians themselves that this great fortress has been somewhat overdone. They are very proud of it nevertheless; and well they may be, for they may feel sure that no strangers who visit it have ever seen its like.

It is quite a relief, after some four hours' walking about these interminable parapets, to find oneself once more within the casemated parallelogram,

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where the eye is no longer wearied in its vain attempt to grasp what appears *without* the barrack, to be indefinite. One portion of the casemates—the greater part of them are used as barracks—are shown with much interest by the Russians, viz., that portion which the late Czar had caused to be fitted up as a palace, and where he often spent some weeks.

His writing-table, his simple camp-bed, everything as he left it, may now be seen here. And pleasant little boudoirs these casemates make; it is strange how the dreary places yield to the influence of paint and decoration, and come out quite light and jaunty—like dungeons dressed for a ball—with the painted flowers crawling up the walls, the arched ceilings picked out with blue and gold, and gay festoons, and the huge iron hooks which erst had reference to the mounting and working of guns now made to support glittering chandeliers. You will hardly know the embrasures, too, with their light, pretty windows, and balconies beyond, having the effect which one is startled sometimes to observe in the tasty stern-cabin of a man-of-war, of a huge gun peeping out among the arm-chairs and furniture. But all the dungeons in Modlin are not dressed for a ball—there are some far less gay and tastefully arranged, not looking out upon the broad rivers, or rejoicing in balconies and festooned flowers and chandeliers, but in their very commonest and coarsest work-a-day costume. And hereabouts we run our Polish friends to earth: here, in the Modlin casemate-prisons we shall find them. The eighteen dusty miles have been traversed at last, and the chains have come jingling over the pretty suspension-bridge; and here in rooms—with what bitter sarcasm it may be said!—similar to those in which the Czar of all the Russias has lived, the Polish patriots may fret away the years which under happier circumstances their talents and deeds might have contributed to brighten. Certainly, extremes of fortune meet in these casemates—"a prison and a palace on each hand"—and what a bridge of sighs between! I saw much to reflect upon in Modlin, when I was there, but I have seen more since, as I have thought upon the dreary fate of those who loved their country not wisely but too well, and who now rest uneasily in this huge gloomy fortress, living in a dark forest of prison-fortifications, inhabited by an army of gaolers and of fellow prisoners, where no ray of hope can penetrate—where there is no change, and whence there is no release.

Can we wonder, now, that the Poles stand forward stolidly in the Warsaw squares to be shot, and that the mothers hold up their babes and call to the grey-coated soldiery to level their muskets that way? There is little active hope of release from bondage and oppression—little active hope of a restoration of that nationality for which every Pole burns as ardently as upon the day on which he lost it; and outside this hope he cares for, or looks forward to, little. If he chafes at his lot, there is Modlin, or there is Death. We have heard lately which alternative he has sullenly chosen. Perhaps the description which I have given of the other fate which awaits him may serve to make this choice more intelligible.

THE ILLUMINATIONS AT HEIDELBERG.

Fear not, ye wearied with tourists, that I am about to inflict upon you an amplification of Murray, when I am preparing to say something of this famous town. Jean Paul calls Heidelberg "the Grand Hotel of Germany," by reason of the number of strangers who come annually hither. Some are here to grow poetical in gazing upon the magnificent ruined castle;—some are looking for students with scars on their cheeks, as the consequence of their daily duels;—most, to use the words of the Guide-book, edited by the Castellan, are attracted by "the altar that is erected here to the genial god Bacchus in the far-famed Great Tun—the colossal altar that draws pilgrims from the north, east, south, and west." Certainly, on the 17th of May, when I came to Heidelberg with a friend, we found pilgrims enough on the railroad, all in a state of noisy excitement, such as only Germans can display—all laughing and hand-shaking and vociferating, as if the Great Tun had been filled again, and its contents, amounting to three hundred thousand quarts of Pfälzer Wein, were to be distributed to all comers. The town was gay with banners hung from the windows; the hotels were full. When at last we found an entrance to an excellent Hof—to the Prinz Karl—the *table d'hôte* dinner was ready; the guests were seated, but not in the usual solemn expectation of the next dish. There was hailing of friends, and joyous laughter, and hob-nobbing with bumpers of costly wine, and an evident contempt of *vin ordinaire*. What is all this excitement about? We shall know in time. Here every one is too busy for explanation. Let us walk to the castle.

The afternoon is cold and damp. It suits the solemn grandeur of the fallen towers—rent by mines—battered by cannon—walls of enormous thickness lying in the moat—kindly Nature trying to hide with her perennial beauty the ugly work of destruction. Here Tilly bombarded and sacked in the Thirty Years' War. After Turenne had ravaged the Palatinate, the ferocious generals of Louis the Fourteenth, in 1688 and 1693, burnt and blew up what the Imperialists and the Swedes had spared. The palatial buildings, in which the Electors Palatine resided, are, for the most part, bare walls of red sand-stone. They had been restored at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1764, the castle of Heidelberg was destroyed by lightning.

Most picturesque is this vast extent of ruined grandeur as it looks down on Heidelberg itself, and the Neckar as it flows beneath the vine-clad terraces. But the crowd of strangers this day in Heidelberg are not here to look upon the desolation of the past, or the smiling beauty and promise of the present. They have been here for four days, upon grave business—most important for their own interests and for the future welfare of Germany. This is the first meeting of a great conference of delegates from all the German States. They are here to debate upon reforms that are necessary to simplify and improve the operations of commerce; to remove obstructions to free interchange that are presented by the

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conflicting regulations of many separate districts; to endeavour to establish the principles of a Unity in Trade which may become the foundation of a Unity in Politics. The 13th of May was the opening of the General German Trades Conference, which was held in the Museum. The delegates had to settle their constitution; to debate upon and to decide upon the steps for obtaining a common system of weights, measures, and money, for all Germany; to suggest alterations of the Zollverein; to come to an agreement upon the terms of shipping merchandize to foreign countries; to urge the taking off the Elbe dues, and the reduction of imposts in States not comprised in the Zollverein. These are, indeed, worthy labours; and will have results of permanent good when the schemes of rival thrones shall have vanished into air.

I had been musing upon the wonderful changes of society—of miners working through the hill upon which the castle is built—not for blowing up a garrison, but for the formation of a railway. The evening was closing in, as I sat looking from the windows of the Hof upon the roofless towers, rejoicing that the certainty and rapidity of modern communication had brought to me some loved ones from the South of France at the very hour when I expected them. We were a joyous party as we looked out and saw the first stars appearing in a cloudless sky, and the walls and terraces of Heidelberg gradually growing dimmer and dimmer. A cannon is fired, and then bursts forth on every

side such an illumination as the burning castle of 1764 could scarcely have equalled. The whole range of the palatial fortress, looking down upon the Neckar, was one blaze of red light. Every opening in the walls, whether of window or loophole, glowed with crimson radiance, which filled all the spaces within, brighter than the brightest setting sun—solemn as when its glow is made more intense by a canopy of clouds. Then, ever and anon, green light mingled with the red, as if enchantment was at work to produce these wonderful effects of chemical science. The glow above the town made the white houses look as of a purple darkness. The glare suddenly grew fainter. Volumes of smoke arose out of the roofless turrets. They wreathed into fantastic forms as they hung over the ruined pile. Imagination might shape in them the grim Tilly in his helmet, and the burly Turenne in his periwig—spectres of fire, famine, and slaughter. But looking at this wondrous illumination with a more philosophic fancy, it is the barbarous past exulting in the brighter promise of the future; when divided districts shall be united in the appliances of civilisation; when nations shall not rejoice in rival interests, but in administering to each other's wants, when War shall give place to Commerce.

The multitudes that are gathered on the bridge over the Neckar, and on its banks, shout—not as if there were a real conflagration, but for joy at so magnificent a spectacle. The pageant is over. It is the welcome of the town-council of Heidelberg to the labourers in the great commercial conference.

May, 1861. C. K.

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LAST WEEK.

Wherever one went Last Week, and whatever newspaper one took up, there were three or four topics which occupied almost the whole capacity of men's minds or of the printed page.

The most noisy, perhaps, of the agitations of the week was the Galway Packet business. To quiet observers, the hubbub does seem passing strange. The excessive eagerness of the Irish public about the subsidy and government patronage might be taken as only a fresh illustration of the habit of exaggeration in the popular mind, and especially of the popular mind in Ireland: but it seems impossible to account, in any reasonable way, for so many people treating the question as if Government had injured Ireland by some infliction of a disability, some deprivation of an ancient right, instead of ceasing to pay for work promised and not performed. The case is really so plain that it would seem impossible to make it plainer. Government is bound to have the nation's business well performed. If the transmission of the mails with punctuality and speed is paid for with the public money, that punctuality and speed must be required, or the money withheld. Everybody knows what imputation any Government would be liable to, which should go on paying the money without exacting the service. For its forbearance, during a certain time, Government ran the risk of a charge of jobbing; and, now that the forbearance is exhausted, the outcry is as fierce as if Ministers had inflicted a gratuitous wrong!

We had heard a good deal of noise about it, the week before; but last week the clamour was ten times greater. It may be of use as a warning to future Cabinets to be more careful in making business contracts with political negotiators, than a former Cabinet was in granting the Galway subsidy. Everybody is now warned that no grants of the kind should be made without a thorough ascertainment of the capacity of the subsidised party to fulfil its engagements, for it is too plain that to withdraw is a very difficult matter. In the Galway case, no security of the sort was taken. No competition was proposed; no guarantee of any kind was obtained that the Galway Company would be able to fulfil their engagements. They have failed, repeatedly and hopelessly; and there is now no prospect of their doing the duty any better. The consequence is clear and inevitable; and yet we had, not only blustering on the part of some Irish members, and meddling and mischief-making by a priest, but public meetings in Ireland, and sensation articles in the newspapers, and monster petitions, as if some precious political right were in peril; and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, with a brilliant train, presented himself at the bar of the House of Commons, craving justice or favour against the Government. The most encouraging symptom in the whole business is the anxiety of various parties to clear themselves of all imputation of having threatened Ministers, directly or indirectly. Some of the Irish members are vexed with Father Daly; Father Daly gets friends to explain that he did not mean to commit the Irish members; and that if the world generally understood that Ministers were to suffer for requiring good mail service, the world was quite mistaken. This is a homage to public virtue which is worth having. And now it cannot take many days to bring us all to an agreement about the discredit to us, as a people, of such an agitation being possible on such a ground.

Something of the same kind has been going on, in regard to our Government, in America; and this was another of the exciting topics of the week. By some extraordinary mistake, the Americans, at home, in England and in France, had imagined that England was going to join, or at least "to aid and comfort" the so-called Southern Confederacy. As they are by this time aware of their mistake, it is needless to explain it away, or to inquire into the causes of it. Our practical concern with it now is to note the dangers and difficulties which must arise on every hand, to all parties, in the face of such a war as that now begun in America. We see already what the violence of language is in both sections of the country: and the eagerness of both in regard to European opinion renders neutrality as extremely difficult as it is supremely necessary. The haste, the irritability, the rash misapprehension, and insane defiance arising out of it, are sad drawbacks upon the admiration we are all cordially feeling for the patriotism of the people of the Free States. We shall not forget that they are young in political life, and that this is the first real war that the existing generation has engaged in: but we must, at the same time, lament that the soundness of their cause has not saved them from misapprehending, nor their patriotism from distrusting and menacing, their best friends. This early mistake may prove a lesson to them, and induce them to consider what neutrality is, and what it requires. They do not choose mediation (very properly): they do not need aid: neutrality is the only course their friends can take: and it is mere folly to quarrel with its requirements.

Some very grave incidents came to our knowledge last week. The Washington Cabinet assumes that it has the power to join in a general action against privateering by now agreeing to terms which were refused by Mr. Pierce's Cabinet of 1856. Mr. Marcy, Secretary of State at that time, declined joining the European powers in abolishing privateering; and that refusal was sanctioned and applauded by public opinion in America, as far as it was expressed. Now that the practice of privateering will be injurious to the Northern States, the new Secretary of State announces to the European powers the acceptance of their former proposals,—as if there had been no rejection, and no subsequent lapse of five years. This is hailed as "a master stroke of policy," because it is supposed to engage the European powers to operate against privateering in the present struggle: but it remains to be seen whether the European powers recognise such a way of playing fast and loose with great principles of international policy. It is observable that some American journals immediately announced the opinion of some persons that the move was too late.

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Among the many complications of the case, one of the gravest is the offer to the President of a regiment from Canada, and the President's acceptance of it. If we could be sure that those thousand Canadians would become United States citizens from the moment of crossing the frontier, there might be no great cause for regret: for those cannot be the wisest men of any community who would rush into a war with which they had no concern, and in which the right side was abundantly strong. Canada might well spare men who are mere subjects of contagion, going to war without any cause to make the warfare sacred. But these men may want to come back, as British subjects; and what is to be done then? As for an English or an Irish regiment in New York, or any other American State or city, we are bound to suppose it composed of immigrants,—men who are now actually or virtually American citizens, and entitled to conduct themselves as such. It is probable that no questions will be asked about them: but the case of the Canadians is one of great perplexity and evil promise.

There will probably be more decision in the action of the American Government than there has been, though it is certain that there has been at once more resource in Mr. Lincoln, and more obstruction in the way of vigorous action than European observers have been aware of. He and his Cabinet have now more certain information to proceed upon than could hitherto be obtained. They were groping, day by day, in conscious uncertainty about their own strength or weakness, and about the fidelity of almost everybody about them. A simultaneous seizure of the whole mass of documents at all the telegraph offices laid open at once the political conduct of the whole Northern section of the nation. Every traitor is known, and all plots are revealed. Whatever the Government may see fit to do about admitting sinners to repentance after a crisis so fruitful in conversion, it will know whom to trust; and the consequence will immediately appear in a clearer and more consistent action than has hitherto been possible. In the matter of the seizure the President was well served. The secret was so closely kept that not one quiver of any wire gave warning from one station to another. At the same moment the blow fell on every telegraph office over the wide area of the Free States: and, as fast as the news could travel, the traitors and the waverers among twenty millions of people became aware that henceforth the Government would know how to value them.

There are incidents, again, which show how the barbaric element which exists in Southern society is already manifesting itself in the warfare which has hardly begun. Those who have ever witnessed, or read much of, the recklessness of human life which exists in the South, and, yet more, the prevalent false notion of valour, as consisting in attacking one's neighbour, armed or unarmed, but best at a disadvantage, will be least surprised at the sort of slaughter which is preceding the conflict on the battle-field,—if, indeed, the latter is to take place. The general agreement of Southern society to honour and reward as a hero the member of Congress who assailed Mr. Sumner at a particularly defenceless moment shows what the notion of valour is in that region. A sermon courageously preached, some time since, in the State of Mississippi, indicates the same fact. The preacher—an episcopalian clergyman—took for his text "Thou shalt not kill," and went into the plainest statement of the murders, as well as the duels, which went unpunished in his State. He showed that the admitted homicides there exceeded annually all the homicides in the whole area of the Free States. Considering these things, and the well-known fact that in some of the towns in the cotton States no day has, for many years, been known to pass without some homicidal attempt by gentle or simple, the murder of Colonel Ellsworth in the hall of an hotel at Alexandria (near Washington) by a shot from the landlord, will surprise nobody. This is but a single instance of the cowardly mode of warfare which may but too surely be anticipated: but there are other tokens. A British ship is said to have been wrecked by the Secessionists having tampered with the coast-lights. If this is true, it will be another complication for European statesmen to deal with. It will scarcely be credited that Indians are already in Virginia, forming a part of the Secession forces. When we heard of their being enlisted, we supposed they would be employed at home, to keep the frontier, or guard the plantations. They are in Virginia, however, in their most terrific adornment of paint and feathers, scalping-knife, and tomahawk. It may explain in part the appearance of these Cherokees on such an occasion, that they are negro slave-holders. The negroes much prefer them as masters to the whites; and it is conceivable that the Cherokees may dread being deprived of their labourers, knowing that there is no chance of white hirelings ever entering their service. But their presence gives a barbaric character to the mustering of forces, which deepens the pain of England in looking on. We must not forget that England herself employed Indians in her American wars. It is too true: but the old war itself was under the ban of good sense and feeling throughout: less was known of the Indians then than now: and our race and nation have made great progress in the interval. Bad as it was to bring in Indians to fight insurgent colonists in the last century, it cannot compare with the barbarism of setting that detested race, like bloodhounds, on fellow-citizens of the New York and Massachusetts of our day. Amidst all the variety of details which every packet brings, the one pervading certainty seems to be that the superiority in every sort of power rests with the North.

The President has found time, amidst his engagements, to refuse his countenance to the annexation of St. Domingo by Spain. The Spanish State papers on the occasion have disgusted the whole world, as extreme specimens of cant and false glorification. A formal announcement that slavery will not be permitted in St. Domingo is put forth—only to be disbelieved. It now appears that the majority of the scanty population of the Spanish half of the island are averse to the annexation, and General Cabral has, on their behalf, set up his standard against Santana's, and invited the people to resist the occupation of their country by

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Spain. It remains to be seen whether Spain will take possession by force, in opposition to European opinion, to American defiance, to the remonstrances of Hayti, and the repugnance of all the inhabitants but the adherents of the traitor and usurper, Santana.

Less noisy, hurried, and demonstrative, but deeper and more solemn, was the solicitude of the nation about Italy, from the illness of Count Cavour; and when the news of his death arrived, we all felt that one of those thunderbolts had fallen which, if they do not scathe the fate of nations, leave a monumental mark upon their path.

The festival at Turin, to celebrate the formation of a united Italy, went all the more merrily for Count Cavour being better, after an alarming attack of his usual illness,—congestion of the brain. But he was imprudent in attending to business when forbidden by his physicians; and the news of more blood-letting spread fresh alarm. Again he was better, and there was talk of all cause for uneasiness being over. But shivering-fits and fever returned; and on Thursday afternoon the news of his death, at seven that morning, reached London.

The notices of the event in parliament, and the newspaper announcements, could give no idea of the character and extent of the popular feeling. There are many thoughts and fears which cannot be expressed, in connection with the foreign alliances and antagonisms of the new kingdom of Italy, and the mischievous tendencies of some parties at home which Cavour alone could propitiate or restrain. He was the greatest statesman in Europe, and the greatest of his age. Italy is richer than any other country just now in statesmanship; but no nation ever has two Cavours in a day. It is little to say that there is no man now who could institute a policy like his. There is no one man at all likely to be able to carry out his policy,—the latter half of which remains to be accomplished: and if that policy fails of complete fulfilment, Europe may rue it for generations to come. Our closest concern is with our own duty in the case; and, as a people, we shall probably agree upon that duty as we agree—almost with unanimity—in our feeling about Italy. If we would have reactionary ruffianism kept down; if we would have republican cabals shamed and repressed; if we would have Rome rendered harmless, and Venice released; if we would have the French Emperor deterred from thwarting and impeding the consolidation of Italy, and discouraged from keeping her wounds open by countenancing intrigues of princes, priests, and pretenders, we must uphold, and by all legitimate means express, a steady sympathy with the constitutional Italy which Cavour has left to the guardianship of the public spirit and liberal opinion of the world. It is a solemn bequest: and if the people feel it to be so, they will uphold such an ideal of Cavour's unfinished work, that neither King nor Kaiser, demagogue nor paladin, shall have power to destroy or debase what he had so nearly achieved, and set on high as the crowning glory of his age.

None but bad men can feel relieved by Cavour's death: and of the good who mourn him one among the chief must carefully take to heart the lesson of the event. Garibaldi must rejoice that he was reconciled to Cavour; and he must never forget that his reason was convinced by Cavour's explanations of his policy. These explanations are the statesman's legacy to the patriot-hero; and he must keep it from the hand of the spoiler. He must not be weak again, with such a stake involved in his good sense and firmness. At best, it is but too heavy a calamity that Cavour is gone,—snatched away in the crisis of his life's work, and leaving whole nations looking on appalled.

When the news arrived, we were talking about India. We do get to talk more about India; and this looks like caring more, and caring more will lead to understanding better.

Mr. Laing is at least advancing towards reconciling the income and expenditure of India; the famine seems to be well in hand; and the landed and commercial interests appear to be thoroughly roused on the subject of cotton-supply.

At home, affairs went on as if no portentous tidings were coming from abroad. The freedom of the City of London was presented to Mr. Cobden on Thursday; and the occasion was illustrated by the repeal of the corn-law in France, and by news of the expansion of industry in various directions there, where disaster was looked for from the removal of protection. Our prospects are opening there, just as channels of trade are closed elsewhere: and Mr. Cobden might well therefore be enthusiastically received in the City of London, and his hand almost wrung off by pressing crowds.

On the preceding day, Lord Elgin was made free of the Grocers' Company, and made an encouraging speech about our prospects, as traders, in China. As for the rest,—the Maynooth question in the Commons received its annual dismissal. The Cotton-supply was again discussed in the Lords; and the Budget passed its last reading in the Commons, and gained a step in the Lords. Government, however, was beaten on the revived question of the claims of the Baron de Bode, whose case is referred to a committee, under a strong and wide-spread impression that there is justice to be done yet in that matter.

The pension to the doggerel poet, Close, was declared to be countermanded, on the ground that the grant was obtained on false pretences.

The Prince Consort and his children opened the new Gardens of the Horticultural Society on Wednesday, as a sort of introductory act to the pleasures of the great Exhibition. The Sunday bands began their summer evening playing in the parks, without any opposition. M. Blondin created an epidemic of shuddering and pale faces by his tight-rope performances at the Crystal Palace, where multitudes put themselves in the way of the pleasing pain of watching a man in extreme danger, and of the chance of seeing that fatal fall which will happen some day. It is a strange taste: but it must be a natural one, or so many would not go.

Such were the gravities and gaieties of LAST WEEK.

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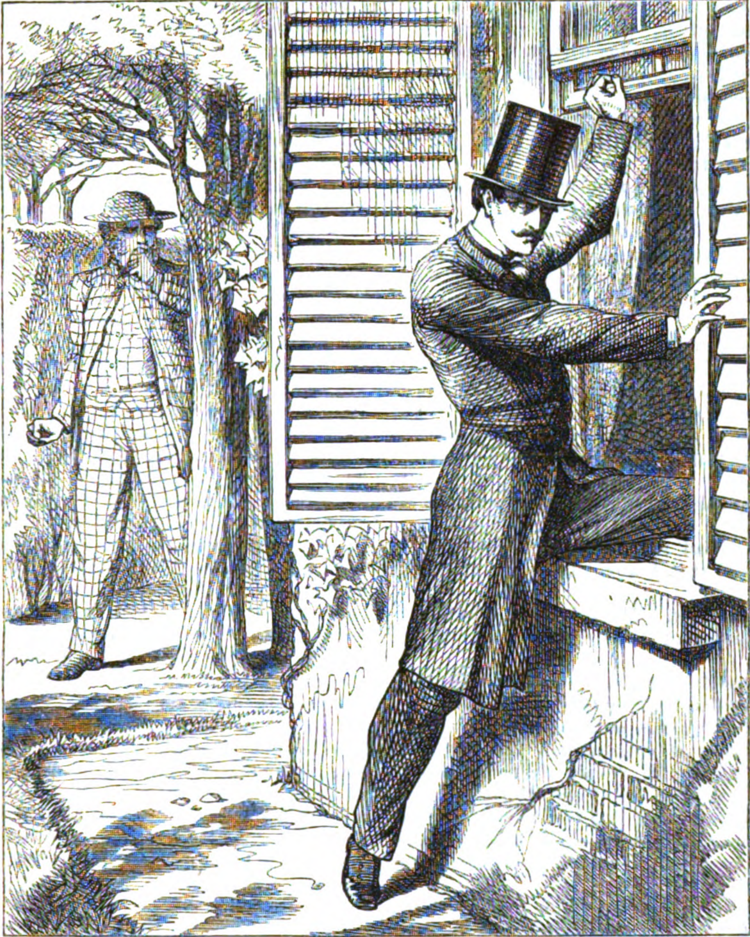
THE SILVER CORD.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.



CHAPTER LXXII.

"I SHALL make my market, now," said Ernest Adair to himself, as he left the presence of his chief; "but they will cheat me if they can, and what is worse, my time is very short. If I had to deal with the Englishmen only, I should have no fear of my chances, but the bureau against Adair is heavy odds. The other day I had the re-assuring consolation that I had nothing to lose, but now I am encumbered by the weight of my possible good fortune. However, we must play calmly. No Cognac now, M. Adair, moral or fluid. We must talk to the excellent Silvain. Let me see—our very last parting was not exactly an affectionate one—he nearly threw me into the street, and I assured him, in return, that I should certainly be his death. His cue, as *we actors* say, is, 'shall certainly kill you.' What will be his next speech? Let us hear."

Adair went down to Versailles, and proceeded to call at the shop of Silvain. The industrious little man was, as usual, behind his counter, and the door of the inner room was open, and there were no signs of one whom Ernest had civilly designated, as she came to his mind on his way, as that snarling she-dragoness.

"I could draw her teeth, if she were worth it," he had muttered; "but it is a nobler revenge to leave them for the affliction of my friend Silvain. Besides, I am going to be respectable and virtuous, and to have no evil passions for the future. I wish I had thought of buying her a prayer-book, as a valedictory present."

Silvain coloured highly as Ernest entered the shop, and the perfumer hastily summoned his recollections and his courage, in order to be able to conduct himself with dignity.

"Silvain," said Ernest, "you are surprised to see me."

"A tradesman's house is open to all the world," replied Silvain, calmly.

"A fair hint," laughed Adair pleasantly.

"Well, that I may not encroach upon your time without recompensing you, let me have a case of your best toilette vinegar. I am going to England, and it will be acceptable to friends there."

Without a word, Silvain took out from a closet the required article, carefully enveloped it in paper, and handed it to his customer. Adair put down a Napoleon, and duly counted the change that was given him.

"I think you might charge me wholesale price, Silvain," he said, again laughing; "but we will not haggle over trifles."

"I have charged the regular price, Monsieur," replied the other, in a business tone.

"Very well; I am not complaining. But when a customer makes a purchase, it is a courtesy of commerce to afford him any little information he may desire. I am entitled to claim that courtesy, M. Silvain."

"What do you wish to ask, Monsieur?"

"You have been for some time a resident in Versailles, I believe?" said Adair, speaking as to a person whom he had never seen before. "You probably know the house of Mr. Urquhart, a Scotch gentleman, connected with railways, I believe?"

"Mr. Urquhart has left Versailles, and shut up his house."

"That fact had reached me. But it is as to the house itself that I would inquire. Is it to be let?"

"I do not know. There is a board affixed to the front, and that will probably answer the question."

"Is it possible that you are unacquainted with the announcement made by that document?"

"I attend to my own business."

"The business of a tradesman who intends to succeed in this world, Silvain, is to be able to oblige his customers. I know that you will pardon my pointing out this fact to you, because, though we may have occasionally misunderstood one another, you cannot fail to be aware of my interest in you."

Silvain made no answer, but busied himself with some of the duties of the shop.

"Can I execute any business in England for you? I am not likely ever to return to France. It is apart from your usual politeness to look pleased at that statement, my dear Silvain—but no matter. I shall be happy to be of any use to you. Or will Mademoiselle Henderson—she is still Mademoiselle, I presume—will she favour me with any commission in her native country?"

"We will not trouble you, Monsieur."

"Almost my earliest visit will be to Mademoiselle's birthplace. At least I shall have the pleasure of mentioning her improved prospects, and of congratulating her friends on her prosperous marriage."

Silvain suppressed all sign of anger, except a certain compression of the lip, and he still remained silent.

"Pray," said Adair, "do not leave me to infer from that dogged silence that anything has arisen to prevent the marriage. It will be sad news for the parents of Matilde."

"Say nothing small or great about her or me, Monsieur," hissed Silvain, "or it may be the worse for you; and if you have no more business with me, go away."

"That is really anything but the way to conciliate a customer, Silvain, and I have by no means worked out the amount of talk that is due to me on my vinegar. If you wish to be rid of me, you will answer my very harmless questions. Is Mr. Urquhart's house to let?"

"Yes. I know no more, but the *affiche* will furnish other information."

"But if the house is to be let, it must be shown. Who is in the house to show it? Is that duty deputed to Mademoiselle?—no one could discharge it better."

"The house is entirely empty."

"Good," said Ernest Adair to himself. "Well, Silvain, wish me *bon voyage*."

"I am no hypocrite, Monsieur Adair, and I do not pretend to forget that the last time you were in this shop, you added to a brutal outrage a brutal threat. I hoped not to see you again. I hope never to see you again."

"And that is the charitable state of mind in which a perfumer who calls himself a Christian looks forward to partaking of the sacrament of matrimony. I counsel you to have some serious conversation with your confessor, Silvain. But come, old friend, this sort of thing is folly between us. You have been taught to hate me, and I do not complain of your yielding to your teachers, especially as some little personal matters of our own have not helped to cement our friendship. But do not bear malice. I am going away, and you never will see me again, unless you prosper as you deserve to do, and come over and set up a fashionable shop in Piccadilly, and cheat us stupid islanders with hair-oil perfumed upon scientific and philosophical principles, and lard translated into the marrow of birds of Paradise. I shall see you through an acre of plate glass, or never again. So forget that, in trying to help myself in sad difficulties, I have caused annoyances to you; forgive me, shake hands, and say adieu."

And Silvain, whether his naturally good little heart was touched by the frank and half-suppliant tone of Ernest, or whether the vision of English glories had for the moment clouded his mental vision, looked sentimental, and held out his hand to meet that of Adair.

But, as their hands met, Mary Henderson entered the shop, and Silvain, reddening intensely, drew back.

"There is no need for any such ceremony, Monsieur," he said, but, it must be owned, somewhat awkwardly. "Will you take your parcel?" he added, holding it out, eager to show that he possessed that excuse for having held any conference with Ernest. Henderson's eye told him, however, that she was not deceived for a second, and that he had much to hear upon the subject at a convenient season.

Ernest, who caught the reflexion of her face in a glass opposite, turned round, and instantly said,

"I am taking leave of Silvain for ever, Mademoiselle, and I am rejoiced that you have arrived to witness our parting. He has forgiven me all that has passed, and was about to join

hands with me in amity. I am sure that you will not be less forgiving, the rather that you have more to forgive, and women are so much more generous than we are. I am going to England."

"Not yet, Mr. Adair," said Henderson, quietly.

"Why, not yet, that is to say, not to-day, and perhaps not to-morrow, but certainly before the week is out."

"It may be so," said Henderson.

"Nay," said Adair, smiling, "we men are sometimes thought ready to break our promises when we undertake to return to you, but when we say that we are going away, I believe that we are generally to be trusted."

"I should like to speak a few words to you, Mr. Adair," said the girl, coldly, and with a business-like air.

"Will you walk into the room," said Silvain, eager to do anything towards softening the advent of his approaching adversity.

"No," replied Mary Henderson, turning from him. "Will you walk with me a little way, Mr. Adair."

She left the shop, and Ernest Adair, as he followed, could not resist the temptation to kiss his hand, with an elaborate look of affection, towards Silvain, and went out with his hand upon his heart in sign that the latter was overflowing with gratitude for his friend's concession. The answering look was not of the same kind, but it was lost upon Adair, who hastened after Henderson.

"Are you afraid to be seen?" she asked, abruptly.

"There are some eyes, certainly," he replied, "which I would rather avoid."

"I suppose so. This way then."

Henderson led the way through three or four small and obscure streets, and finally into a house—if it merited the name—of the poorest order. The shutter was closed, but the door, which was on the latch, opened to the girl's hand, and they stood in a low, mean room, denuded of all furniture save an old broken wooden chair which it had not seemed worth the while of the outgoing tenant to take with him. The walls were dingy with dirt, and with the gloom of the place; and, as they went in, a starved cat rushed out, scared from her retreat.

"What a den," said Ernest, pushing open a single square window at the back of the room, and letting in a current of wholesome air.

"Yes," replied the girl. "Since the poor man who lived here was cut down from that hook"—and she pointed to a beam, whence projected a hook, round the shank of which a fragment of cord was still clinging—"people have not liked to come in."

"A foolish way to die," said Adair. "What induced him to die at all?"

"He risked everything that he had in the world in a lottery," said the girl, looking steadily at Ernest, "and the lottery gave him a blank, so he was left a disgraced beggar, and died."

"Silly fellow—he should have lived, and beggared somebody else," said Adair, with a defiant smile.

"We all think these things till our time comes," replied Henderson.

"True," said Adair, "and I am glad to find that you are so much more serious in your view of affairs than poor Silvain, who is very flippant. I have been obliged to remonstrate with him."

"Leave Silvain alone, and listen to me," said Henderson.

"Have I not accepted this delightful *rendezvous* for that purpose? Speak, Mademoiselle?"

"Why have you come to Versailles?"

"Is there anything wonderful in one's coming to such a place in this delightful weather? The château, erected by Louis, surnamed the Great, at an expense which impoverished France, is a monument of regal extravagance, and the chapel—"

"You ought to have felt every step you took here was on red-hot iron," said Henderson, indignantly.

"Perhaps every step was about as dangerous," said Adair, carelessly, "but then you know my tastes are eccentric."

"You are here on some new scheme of villany," said the girl, "for nothing else would have made you run such a risk."

"There is no risk that you can understand, girl," said Ernest, something haughtily, for he began to be impatient at the tone of his inferior; "but let that be as it may. What is your business with me?"

"What is your business with Silvain?"

"Could I leave France for ever without a reconciliation with that dear friend? I am happy to say that I have accomplished this—he makes allowances for what has seemed objectionable in my conduct, and we were about to shake hands for the third time when you arrived to witness our exchange of forgiveness."

"Why do you lie to me?" demanded Henderson, in a tone by no means so offensive as her speech. "I do not mean you any harm."

"That is a comforting assurance."

"If you think that I am quite unable to do you any," replied Henderson, "you may be right, but do not be too sure of it."

"I am a man of business, my dear, and my time is valuable. You do not seem to know how to come to the business you want to do. Let me put you into the groove. Mrs. Lygon has sent you after me. Now, what does Mrs. Lygon want?"

"As I shall be judged," said Henderson, earnestly, "that poor lady knows no more of your being in Versailles, or of me seeing you, than the babe unborn."

"Whose babe unborn? But one must not ask impertinent questions, Madame Silvain. Well, without believing a syllable of what you say, what next?"

"Mr. Adair, if you have not indeed sold yourself to the devil body and soul, if you ever hope to die in your bed, if you have any mercy in you for yourself or any one else in the world, can you not do something to make up for your wickedness, and open the way for that poor dear lady to go home to her children?"

"My dear girl, which way can be more open than the Northern Railway. And if it were not, it is to your late master, the engineer, not to me, that you should address yourself to open a railway line."

"I wonder that you dare mention his name,"

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said she, in an under tone. "You are a mocking devil, Mr. Adair, but it will come home to you."

"You put yourself in a rage, Henderson, and people who are sent with other people's messages should never do that."

"I am sent with no message."

"Well, put it so, and say that you know Mrs. Lygon would be very much obliged to me if I would have the kindness to blot out the proofs of her character, would persuade Mr. Urquhart and her husband that she is a spotless person, and would restore her to home and happiness. And in return for these trifling favours, what do you think that Mrs. Lygon is inclined to offer me? Tell me, because I am not proud. No reasonable offer refused."

"Have you no repentance for all that you have done?"

"Not the least, so leave out all that kind of superfluous talk. Do you know that I was going to buy you a prayer-book for a present, but I am happy to find that you do not need one."

"What can Mrs. Lygon offer you, when you have driven her from her home, and left her without a friend in the world, Mr. Adair? Oh, do have some mercy upon her. For in your heart of hearts you know that you have lied, and that she is cruelly and wickedly wronged."

"The friends whom she had—and they were good ones—do not think so, and the opinion of an impulsive lady's-maid may be valuable, but it is not convincing to her betters. So, as you do not appear to have much to say, except that Mrs. Lygon is an angel, and that I am the other thing, and as that sort of conversation is apt to be tiresome, I think I will wish you good-bye."

"Do not you go until I have done," said Henderson, very earnestly. Her manner throughout the whole interview had been divested of her ordinary petulance, and she had spoken with more self-restraint than might have seemed possible, her habitual impetuosity remembered.

"What next? Are you going to call up the ghost of the gentleman who went out of the world by way of this hook? I would rather hear *you*."

"For Heaven's sake do not speak so shockingly wicked, and in a place where the dead have been. Mr. Adair, I know that it is of no use for me to plead with you—the things that I have known of you ought to have taught me better than to try that—but I did hope that thinking over the ruin you have brought to two ladies, and the sorrow and agony you have caused in their houses, might have softened your heart a little, and you might have shown one of them some mercy."

"You have said all this before, and I have answered you," said Adair, roughly.

"I beg your pardon, and I will say it no more. But if I were to ask you a question, would you answer it?"

"Most likely not. But try."

"What might you have been asking of Silvain? It is of no good saying that you made friends with him. I could see all that went on, but you kept on speaking to him, and he would hardly answer."

"What a vigilant watch we keep on our Silvain! And you are right, for he is worth watching. I will tell you all that passed, the rather that you will know every syllable in five minutes from your going back to him. I bought a packet of toilette vinegar of him, for which he charged me full price, so do not let him cheat you out of any perquisites; and I asked him whether Mr. Urquhart's house was to be let."

"Yes," said Henderson, eagerly.

"He replied that it was, and that it was empty."

"It is empty," said the girl, with a curious intonation.

"That was about all; and as you will perceive, all that I was able to say was merely intended to draw him into conversation, which he was not much inclined for."

"You came to Versailles to know whether Mr. Urquhart's house was empty?" repeated Henderson.

"No, I tell you. What do I care whether it is empty or not? I am going to England, so certainly have no object in examining French houses; besides that, out of all the houses in France, Mr. Urquhart's is the last in which I would live."

"Mr. Adair," said the girl, solemnly, "if you persevere in a plan which I believe has brought you to Versailles, I will put back your own words into your mouth, sir."

"How will you manage that feat, Henderson?"

"Pray don't laugh, sir—please, sir, in God's name, do not laugh. If you do what is in your mind, Mr. Urquhart's house will be the last in which you will live."

"What a very mysterious speech, Madame Silvain! Have you been reading any conjuring-books lately?"

But the laugh was not quite an easy one.

"I could make it much plainer if I chose, sir; but you have not deserved that I should do you any kindness. If you had met me in a different way, I would have said more, and been proud and glad to do it. But you will not show any mercy, and I have no call to say another word. The judgment will come, if it be God's will, and those who might have stayed it will remember when it is too late."

She waited for a moment, looked at him hard, and went out hastily.

"The she-dragoness has turned melo-dramatic," said Ernest Adair, lighting a cigarette. "I must recollect the incident for Aventayle. '*The Dead Man's Hook; or, the Warning under the Beam*,'—it would finish an act capitally."

Yet the scoffer was not sorry to come out of the suicide's hut into the sunshine.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

From the cottage, Mary Henderson, taking a hare-like precaution lest Ernest Adair should follow her, made her way, something deviously, to the house in which Mrs. Lygon had her apartment. Admitted to Laura's room, the girl imparted a portion of the story that has been told in the preceding chapter, but said nothing of her having sought to plead with Adair, and simply took credit to herself for having endeavoured to discover the business on which he had come to Versailles. To her surprise Henderson found in Mrs. Lygon a cold and pre-occupied listener. For poor Laura's

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heart had been stirred to its depths by her interview with Hawkesley in the gardens, and when she had leisure to turn from the contemplation of her own fortunes, and from the revelations which her brother-in-law had made, her thoughts were away with her children. The hearing of and about them, the little narratives of their little joys and sorrows and troubles, the breath from childland which had suddenly come around her, had re-awakened all the thousand strings that make music between the mother and the child, and Laura, saddened and thoughtful, only desired, until better times should come, to be left with that living music.

As for Silvain, when he found that instead of the storm which he had expected upon his weak head for the offence of his weak heart, his mistress waived all that was past, and condescendingly took him into counsel as to the future, his happiness was exuberant. That he coincided with her in every thought and word was matter of course, that he was prepared at a moment's notice to undertake any scheme that could be suggested to him was almost equally so. He was burning for an opportunity of proving that, though circumstances had for a moment seemed against him, he was loyal and true, and worthy of the love and esteem of his energetic English girl.

"Yet it must be done at once, Silvain, and what is to be done with the shop?"

The shop might go —. Silvain was going to be needlessly energetic. At all events the best part of the day was over, it was not a day for chance custom, the orders had been attended to, and he would close.

"We will never do this out of idleness, or for the sake of a holiday, Silvain; but as there is a good thing to be done, that is to say, to be tried, we will hope that shutting up will not turn luck against us."

The shop *was* shut up, and Silvain and Matilde went their way on the errand which she had not dared to mention. It was one which required both secrecy and adroitness—which might end in nothing—but which also might materially affect the destiny of those whom Henderson was so anxious to serve. So they went about the errand with speed and with resolution.

An hour later in the day, Silvain contrived to throw himself in the way of Ernest Adair, whom he had succeeded in tracing. Adair was restless, now entering a little inn, taking some slight and perfectly unintoxicating refreshment, glancing over a journal, and coming away—now wandering about the smaller streets of Versailles, avoiding the principal thoroughfares—now walking some little distance into the country, and suddenly turning backwards towards the town. It was upon one of the outlying roads that Silvain encountered him.

This time the Frenchman gave him his hand, unsolicited, but looked round, as if to see that no one observed the act.

"I am glad to have met you, M. Adair," said Silvain. "You would understand why I refused your hand in the shop. You comprehend that when one's happiness is in the keeping of another person, one has to make numerous sacrifices. And not to disguise from you what you well know, you are certainly hated in that quarter."

"Well, I must hope that time will efface the hatred, and that the advocacy of a friend will assist time. I bear no malice, and I hope that you will be very happy. You were not jealous at Mademoiselle's selecting me for a *tête-à-tête*. Jealous—happy man—he shrugs his shoulders, knowing that the heart of Matilde is a rock of Gibraltar for all but himself."

"And you are really going to England?"

"I am indeed, and immediately. I will make you a confidence, though you don't deserve it for charging me full price for my vinegar. I am going to be an actor."

"No man is better calculated to make a great success, and we shall read of it in the journals. I congratulate the English. They will have an actor at last."

"And so Matilde hates me, truly, thoroughly, and as a woman hates—that is to say, if she had to describe me in a bill, she would insist on saying that I was short, fat, and ugly, stammered and stuttered, spoke bad French, and had generally a hang-dog appearance. Do you suppose I should think the worse of her for *that?* Not at all. Lying! It would not be lying, it would be truth, as presented to the female organisation, regarding a man who was distasteful. They praise in the same manner, bless you! The most hideous lout of a soldier, with the profile of a sole and the croak of a raven, becomes a noble-voiced hero to Jeannette, as soon as he has made his way to her heart. Do you consider them responsible beings? I do not. So, come, own that Matilde, having failed in getting me to come to terms, is availing herself of the hold our friendship gives you over me, and has bid you use your influence."

"It is not so," said Silvain; but it was said in a way which was intended to confirm Adair in the conviction that a new ambassador was being tried.

"You would not have shaken hands with me unless you had her leave to do so, Silvain, and you were sent to find me out."

"If it were so, would my attempt be utterly fruitless?"

"Why, I would, as you know, sooner please you than anybody else, because I like you, and because I owe you a sort of atonement. But what can be said between us, my dear Silvain? You are a friend, but you are also a man of business, and a sound, clear-headed fellow. Well, I am asked to run a very great risk, do a very great service, and all for nothing. Your Matilde says that I am a devil, and backs up that intolerable proposition by desiring me to show mercy gratis. Why, you, who charge a friend retail price for toilette vinegar, must see that this is not the way to set to work. Take a cigarette."

"I have no better bargain to propose to you, my dear Adair," said Silvain. Let us go into the Silver Deer, and refresh ourselves."

"Not now, Silvain. I take but little, and I am desirous to keep my head as cool as I can. No more card-parties and brandy, like that when you let loose the wild beast, Haureau, upon me, traitor."

"Do not say so. I had no idea of his character. I thought that he was a smuggler, and

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probably an escaped convict, but I did not suppose him to be a bad fellow. And you certainly chastised him."

"I wish the cursed dagger had flown to shivers as I pulled it out. It was to your friend, and your brandy, and that blow, that Matilde may lay all the suffering which has come upon her ladies. I was driven to bay in the police-cell, and the fatal revelation was made. Does Matilde consider you the author of all these catastrophes?"

"No," said Silvain, in his turn disconcerted. The subject had never presented itself to him in this way.

"It appears to me that her hatred concentrates itself upon the wrong person. It is you, M. Silvain, you perceive, who are the real criminal."

"That is not the way to speak of it."

"Not quite. I waive the invitation to me, and the brandy. But when you engage a notorious ruffian, in the pay of the police (don't tell me that you did not know that, my dearest Silvain, because I could call him to contradict you); and when you set that man upon me, and place me in such a position that, in defence against him, I use my knife, and in defence against consequences I use my information, who is the real enemy of Mrs. Urquhart and Mrs. Lygon? I must have this view of the case set clearly before Matilde, and before Mrs. Lygon herself, in whom you have pretended to take an interest."

"Your tongue has not gained in gentleness since we last met," said Silvain, who by no means liked the tone which the dialogue was taking.

"The man who disguises truth from a friend is incapable of a true friendship," said Ernest Adair. "Cherish that sentiment, Silvain, for though I shall be far away, you will be sure to have other true friends, especially as you are going to keep a handsome wife."

"But come and drink with me, as we are about to part," said Silvain.

"To repeat your own words, there is no need of that ceremony, M. Silvain. I shall preserve the recollection of your regard, which I wish you would crown by a little frankness."

"What do you wish me to say?"

"Tell me, though I shall know it without your aid, what object Mademoiselle Matilde proposes to herself in permitting you to associate with me all this time, to smoke with me, and to offer to drink with me? Had you not her leave and licence for each act, my dear Silvain, I should have had far less of your delightful society. Come, tell me, and I may reward you by sending you back to her with good news."

"I wish that I had anything to tell you, then," said Silvain, "but, unhappily, I can make you no further answer."

"Then I will tell you, M. Silvain; but you must not be frantic at finding that a stranger is deeper in the confidence and secrecy of your intended wife than you yourself are. Matilde has been to Mrs. Lygon, to inform her that I am in Versailles, and you are sent to keep me in conversation until a telegraphic message can be forwarded to Paris. I was injudicious enough to admit to Matilde that there were persons whom I did not desire to see, and if the wires do their work, some of those persons will soon be here. Now, let us go and drink at the Silver Deer."

"You are wrong, indeed you are wrong, M. Adair. There has been no thought of sending any message to Paris; and if I understand Matilde aright, she would have served you, if you had permitted it."

"Permitted it, my dear Silvain, by throwing up a game on which my future fortune is set! There, I am frank with *you*. And now, as I have shown you my cards, we need say no more; and as you declare that you have no object in detaining me, and I have business to attend to, we will part here, just out of sight of the town. Of course you will watch me, in order to report to Matilde, and I will facilitate your duties by informing you that I am going down to the Avenue, to read from the board in front of Mr. Urquhart's house the name of the person who has charge of letting it, and any other particulars. And when I have copied this, for I wish for a copy of it for a reason of my own, I shall return to my own little inn, where I shall remain until eight o'clock, as I expect a visitor. After eight, you must do your spying for yourself."

"I wish you farewell, M. Adair," said Silvain, less angrily than the offensive speech and tone seemed to render natural in his reply. "I repeat that you wrong both Matilde and myself; but it is useless for me to say what you have resolved not to believe. Should you go to England, I wish you the success you deserve. Should you be delayed by any casualty, unforeseen by yourself, it will be for you to remember that, in your scorn of two persons in humble position, you rejected terms that might have prevented that casualty. I wish you farewell, M. Ernest Adair."

Adair had listened with gravity to this speech; but at its close he raised his hat, and, as Silvain walked away, made him a deep bow of mock respect.

Nevertheless, Silvain did watch him for some time; did see him make his way towards the avenue; and did follow him far enough to perceive that Adair stood before the house of Urquhart, and was apparently transcribing the contents of the *affiche* into his pocket-book. Silvain made no pretext of concealing himself, and Ernest, looking back, saw him standing at the end of the road, and again raised his hat. Silvain turned away, and departed.

What Silvain did not see took place twenty minutes later. A man had adroitly scaled the wall of the garden in the rear of the deserted house, and had sprung down upon one of the beds. Then, after several cautious glances around, to assure himself that he was not watched in that well-wooded garden, the stranger approached the house, and coming up to a window, with some exertion forced open an outside Venetian blind. It was the back window of the ground-floor room in which Laura had been concealed from Urquhart.

He forced the blind, threw up the English sash, and mounted on the sill. Ernest Adair was about

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to descend into the room, when he looked round for a moment. But he saw no one.

Yet another man was in the garden, and was watching him.

This was Robert Urquhart.

(To be continued.)

AMERICA MILITANT.

BY FRANCIS MORTON.

PART I.

ALAS! darkness gathers around the great Republic, and thunders herald the imminent tempest. "Jeshuron hath waxed fat," and his recalcitrancy can only be cured by depletion.

Men and nations equally attain maturity through a succession of insensible changes, the determination of which few distinctly apprehend but in their ultimate results. As M. Jourdain had unconsciously been speaking prose all his life, so, through its entire existence, the American nation has been unwittingly elaborating revolution. The two parties, whereinto it is divided by diverse social and geographical conditions, have by slow but continuous divergence finally reached that point in their career whereat their policies become antagonistic and their paths opposed. When there is no longer community of interests, separation, however long it may be deferred, as essential to security of individual rights, is eventually unavoidable. To attempt to prevent it by coercive measures will, in the spirit of revolutionary France be saying, "Be my brother or I kill you!" The evils attendant on civil war are sincerely to be regretted, yet, like the havoc incidental to a thunderstorm, they may be partially compensated by the re-establishment of the conditions of health.

The issue of the struggle will in a great measure be dependent on the temper and weight of the sword that is appealed to so clamorously and unwisely; and as authentic and impartial information upon the military system of the dissolving Republic is somewhat rare on this side of the Atlantic, the writer is emboldened to proffer that acquired by himself during a protracted residence in the United States, and more especially on the western frontier, along which the greater portion of the regular army of the United States is distributed.

The misconceptions prevalent here as to the character of the American militia demand some preliminary remarks. Nominally it is immense, for it is supposed to comprehend all able-bodied citizens, between the ages of 18 and 45, who are enjoined to drill four days in each year, with arms provided by the State; and as the population exceeds 31 millions, a very simple calculation will show that those liable to serve would constitute a force of vast numerical strength, could it be assembled. But the militia law is practically neutralised by a general disinclination—and more especially in the industrious North—to conform to it. Comparatively few obey but those who are unable to pay the fine incurred by recusancy, and these resort to very ingenious and amusing expedients to escape, or, in case of failure therein, to ridicule the onerous duty. In consequence of this universal opposition the law is generally inoperative, except for the imposition of fines. With the exception of a few regiments organised in the North for the purpose of insuring order in the great Atlantic cities, which are subject to popular tumults, the militia force actually existent otherwise than on the census returns and the papers of the Adjutant-General's offices, is absolutely insignificant; though, as military titles are in demand, the staff is, to use an Irish expression, "always to the fore," and the country swarms with gallant officers without commands. Even could the law be enforced, it might reasonably be queried how far military efficiency could be attained by so brief a continuance under arms.

Such being the recognised impracticability of embodying the militia, the State has sought to attain its object indirectly by fostering military tastes among the citizens, and favouring the formation of Volunteer Corps, which, it was hoped, might on emergency be made available for the public service. In all the great commercial cities, young men who may be burdened with superfluous cash or leisure, and are animated by that taste for personal adornment considered by Philopœmen essential to the soldier, associate themselves into Volunteer Corps. But these trivial corps, varying from twenty to fifty in strength, fulfil none of the functions of a militia, are entirely unconnected with each other, have no common organisation, and when war has occurred have shamelessly ceded the defence of their country to the hardier and poorer rural population, and to the scum of the great cities.

The local authorities on the western frontier are occasionally obliged to call on the people to repel the incursions of predatory tribes, and fight *pro aris et focis*; but compliance is absolutely voluntary, and is rewarded by a daily wage. The backwoodsmen, who have the same instinctive hatred to an Indian that a dog has to a rat, are rarely loath to obey a summons which chimes with their humour. Having elected officers from among themselves, they take the field with easy confidence, unburdened by other *impedimenta* than their arms, their blankets, and a few days' provision carried by each in his haversack. Dexterous in the use of the rifle, patient of fatigue, endowed with those keen perceptions generally esteemed peculiar to the savage, adepts in the craft of Indian warfare, following a trail with the unerring sagacity of a sleuth-hound, and, in addition to the vindictiveness consequent on the sense of wrong, animated by the cruel delight of the hunter,—they track the savages to their lair, or perchance overtake them in their flight, reeking with innocent blood, heavy with spoil, and ruthlessly exterminate them at a blow. Returning from a successful raid of this description, and carrying frequently as trophies the ears and scalps of the slain, these rugged warriors are "mustered out of service," as the phrase is, each receiving from the State a dollar for each day he had been under arms.

When engaged in foreign war the State has sought to supply the absence of the militia by appealing to the warlike genius of the people, and enrolling for fixed but short periods of service those who might be attracted by love of excitement and adventure, large bounty, good pay, and the hope of plunder. It has, however, been found exceptionally difficult to establish discipline among these tumultuous and venal levies, because, from

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the influence of their political institutions, Americans are invariably characterised by a singular indocility and aversion to restraint that render them the most untractable material for the drill sergeant that can possibly be conceived.

How unfavourable this national idosyncracy is to military efficiency was satisfactorily demonstrated during the Mexican war, wherein volunteer forces were largely employed. The successful issue of that contest is generally attributed by Americans to those irregular levies; their vanity is interested in concluding that those occasional soldiers, their friends, sons, or brothers, were fully equal to professional troops, and this erroneous conception was confirmed by the multitudinous narratives emanating from vain-glorious volunteers, while the venal press shrank from the odium that would have been incurred by bold utterance of a disagreeable truth, which could have been corroborated by the entire regular army. And so long-lived is a lie, that even here a leading periodical, discoursing of American affairs, asserted undauntedly that "Mexico was conquered by volunteer bands, commanded for the most part by elected officers, and it was boasted that this mode of warfare gave additional vigour to the combatants."

Only regular troops were engaged in the fierce combats of Palo-Alto and Resaca de la Palma, which initiated the war and startled the American nation. The crowds of volunteers that then rushed forward from various motives, being only enlisted for terms of three and six months, and therefore, in the majority of instances, entitled to discharge by the time they had reached the scene of action, turned from the bloody arena in most cases without having fired a shot, and gladly wended their way homeward, having "seen the elephant," as the phrase was, and had quite enough of military glory. When it became apparent that the war was not to be terminated by a *coup de main*, both economical and military considerations enjoined the necessity of longer enlistments if volunteers were to be employed, and it proved a lamentable error that they were. General Taylor's subsequent operations on the Rio Grande were rendered desultory and indeterminate by the undisciplined character of these levies; and when all the regular troops had been withdrawn from his command to be concentrated under Scott at Vera Cruz, the stout old soldier nearly lost the battle of Buena Vista from the inefficiency of the volunteers whereof his force was composed. That action was exceptional, for it lasted two entire days, and was almost a defeat. Entire regiments fled scandalously *en masse*, artillery was lost only to be recovered afterwards at Churubusco by the regular army, and the rout would have been general but for the heroism of the Mississippi Rifles, under Colonel Jefferson Davis, and of the small artillery force under Braxton Bragg, whose recent violation of his military oath sadly tarnishes the fame he then won. The force wherewith the septuagenarian hero Scott advanced from Puebla, and fought those actions which led to the fall of the capital, did not exceed 14,000 men of all arms, whereof irregulars formed certainly less than a third. After the capture of the city volunteers arrived in thousands arrogantly to claim a share in the glory, and by their rapacity and dissoluteness to endanger a general revolt of the nation, which had hitherto been indifferent to the struggle between the foreigners and the military aristocracy that had so long oppressed it. Those most favourable to the military occupation of the country contemptuously termed the volunteers Los Ladrones, "the thieves;" and that they deserved the appellation may be inferred from the fact that throughout the war they were distinguished from regular troops by being shot incontinently when captured. An attempt was made to garrison the city exclusively with volunteers, but to prevent its being sacked it was necessary to withdraw them. Though they were then encamped on the loveliest and healthiest spot in the vicinity, such was the dissoluteness and stubborn disregard of all disciplinary and sanitary regulations distinguishing these tumultuary levies, that, during three months of profound tranquillity, their loss by disease was fifty per cent. on their entire strength, or double that of an equal force of regular troops from all causes during the entire war! In consequence, it was acknowledged by the higher military authorities that of all others a volunteer force was the most costly, most refractory, and least efficient that could have been employed; and that fifty millions of dollars would have been saved to the nation by raising the regular army to 30,000 men, and giving to it a determinate direction in the first instance.

In no instance were any operations of moment entrusted to the "elected officers," spoken of by the English journalist, nor does the memory of the writer suggest to him the name of one who displayed any noticeable ability in any position, who had not formerly been a member of the regular army; while *all* the officers who fought brilliantly actually belonged to it at the time. Many of the volunteer generals were for party purposes unconscionably lauded by the political press, and even in some egregious instances by themselves; but certainly no correct conclusion as to their military capacity can be deduced from these electioneering trumpetings, however loud and brazen they may be. Such extravagant laudations of these volunteers is by implication an unjustifiable depreciation of the regular army and of its heroic chief, whose many services to his own and to our country merited more gratitude on both sides of the Atlantic, since only his magnanimity, discretion, and kindly feeling toward his ancestral land prevented war between England and America on more than one occasion.

The present war will necessarily be waged on both sides by hasty and undisciplined levies of this description; and in place of those cautious and determinate movements contemplated, that wise economy of blood and treasure enjoined by scientific warfare, it will inevitably be distinguished by desultory operations, useless havoc, and lamentable slaughter. In fact, what but the most unhappy issue can be expected from the employment of such forces? Consideration of the distinction between regular and irregular warfare will intelligibly suggest the probable issue. The vital principle of aggressive warfare is determinate action in a single direction, for the purpose of overpowering

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the enemy by concentration of effort and preponderance of force at a single point. The tactical dispositions to this end, demanding rapidity of action from the several masses whereinto the line is necessarily broken in order to facilitate its movements, suppose a preliminary discipline which these troops not only would not possess, but would be long in acquiring. On the contrary, the force of corresponding character, which would in this instance be opposed to it, would be specially qualified for that action which policy would emphatically enjoin. The vital principle of irregular warfare, which is the policy of the defensive, is by protracting hostilities to exhaust the foe, to whom from economical considerations time is of importance. Admitting of indefinite extension of the force waging it, prudently recoiling from exposure or collision, and profiting by a familiarity with the ground not possessed by the assailant, irregular warfare harasses all his movements, interrupts his communications, neutralises by incessant desultory hostilities a superiority of force that can never be brought into action; and, in the attempt to crush so restless and ubiquitous an adversary, enforces abandonment of that very discipline and aggregation wherein strength chiefly consisted. The very strength of individuality and independence of character under other circumstances so objectionable in the American admirably adapt him for this irregular warfare, wherein the combatant, even while acting in *concert* with others, must necessarily be dependent in great measure, not on the support and momentum of the mass, but on that personal skill, craft, daring, and ingenuity which specially characterise the American. Thus it may reasonably be concluded that in so far as the issue of the war is dependent on the military operations of volunteers or militia, the advantages will be with the Southern States, from their defensive attitude, from the special adaptation of irregular troops to defensive warfare, and from the pestilential character of the swampy regions wherein the first movements of the unacclimatised assailants must necessarily be made.

The standing army of the Republic does not exceed 17,000 men of all arms; a force as incommensurate to the power and wealth of the state, as it is inadequate to the duties consequent on its vast extent. It is probable that, in restricting it to the lowest amount reconcileable with efficiency, the founders of the Republic, in addition to wise considerations of economy, may not only have apprehended such a contingency as the present, but also have feared that a larger force might enable some unscrupulous chieftain to overthrow the public liberty. A similar distrust may be the cause of the special disfavour wherewith the nation regards the army, and of its persistent hostility to any propositions for its augmentation. Nevertheless, the executive has within the last twenty years, by taking advantage of the aggressive tendencies of the nation, succeeded in nearly trebling its former strength. But, though yet numerically so small, this force has the general staff of an army ten times its size; a peculiarity which significantly indicates the principle whereon it was first constructed:—that, while during peace it should not exceed the force required for the defence of the frontier, and security of the national arsenals; yet, in case of war, it might be capable of indefinite extension by the promulgation of a general brevet, and reinforcement of the strength of companies from the militia; so that, without loss of time or efficiency, it might be raised to 150,000 men, including a sufficient proportion of veterans to impart firmness and discipline to the mass, and a sufficient staff of experienced officers to lead it. During the late Mexican war, by raising the organisation of the infantry company from 42 to 120, the army was immediately and largely augmented with most satisfactory results. The system of drill and tactics is throughout of French origin, a marked indisposition prevailing to approximate to the British or Prussian system; that is to say, that somewhat loose order and rapidity of evolution is preferred to that precision and compactness of movement which necessarily involve slowness.

This force is recruited by voluntary enlistments, for five years, chiefly of foreigners, the introduction of *Americans* being singularly discouraged in general, from the considerations already alluded to. The recruits are chiefly immigrants, desirous and deserving of employ; but, as strangers, often unable to obtain it. Thus, though an army is generally a *sentina gentium* whereto naturally gravitate the very dregs of society, this one includes, as the world goes, an unusual proportion of good men. The pay of the infantry soldier has during the last twenty years been augmented from 5 to 11 dollars per mensem, with an addition of 2 dollars monthly for the first, and 1 dollar for each succeeding re-enlistment. The only deduction from this pay is a monthly shilling for an institution similar to our Chelsea Hospital. The liberality with which the soldier is paid may be best apprehended by a comparison with the dollar per diem of the ordinary labourer, all whose needs are to be provided for out of that precarious wage. On discharge, the soldier receives in money any economies he may have effected on his clothing, and the allowance of clothing is so large that with ordinary care this may amount in five years to 60 or even 80 dollars. If his private character be unobjectionable, a non-commissioned officer, capable of passing a not very rigorous examination, is entitled to a commission when a vacancy occurs, and soldiers of all classes have won them by bravery. The proportion in which different nationalities contribute to the army may be thus stated:—Irish, 40; Germans, 30; English, 5; Scots, 5; French, Italians, and Spaniards, 10; and Americans, 10, equal 100. Notwithstanding the hardships incidental to the profession, the annual rate of mortality is but 4 per cent., which speaks favourably for the morale of this army; but, on the other hand, it loses by desertion one-third of those enlisted; yet, as another third re-enlists after serving five years, and as desertions occur chiefly during the noviciate of recruits, ere habit and reflection have reconciled them to novel but necessary restraints, it is evident that the fault is in the character of the individuals, rather than in the service. When the popular ill-will toward them is recollected, it will be apparent that the obedience of these foreign mercenaries to the commands of the Government which entertains them

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is not likely at this crisis to be stayed by any scrupulous tenderness; nor, on the other hand, are they likely to be swayed by anything but a regard to their immediate personal interests.

Most of the officers of this force are pupils of the United States Military Academy at West Point, a place memorable in the revolutionary annals. The cadet, appointed by the Secretary of War, after five years of arduous study and subjection to stringent military discipline, receives his commission in that arm of the service for which his attainments qualify him, the infantry ranking lowest. Excellent and comprehensive as the educational system of West Point may be, it cannot, even were it desirable, make admirable Crichtons of all its alumni; for youth rarely considers a knowledge of dynamics requisite to the enjoyment of cricket, or denies that "Gil Blas" is more amusing than Legendre or Jomini. Thus, it may be assumed without offence, that a majority of these youths, having by resolute attention to distasteful studies passed the ordeal of examination, hasten to forget much of that which can be of little practical use in military life on the frontier, which oscillates between the daily petty duties and listless indolence of a garrison, varied by an occasional bear-hunt or a skirmish with Indians. On joining his company, the young subaltern is usually as well drilled as any man in its ranks, and too well acquainted with the evolutions to require that the word of command should be whispered to him by a sergeant; but, from the smallness of the army, and its distribution over the frontier in small detachments, few facilities are afforded for the acquisition of strategical knowledge.

Though generally gentlemanly and considerate towards their subordinates, the aristocratic proclivities of these officers have estranged the affections of the soldiery. Thus custom, if not regulation, enjoins a slavish mode of addressing the officers in the *third* person, altogether foreign to the genius of our common language; and an infringement of this formula is always noticed by a glance of stern displeasure. Thus also, such is their punctiliousness as to the due recognition of their rank, that even when in *mufti*, and therefore, according to military etiquette, not entitled thereto, a salute is frequently exacted from the guards. Yet, the prevalent tone of feeling is neither chivalrous nor manly, for many instances might be cited of officers who unscrupulously availed themselves of political influence to remain absent from their corps during the entire Mexican war; a procedure susceptible of the worst construction, but which was unnoticed by their comrades otherwise than by a covert sarcasm. When principles are thus lax it is not surprising that Southern officers consider themselves absolved by present circumstances from their military oath. Among themselves the greatest unanimity prevails, the harmony of their *symposia* being rarely disturbed by aught more serious than a question of etiquette; and to this quiet, doubtless, the inflexibility of the articles of war with regard to duelling largely contributes.

As the real character of a man is most apparent in his domestic relations, so, without in any respect subordinating fact to fiction, the social condition and exceptional duties of the American army will be best apprehended from the following sketch of its daily life and conversation, which may be entitled—

A PEACE CAMPAIGN IN THE PRAIRIES.

It is impossible to conceive of a more delightful region than the "Indian Territory," bounded by and between the Arkansas and Red Rivers. The gentle undulations whereby the ground has gradually ascended from the margin of the Mississippi here acquire a bolder character, and swell into a succession of ridges known as the Ozark Mountains, which, originating in the Sierra Madre of Mexico, and running towards St. Louis, form the only exception to the general uniformity of the great western plain. Those wide, grassy, and flowery expanses, with occasional groups of trees indicating from afar to the thirsty wayfarer the depressions of the surface which have favoured the formation of scanty rivulets, are here succeeded by magnificent forests threaded by numberless streams flowing through pleasant valleys towards the great rivers on the north and south. Here the solemn silence and utter solitude and lifelessness of the prairies are replaced by the rustlings of foliage, the sound of falling waters, and the songs of birds. The region is rich in coal and other minerals, the soil is singularly fertile, the climate is mild and agreeable, and, in fact, nought is lacking to the comfort of man; yet, but a hundredth of the land is occupied and less is cultured. This territory has been ceded, in place of their ancestral possessions, to certain Indian tribes, which, having beaten their spears into pruning-hooks, have here sat down under the protection of the federal government to make the dubious experiment of civilisation. To protect these quiet folk from the enmity of yet savage tribes, and from the equally aggressive habits of their civilised neighbours, several military posts have been established within the territory, whereof the most southern one, that wherewith we have to do at present, is generally known as Fort Washita.

Now the word fort, which to most minds suggests a picture of cannon frowning defiant from embrasures, scarp, counterscarp, and grassy glacis, has in the United States an entirely diverse application—implying everywhere almost except on the Atlantic coast only a military station, without the least pretension to fortification of any kind, and exclusively dependent in emergency on the bayonets or sabres of its garrison for defence. A brief description of the place in question will sufficiently indicate the character of nineteen-twentieths of the places whose warlike names crowd the map of the United States.

In the centre of a pleasant tract, a mile square, known as the United States Reserve, and on a grassy ridge shaded by noble trees, at whose base flowed a babbling stream, two opposed ranges of barracks, a range of officers' quarters, a guard-house, and an adjutant's office, form a quadrangle of 200 feet square, the enclosed area constituting the parade. Exterior and parallel to these are the commissariat stores, hospital, sutler's house and store, and various offices. From one angle of the square runs along the ridge an irregular line

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of detached houses inhabited by the staff officers, from the verandahs of which the eye commands a view over twenty miles of undulating prairie. Half way down the further slope is the magazine surrounded by pickets twenty feet in height; and where the slope subsides into the plain is the quartermaster's yard, with its spacious stables for the horses, mules, and oxen required for the public service at the fort; with its storehouses for forage, harness, tools, and means of transportation; the whole being surrounded by a little settlement of workshops of various kinds. All these buildings are or were constructed of the various kinds of timber wherein the region abounds, more or less rudely, according to circumstances. In various directions on the lower ground are the gardens which supply the different messes with fruits and vegetables, and the culture of which occupies so much of the leisure of the soldiery. On the verge of the reserve, beyond a brawling brook traversed by a rustic bridge formed of rude logs, is a straggling street of huts inhabited by traders who have taken shelter under the military wing, and who sell every conceivable commodity from a needle to a crowbar, with the exception of intoxicating liquors, which, from discreet consideration for the welfare of their respective subjects, Indian and military authorities alike rigorously interdict.

The whole region around the fort, with its frequent groups of gigantic chesnut, beech, and walnut trees scattered over the grassy expanse, which in spring is crimsoned with the wild strawberry, resembles some royal domain, being kept in scrupulous order by continuous *policing*, as scavengering is denominated in armies. Four brass field-pieces protected from the elements by a shed, or the glitter of the passing sentinel's bayonet, could alone betray the military character of the place to a stranger's eye on ordinary days; for, with the exception of the scanty guard, the soldiers on duty are all engaged in the most peaceful or even bucolic pursuits—away in the forest cutting fuel or timber for the carpenters, burning lime at a distant kiln, plying the broom and dung-fork in the public stables, driving teams of stubborn mules, carpentering, blacksmithing, and those of inferior capacity working lazily in the gardens. Those off duty are enjoying their *siestas*, or lounging about listlessly in white jackets with cigars in their mouths, or gossiping with the laundresses whose husbands are away, or philandering with the servant girls in the officers' kitchens. A single officer may perhaps be descried in the distance, reclining in negligent array in an easy chair at his own door, unconsciously intent on the fumes arising from his cigar, or gazing out listlessly into space.

But, on the day dedicated to the Prince of Peace, the military principle is in the ascendant, and grim-visaged war assumes his fairest aspect. Then betimes, at the peremptory tap of the drum, the ground teems with armed men, and those but yesternight escaped from servile toil now throng the parade, attired, plumed, belted with military precision, and their bayonets flashing redly in the early morn. The front having been formed and aligned, arms are ordered and ring sharply on the ground, while a moment of whispered suspense intervenes ere the appearance of that despotic prince, the commanding officer. Then, the adjutant having meekly intimated to that sublime personage that "the parade is formed," a fact which his transcendent dignity is presumed to prevent his observing for himself, that warrior draws his trusty toledo with an impressive flourish, and having commanded the ranks to be opened, straightway returns it to its scabbard, and proceeds to institute a rigid inspection of the arms, clothing, accoutrements, and general appearance of the troops—scrutinising buckles, straps, and buttons with an earnestness seemingly quite incommensurate with their intrinsic worth, and gazing so fixedly into the eyes of the men, as to blanch the cheek of many a culprit with the apprehension that his secret peccadilloes by some mischance have been discovered. Having at length returned his sword and dismissed the men with discriminative commendation or with grave reproof, as circumstances may demand, he courteously solicits the attendance of the officers in his tour of inspection of the guard, quarters, kitchens, laundresses' or married men's houses, hospital, &c., with a view to ascertain whether all these are in that orderly and healthy condition required by army regulations.

A sufficient interval for repose having elapsed, and the guard having also been relieved, the indefatigable drum again claims attention. The troops are now paraded with side-arms for church, scrupulous observance of religious forms being considered conducive to discipline, if not to morality; but to no duty is the soldier so reluctant, dark looks and profane ejaculations indicating in most the reverse to a devotional mood. The roll having been punctiliously called, to ensure the attendance of all, in this humour the soldiery enter and occupy the body of the building, which is contrived "a double debt to pay," being on week-days the Library and School-room: while in company with their families, the officers, as befits their dignity, are seated sword-belted before them. There is a fashion in religion, as in things of less importance, and the military aristocracy of America not only honours episcopal institutions by its own patronage, but, with strange indifference to the constitutional principle of toleration, whatever may be the conscientious scruples of individuals, enforces the attendance of the soldiery likewise. After prayers, and a sermon, wherein reverence for the constituted military authorities is inculcated as of primary importance to salvation, the yawning soldiers joyously escape to their dinners, and to those after amusements that signalise the intermission of their weekly toils. At sunset a parade, designed chiefly as a check on intoxication, whereto these weak vessels of porous clay are lamentably prone, terminates the solemnities of the sacred day.

Ere this evening parade is dismissed, it is customary to read out to the assembled troops any general orders recently received from the War Department wherewith it may be desirable that they should be acquainted; and at one particular occasion of this sort, at Fort Washita, on a certain day in the year of grace 185—, among the orders thus promulgated, was one of such a tenor, that those who had listened to it with that gravity en-

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joined by military decorum, retired from the ground with knitted brows and sullen looks, to break out on reaching their quarters into tumultuous wrath.

In elucidation of this popular dismay, it requires to be stated, that with the continuous increase of the population, and the attendant migration to the frontiers, the settlements annually gain about twelve miles on the wilderness, rendering it periodically necessary that the line of military posts, designed to restrain the lawless tribes of the prairies, should be similarly advanced. When a movement of this kind, into what may be considered a hostile region, occurs, necessarily subjecting the troops engaged to many inconveniences, privations, and to the excessive fatigues to be described in the sequel, it is popularly asserted that the selection of the corps appointed to execute this unpleasant duty, and of that which is to occupy its vacated post, depends principally on the political influence possessed by their respective officers; a fact which seems to indicate that favouritism is not absolutely unknown even in Utopia. Be this as it may, in the present instance, in consequence of a reconnoissance made by authority, the regiments occupying the various posts in the Indian territory, whereof Fort Washita was one, had been instructed by G. O. to take up a position in advance of the frontier, 200 miles to the south-west, and on the head waters of the Brazos River, at a point indicated as that whereat the contemplated Pacific Railway would necessarily cross that important stream; while a more favoured corps was directed to occupy the comfortable quarters thus vacated. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!*

The various munitions and supplies required for two years' military occupation of a barren and inhospitable region, of which the most dispiriting accounts were in circulation, having been promptly accumulated at Fort Washita, as the point of departure, the regiment was concentrated there, and, after an interval of busy preparation, marched successively in four separate detachments, on account of the difficulty that would have been experienced by larger masses in procuring wood, forage, and water, in so miserable a region as that about to be traversed.

THE AEROLITHS (METEOR-STONES) IN THE VILLAGE JUVINAS, IN FRANCE.

BY DR. MICHELSEN.

One learns much in travelling in the south of France, where the priest-ridden people are seen *in puris naturalibus*, in the lowest stage of moral and intellectual degradation,—where whole communities have become so childish and puerile by monkish craft and discipline, that they look upon common sound sense as the offspring of Satan, and at rational liberty as wayward heresy.

We do not of course speak here of families of education and much reading, which are frequently met with at Toulon, Nismes, Marseilles, Montpellier, &c., but of the bulk of the population generally, who are taught from early childhood never to consult their understanding and follow its dictates. In illustration of our remarks, we will recite here the incident of the Aeroliths which had fallen on the 15th of June, 1821.

On that day large meteor-stones had fallen from the sky in the vicinity of Juvinas, a village in the Department Ardêche, in France. It put the whole surrounding towns and villages in devout consternation. They spoke of 500 devils sporting in the air, and throwing down, in their satanic recreation, large stones upon the innocent mortals on earth, just as some of our youngsters lavish numbers of eggs on the heads of the pedestrians on their return from the Derby. Two full days elapsed before the people could summon courage to repair to the spot where those stones were deposited.

In the official report to the Minister of the Interior at Paris, which was signed by the Mayor (M. Delaigne), and countersigned by the Attorney-General (M. de Privas), the event is related as follows: ". . . . this memorable occurrence was particularly noticed and examined by children of tender age alone, who, less alarmed than the grown up people (*que les personnes raisonables*), had followed the direction, and pointed out the exact spot where the stones were lying. . . ." These *reasonable persons*, as the French text calls them, were no doubt some labourers who were in the field and witnessed the fall, but were too frightened to convince themselves of the real fact.

"Before people ventured to repair to the spot," continues the report, "a long consultation was held, whether it were not more prudent to approach the dangerous spot well armed with gun and sword; but Claude Serre, the sexton, wisely observed that if it was really the devil, powder and shot would not frighten him away, and it were therefore much better to be provided with holy-water, with which he engaged himself to chase away the bad spirit. . . ." Such was the force of reason in the Department Ardêche.

COUNT CAVOUR.

In Memoriam.

Weep, Italy, weep!
For the sun of thy dawning,
Now set in midday:
For the flower of thy morning,
In bloom pass'd away.
On his brow be the laurel,
Fame's smile on his sleep,—
But weep for thy Hero,
Weep, Italy, weep!

Weep, Italy, weep!
For thy great one departed—
The eloquent breath:
For the strong, the high-hearted,
Now silent in death.
For the lion-like courage,
The eye of the lynx,
The wisdom that baffled
The Gallican sphinx;
That humbled the pride
Of the priesthood of Rome;
Thy faulchion abroad,
And thy buckler at home;
In whose life thou wert first,
And the last on whose lip,—
For thy Patriot—Statesman—
Weep, Italy, weep!

Weep, Italy, weep!
And the loud cannon's rattle
Make mourn for the brave—

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For the light of thy battle,
Cold-quench'd in the grave!
For the daring that conquer'd
By Mincio's flood;
And wiped out each slave-stain
In Austrian blood;
And loosed the wild tide
Of thy long pent-up war,
And chain'd thy young eagle
To Victory's car;
That swept the red ensign
From Gaëta's steep,—
For his Country's Avenger
Let Italy weep!

Yes, Italy! weep!
For the arm that has righted
Thy wrongs and thy shame:
For the hand that has lighted
Bright Liberty's flame.
That took from thee—Scorning!—
That left thee—Renown!—
Thy long scatter'd jewels
Gave back to thy crown,—
That nerved thee to conquer—
That taught thee to keep—
For the man that has saved thee,
Weep, Italy, weep!

H. Cholmondeley Pennell.

THE REVENUE OFFICER'S STORY.

Thirty years ago, when I was an officer of His Majesty's Customs, the maritime counties of England were in a very different condition from that in which we now observe them. The contraband trade was still flourishing; high duties and large prices tempted the smuggler to constant exertions; and there was by no means the same uniform vigilance on the part of government officials which characterises the present day. Although I am an old man, and feel a natural fondness for bygone times when I was young and vigorous, I cannot but own that the Preventive Service of Queen Victoria's reign keeps the coasts in much better order and security than was the case under those of her grandfather and her uncles. How, indeed, could it be otherwise! We were appointed by private favour, quite without respect to merit; we were scarcely looked after

by our superiors, and had a hundred reasons for our remissness. Some of us were lazy, others were timid, and not a few were bribed to hear and see nothing. Then, the instruments we had to work with were not of first-rate quality. Those seaports which returned members to parliament had their own revenue boats, manned by freemen, who drew snug salaries, and were chosen for their votes, not for their powers as oarsmen. I have known the crew of one boat quite unable to row, that of another to be found drunk and helpless, at a corporation supper, when wanted for a call of duty; and yet these were the assistants on whom we were compelled to rely. Our own men were not much more efficient; the Revenue gang, as it was called, consisted of dissolute scamps, seldom sober, and not seldom in league with the smugglers themselves. At the very best, they were disorderly and unprincipled to an extent hardly to be believed by those who are only accustomed to the steady, well-disciplined Coastguard of the present day.

Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that so many prizes slipped through our fingers. The real wonder is that we made as many captures as we did. But we were not all drones in the hive. Some of us were as zealous as it is possible to be; and to this number, in the year 1827, I belonged. I was then a young man, but I had been for some years in the Customs, and having recently been promoted to the rank of a riding officer, had attained to a sufficient salary to permit me to marry. My station was on the Kentish coast, near the town of D——, and it was one that gave me ample opportunities of showing my activity and zeal for the king's interest. In those days Kent and Sussex were the head-quarters of what was called the Fair Trade; and a colossal traffic it was. Most of the sailors along the coast were concerned in the smuggling; almost all the traders of the towns had capital embarked in it; and even the farmers, for miles inland, had at least an annual share in some contraband venture. Many and many an old house is still in existence, under which are all manner of secret cellars and crypts, wherein the tea and brandy and other goods were stored when first landed; thence they were transferred to the barns of farmhouses a few miles from the coast, to disused kilns and quarries, to caves and woods, and other places of concealment, until they could be escorted to London.

There were great magazines of smuggled wares inland, the existence of which we vaguely knew of, but which we never even attempted to meddle with, however such a statement may provoke the incredulity of a generation accustomed to regard the law as omnipotent. But the truth is, that we dared not go too far in repression of these illicit practices. If we had acted up to the full measure of our duty, we should have brought the whole hornets' nest about our ears, and that was not a risk to be made light of.

To capture a vessel and cargo did not much provoke the smugglers: their well-known calculation was, that one venture successfully brought to market paid for the loss of two freights, so great were their profits in those times of a repressive tariff. But if we—the Philistines, as they called us—interfered with any of their haunts and hiding-places on shore, they regarded such an aggression as a breach of fair play, and resented it accordingly.

More than once, I had received well-meant warnings from reputable townsmen or farmers, that I was "too keen" in the exercise of my calling; that I should "do myself no good," if I persisted in my active career, and that I had better take pattern by old Mr. Peabody, of D——, who had for forty years looked with purblind eyes after the rights of the Crown, to the great satisfaction of the fair traders. But I was too young and hot-blooded,—I hope I may add, too honest,—to follow this kindly advice. To be a dumb, toothless watchdog, like old Lieutenant Peabody, neither barking nor biting, but eating the king's bread on false pretences, had something in it unconquerably repulsive to me. I liked to do my duty, to receive the praise of my chiefs, the Assistant Commissioners, who had already begun to talk of my future promotion. I even took a sort of pleasure in remembering that my name was known, and my vigilance feared, by the hardiest desperadoes of the coast, and that my exploits had even found a niche in a corner of the county newspaper.

But I had yet another and more solid reason for trying, in every way, to win advancement by merit superior to that of my colleagues. I was married, as I have said, and to one born in a rank of life rather above my own,—the orphan daughter of a clergyman. Cheerfully and smilingly had Lucy shared my poverty, but still I longed to be able to provide her with the comforts that had surrounded her in her youth, and it was mostly for her sake that I aspired to rise in my profession. Let no one laugh that a gauger should be ambitious. There are callings more popular and exalted, ay, and more agreeable, but no trade deserves to be utterly despised in which a man can do his work honourably and keep his hands clean from knavish practices.

The autumn of the year I have named had been a rough one, with strong, blustering weather. Such weather as that we had had is that which smugglers love. Bright nights and moonlit seas are less to their fancy than the dark and dirty weather that hides their operations from hostile eyes. In spite of the revenue officers, then, the "runs" had been many and profitable. The government cutters had made few captures; the guard on shore had been baffled in almost every instance. In only one case had a large seizure been effected, and I thought myself the most fortunate of mankind in being the cause of it. Little did I dream, however, when in my lonely rides across the downs I came upon that solitary hiding-place and detected its secrets, that it was my own destruction I was toiling to effect! Little did I imagine what was to follow, and what dire vengeance I was thoughtlessly provoking, when I made that ill-omened discovery. The hiding-place was in itself very curious and ingenious. Near a lone farmhouse on the high chalk downs, four miles from the sea, was a well, an old, deep well, with buckets, chain, windlass, and

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wooden cover, not in the least differing from a thousand other wells in the south of England. But, forty feet below the surface, there was a cave, or tunnelled passage, excavated in the side of this well, wide enough to admit two men, and it led to a large grotto scooped out of the solid chalk, and which made a dry and roomy storehouse for the kegs and bales that filled it. Any one might have peeped down the well and suspected nothing: nor should I, had I not happened to ride up just as two men, toiling at the windlass, had drawn to the light of day a bucket containing, not water, but a man in a pea-jacket and red cap, with a keg on his knee, suspiciously suggestive of Hollands. This was enough for me, as I reined up my horse in the shadow of the peach-wall of the garden, and peered cautiously at the scene. Quietly, as a huntsman who marks the fox steal out of covert, I made my way homewards across the springy turf, but not unseen, for when I returned with a strong force in two hours' time, the lace and silks had been removed from the well, and nothing but the bulky spirits, claret, and tea, remained at the disposal of His Majesty's servants. Still this capture made a great noise. The Assistant Commissioner, Sir John Buckram, came to D—— on purpose to report upon it, praised me at the corporation feast, and in private promised me both reward and advancement on the very next occasion when the Minister should ask him to dinner, and thus afford him an opportunity of urging my claims.

Elated by all this, I cared little for the melancholy way in which some of those townsmen who were supposed to have the best means of knowing the opinions of the smugglers shook their heads at me when we met, and heeded even less the threatening letters which now began to arrive at my house. Ugly documents they were, these latter; misspelt, and scrawled in villanous caligraphy, as if the authors wrote with a bayonet dipped in moistened gunpowder; but their contents, many a time, made Lucy's bright eyes grow dim, and blanched her blooming cheek. I almost wish I had kept one or two, that I might favour the public with a facsimile; but it can easily be imagined what sort of menaces would suggest themselves to rude, untutored beings, as wild as the waves on which they pursued their illegal and dangerous calling. I paid no heed to these threats, however, but pursued the same course as before.

One dark December afternoon—the fifth of the month it was, for I have cause to remember the date,—a letter of a different stamp arrived at my dwelling. It bore the signature of the superintendent, my immediate superior, and was dated from F——, a neighbouring town, where I knew that officer resided. The letter informed me that, according to intelligence received from private sources, a great cargo was on that very night to be landed on the coast between D—— and F——. I was instructed to repair, at eleven o'clock precisely, to a particular part of the cliff, where I should find the superintendent and his men, who were desirous to avail themselves of my local knowledge and well-known activity in effecting this most important capture. The letter was addressed, in red ink, as usual, bearing the talismanic "On His Majesty's service," and was sealed with the huge red seal commonly decorating such documents. One portion of the letter I have forgotten to mention. The superintendent strictly enjoined me to come alone, and on no account to speak of his communication, or the rendezvous, to any person at D——, whether connected with the service or not.

All that evening, while I was preparing for my nocturnal expedition, Lucy was sad and out of spirits, and I continually found her eyes fixed upon me with a mournful tenderness that struck a chill to my heart in spite of myself. I, on the contrary, was rather disposed to be gay and hopeful, for here was a capital opportunity of again signalising my zeal for the king's interests, and of earning the goodwill of my chiefs, and perhaps that promotion which had been so lately promised me.

But Lucy was not happy; her wistful glance followed me as I moved about the little humble parlour, oiling and loading my pistols, getting ready my sword and belts, my waterproof cloak and high boots, and laying everything in the place where I could most readily snatch it up, when, after supper, it should be time to start. Many a night had Lucy seen me busied with the self-same preparations, but never before had her heart been so heavy, or her blue eyes so tearful. She was always recurring, in a restless manner, to the letter of the superintendent, asking to see it again and again, reading it over slowly, weighing every syllable as a scholar cons some rare manuscript in a half-forgotten language, and questioning me as to the writer's purport and meaning, in a way that would have been provoking in any one else.

"Was I *quite* sure," she asked, "that the letter was really in the superintendent's handwriting, and had I any of his former epistles in the house, with which I could compare it?"

I laughed at her; but she persisted, and then I was obliged to own that I did not know the official's penmanship in the least. He had been newly appointed, and was personally a stranger in those parts; and though I thought I had seen documents in his writing, at the Custom-house, I had never paid any attention to the caligraphy, and should not know it again.

Next, Lucy fell to examining the seal, as I have seen antiquaries poring over some half-effaced medal or coin in a museum. But this, she was forced to confess, was exactly as usual, the same lion and unicorn, the same royal arms, and the identical motto; even the prodigality with which the sealing wax had been used, and the smears and blotches of it that had fallen on the envelope, had an official character that defied dispute. Then, Lucy must proceed to ask questions about the contents of the document, and to wonder especially why the superintendent should have desired me so peremptorily to bring no one with me from D——, and to observe strict silence as to the orders received?

To this I could only answer, firstly, that my business was to obey my superiors, not to interro-

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gate their motives; and, secondly, that no doubt the superintendent was aware that some of our hired men were allies of the smugglers, and in their pay, and that others were drunken rascals, who would be certain, in their cups, to divulge the whole affair in some water-side public-house. In fact, there were very few, in those days before the Reform Bill, on whom reliance could be placed, especially in a borough like D——, where the freemen who were in government employ, on account of their votes, were frequently near relations of the very smugglers whom they were set to watch.

Now the superintendent, whom I had heard described as an energetic officer, had brought down with him a party of trusty subordinates, who had no local ties or likings to interfere with their utility. It was natural that he should prefer relying on his own people, and no less natural that he should desire to benefit by the minute acquaintance with the various gullies and coves of the coast for which I had acquired some credit.

My young wife listened to all this, and was silenced, but not satisfied.

Supper was a melancholy meal that night, in spite of the cheerfulness I sought to impart by dwelling upon the bright prospects in store for us. I talked of the certainty of my speedy promotion to the place which it was daily expected would be resigned by the superannuated Lieutenant Peabody; and then I made a mental leap over the next two or three years, and saw myself a superintendent, and on the high road to a still snugger berth in London itself, in the head Custom-house. And I talked of a nice cottage at Islington, with garden and coach-house, and of the best of schooling for little Alfred, who was to grow up a gentleman, and be in the Church, like his grandfather; and in fact I built a score of those castles in the air which Lucy, in common with many young mothers, dearly loved. But though my wife tried to smile and prattle in her customary style, it was to no purpose; and whenever she thought I did not observe her, her eyes would fix on me in a frightened sort of way, as if she saw a peril that was invisible to others.

From one mood to another the transition is often very abrupt, and perhaps it is hardly wonderful that, having failed to cheer up Lucy, I should next have grown irritable and morose. I looked at my watch, took an extra glass of grog, and, pushing aside my plate, rose from table and began to get on my accoutrements in silence. As I buckled the broad leathern belt around me, and stuck my pistols in it, Lucy shuddered perceptibly. Often had she seen me go forth before, on nights as dark and on errands as full of danger, but without any tremor, outwardly, at least. I took no notice; I finished equipping myself, linking my sword close up to my left side, lest it should rattle, and throwing my thick rough greggoe over all. But then Lucy came nestling to my side, and passed her soft arm round my neck, and spoke and looked so tenderly and graciously, that I must have been made of crabbed stuff indeed, had not my ill-temper vanished before the true eyes and the fond smile. And then, nothing would serve her, but she must bring baby out of his little cot to kiss papa before he went away; and the child cried, of course, at being disturbed out of his slumber, and because he did not know me in the huge cloak and oilskin hat, and Lucy hushed him in that marvellous way she had,—a power of coaxing that the most stubborn urchin could never have resisted. But there was something solemn in this outburst of Lucy's tenderness; the terrors, vague and shapeless, had not quite died out of her dear blue eyes, and her voice trembled as she made baby join his little pink hands, and murmur his little prayer for papa. I had heard her do so before, but never with such a depth of troubled expression; and I could tell that she was ill at ease. However, I pressed my lips on Lucy's soft cheek, and then on the child's little rosy face, and hurried out of the room.

I had got but a short way down the cobble-stoned pavement of the narrow street, dark and silent as the tomb, before I heard my name called.

"Alfred! Alfred! *One* word, dearest!"

I came back, and found Lucy standing in the doorway, peering out into the night.

"Well! What is this wonderful word?" asked I. "Be quick, love, or I shall get a scolding for not being punctual."

"Alfred, dear!" said my wife, hesitatingly, "something weighs on my mind to-night. Are you quite, *quite* sure about that letter?"

"Sure of what?" asked I, perhaps a little peevishly.

"Sure that it really came from F——? that the superintendent really wrote it?"

I laughed, stopped her mouth with a kiss, telling her she was a little goose, not fit to be a sailor's wife, and strode fast down the street again. At the corner I looked back, half involuntarily, and there was the door still ajar, and a streak of yellow light falling across the pavement, and Lucy on the threshold, watching my retreating steps. I waved my hand, turned the corner, and plunged into the still and sombre town.

I had a long way to walk through the roughly paved, mean streets of the little seaport, dimly lighted as they were by the miserable oil-lamps that swung in the boisterous wind. The shutters were up, everywhere, though now and then a gush of light would stream from between their chinks, and I could hear voices chatting over the cozy fires and supper-tables. The public-houses that I passed were not empty, for there was a crimson glow visible through their red curtains, and voices were heard singing or disputing in sea slang.

I got clear of the town at last, and took my lonely way up the white chalk road that led to the lofty cliffs. It was a wild night. The wind dragged and tore at my cloak, and but for the ribbon I wore I should have lost my hat before I had got twenty yards beyond the lee of the last house. Above, there was a tempestuous sky, where the black clouds were rolled along in masses before the gale, and the moon peeped out very seldom,—a faint new moon, like a little white crescent,—while it was very dark and cheerless. In spite of my efforts, I could not keep a light heart in my

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breast: all nature seemed to menace and frown, and, do what I would, Lucy's mournful mood, the shadow of coming evil, weighed down my usually elastic spirits. Her last question, idle as I had deemed it, kept recurring to my memory: "Was I *quite* sure that the superintendent wrote the letter?" In vain I dismissed the question; in vain I called it silly, trivial, the mere suggestion of fancy; it rang in my ears again and again, as I battled my way onwards against the powerful wind.

I was off the chalk road by this time, and my feet were treading the crisp herbage of the downs. I was now obliged to advance with precaution, for the ground was irregular, and I had to climb up a steep slope of turf to reach the place of rendezvous. I came to it at last: I knew it well; a giant cliff beetling proudly above the chafing sea, and in shape resembling a monstrous wheel placed edgewise on its tire. A well-known landmark was that cliff over many a league of sea; beacon fires had blazed on it in old times; a mighty poet had described its towering steep in words as grandly simple as itself, and throughout the length and breadth of England the precipice was known by the poet's name. For a moment I lingered on the brow of the grim sea rampart, and looked out into the pall of darkness, through which the waves murmured with a mysterious sound, unseen as they were. Far away over the waters I could catch, through a break in the phalanx of clouds, the red glare of a light to warn ships from a place of peril. A moment, and the dark sky swallowed it up. No trace of man or his works was now visible. A shudder ran through me; an impulse seemed to urge me to fly, to hurry away homewards, to shun—what? Pshaw! What a pitiful coward I should grow, were I often thus! Was I a child, to fear a dark night and a high wind! I pushed on, sneering at my own qualms. In a couple of minutes I could make out a clump of black objects specking the hillside, and standing within a few feet of the verge itself. Bushes or men? Men, for I hear the muttering of their voices. The superintendent and his party, no doubt. I hastened up to them.

"Good night, gentlemen!"

They answered never a word. In silence they opened their ranks to receive me; my practised eye made out, as I passed in among them, that they numbered eighteen or twenty. A whistle, sharp and shrill, a roar of triumph, and I was seized and grappled with by a dozen strong hands at once. So sudden was the attack, so complete the surprise, that, although neither a feeble nor a timid man, before I could strike a blow or draw a pistol, I was pinioned, disarmed, and borne down. The smugglers! Quick as lightning itself the terrible thought flashed upon me that I had fallen into a cunningly devised snare, and was at the mercy of those lawless men who had most cause to hate me.

"A rat in a trap!—a rat in trap!" cried several hoarse voices at once; "we've got the gauger at last!" And then followed a storm of abusive epithets and coarse taunts, mingled with still feller curses.

"Murder the scoundrel!" "Blow his brains out without more palaver!" "Cut him into bait for eels!" "Pitch the land-shark over the cliffs!" Such were a few of the savage proposals of those who crowded round me.

"Stop!" called out a voice, in tones of authority; "drag the fellow up; help him to his feet, some of you; and you, Bill, flash the glim on his face, to make sure he's the right devil's chicken for us."

I was dragged to my feet; my hands were by this time securely bound with a lanyard, and all resistance was impossible. Involuntarily I closed my eyes as the red bull's-eye of a dark-lantern was flashed full on my face.

"Our bird! We've netted the villain himself!" was the unanimous acclaim. I opened my eyes, and by the partial glare of the lantern, dazzled as I was, I could see that I was in the grasp of several stoutly-made men in sailor garb, but much muffled and disguised. They were armed, for I could see the brass hilts of cutlasses and the brass-bound stocks of pistols peep here and there from under a peacoat or an oilskin wraprascal, but every man wore a crape mask, or else had his face so besmeared with soot and gunpowder as to present the aspect of a negro, and baffled recognition. He who seemed their chief was taller and more slender of build than the rest, though clad and armed in the same way, and he wore a loose crape before his face that fluttered with the action of his breath. I could see only his eyes looking out from the slits in the veil; his voice was less gruff than the voices of his comrades; I felt assured that he, alone, was a man of education, and that on his fiat hung my doom.

"The same," said the leader, after a pause, "Alfred Harvey."

There was another roar.

"Kill him!" "Drown the gauger as you'd drown a mangy kitten!" "Pitch him over!" "Shoot him!" and other pleasant propositions, were bellowed forth on every hand. Nor were the marks of ill-will entirely verbal. I was roughly shaken and struck by my captors, and nothing but the crowd that pressed around saved me from the more lethal strokes of clubs and cutlasses which were aimed at my defenceless head by some of the more excited of my foes.

"Who boarded the Blue Bell?" growled one husky voice, "and grabbed twenty puncheons of as good Hollands as——"

"Who stopped the waggon by the ninth milestone, and seized the goods that would have given a merry Christmas to half Lingham parish?" interrupted a second fellow.

"Who made me a poor man, along of tobacco?" fiercely demanded a scowling mariner, whose face I vainly scanned, so completely was it disguised by its swart colouring.

"This be he," snarled a fourth accuser, "that when we'd made the D— boat's crew as drunk as the Baltic ocean, must needs go and bring down the cursed revenue cutter upon our craft, by token of which I had three years in a man-o'-war, till I gave leg-bail, and shan't I have my revenge now?"

"Think of the Well!" bawled a fifth, and

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then the rage of the ruffians became overpowering.

I was buffeted, overthrown, and thought I should have been trampled to death. Then I was on my feet again, bruised and dizzy, and I felt something like a cold metal ring pressing my forehead, and I knew it was the muzzle of a pistol. I shut my eyes mechanically, breathed an inward prayer to heaven, and resigned myself to my fate.

"Fire, Jack!" exclaimed several of the gang.

"Hold!" cried the voice of the leader of this infernal crew, "hold! would you cheat the gallows of its due? The eavesdropping rogue does not deserve to go out of the world in so gentlemanly a fashion."

"That's true;" was the rejoinder, and then followed some fresh comments.

"Shootin's too easy a death for such as he!"

"Captain's right!"

"Hang the land-shark!"

"Over the cliff!—over the cliff!"

And the pistol was withdrawn. I was almost sorry. Death had only left me for a moment to return in some more hideous shape.

"No hurry, boys," said the superior ruffian; "let us hear if he's anything to say in his own defence."

There was a murmur, but the man had evidently much influence, and I was accordingly drawn before him, and bidden to "speak up." I never shall forget that scene. The stormy night, the wild cliff, the lantern flashing upon the grim circle of blackened faces, the figure of the self-constituted judge, tall and shadowy, with only his eyes gleaming through the fluttering veil,—all these were the features rather of a nightmare than of anything belonging to the real world. The whole was like some shocking dream, but it had a ghastly truth in it.

"Alfred Harvey," said the chief, and for all his soft tones I felt more fear of him than of all the rest of the howling pack, "Alfred Harvey, if you have anything to plead—speak."

I spoke, but with despair at my heart. I declared that I had done nothing but my duty to the king, without fear or favour,—that I had borne no grudge to any man—had never been unnecessarily severe or harsh, and had merely behaved as any honest officer, in my position, would have done. But my plea failed of its effect. Those rugged jurors were too prejudiced to give me a hearing. They drowned my words with oaths and violent clamour.

"Silence the sea-lawyer!" was the cry, and I bitterly felt that hope was at an end.

"Alfred Harvey," said the leader, "listen, and you, men, hearken to the sentence. This gauger is not one of the common run of Philistines for whom some mild punishment, such as the slitting of nose and ears, or keelhauling, or even flogging and pickling, might have been enough. I declare that if it were not for that Well business, I should be for some such light infliction, but, unhappily, my duty is a sterner one. Gauger, your sentence is—death! Tie him neck and heels, and pitch him to the fishes."

"Tide's out!" remarked a fellow who held me by the shoulder.

"Our friend will not, then, fall so soft as I thought," said the smuggler-captain.

A hoarse laugh hailed the brutal pleasantry. I made a violent effort to break the cord on my wrists, but though I loosened, I could not snap the bonds; and though I struggled hard, I was completely helpless in so many muscular hands. I pleaded no more. I scorned to ask for mercy, but, alas! my entreaties would have been idle. They led me, unresisting, to the edge of the tall cliff, beneath which boomed the sea. The moon, by this, had broken through the clouds a little, and by her wan white light I could just see, at an awful depth below me, the narrow stripe of beach, the narrower stripe of sand beyond, spotted with chalk boulders, and the line of foamy breakers boiling on the shore.

"Now, lads, take a good grip of the gauger," cried the chief. One, two, three, and away!"

I was drawn back a pace or two, and lifted from the ground by several strong arms.

"I give the word," said the chief. "One!"

I was silent in my agony; I bit my lips lest a cry for mercy should escape; I grudged my tormentors that triumph.

"Two!" called out the leader.

There was a pause. I was swinging half off the cliff, and my captors were preparing to launch me into the abyss. "Three!" already trembled on the lips of the smuggler-captain.

"Poor Lucy! God guard my wife and child!" broke from my lips half unconsciously, as I was on the point of being hurled over the precipice into the blackness of the night. There was a murmur and a movement among the men who held me. Those last words of mine, not addressed to them, had produced an effect which no oratory could have done. My entreaties they would have mocked; but, after all, rugged and fierce as they were, they had wives and children of their own that they loved, and my out-spoken prayer had touched a chord in their wild hearts that made them pause.

"Three!" said the leader, but no response followed.

They set me down, and stood hesitating, muttering to one another in low tones.

"I'll have no hand in it," said one, the very fellow who had put the pistol to my brow.

"Jem says he's seen her," grumbled another voice.

"Ay!" answered Jem, "a pretty little blue-eyed lass she be; kind to the poor, too, my old mother said."

"Sink me, if I like it!" said another.

"Are ye chicken-hearted, you tender-conscienced, go-to-meeting dunces?" sneered the captain.

But the rough hearts of the men were touched, and they got round their leader, muttering what I could not hear. A long discussion followed. I stood, meanwhile, dazed and stupefied, quivering as it were, on the threshold betwixt death and life. The debate, of which I did not catch a word, ended with a guffaw of boisterous laughter that went roaring away on the wind. Then the captain spoke.

"Gauger," said he, "we are going to give you

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a chance. Instead of pitching you to the crabs, we mean to hang you over the edge of the cliff, like a limpet on a rock, and leave you clinging. If you hold on till morning some shepherd will save you for the gallows. If you drop,—good night!"

Before I could reply, I was seized again, a gag was thrust into my mouth, I was closely blindfolded, and led along the cliff to its highest point. As far as I could judge, I thus traversed above a hundred yards. Then the wretches lifted me over the edge, and lowered me until my chin just rested on the turf, while my hands, still tied together by the rope, were placed on the edge, so as to take a firm hold of the earth and tufted grass.

"Hold fast, gauger!" were the last words I heard, and they were almost drowned by the yells of laughter, wild, unfeeling laughter, of the ruffians who thus sported with my anguish. I could hear their retiring steps. Their voices grew feebler and more faint; they had left me to perish. "Cruel, indeed, are the tender mercies of the wicked." I was spared, merely as a cat spares a half-dead mouse; my agonies were prolonged. But for the gag, I would have called to beg that a bullet might end my sufferings. But they were gone, and I remained, blindfolded, and suspended by my hands over the stony beach and the roaring sea. Like the fabled coffin of Mahomet, I hung between heaven and earth, in mid air. Death—a death cruel and imminent, was before me. On the other hand, but a few feet of the perpendicular chalk wall divided me from life and liberty. But I was powerless to lift myself out of that nether abyss over which I swung, as the strong wind rocked me sideways on my dangerous perch. For the first few minutes there was a humming in my ears, like the noise of bees murmuring among the flowers in the pleasant summer time. Then this sensation, which must have been caused by a rush of blood to the head, faded away, and my thoughts became endowed with almost supernatural activity. Dangling thus over my yawning grave, I seemed to take in at one eagle glance my whole past life, things long forgotten, the joys and sorrows of infancy, lessons learned at my mother's knee, childish quarrels and frowardness, and reconciliations; how I played truant at school, how I won the prize, how I was punished for some boyish fault. These and many other scenes of early life passed before my blinded eyes as if painted on the slides of a magic lantern. Then I was a man, and already in my profession; my first capture, my first encounter with smugglers, came before me with startling vividness, and in fancy I felt the boat bound over the phosphorescent sea, all aglow with its blue sparkles, and as we neared the prize, and the firing and shouting began, I imagined myself once more in the old wild excitement, cheering the rowers, and with my heart bounding to every stroke of the flashing oars that carried us up to the doomed lugger. And next I was a young lover, walking at Lucy's side among the white and pink blossoms of a Devonshire orchard, and I was whispering in her ear, as she blushed and faltered, a rosier, fairer bloom than aught else the summer could show, on the day I asked her to be mine. Then I saw little Alfred's childish face and wondering eyes, very near to mine, it seemed, and wonderfully clear and distinct, and I heard the lisping of the innocent baby's voice as he prayed for me. And then I laughed, or seemed to laugh, a horrid mad laugh, that shook and tortured me, but the gag was fast between my teeth, and no sound came forth. Next I grew half delirious, and my thoughts were fantastic and quaint. I was a spider, swinging by a thread from a wall; I was a bat hanging by its claws in a church tower; I was a sea-mew, poised on white wings over a seething sea. And then pain and cold brought back my senses. The wind was bitter, and my teeth seemed to chatter, and my feet were cold as stones and heavy as lead. Already I had hung for some time over the rock, and my hands were aching, and there were sharp cramps racking my over-strained joints, and my neck was half-dislocated. Still, for dear life, I clung on. My mind was active. My thoughts flew off to Lucy and her child, to her terrors and grief, to the cold bare poverty in store for her and hers, now the bread-winner was gone. For I deemed myself already dead. Hope was a mockery now. No mortal strength could maintain that despairing grip until the morning, and even were dawn at hand, aid might not come for hours. No, for me all was over. My fancy pictured Lucy, in black, pale and poor, plying her needle in some garret, far off in some dismal quarter of a great city, where alone could scanty bread be earned for herself and her pining child. And then the clock on the belfry tower of St. James's Church, in D——, struck the hour, and the wind bore the sound to my ears. Twelve! every metallic chime clear and plain! Twelve! Eight more hours of darkness. No man's strength could endure a tithe of the trial. Poor Lucy! I prayed inwardly, not for life, that seemed gone, save a miracle should pluck me back from the grave, but for pardon of my sins, for mercy to those I left, that the wind might not visit too harshly those poor lone lambs. The gale slackened, and a cold rain fell, lashing my face as I clung. The cramped position of my limbs gave me much pain, gradually increasing to unbearable torture. I was tempted to loosen my grasp, and to drop at once into the depths below. Still, I held on. Blindfolded as I was, I vividly pictured the beach below, the pebbly bank of shingle, the yellow sand, the fragments of chalk that lay as they had fallen, the waves beating on the shore. If I fell on the beach, while the tide was still out, I should be dashed to pieces, surely. Would such a death be very painful? I imagined the rush through the air, the sense of falling through space, the breathless rapidity of the descent, the crash upon the hard beach. Should I feel it? Was it possible that I should lie for hours, like a crushed worm, with broken bones and spine, longing for death but lingering on? Better be drowned than this. Ah, if I could but hold on till the tide makes, the sea will give me a comparatively painless ending. This new sad hope made me tighten my clutch: I could not live, but drowning, I had heard, was an easier death than such a fall as that before me. But why die at all, if I could keep my grasp till the sea washed the cliff's foot? I could swim

well. I might escape. Never, never, the cruel cord that tied my galled wrists would prevent my buffeting the waves. Should I end the suspense, and spring out to meet my doom half-way? No, no! I heard the waves howling nearer; I would wait, wait. Cramped, racked with pains, I could hardly hold on. But for the support my chin afforded, I must have succumbed before. I had driven my stiffening fingers into the short turf; and held it in a death-grip. But my powers were going fast; I was sick, dizzy, worn out. Ha! I may as well die like a man, in a struggle for life. I remembered that by a great effort I might climb to the top of the cliff, and be saved. True, the exertion would be exhausting to my last remains of strength; true, there were heavy odds against it, bound as I was, but in a few moments it would be too late to try. I nerved myself for the trial, and manfully tried to lift myself, like a gymnast, by my hands, above the beetling cliff. For a moment I rose; I was poised in mid air; I was succeeding, but the cord restrained me, my tortured arms gave way; I sank, my chin slipped off the edge of the precipice, and I now dangled, swaying at the full extent of my arms. This could not last. The pain was great; my strength was gone; in a minute I must let go, and fall to die. And then a wild notion seized me that perhaps the smugglers, less utterly barbarous than I thought, were at hand, watching me, ready to save me at the last. Surely, surely, it must be so. I strove to cry to them for help, to scream that in a second it would be too late. I was gagged. No word could I utter. The bitterness of death came upon me. *I let go my hold.* But no rush, no swift dart into mid air followed. My feet sank but a few inches, and then touched the ground, the firm, solid ground! It was no dream! Was I snatched from destruction by a miracle? I fainted, and fell to the earth. When I came to myself it was morning; I was lying, soaked and chilled, on the wet ground; two men, shepherds, were beside me, and one of them was trying to force gin from a pocket-flask between my teeth, while the other was loosening my cravat. The bandage had been removed from the eyes, and the cord cut that tied my wrists. I looked up, wondering whether I were in this world or the next.

"I'm mortal glad, master, you're come round at last," said one of the shepherds, "though how you comed here nobody could guess."

I looked wildly about. I was not on the beach; no cliff towered overhead. I was lying in a sort of scoop or bowl in the chalk downs, not uncommon on the cliffs of the Kentish coast. And I may as well, at once, explain as well as I can the cruel trick of which I had been the victim. I have no doubt whatever that the smugglers, when they ensnared me by means of the forged letter, meant to have my life, which at the last moment they spared by one of those wayward impulses of generosity which sometimes sway even the most abandoned men. They had abstained from spilling my blood, not for my sake, but for the sake of my innocent wife and child, the only plea which could have moved them. But they had not been willing to let me altogether escape punishment for my over-zeal, and accordingly they had placed me in a position where I was sure to feel all the bitterness of death, save the final pang. They had left me suspended, blindfold, over the edge of a shallow pit in the chalk, less than nine feet in depth, but with the full conviction that I was actually dangling over the giddy edge of the giant cliff, with a terrible death creeping upon me by slow degrees. The bottom was never, really, above a yard from my feet, and when I fell to the full extent of my arms, being a man six feet in height, I was actually within some six inches of the safe ground. But I died a thousand deaths in one during the awful hour I spent upon Poet's Cliff.

* * * * *

I resigned my situation. The illness brought on by that dreadful night aged and enfeebled me much, and I was glad to accept a clerk's place in a London institution, which my pitying friends procured for me. I have thriven in another walk of life. Lucy is still by my side, my stay and comfort, and my children are all I could wish. But I have never quite recovered the hideous anguish of that grim ordeal.

JOHN HARWOOD.

A NORTHERN CRYSTAL PALACE.

FROM THE RUSSIAN.

DURING the reign of Anne, Empress of Russia, her favourite Minister, Biron, Duke of Courland, induced her to command the marriage of one of the court jesters, who was, forthwith, directed to select himself a bride; while the cabinet minister and master of the hunt, Volinsky, was commissioned to celebrate the event by an exhibition of the most strange and novel festivities that he could devise, the empress insisting merely that the ceremony should be performed in an edifice constructed wholly of ice.

When the building, which was literally a Crystal Palace, was completed, it was well worthy of the unbounded admiration it excited in the multitudes who flocked to see it. It was observed, with astonishment, that this nuptial palace, built entirely of ice, contained several chambers, and measured 56 feet in length, 17½ feet in breadth, and 21 feet in height. For its construction, the ice was sawn out of the frozen river, in large quadrangular slabs, which were piled upon one another with great accuracy, and thus connected together by swilling them with cold water, which quickly freezing, united them in one mass.

In this house all the doors, window frames and their panes, all the furniture, and even all the vessels, such as tumblers, wine-glasses, and a multitude of other articles, were made of pure transparent ice. Nor was this all; for the candles in the chandeliers, and the fuel in the grates were represented in ice; and being smeared over and supplied with naphtha, were inflamed, and blazed during the evening. At the door were two dolphins, formed in ice; and from their open jaws issued streams of naphtha, which, when ignited, gave them the appearance of vomiting flame. Six cannon, made of ice, on carriages

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and wheels of the same material, were placed around the building, and more than once fired off ice balls.

The masquerade, contrived by Volinsky in honour of the nuptials, was not less extraordinary than the palace of ice. From all parts of Russia, which contains a variety of different races, one couple of each was summoned to attend the solemnities. They all appeared at this masquerade in the holiday costume peculiar to their tribes, and danced their national dances, to their national music, and were afterwards feasted abundantly on their favourite national dishes. The dinner took place in the riding-school, or manége, belonging to the Duke of Courland; and the visitors were formed into a procession to attend it.

The procession began with an elephant, on whose back was secured a large cage, within which sat the newly-married pair. Then followed the guests, in pairs, seated in sledges drawn by various animals—mostly such as are commonly used for the purpose in the countries from whence their respective drivers came—and accordingly some were drawn by reindeer and some by dogs, and others by oxen, and even by goats and bears.

After dinner the day was terminated by the triumphal entry of the married couple into the palace of ice, where, however, they remained only a short time, probably with little enjoyment of the caprice which assigned them such a chilling nuptial home.

IN THE WOODS.

From under the moss, from under the stone,
From under the roots of trees,
I can hear a rill's soft tremulous tone,
Though it roams where no one sees:
'Tis now mid the grasses high,
And now 'neath the hawthorn gay;
With never a song, yet often a sigh,
It glides on its wearisome way.

I follow the sound to a willowy dell;
Another low voice I hear,
From a purling brook and I love it well,
With its deep pools, bright and clear:
The purling brook knows the tremulous tone
Of the modest rill, there wandering lone,
And whispers, My love, draw near.

From amid the fronds of a flow'ring fern
I can hear the answer given—
I come, I come,—delighted I turn,
For love on this earth is heaven.
Now listen the sedges nigh,
Now listen the kingcups fair:
'Tis ever a song, and never a sigh,
Fall the sun or the moonbeams there.

Harrison Weir.

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LAST WEEK.

NONE but those who are accustomed to record events can be fully aware how rare good news is in comparison with bad. It does not follow that evil overbalances good. The fact is no doubt quite the other way; but the evil makes more show, and gives out more noise. Good people, and a healthy state of society go on quietly, while guilt and misery make a disturbance. All that is soundest and best grows gradually; while misdeeds and misfortunes come and go with a rush. We hear nothing of honest men, while the thieves take up a great space in the daily newspaper. Happy homes make no talk, while a conjugal scandal is heard of from Sir C. Cresswell down to the errand boys of a whole county. There is nothing to tell at any particular time about a people who are contented, free, and prosperous; while there is always revolution, or the expectation of it, to exhibit in countries cursed by tyranny, It is even worth noticing that the rule holds good under the headings of Births and Deaths. The order of great men never fails; the line of Nature's noblemen never comes to an end: yet we are every year,—almost every month,—notifying the loss of some great citizen, without any apparent set-off on the other side. Among those new-born babes who can excite no public interest there is one here and there whose death will some day be a great public loss; but we do not know what a blessing we have got in his birth, while we are mourning over the death of somebody of perhaps far less beneficial importance. Thus it seldom happens that good news has to be announced, while every week creates more or less of bad. Last week, however, there were certainly two pieces of very good news,—clear, distinct, and unquestionable. The New Zealand war is over. The natives have unconditionally surrendered —not, we may trust, as a hopeless army surrenders to an enemy, or insurgents to a powerful tyrant; but as an erring child or servant who has found out his mistake. The return of Sir G. Grey to the colony he governed so well and happily will give the best possible turn to this conclusion of the war. He is absolutely trusted by the natives, and cordially respected by the Europeans; and it is not too much to expect of him, after what he has before done, that he will point out the dangerous parts of the land question for settlement, convince the various opposing parties of the necessity of coming to an understanding on them, and obtain such an arrangement as shall preclude future struggle. The natives have shown their capacity for civilisation; and the Europeans have till lately indulged less in the prejudices of race than perhaps any other white colonists in the world. The recent war must, we fear, have roused some of the "damned nigger" passion; but the presence of Sir George Grey is a constant rebuke to that evil instinct in his own countrymen, as it is to savage propensities in the Maories. The New Zealand war is over. That chapter of disgrace and evil boding is closed; and it is for all good citizens to look to it that it never breaks out again. The more intricate and doubtful the question of land rights is, the more care should be taken to get it cleared up and settled, now when a fresh start is to be made. Instead of seeing—not only native opposed to European, but bishop to governor, clergy to gentlemen, and old settlers to new comers,—we must get Sir George Grey to put his finger on the point of difference, and tell us how, in his opinion, a common agreement may be established. The sooner he gets this done, the sooner he will return to the Cape, where he may any day be as much wanted as he ever was in New Zealand. If it should be his life's work to find and prove the method of reconciling barbarian tribes to our colonial rule, he need envy no living man his career, be it what it may.

The other piece of good news is, that our flag, together with that of France, is peacefully floating on the Celestial atmosphere of Heavenly Pekin. We have now an embassy established in the heart of China,—not apparently only, or by force, or on false pretences, but as genuinely as at any European court, and for the same general reasons. The ruling princes now understand that England is a Great Power, and that our friendship may be an inestimable benefit to China, and the institution of a school in Pekin for the teaching of our language, and of European knowledge, is a sign of the times full of promise. There is plenty of gloom overhanging China. The hopeless character of the rebellion, and quality of the rebels, must long be a drawback on our hopes of a prosperous commercial partnership with China: but the old, and apparently insuperable difficulty of entering into genuine relations with the government is overcome; and the date of the hoisting of our flag on the British embassy in Pekin is one which should be marked in the history of both empires.

These items of eastern news arrived just when the Secretary for India had proposed in Parliament three bills intended to revolutionise the government of India. It is too soon, as yet, to discuss these measures; the hurrying them through a second reading at this period of the session, without anything like real examination of their merits, sets public opinion at defiance: but it can never be too soon to remark on such a fact as that the Bills were moved for in a very thin House; that they seemed to excite less sensation than half the questions put by members on motions for adjournment; and that they passed a second reading with singular levity. The reception of Mr. Money's book on Java, with its advice "How to govern a Colony," shows that there is a way to people's minds on Indian subjects. The eagerness with which that book is talked about is an encouragement to try again and again to fix public attention on the great duty of studying the case of India, however astonishing may be the ignorance betrayed by the comments on Mr. Money's advice. It is astonishing enough that Parliament and people seem unaware that, having abolished an old theory and system of ruling 150,000,000 of people, it is necessary now to determine on some principle and method. It is astonishing enough that men are saying, all over London, "Why cannot we rule India as the Dutch rule Java, and

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get money out of it?" while the Dutch method is explained in its fullness, with its low aims, arbitrary methods, and artificial organisation, liable to destruction at any hour, and certain to meet it soon. It is astonishing that our journals should praise, without reserve, a book which makes game of all our essential aims in India, and advocates a system which is an enormous exaggeration of the system we have abolished, with much profession of indignation, in India. But perhaps the most amazing thing of all is that, in the same week in which Mr. Money's "Java" was extolled and talked about in all companies, Sir C. Wood's three India Bills were received with as much apathy as if they related to some parish boundary. They comprehend the whole principle of the government of Asiatics. They must decide the vast question of the colonisation of India, and its exploration by European capital.

They engage us to rectify the most appalling of all our disgraces in India, — the failure of justice, through a mixture of incompatible methods in the institution of our courts. We have swept away the Company, with its principles and its policy: we profess alarm at Indian finance, and are eager to hear how the Dutch make a profit of their colony: we bestow our money to relieve famine in India: we say that we might preclude famines, and obtain cotton, and tap an inexhaustible source of wealth, if we set properly about it: yet every rising politician avoids Indian studies, because they will make him a bore; and when a Minister introduces Bills which, whatever else they are, are a revolution or renovation of Indian policy, he addresses a thin House, and there is every reason to suppose that the whole discussion will be as remarkable a specimen of sixes and sevens as the debate on Indian army amalgamation last year. The question presses, and will continue to press, why Parliament undertook the responsibility of governing India if it was not prepared to qualify itself for the duty. Some point was given to people's reflections on this matter last week by the final closing of Addiscombe College. At that College had been trained a long succession of those Indian officers whose names will for ever fill a separate department in our military history; and, now that the Indian army is extinguished, the College must follow. Haileybury, the Civil College, was closed when the Company was dethroned; and it was a melancholy day to all who knew how to value the singular and successful experiment of middle-class government in so splendid a field. The shutting of the gates of Addiscombe College was not quite so ominous an event: but it made many hearts swell, like the expiring military music of a doomed army, or the disbanding of a famous old regiment which carries the names of a score of great battles on its colours.

As for the rest, the week brought assurance of an amelioration of the famine, and of its ravages having been exaggerated, and of an improving prospect of cotton from many districts of India. There seems to be indeed no doubt in regard to a sufficient quantity, wherever adequate arrangements are made for cleaning, picking, and conveying it. It will be strange if British energy and capital do not, as usual, accomplish what is so clearly within their scope; but how can we build upon this at the moment when a Bill which involves the whole question of British investment and industry in India seems to have no interest for the House of Commons?

The West India people seem to be stirred on the subject of cotton supply. In Jamaica and elsewhere it is now admitted that there is abundance of labour at command for that sort of work; and of the fitness of soil and climate, and the goodness of the seed, there is no question. On the whole, the prospect of a supply seems brightening, and already much better than we deserve.

We had misled the Americans, as well as endangered ourselves, by our slowness. The little we now hear from the Southern States shows us that the calculations of the Secessionists have been based altogether on the supposed inability of Europe and the Northern States to do without their cotton. The Northern States are hastening to enlarge their supplies of the admirable flax-cotton which the Western prairies can be made to yield to any amount. A small trade in the seed will now give way before a vast demand for the fibre, for the mills of New England and New York; and the rest of the world is wide enough for the demands of Europe. The dismay caused in the Southern States by the discovery that they had been leaning on a broken reed, begins to show itself to all observers of their ways and readers of their newspapers.

Week by week the warnings of all sensible men who know anything of America are seen to be well grounded. There never could be any rational doubt of the essential weakness of the Southern section, whatever the North might do, or refuse to do. Property is only land and slaves —land mortgaged and slaves precarious;—a constant insufficiency of food, clothing, and specie; a dislocated social fabric, where the intelligence of the educated few is in every crisis overwhelmed by the passions of the ignorant many, and where both live in dread and hatred of four millions of an injured servile class;—a dread of public opinion which prevents the Secession leaders from fulfilling their constitutional duty of appealing to the people; and that restriction of the press which creates an untruthful habit of mind and speech, and keeps the whole mass of inhabitants in a constant state of delusion;—these things are enough to show that the South cannot make any sustained effort, in the way of either attack or resistance. The leaders began with attack; but they have not followed it up. The May-day fête at Washington, bragged of in March, was put off to the 10th of June; and the Confederates are not at Washington, nor likely to be, as far as they yet show. The first great battle was still unreported last week. It may be a real battle, and a great one; but the scheme of rapid onslaught at first boasted of has been relinquished; and every day's delay weakens the aggressors and strengthens the discipline and the arrangements of the aggrieved, now turned into invaders of Virginia.

All the expected symptoms are appearing in the South, one after another. Cotton is pushed aside

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to grow corn. Planters are flying when they can; and when they cannot, they are freeing their slaves, and taking refuge in the cities. The negroes are showing so plainly their state of expectation that their owners dare not live among them. Wherever any Federal force appears, fugitive negroes throng into the camp. They are employed on the defences, as are their kindred in the South,—with the belief in all their minds that their bondage is near an end.

As was anticipated, no free election is anywhere allowed in the Slave States, nor any other expression of adverse opinion; and some deeds have been done which must embitter the war. It was a dreadful thing that in Baltimore a lady could go from bed to bed in the hospital, where the injured Massachusetts soldiers were lying, reproaching them for their cause, and saying that they were rightly served in having their heads and limbs broken: but it will be more keenly felt that a lady in the South—a governess—has been tarred and feathered as a Northern woman. The school-mistresses there have collected in parties to travel under the escort of some known Secessionist: but even so, every stage has been full of peril.

The "Times" correspondent has told us of no less than thirty-five British subjects at New Orleans who were seized upon to be made "Volunteers" of; and the Washington Government, and other authorities who have a grasp of Southern correspondence, are more thoroughly convinced than ever that the Southern forces are, to a great extent, pressed, and that each State includes a large proportion of Unionists.

As for the North, its passions are on the rise also. Last week brought evidence of some improving feeling towards England and France: but the hasty misapprehension at first, and the violence of temper and manners which followed will be remembered, through all our sympathy with the cause, and admiration of the devotedness of the Free States. There, as in the Slave States, mothers and sisters are full of anxiety, and wives and daughters heartsick with terror. When the rumour runs that the wires are cut, and the mails stopped, because a battle is beginning, the Southern wife keeps the negroes in her presence, and decides upon which she will trust with arms, and which she will win over to take charge of the children. The New England matron, meantime, is sitting before her open Bible, or scraping lint—now turning from one to the other in sickness of heart, and now, too sick at heart for either, pacing the house from noon till dark. Civil war is already found to be very terrible, though no immediate collision of importance had been reported last week. Something else became known—as important as could well be. It was told as a joke that a Peace Society had met, uttering such belligerent sentiments that it was proposed to enlist the whole for the war: but it was in sober earnest that the peace-loving citizens, who had wished that the Secessionists might be allowed to take themselves off quietly, were now found rejoicing that the method of violence had been preferred at Charleston. The Southern "Pharaoh" would the sooner "let Israel go," as the sons of the pilgrims phrase it. The bondmen seem to be finding a Red Sea passage without leave of "Pharaoh"; and each day reduces the chance of the perpetuation of their bondage.

The springing up of the notion of a British protectorate, when difficulties press, is remarkable. The Southern gentlemen fancy they should like an English Prince, to make a king of; and all wavering people think we might help them to some settlement. What English Prince can slaveholders suppose would rule over them? And why are we bound to find a solution for a hopeless quarrel? Our respect is all for the genuine republicans, who blame themselves, and not their form of government, for their present difficulties, and who feel that they must work out their own solution.

We sent troops to Canada last week. It is a pity that we had not previously settled the question of colonial self-defence: but our garrisons in Canada were so reduced that they might be strengthened without scandal; and it is possible that the presence of some soldiery may be welcome to some residents who desire a genuine neutrality to be preserved on their side of the American frontier.

During the week, we heard of Ricasoli's announcement of his headship of the modified Italian Ministry: and of the agreement of the Great Powers that Syria should be under the command of a Christian governor; and that the odious Stade Dues will cease to be levied on the 1st of July, for a very moderate consideration in money. We saw Father Daly confirming Lord Palmerston's account of their *tête-à-tête*, under cover of contradicting it. We saw the Royal Assent given to the much contested Budget Bill, and the disappearance of the Paper Duty below the horizon for ever. We saw the Criminal Law Consolidation carried through committee; and the Affirmation Bill thrown out, after an astonishingly crude discussion of the occasion for it, and the principle involved in it. We saw the Surrey Music Hall lying in smoking ruin; and the water rising in the Clay Cross Pit over the bodies of a score of men and fifty horses. We saw the weather brightening and the crops growing as fast as welcome rains and summer heat could make them. We saw the Builders' Strike renewed in the best days of the year for work and earnings. We saw evil and good alternating as usual; and took leave, as usual, to trust that the good was the stronger of the two.

END OF VOL. IV.

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