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"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LXV. MR. MARSTON SHOWS HIS HAND.

THERE came on a sudden a great quiet over Dorraclough; the quiet of death.

There was no longer any doubt, all the country round, as to the fact that the old baronet was dead. Richard Marston had placed at all the gates notices to the effect that the funeral would not take place for a week, at soonest; that no day had yet been fixed for it, and that early notice should be given.

The slight fuss that had prevailed within doors, for the greater part of a day, had now quite subsided; and, quiet as it always was, Dorraclough was now more silent and stirless than ever.

I could venture now to extend my walks anywhere about the place, without a risk of meeting any stranger.

If there is a melancholy there is also something sublime and consolatory in the character of the scenery that surrounds it. Every one has felt the influence of lofty mountains near. This region is all beautiful; but the very spirit of solitude and grandeur is over it.

I was just consulting with my maid about some simple provisional mourning, for which I was about to despatch her to the town, when our conference was arrested by the appearance of Richard Marston before the window.

I had on my walking-dress, for I thought it not impossible he might arrive earlier than he had the day before.

I told my maid to come again, by-and-bye; and I went out to meet him.

Well, we are now walking on the wild path, along the steep side of the cleugh,

towards the lake. What kind of conversation is this going to be? His voice and manner are very gentle; but he looks pale and stern, like a man going into a battle. The signs are very slight, but dreadful. Oh! that the next half-hour were over! What am I about to hear?

We walked on for a time in silence.

The first thing he said, was:

"You are to stay here, at Dorraclough; you must not go; but I'm afraid you will be vexed with me."

Then came about twenty steps, we were walking slowly, and not a word was spoken during that time.

He began again:

"Though after all it need not make any real difference. There is no will, Ethel; the vicar can tell you that; he had the key, and has made search—no will; and you are left unprovided for; but that shan't effect you. I am heir-at-law, and nearest-of-kin. You know what that means. Everything he possessed, land or money, comes to me. But—I've put my foot in it; it is too late regretting. I can't marry."

There was a silence; he was looking in my face.

"There! the murder's out. I knew you would be awfully vexed. So am I; miserable; but I can't. That is, perhaps, for many years."

There was another silence. I could no more have spoken than I could, by an effort of my will, have lifted the mountain at the other side of the lake, from its foundation.

Perhaps he misinterpreted my silence.

"I ought to have been more frank with you, Ethel; I blame myself very much, I assure you. Can't you guess? Well, I was an awful fool; I'll tell you everything. I feel that I ought to have done so, long

ago; but you know, one can't always make up one's mind to be quite frank, and tell a painful story. I am married. In an evil hour, I married a woman in every way unsuited to me; pity me. In a transitory illusion, I sacrificed my life—and what is dearer—my love. I have not so much as seen her for years, and I am told she is not likely to live long. In the mean time, I am yours only—yours entirely and irrevocably, your own. I can offer you safety here, and happiness, my own boundless devotion and adoration, an asylum here, and all the authority and rights of a wife; Ethel—dearest—you won't leave me.”

I looked up in his face, scared—a sudden look, quite unexpected. I saw a cunning, selfish face gloating down on me, with a gross, confident, wicked simper.

That odious lazy smile vanished, his eye shrank; he looked detected or disconcerted for a moment; but he rallied.

“I say, I look on myself, in the sight of Heaven, as married to you. You have pledged yourself to me by every vow that can tie woman to man; you have sworn that no obstacle shall keep us apart; that oath was not without a meaning, and you knew it wasn't; and by Heaven you shan't break my heart for nothing. Come, Ethel, be a girl of sense; don't you see we are controlled by fate? Look at the circumstances; where's the good in quarrelling with me? Don't you see the position I'm placed in? Don't you see that I am able and anxious to do everything for you? Could a girl in your situation do a better or a wiser thing than unite her interests with mine, indissolubly? For God's sake, where's the use of making me desperate? What do you want to drive me to? Why should you insist on making me your enemy? How do you think it's all to end?”

Could I have dreamed that he could ever have looked at me with such a countenance, and spoken to me in such a tone? I felt myself growing colder and colder; I could not move my eyes from him. His image seemed to swim before me; his harsh tones grew confused. My hands were to my temples, I could not speak, my answer was one piteous scream.

I found myself hurrying along the wild path, towards the house, without hardly a clear recollection, without one clear thought.

I don't know whether he tried to detain me, or began to follow me.

I remember, at the hall-door, from habit, going up a step or two, in great excitement—we act so nearly mechanically; a kind of horror seized me at sight of the half-open door. I turned and hurried down the avenue.

It was not until I had reached the George and Dragon, at the sleepest hour, luckily, of the tranquil little town of Golden Friars, that I made a first effectual effort to collect my thoughts.

I was simply a fugitive. To return to Dorraclough, where Richard Marston was now master, was out of the question. I was in a mood to accept all ill news as certain. It never entered my mind that he had intended to deceive me, with respect to Sir Harry's will.

I walked up to Mr. Turnbull, the host of the George and Dragon, whom I saw at the inn-door, and having heard his brief but genuine condolences, only half understanding what he was saying, I ordered a carriage to bring me to the railway station, and while I was waiting I wrote a note in the quiet little room, with a window looking across the lake, to the good vicar.

Mr. Turnbull was one of those heavy, comfortable persons who are willing to take everybody's business and reasons for granted. He therefore bored me with no surmises as to the reasons of my solitary excursion at so oddly chosen a time.

I think, now, that my wiser course would have been to go to the vicar, and explaining, generally, my objections to remaining at Dorraclough, to have asked frankly for permission to place myself under his care until the arrival of Mr. Blount.

There were fifty other things I ought to have thought of, though I only wonder, considering the state in which my mind was at the moment, that I was able to write as coherently as I did to the vicar. I had my purse with me, containing fifty pounds, which poor Sir Harry had given me just before he left Dorraclough. With just this, which I had fortunately brought down with me to the drawing-room, for the purpose of giving my maid a bank-note to take to the town to pay for my intended purchases, I was starting on my journey to London. Without luggage, or servant, or companion, or plan of any kind, inspired by the one instinct, to get as rapidly as possible out of sight and reach of Dorraclough, and to earn my bread by my own exertions.

CHAPTER LXVI. LAURA TO THE RESCUE.

YOU are to suppose my journey safely ended in London. The first thing I did after securing lodgings, and making some few purchases, was to go to the house where my great friend, Sir Harry Rokestone, had died. But Mr. Blount, I found, had left London for Golden Friars, only a few hours before my arrival.

Another disappointment awaited me at Mr. Forrester's chambers. He was out of town, taking his holiday.

I began now to experience the consequences of my precipitation; it was too late, however, to reflect, and if the plunge was to be made, perhaps the sooner it was made the better.

I wrote to the vicar to give him my address, also to Mr. Blount, telling him the course I had resolved on. I at once resolved to look for a situation as governess to very young children. I framed an advertisement with a great deal of care, which I published in the Times; but no satisfactory result followed, and two or three days passed in like manner.

After paying for my journey and my London purchases, there remained to me, of my fifty pounds, about thirty-two. My situation was not so frightful as it might have been. But with the strictest economy a limited time must see my store exhausted; and no one who has not been in such a situation can fancy the ever-recurring panic of counting, day after day, the diminishing chances between you and the chasm to whose edge you are slowly sliding.

A few days brought me a letter from the good vicar. There occurred in it a passage which finally quieted the faint struggle of hope now and then reviving. He said, "I observe by your letter that you are already apprised of the disappointing result of my search for the will of the late Sir Harry Rokestone. He had informed several persons of the spot where, in the event of his executing one, which he always, I am told, treated as very doubtful, it would be found. He had placed the key of the safe along with some other things at his departure, but without alluding to his will. At the request of Mr. Marston I opened the safe, and the result was, I regret to say, that no will was found."

I was now, then, in dread earnest to lay my account with a life of agitation and struggle.

At last a promising answer to my advertisement did reach me. It said, "The

Countess of Rillingdon will be in town till this day week, and will be happy to see L Y D X, whose advertisement appears in the Times of this morning, if possible, to-day before two." The house was in Belgrave-square. It was now near twelve. I called immediately with a note, to say I would call at a quarter to two, and at that hour precisely I returned.

It was plain that this was but a flying visit of the patrician owners of the house.

Some luggage, still in its shiny black casings, was in the hall; the lamps hung in bags; carpets had disappeared; curtains were pinned up, and servants seemed scanty, and more fussy than in the organised discipline of a household.

I told the servant that I had called in consequence of a note from Lady Rillingdon, and he conducted me forthwith up the stairs. We passed on the way a young lady coming down, whom I conjectured to be on the same errand as myself. We exchanged stolen looks as we passed, each, I dare say, conjecturing the other's chances.

"Her ladyship will see you presently," he said, opening a door.

I entered, and whom should I see waiting in the room in a chair, in her hat, with her parasol in her hand, but Laura Grey.

"Ethel!"

"Laura!"

"Darling!"

And each in a moment was locked in the other's embrace.

With tears, with trembling laughter, and more kisses than I can remember, we socialised our meeting.

"How wonderful that I should have met you here, Laura!" said I; though what was the special wonder in meeting her there more than anywhere else, I could not easily have defined. "You must tell me, darling, if you are looking to come to Lady Rillingdon, for if you are, I would not for the world think of it."

Laura laughed very merrily at this.

"Why, Ethel, what are you dreaming of? I'm Lady Rillingdon!"

Sometimes a mistake seizes upon us with an unaccountable obstinacy. Laura's claiming to be Lady Rillingdon seemed to me simply a jest of that poor kind which relies entirely on incongruity without so much colour of possibility as to make it humorous.

I laughed, faintly enough, with Laura, from mere politeness, wondering when this poor joke would cease to amuse her, and the more she looked in my face, the more

heartily she laughed, and the more melancholy became my endeavour to accompany her.

"What can I do to convince you, darling?" she exclaimed at length, half distracted.

She got up and touched the bell. I began to be a little puzzled. The servant appeared, and she asked:

"Is his lordship at home?"

"I'll inquire, my lady," he answered, and retired.

This indeed was demonstration; I could be incredulous no longer. We kissed again and again, and were once more laughing and gabbling together, when the servant returned with, "Please, my lady, his lordship went out half an hour ago."

"I'm so sorry," she said, turning to me, "but he'll be back very soon, I'm sure. I want so much to introduce him; I think you'll like him."

Luncheon soon interrupted us; and when that little interval was over, she took me to the same quiet room, and we talked and mutually questioned, and got out each the whole history of the other.

There was only one little child of this marriage that seemed in every way, but that, so happy—a daughter. Their second, a son, had died. This pretty little creature we had with us for a time, and then it went out with its nurse for a drive, and we, over our afternoon tea, resumed our confessions and inquiries. Laura had nearly as much to tell as I. In the midst of our talk Lord Rillingdon came in. I knew whom I was to meet. I was therefore not surprised when the very man whom I had seen faint and bleeding in the wood of Plas Ylwd, whom Richard Marston had shot, and whom I had seen but once since at Lady Mardykes's ball, stood before me. In a moment we were old friends.

He remained with us for about ten minutes, talked kindly and pleasantly, and drank his cup of tea.

These recollections in my present situation were agitating. The image of Richard Marston had reappeared in the sinister shadow in which it had been early presented to me by the friends who warned me so kindly but in vain.

In a little time we talked on as before, and everything she told me added to the gloom and horror in which Marston was now shrouded in my sorrowful imagination.

As soon as the first delighted surprise of meeting Laura had a little subsided, my

fears returned, and all I had to dread from the active malice of Richard Marston vaguely gathered on my stormy horizon again.

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MONSIEUR CHOSE.

III. TO THE TRIBUNE BY RAIL.

THEY are in groups in the immense shed, or hall, or Saloon of the Lost Foot-steps; gesticulating, whispering, declaiming, twitching one another by the button, snuffing, smoking. You might gather a complete exhibition of the spectacles of all nations from their sagacious noses. The Sabot carries a stout stick; the Lorgnon a thin umbrella that would be at home in St. James's-street. The notables among the Lorgnons are old-fashioned men; some are buttoned to the throat in coats of military cut that cover honourable scars; some are robust and slouching, and their voices recal the speaking-trumpet and the quarter-deck. A stiff, nimble dandy of seventy; a gandin who has just laid down his cue at the Jockey Club to spare an hour or two for the benefit of his country; burly provincials—the heavy, deep-toned Norman and the little, fiery, squeaking Marseillais, more than flavoured with garlic. Dapper, assured, generally courted gentlemen of the press; some with mocking lips and laughing eyes, who consider the regeneration of the country the very best joke in the world, and have pinned an epithet or an anecdote upon every deputy; others solemn, bald, and with their brows knit, as becomes men who are the governors of the governors of France. Pepper these groups with loungers, spice them with the jests of the lookers-on, and serve the whole as the parliamentary macedoine that may be tasted any morning at the Versailles railway station (Rive Droite) about half-past one o'clock.

The reader may think that I speak lightly of a very solemn matter; but, pray, how am I to be serious when there is hardly a grave face to be seen? When first I was drawn away from the gudgeon of my beloved Seine, I looked abroad never daring to smile. I crept through Belleville with my palms upon my pockets. When I woke in the morning, I listened for the guns. When I went out I was relieved to see the shops open. And could anything, pray, be more natural? Every night my evening papers told me—with

surprising vivacity and variety of expression and metaphor—that I was living upon a volcano.

But I shook off my fears by degrees, and can now laugh with the loudest, even when I am told that the Damocles sword is suspended, merely by one of the silver hairs of the head of the most eminent of eminent men, over the neck of that most unfortunate of modern ladies—France. I have learned to say a clever thing about the cannon's mouth. A chassepot has no more significance for me than those straw tubes our English visitors use for their American drinks. I think I am lighter-hearted than Monsieur Ollivier was in the laughing hours of 1870; and therefore I am in a better condition than ever for making my observations on the diurnal crises through which my adored country passes, laughing all the way.

We have an express to Versailles. Imagine the Left and Left Centre, the Right and Right Centre, with a score of journalists, shaken in a bag like loto numbers, and thrown into boxes, each box containing eight individuals. This is the train of the Wisacres of France. This is the serpent that winds swiftly through the sour vineyards of Suresnes to the tribune planted in Louis the Fourteenth's bonbonnière of a theatre, and buries its fangs in the bosom of la belle France! Of the serpent the journalists are the rattle—the amusing rattle!

Who dares to say that pure comedy is dead in France? Is it possible to imagine a more charming theatre, a more distinguished audience, a more efficient company? And the national theatre in the palace which has been called by a barbarous Englishman, I think one Gibbon by name, "a huge heap of littleness," has, in the matter of music, the advantage of a bell over the Théâtre Français.

The audience are shown to their places by the politest of ushers. It is what managers call a paper house always, the orders being distributed by the performers; which, by the way, surprises me, because I think the eminent manager might effect a large addition to his budget by letting his boxes.

The performance has begun, the bell has tinkled. The question is, shall it be *Vive la France*, or *Vive la République*?

It is true that we have a President of a Republic; that the country of our adoration is France; and that yonder tribune is the spot from which the glorious nation is

to be governed. Within these gilded walls is gathered the representative wisdom of the land which is the centre of civilisation. The land has just been freed, and the Wisacres have given three times three in celebration of the great event. Left and Left Centre, Right and Right Centre, have cheered with one accord, But now the Lorgnons and the Sabots appear on the scene. The farce opens quietly. "Vive la France" observes Lorgnon; "Vive la République" responds Sabot, accompanying his reply with a long threatening growl. In a moment, there is a mighty movement through the theatre; and then the play proceeds for an entire hour.

If an Englishman could imagine a free fight, without the exchange of a single actual blow; jeers and counter jeers; fists to the right, and fists to the left; yells and counter yells; insulting epithets, plentiful as bon-bons at a Roman carnival; with Monsieur Grévy for central figure, brandishing a bell from a high desk, and patriotically going through a pantomime of beseeching, imploring, protesting and threatening; he would first obtain an idea of what is called a sad episode in the gorgeous theatre of the Bourbons.

Personalities are as copious in the Assembly as in the contemporary chronicles of its doings. At a word from the Right the Left bounds from the benches as though spears had been suddenly driven through them.

Has Monsieur Pelletan, or has he not, called the President a third horse to draw the state coach over the hill? Has Monsieur de Kerdrel tried to overturn Monsieur Thiers? The two questions furnish the material of an excellent *petite comédie*. Monsieur de Kerdrel opens with an indignant denial, his soliloquy being interrupted with a confounding noise peculiar to the Versailles theatre, called *brouhaha*. Far from desiring to overturn the eminent statesman, he is proud of the esteem Monsieur Thiers has for him. But Monsieur Pelletan did say Monsieur Thiers was a third horse to pull them over the steeps of a Republic.

The Left indulge in more *brouhaha*. The eyes of the Sabots flash lightning; their throats provide the thunder; and in the storm Monsieur Pelletan bounds to the tribune. He has not called the President a third horse. He has; he hasn't; he has! Monsieur Pelletan goes further—all Monsieur de Kerdrel's friends, all the Right, have constantly tried to trip up the Pre-

sident. Then ensues a brisk sparring-match between the two deputies, the Left and Right acting as backers — and the President looking on hopelessly. It is a curious sight; but what good it can do France, I was forced to admit to Madame Chose, I could not see. I left them fighting over Monsieur Thiers; Monsieur Thiers looking as fresh as a girl the while, and keeping a merry twinkle in his eye. As well he might, for he saw that neither the Lorgnons nor the Sabots could move a peg without him.

But here is a comedy with serious interest in it. Monsieur Latour, by way of a suggestive opening scene, affirms that during the war, when Monsieur Lacour was in office, he sent back a certain report to the prefect of the Rhone, with this marginal note, "Shoot me all these fellows!" With a superb air Lacour cries, "Prove it. Where's the report?" Latour is of the Lorgnons; Lacour of the Sabots. Latour in a solemn soldierly manner rises to a hushed audience, and after having warmly vindicated the conduct of the troops he commanded in the war, produces the testimony of the general who was ordered to "shoot me all those fellows." The Lorgnons are delighted—the Sabots in consternation. Latour adds emphatically that his men fought well.

"Yes, yes, they were not Republicans," cries a Lorgnon.

The comedy begins. Nobody can say that it is wanting in movement. Monsieur Langlois, pale as death, rushes at the throat of the daring Lorgnon, and is followed by an admiral of the fleet—by half the Sabots, in fact. There is not the smallest mistake about there being thorough brouhaha this time. It is a hand-to-hand struggle—not for the arguments, but the coat-collars of opponents. The unfortunate Lorgnon, who has insulted the Republicans, is surrounded by his party like a standard-bearer on a battlefield. Parliamentary language! I assure you I had not the courage to repeat to Madame Chose all I heard from the lips of the wise men we have elected to revive the grandeur of France; especially as, while I related to her the Latour-Lacour incident, she was doing me the honour of mending the tail of my coat which had been torn in the excitement and rush which followed the actual fight.

No English muffin-boy, wending his way through the foggy streets of Soho, rings more in his round than Monsieur Grévy

did in the Latour-Lacour *melée*. Even when the offending Lorgnon retracted, the Sabots rolled threatening murmurs at him. Then came the turn of Monsieur Lacour, author of the marginal note. He cut and thrust about him with a will—conveying by his air and words the conviction that at any rate he was the man who might have written with the point of his official sword, "Shoot me all these fellows." Albert Milaud observed of him that he knew how to use the slang dictionary, and to adopt the manners of the Halles; that his coarse cynicism and shameless retorts made even the Left ashamed of their man. It seemed so. While the Lorgnons shrugged their shoulders, laughed, protested, and murmured, the Sabots were quiet as mice. Then Lacour turned upon the Mables of Latour, and said they were drunken fellows who wouldn't fight; who passed their time in revolting orgies under the smiling approval of their superior officers. By way of peroration Lacour denied the marginal note; and on descending from the tribunal he was received into three brace of arms from the Left.

I believe that in the English House of Commons members do not often hug one another in token of approval; and that the greatest orator who ever breathed would never provoke a kiss from the chief of his party; but I find that a very little bit of oratory carries a man literally into the arms of his party at Versailles.

The Latour-Lacour comedy ended, after an uproar about Monsieur Latour's Mables, and a passage of yelling at Monsieur Jules Favre, in a general dance out of all the characters; in which, by-the-way, my coat-tail suffered, in a manner I have already had the honour of describing.

I wonder whether it was a good day's work for France? I confess that, as I travelled back to Paris, I became somewhat bewildered; for on the platform I heard one gentleman threaten to pull the nose of another who had called him a Republican. And yet the walls of the mairies, my tax-papers, and the little bank-notes in my pocket, tell me I am one of a republic!

I begin to think, with Madame Chose, that I had better return to my gudgeon. She has observed to me that at any rate I spoiled fewer clothes as a fisherman than I do as a politician. My coat-tail will be shaken before me for many a long day to come. Women never forget; and their logic is inexorable.

IV. MONSIEUR THE PRESIDENT OF—WHAT IS IT?

He rises at three minutes to five, and not at five, as that inventor of facts and chiffonnier of old ideas, Hippolyte Patatras, tells us once a week in the Guignol. Very frequently he lightly rubs his eyes. Sometimes he raises himself upon one presidential elbow; yesterday it was his left elbow. Then he lightly draws his hands through the silver toupet which is destined to go down to posterity with the curl upon the first Napoleon's forehead, and the tips of Napoleon the Third's moustache. Then, placing his fingers before the eloquent mouth, he yawns. By this time the clock is on the stroke of five; by this time he is on his legs, his lamp is trimmed, and the affairs of Europe are under way. While they are moving slowly ahead, he prepares his coffee. The sagacity with which the boiling water is poured upon the special Mocha; the learned glances which fall upon the biggin; the thorough knowingness with which the coffee-cup is handled; bespeak the remarkable man.

The fragrant fumes curl about the snowy head that is bent over masses of state papers. The sun has not winked yet on the horizon; but the destinies of France are well in hand. It is a touching sight, that should soften the hearts of his roughest and fiercest opponents, to see this brave old man not waiting for the sunrise to work for his country. I cannot say—I read so many papers—whether he is right or wrong; selfish or unselfish; an intriguer or a frank, honest politician; but he is a hero, by the burden which he bears upon his gallant shoulders. I love him for his work; the prodigious store of knowledge which he has put by; the vast fields of public affairs he has trotted over; for his bounding spirits, and valiant resolves under difficulties; and, if I may never call myself of his party, I shall never fail in touching my hat to him as one of his personal admirers—proud that he is my countryman.

He has got through a mountain of labour when the Pink of Politeness arrives at six o'clock. The Pink is his old friend; the national letter-writer, the universal apologist; the great man of the ante-chamber, who lives with his back bent. Together the two prodigious toilers make short work of despatches, letters, petitions, drafts of bills, invitations, arrangements for diplomatic receptions, prefectoral appeals and troubles; and are ready to go into affairs of state generally, with the council, as soon

as the ministers please after breakfast. Not a moment is lost. Over the morning cutlet a diverting gossip on the treaty with England; with the omelette, the settlement of the future franchise of France; and, while the coffee is being served, an ambassador is removed from China to Washington. A ministerial council is an easy way of passing the time, from breakfast till the meeting of the Assembly. To be sure the parliamentary storm of yesterday has to be discussed, and a line of ministerial action decided upon; to be sure there are some troublesome interpellations ahead that must be met; Lyons is simmering and Marseilles is boiling over, and there is an uneasy movement in the dangerous stratum of Paris; but the President smiles and works, and works and smiles through it all; and doffing his snuff-brown coat (as much a part of him as the grey capote was part of the immortal Little Corporal), trots away on the arm of his stalwart officer-in-waiting—to the tribune.

It is a great day. The boxes are filled with ambassadors, generals, prefects, and fine ladies. The manager's box contains the manager's wife and a princess or two. The ushers have had a bad time of it. The deputies have been pestered for a week past for orders for this extraordinary representation of—shall I say legerdelangue? An uninitiated man might imagine he was at a court ceremonial, and that in a moment the national air would vibrate through the theatre, and Cæsar would enter, with Cæsar's peerless wife glittering with jewels. The ladies in the most fantastic dresses, and in the highest spirits, occupy the front row of the boxes. Is the farceur Vivier going to play fantastic tricks on his horn from the table in the tribune, or is Levassor about to present us with his delightful caricature of the Englishman on his travels? I felt inclined to look out for a bill of the play; and began wondering where they could have put the band. But I was brought to myself, and to the solemnity of the occasion, when I saw a tuft of snowy hair making itself higher than the rest of the crowd before me. There was a flutter, a rustling, and a nervous coughing through the theatre as the little performer at length stood out from the throng, and appeared bright as the morn, in the tribune.

A bright, fresh, sharply cut face, roofed with stiff white hair; a keen, quickly moving eye seen through a portentous pair of spectacles; a rigid military frock-coat buttoned to the throat, and the head

settled in an ample collar; and all on the smallest conceivable scale. It is greatness in a nutshell. And these people—representatives of dynasties and leaders of armies—are hanging breathless upon the words of the little man, who is arranging his glass of water, unfolding his handkerchief, and twitching his spectacles to a just balance upon his nose. The destiny of my country is the piece that is upon the playbill to-day; and the whole responsibility of the performance rests upon these tiny shoulders. In order to get through with it the speaker must command profound silence. You feel such tenderness towards him as you have for a child, and hush the people about you. He waits till the last cough has subsided, and then a shrill, piping voice which startles you proceeds from the little figure. The pitch is high, the tones are piercing. Every word is heard at the back of every box.

And such words! They were big with the fate of France. As the wonderful little man rolled them out, I thought of the conjurer who fills a theatre with flowers out of his hat. People were charmed. The flowers fell to the right and to the left with strict impartiality. The Right jeered, the Left applauded, the Centres made a confused noise. And still the voice piped away bravely—steady through the storm as a boatswain's whistle. I had travelled all the way to Versailles in order to ascertain the form of government under which I was living, having been utterly confused on the subject by the Tattoo, and the views of Monsieur Hippolyte in the Guignol. The Tattoo informed me that I was living under a republic that was as firm as the Rock of Gibraltar, and that all other forms of government were henceforth impossible, which was cheering when I reflected on the number of stable governments that had successively compelled me to put up my shop shutters and hide my till in the cellar. The Guignol assured me that I was not only upon a volcano, but that the tassel of my night-cap was hanging over the edge of the crater; that the Republic was a rickety thing bolstered up by a company of fools and knaves, and that a republic had about as good a chance of enduring in France, as a farrier would have of pursuing his business in a powder magazine.

The wonderful orator piped away for two hours. I lost not a single syllable, for the facets of his glittering sentences are of faultless edge. Now I settled myself comfortably in my seat, believing that I was

the citizen of an incorruptible and unassailable republic; and now, again, I was cast upon a sea of doubt, in a cockle-shell called the Pact. The Lorgnons were not at the pains of concealing their disgust; nor were they nice as to the forms in which they conveyed their displeasure to the leading performer in the most remarkable comedy I, an old playgoer, have ever heard. On the other hand the Sabots roared out their pleasure when the piping voice told them that they enjoyed the republic of their dreams, and it only remained with them to make its walls of adamant, and its temple of porphyry. Four or five times during those two tumultuous hours I was shifted from a republic to a monarchy, and back again. All this time I admired, with my whole heart and mind, the white head from which the mighty confusion of oracular dicta was proceeding. The tears came to my eyes when the old man's trembling voice passed over the misfortunes of our country. Yea, I laughed and I cried, for it was a noble comedy, but what had I to carry back to Madame Chose? I was compelled to confess to her that I was quite as wise when I left the St. Lazare station as when I returned to it.

"Bless me, Chose," she said to me, when I had explained to her all I had seen and heard, in very warm language—for my heart had been stirred—"bless me, how can you put yourself in such a heat about such a trifle? Twenty times during dinner you have asked me what your pocket-idol was president of. 'President, my dear—of what?' said you over your soup, then again over the most delicious capon Anastasia has ever cooked for us. I thought I should have a little peace over the artichokes, for you are generally silent when you are eating a favourite dish; but no, with the artichoke in your hand, you repeated your stupid question, 'President of what?' I don't know, and I don't care, Monsieur Chose."

But Madame Chose is not quite so irrational a being as it is her pleasure, now and then, to affect to be. I took occasion to draw her attention to the surprising activity of the President. All good women have a respect for hard work; and when I sketched our brave little veteran writing, speaking, giving audiences, holding councils, paying visits of ceremony, travelling to Paris and back again for an interview, conducting the reconstruction of his house, disposing of mountains of letters, bowing, smiling, contriving fresh lively

sallies for the dinner in the evening, and all from before the peep of day till his hour of siesta comes late in the afternoon, and then waking up for a fresh bout of work in the shape of incessant receptions of official persons to midnight; when, I say, I sketched all this to Madame Chose, I elicited from her the acknowledgment that the little man was a very great one.

"If he wouldn't make things as dear as they are," Madame Chose continued, "I should give him my vote, if I had one. But I never go to the grocer's, without finding a sou put upon this, or two sous clapped upon that. I have it—he must be president of the grocers. They will never desert him. They share the plunder between them. He puts two sous on the hectolitre, which enables them to put a sou on the litre. That's your régime, Monsieur Chose. Ah; the rogues. 'President of what?' say you; 'of the grocers,' say I."

I begged Madame Chose to observe that liberty was a jewel worth paying a substantial price for. I have seen madame, since I had the honour of taking her on our bridal walk through the Bois de Boulogne, in, I may say, a thorough passion at least three or four times; but never since the unlucky day when I gave the fish I had caught to her cousin, Madame Julie, for a friture, have I experienced such a storm as that which burst over my devoted head when I mentioned the sacred word, liberty.

"You, too, Monsieur Chose," she cried. "I thought that you who have been in business twenty-two years, would have had more sense. Don't ask the men, for they are idiots, what they think of your liberty; ask their wives who buy the bread and vegetables. Go and ask the poor creatures who stay at home to make the pot-au-feu, while you gentlemen talk politics and play at dominoes at the café, what liberty throws into the saucepan; what it takes out of the cupboard; what wages it pays and what trade it drives? Messrs. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and Company, what a sweet firm of bankers they would make! I wouldn't trust them with change for a franc. I was not aware you were so far gone, Monsieur Chose. I had better send your night-cap to be dyed red. Blood-red, do you hear, Monsieur Chose?"

Hear! The words ring upon my tympanum still. I fell into my arm-chair when my wife had bounced out of the room, and unfolded the last edition of the Tattoo (which differs little from the first

save in four or five lines of additional misinformation printed in capitals), reserving the Guignol for a softer moment. I had just read that Henry the Fifth was a moral cretin, when the door was swiftly opened, and my wife, thrusting in her head, cried, "Who bought the petroleum? Citizen Liberty." With that she slammed the door.

Shrugging my shoulders, I resumed my reading. I had reached the interesting point of the leading article, where the candid reader was pressed to admit that the younger branch of the Bourbons was rotten and worthless, when a stream of cold air told me the door was again open.

Madame Chose, who by this time had disembarassed herself of some of her hair (of which, I am bound to say, she has a collection that does honour to her taste and judgment) for the night, was before me.

"Who," she asked, passionately, under her breath, "who lit the petroleum? Citizen Equality." I trembled under her fierceness, and was relieved when she shut the door, and, to my delight, bolted it.

Now should I have a peaceful hour. I would study carefully the statements of the Tattoo and Guignol, and endeavour to settle in my mind, before I went to bed, my knotty question—president of what? I had dismissed one dynasty thoroughly, and was deep in the wickedness of the second, when I heard a hand upon the bolt of my wife's bedchamber. She was still stirring. I faced round to meet the gale. The door flew open with such force that the Tattoo was blown from my knees to the ground. Madame was in curl-papers that trembled upon her head.

"Who danced round the fire?" she hissed at me. "Citizen Fraternity. You are on a pretty road, Monsieur Chose." And, with a profound bow, she bade me good-night, doubly locking the door this time.

I, who thought everything was as easy as bonjour, when I heard that smiling president! But, president of what? Still asking myself this question (for the Guignol, answering the Tattoo, vowed there was no republic in existence) I fell asleep.

CHAPTER V. A POLONAISE—PAIN DE SIEGE.

How many men died in that winter of the terrible war? How many hectares of snow were stained with blood? The poor children were carried by scores to the cemeteries. They could hardly open the Common Grave fast enough. Widows were weeping in every house. Death stood in

the ante-chamber of every home. There were no fires. There was no gas in the streets. And hour by hour the booming guns struck terror through the hearts of pale mothers and famished children. In the very house which now shelters me, a shell crashed through the roof one morning, at the peep of day, and killed outright a father and a child, leaving a mad mother as the sole survivor of one of the most honourable and modest households I have ever looked upon. I cannot think of those icy hours I have spent getting our little rations of meat without a shudder, even now when we have nearly bought the enemy out of our country. How many times did I pace behind coffins—big and little—in that winter? Mont Parnasse, Père la Chaise, Montmartre seemed to me to be threatened with a glut of human remains. And then those interminable processions of the ambulance people; the river boats laden with wounded men, with the dark blood showing through their bandages! My hair whitened in that dread winter time; and many months passed after the strife was ended before Tennerre could persuade me to throw my line once more into the Seine. For I was in both sieges; in the siege of Paris by the Germans, and the siege of Paris by the French. The first was bad enough, Heaven knows, when the children were dying like flies in autumn, and we were eating the food from the sewers, and we could see the inevitable end approaching, through the squabbles and incompetency of the men who had seized upon the reins of government on the morrow of Sedan, just as a thief gets your purse in the tumult of a crowd. It was bitter to watch the Germans passing under Napoleon's Triumphal Arch, and to look upon them smoking their big pipes in the Champs Elysées. I wept, I know, for one, like a child; and Madame Chose (who was never so amiable as she appeared through that winter) made me a good bouillon to comfort me.

The food came in. Those good English sent us immense stores which our Incapables had not the sagacity to distribute equitably over the lean population. But the sight of milk, and butter, and fresh meat; the taste of good bread once more; the twinkling of a few lights along the Boulevards; the huge relief to the mind when there was silence in the night, and we knew that the dreadful bloodshed was finished for a time—for our time at least, I may say—all this was a joy that went very

far in repayment of the anguish we Parisians had suffered. But the joy was brief—a flash of light in a tunnel; just breathing time in the torture-chamber.

In the second siege the screws were tightened to their last twist; the wedges were driven home in the stocking; the sewers overflowed the streets. He who was my servant yesterday was my master to-day. Furies streamed out of cellars and garrets, and took arms, and screamed republican slang; stuck Phrygian caps upon heads that had never felt the comb; and, between their hags' teeth, called for blood! My beautiful Paris was doomed this time. The enemy had left arms in the hands of the mob; the mob was led by lettered ruffians, scapegraces, prodigal sons reduced to rags, and vain strutting theorists who would botanise upon their mother's grave, or practise vivisection on their own children. These hateful and cowardly egotists put their heels upon immortal canvases; trod out the richest leaves of Ingres' laurel. The walls flamed with their ignoble decrees. They were ready to command the shrubs in the public gardens to grow roots upwards, with their flowers in the soil. They had a right, which they made for the occasion, to enter every man's house, and command the keys of his strong box. They turned the sacristy into a tavern, where they caroused on stolen wine.

It was a brave game, danced to all the airs in Liberty's repertoire, by Freedom's worst enemies. Men went abroad into the next street with fear and trembling. A word from any angry man could take away the liberty of his neighbour. Only the rogue was quite safe. For this we had escaped from the hands of the Prussians! They had spared our beautiful city, to look on, while our own hands should destroy it.

Shall I ever cease to think of that morning of humiliation in my life when a picket of hang-dog fellows thrust open my door, and demanded the arms they know to be in my possession? Madame Chose was falling on her knees to them, when I dragged her aside, and begged her to remember who and what she was, and who and what those men were. Whereupon two seized my wrists; but with a desperate twist I freed myself, and drove them back with that look of the honest man under which every rogne quails. And then, under our eyes, they turned out every cupboard, opened every box, searched the beds, and found—not even a pop-gun. I was too old a connoisseur in revolutions to keep

arms in my house. With an insolent "Good day, citoyenne" to my wife, and a parting oath for the reader's humble servant, they went out, warning me that if it should be proved that I had a lady's pistol in my possession, it would go hard with me.

I lived in rage and terror. The unarmed law-abiding citizens were under the dominion of an armed rabble, the said rabble duly installed in all the public offices, issuing decrees, and giving to wholesale pillage the authority of law. The reign of topsy-turvy was begun in downright earnest, and every night I expected to find the cook in the best bed, and my wife thankful for the mercy that left her one of the attics. But neither tongue, nor pen, nor pencil could realise the suffering we endured during that second siege that closed in flames.

When it was happily ended, and the Versailles were masters of Paris, I said to Madame Chose—who, I must confess, had borne herself bravely throughout, with the exception of the little incident I have described—"Let us thank Heaven that our lives and our goods have been spared. It was through all our frivolities as a nation, through the dandyism of our officers, and the vanity and extravagance of our women; through that lightness and love of pleasure which have drawn us from the serious business of life and made us merely the pleasure-caterers of the world, that we incurred a shame for either cheek—defeat and civil war. For the rest of our lives we should be sober and serious citizens."

"You are right, Chose," my wife answered. "I have done with finery for the rest of my life."

How many seasons have passed over our heads since they were shooting men by the score under the Pont de la Concorde? When was the last man tied to a stake before a firing party on the plain of Satory?

I and Tonnerre were talking on the gloomy subject not many evenings ago, while waiting for Madame Chose to return for dinner. When, at length, she appeared, she excused herself, saying she had been detained over a very advantageous purchase. Indeed, she would have our opinion on it before she served the soup. Poor Tonnerre, who had been growling for his dinner, was compelled to say that he would not approach the table till he had seen the new garment.

"It is the very latest thing in novelties," cried Madame Chose to us from the bedroom. Then she appeared in a new polo-

naise, which undoubtedly became her, as she well knew.

"Superb," cried Tonnerre. "But what a curious tint. I never saw that brown before."

Madame Chose laughed in her most bewitching manner as she replied: "Not seen it before; why you've eaten it. It's the latest fashion; the last tint, and nothing else will be worn this summer."

"What do they call it, madame?" the gallant soldier asked, holding the corner of the garment critically between his thumb and forefinger.

"*Conleur pain-de-siège* — siege - bread-colour!" said my wife, looking in the glass the while.

I was very angry.

"LOST WITH ALL HANDS."

"Lost, with all hands, at sea."

The Christmas sun shines down
On the headlands that frown o'er the harbour wide,
On the cottages, thick on the long quay side,
On the roofs of the busy town.

"Lost, with all hands, at sea."
The dread words sound like a wail,
The song of the waits, and the clash of the bells,
Ring like death-bed dirges, or funeral knells,
In the pauses of the gale.

Never a home so poor,
But it brightens for good Yule-tide.
Never a heart too sad or too lone,
But the holy Christmas mirth 'twill own,
And his welcome will provide.

Where the sea-coal fire leaps,
On the fisherman's quiet hearth,
The Yule log lies, for his hand to heave,
When he hastes to his bride on Christmas Eve,
In the flush of his strength and mirth.

High on the little shelf
The tall Yule candle stands,
For the ship is due, ere the Christmas night,
And it waits, to be duly set alight
By the coming father's hands.

Long has the widow spared
Her pittance for warmth and bread.
That her sailor boy, when he home returns
May joy, that her fire so brightly burns,
Her board is so amply spread.

The sharp reef moans and moans.
The foam on the sand lies hoar;
The "sea-dog" flickers across the sky,
The north wind whistles, shrill and high,
'Mid the breakers' ominous roar.

Out on the great pier-head,
The grey-haired sailors stand,
While the black clouds pile away in the west,
And the spray flies free from the billows' crest,
Ere they dash on the hollow sand.

Never a sail to be seen,
On the long grim tossing swell,
Only drifting wreckage of canvas and spar,
That sweep with the waves o'er the harbour bar,
Their terrible tale to tell.

Did a vision of Christmas pass
Before the drowning eyes,
When 'mid rent of rigging and crash of mast,
The brave ship, smote by the mighty blast,
Went down 'neath the lifeless skies?

No Christmas joy I ween,
On the rock-bound coast may be.
Put token and custom of Yule away,
While widows and orphans weep and pray
For the "hands, lost out at sea."

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE SEVENTY-FIRST (HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY).

THERE have been several regiments numbered the Seventy-first. In 1758, when the second battalions of fifteen infantry regiments were formed into distinct corps, the second battalion of the Thirty-second Foot became the Seventy-first regiment, which was disbanded at the peace in 1763. The Eighty-first regiment of Fusiliers then became the Seventy-first, and was sent to garrison our coast forts. In 1775, another Seventy-first regiment (three hundred and forty strong), was raised, for service in America, by Major-General the Honourable Simon Fraser, of Lovat, whose forfeited estates had just been restored. At the general peace of 1783 the second Seventy-first was disbanded. In 1786, the Seventy-third, raised by John, Lord Macleod, in 1777, was finally numbered as the Seventy-first regiment, and still flourishes, strong and sturdy as the Scotch thistle on its colours.

The first battalion of Lord Macleod's regiment of Highlanders, embodied at Elgin in 1778, embarked for India in 1779, the second battalion being sent to help defend Gibraltar against the Spaniards. The first battalion had its work cut out for it. Hyder Ali had passed the Ghauts, and burst like a deluge over the Carnatic. The Nizam of the Deccan and the wild Mahrattas had joined his standard; the French had promised Hyder aid; and his son Tippoo's horsemen were already threatening Madras. Against Hyder's countless and fanatic force Sir Hector Munro had hastily gathered together four thousand men, all Hindoos, with the exception of the eight hundred men of the Seventy-third. The cavalry consisted of only sixty dragoons, the artillery of thirty field-pieces and howitzers, with four battering twenty-four-pounders. Hyder Ali, who was engaged in besieging Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, detached Tippoo with twenty-four thousand men and twelve guns, to intercept Lieutenant-Colonel Baillie, who was marching to join Munro. The latter officer at once despatched Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, with one thousand men, to reinforce Baillie. The flank companies of the Seventy-third formed part of this force—the grenadier

company commanded by Lieutenant the Honourable John Lindsay, the light company by Captain David Baird. On the 6th of September, 1780, Baillie was attacked by Tippoo at Perambaukam, and on the 9th was joined by Fletcher's detachment. In a small jungle the enemy suddenly opened fire from three batteries, and fifty-seven pieces of cannon poured death on Baillie's small band. Tippoo's men, everywhere repelled, fell back before the square that contained in its centre the sick, the baggage, and the ammunition. After three hours' stubborn fighting, Tippoo ordered Colonel Lally to draw off his men, and place the cavalry to cover the retreat; at that instant two ammunition waggons exploded, laid open one entire face of Baillie's column, rendered the artillery useless, and threw the whole into disorder. The Sepoys refused to rally, the camp-followers fled. Hyder saw his opportunity, and sprang like a tiger on the enemy he had hitherto dreaded. Squadron after squadron of the Mysore horse dashed upon us, bodies of infantry poured in volleys of musketry; still the English (now scarcely four hundred men) formed square on a sand-hill, and repelled thirteen charges. The Sepoy havildars joined the Seventy-third, and the officers with their swords, and the soldiers with their bayonets, fought to the last. The wounded were trodden down by the horses and elephants while still struggling to raise themselves and prepare for the charge. Colonel Baillie, anxious to save the few survivors, at last held up a flag of truce, but no sooner had his troops laid down their arms than the enemy rushed forward, and slashed and stabbed the disarmed, the wounded, and the sick. A few were saved by the generous interposition of the French officers. In this fight the Seventy-third flank companies were almost annihilated. Captain Baird received seven wounds, Lieutenant Lindsay nine, and both were made prisoners. Captain Melville, of the Seventy-third, had his left arm broken, and his right arm cut through with a sabre; he was also speared in the back, and lay for two days exposed to a burning sun, two nights in danger of being torn to pieces by tigers. Eighty-two rank and file were killed, and only twenty-three men of the Seventy-third escaped unwounded. Hyder received the prisoners in his tent with barbaric insolence.

"Your son will inform you," said Colonel Baillie sternly, "that you owe the victory to our disaster rather than to our defeat."

Hyder angrily ordered the prisoners from his presence, and they remained in captivity three years and a half, Captain Baird being chained by the leg to another prisoner. Baird was not remarkable for the suavity of his temper, and his old mother's first remark, when she heard of her son's captivity, was:

"Eh, I pity the chiel wha's chained to our Davie!"

Only two men of the Seventy-third escaped, and they were found in the jungle desperately wounded.

In 1781, the Seventy-third again met their old enemy. The regiment was now commanded by Colonel James Crawford. Again we were a handful of men facing countless hosts. Hyder had twenty-five battalions of foot, some fifty thousand horse, above one hundred thousand match-lock-men, and forty-seven pieces of cannon, while Sir Eyre Coote commanded a poor eight thousand men, the Seventy-third being again the only British regiment. The advance was across a plain, beyond which the enemy was drawn up, protected by front and flanking redoubts, and dangerous batteries. Just after the repulse of the enemy's cavalry, an English officer discovered a road cut through the sand-hills the night before by Hyder, by which the Mysore cavalry was to be let loose on the English flank. Sir Eyre Coote at once made use of this road, and turned Hyder's position. During the eight hours' fighting, the Seventy-third led all the attacks on the right of the first line. General Coote particularly noticed that wherever the fire was unusually hot, one of the pipers of the Seventy-third blew up his pibrochs fiercer and louder than usual. This so pleased the general, that he cried out:

"Well done, my brave fellow, you shall have a pair of silver pipes when the battle is over."

He afterwards presented the regiment with a pair of silver pipes, value one hundred pagodas (nearly fifty pounds). The British lost in the subsequent battle of Conjeveram four hundred killed and wounded, but few of these were Europeans. Major-General Stuart and Colonel Brown each lost a leg, both carried away by the same shot. On the battle-field (the scene of the defeat of Baillie) the Seventy-third were affected to find relics of their friends. Spatterdashes marked with well-remembered names, feathers, clubs of hair, known by the ties, scattered clothes, and helmets and skulls bearing the marks of blows, roused the men to vengeance.

In 1783, under General Stuart's command, the Seventy-third joined in the attack on Cuddalore. There were to have been three simultaneous attacks, but the noise of the signal guns being drowned by the enemy's cannonade, the attacks were not simultaneous, and failed. While the enemy pursued our men, Lieutenant-Colonel Cathcart and Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart, with the precious remains of the Seventy-third, slipped into the redoubt the enemy had left in the eagerness of pursuit. In the night the enemy retired. In this attack the Seventy-third lost Captains Mackenzie and the Honourable James Lindsay, one of five sons whom the Earl of Balcarras had in the army, seven lieutenants, nine sergeants, and one hundred and eighty-seven rank and file. In this campaign the regiment also lost Corporal Mackay, son of Robert Doune, the bard. When the men were drooping in a long march, the corporal used to revive them by singing the Gaelic poems of his father.

While the first battalion had been thus hotly employed in India, the second battalion had greatly distinguished itself by aiding in the gallant defence of Gibraltar. Colonel Drinkwater, in his valuable history of the siege, particularly mentions a remarkable escape of a man of the Seventy-third. During the first tremendous attack of the Spaniards, when the old rock was the target of more than one hundred guns, a shell fell in an embrasure opposite the King's Lines bomb-proof, killed one of the Seventy-third and wounded another. Donaldson, the second man, had his skull fractured, his left arm broken in two places, one of his legs shattered, half his right hand carried away, and his whole body bruised and blackened with gunpowder. The surgeons scarcely knew where to begin on him. That evening, however, he was trepanned, and a few days afterwards his leg was amputated and his fractures were dressed. The man's constitution was good; he rallied, and in eleven weeks his cure was effected, and he had become entitled to his munificent pension of ninepence a day.

In 1791, the Seventy-third, now the Seventy-first, that had won a name in Indian warfare, again took a foremost part against our untiring enemy Tippoo, and led the invasion of the Mysore country. At the storming of Bangalore, Lieutenant James Duncan, of the Seventy-first, led the grenadiers and light company of his regiment up the breach. The grenadiers were commanded by Captain Lindsay, the light company by Captain Robertson, the son of the Scottish historian. The men trusted

entirely to their bayonets, and carried the place with flying colours.

On their march towards Tippoo's capital, Seringapatam, flank companies of the Seventy-first were sent to capture the hill fort of Mundydroog, and Lieutenant James Duncan and Lieutenant Kennett Mackenzie carried both breaches, and secured the gates of the inner wall without the loss of a man. Many of the enemy were dashed to pieces over the precipices in attempting to escape. Savendroog, a hill fortress, surrounded by almost inaccessible rocks, was also taken without the loss of a single soldier. In January, 1792, the Seventy-first came in sight of Tippoo's capital. The regiment formed part of the central division of the three columns of attack. The commander-in-chief, General the Earl Cornwallis, was at their head. It all but ended the war at the first rush. Forcing through the enemy's first line, the English suddenly found themselves at the foot of the glacis of the fort of Seringapatam. Captain Lindsay instantly collected his grenadiers on the glacis, and all but succeeded in pushing into the body of the place. Joined by more of the light companies he forced a way down to the famous Lial Baugh, or Garden of Pearls, repelling several furious attacks with the bayonet. He then took post in a redoubt, and held it till the morning. The next day he forced a way across the river to the island, and attacked and carried the sultan's redoubt. Captain Hugh Sibbald, of the Seventy-first, was killed after repelling repeated desperate attacks of the enemy. The same evening the Seventy-first and some coast Sepoys repelled three thousand of the enemy's horse who attacked the island. The regiment lost, in these operations, two officers and one hundred rank and file, but the enemy at the same time, from the united columns, had twenty thousand killed and wounded, and left behind twenty pieces of cannon. At night, on the 8th of February, the Seventy-first, commanded by Major Dalrymple, crossed a branch of the Cavery, attacked Tippoo's cavalry camp, and slew or dispersed the whole. The result was a speedy treaty and the surrender of Tippoo's two sons to the British general. In 1794, the sons were restored to Tippoo, on which he instantly made a treaty with the French, then at war with us. In May, 1799, Seringapatam was stormed and Tippoo slain.

In 1795, the Seventy-first helped to conquer Ceylon from the Dutch. In 1806, this active regiment assisted in the conquest of the Cape of Good Hope, and in the

battle of Blue Mountain the Seventy-first helped to decide the day. They were sharers in the defeat at Buenos Ayres, and lost their colours there (afterwards recovered), thanks to a rash and incompetent general.

One of the most dashing exploits of the Peninsular war was achieved by the grenadier company of the Seventy-first at Vimiera. Captain Alexander Forbes, who was ordered to the support of some British artillery, saw a favourable moment for a sloop, dashed down at a French battery immediately in front, and carried off four guns and a howitzer. In this affair the grenadier company had two lieutenants and thirteen rank and file wounded, and two men killed. The French made a tremendous effort with cavalry and infantry to recapture the guns, but in vain. On this day George Clark, one of the pipers of the Seventy-first, being wounded and unable to join in the advance, sat down, tucked his bagpipes under his arm, arranged his chanter, and struck up a favourite Scotch regimental air, to the great delight of his comrades.

The Seventy-first embarked from Cork for the Peninsula June the 27th, 1808, and arrived in Portugal August the 1st, losing four men, who died of thirst in the first day's march. They were soon in the thick of it, and suffered dreadfully from the starvation and fatigues of the terrible retreat to Corunna. Hungry and shoeless, the poor fellows had to tramp, fighting, over barren wastes of mountain snow, till many a brave fellow lay down to die in despair. Their march over the snow could be tracked by the blood from the men's wounded feet, and, to add to their misery, the soldiers were forced, in turns, to drag the baggage. The men eyed each other with looks that seemed to say, "If you were dead I would have your shoes." "Near Villa Franca," says one of the Seventy-first, "many came up to the army dreadfully cut and wounded by the French cavalry, who rode through the long lines of these lame, defenceless wretches, slashing amongst them as a schoolboy does amongst thistles. Some of them, faint and bleeding, were forced to pass along the line as a warning to others. Cruel warning! Could the urgency of the occasion justify it? There was something in the appearance of these poor, emaciated, lacerated wretches that sickened me to look upon. Many around me said, 'Our commanders are worse than the French. Will they not even let us die in peace, if they cannot help us?' Yet in the midst

of this torpor and despair the Seventy-first men would still rouse at the fire of a gun, face the French, and form with the other stragglers.

In May, 1810, six companies of the Seventy-first embarked in two frigates from Deal to return to the war. On October the 14th of that year the regiment had a turn at the French, and distinguished themselves at Sabral de Monte Agraco. Colonel Cadogan called to the men as they marched out:

"My lads, this is the first time I have ever been in with you; show me what you can do—now or never."

The Seventy-first replied with a loud cheer, and pushed forward. Driven back to Gallows Hill, they were attacked the next morning. "During the night," says one of the Seventy-first, who was present, "we received orders to cover the bugles and tartans of our bonnets with black serge, which had been served to us during the day, and to put on our great-coats. Next morning the French, seeing us thus, thought we had retired, and left only Portuguese to guard the heights. With dreadful shouts they leaped over that wall before which they had paused when it was guarded by British. We were scarce able to withstand their fury. To retreat was impossible, all behind being ploughed land, rendered deep by the rain. There was not a moment to hesitate. To it we fell pell-mell, French and British mixed together. It was a trial of strength in single combat; every man had his opponent; many had two. I got one up to the wall on the point of my bayonet. He was unhurt; I would have spared him, but he would not spare himself. He cursed and defied me, nor ceased to attack my life until he fell, pierced by my bayonet; his breath died away in a curse and menace. This was the work of a moment; I was compelled to this extremity. I was again attacked, but my antagonist fell, pierced by a random shot. We soon forced them to retire over the wall, cursing their mistake. At this moment I stood gasping for breath; not a shoe on my feet; my bonnet had fallen to the ground. Unmindful of my situation, I followed the enemy over the wall. We pursued them about a mile, and then fell back to the scene of our struggle. It was covered with dead and wounded; bonnets and shoes were trampled and stuck in the mud. I recovered a pair of shoes; whether they had been mine or not I cannot tell. They were good. Here I first got any plunder. A French soldier

lay upon the ground dead; he had fallen backwards; his hat had fallen off his head, which was kept up by his knapsack. I struck the hat with my feet, and felt it rattle; seized it in a moment, and found in the lining a gold watch and silver crucifix. I kept them, as I had as good a right to them as any other; yet they were not valuable in my estimation. At this time our life was held by so uncertain a tenure, and my comforts were so scanty, that I would have given the watch willingly for a good meal and a dry shirt."

In this battle, one of the Seventy-first, named Rae, a native of Paisley, and the oldest man in the regiment, not being so active in ascending the wall as the rest, chose courageously to stand his ground alone; the first enemy that approached he shot dead, the next he bayoneted, a third shared the same fate, and the ancient hero then coolly effected his retreat. Another man, while coming over the wall, received no fewer than a dozen bullets through his great-coat and canteen without suffering a single wound in any part of his body. But a third poor fellow did not escape so well; he had, for security's sake, cunningly pulled as many stones out of the wall as would admit the muzzle of his musket. While he was in a crouching attitude, preparing to keep up an incessant fire on the enemy from his loophole, a ball came from them, and, by a remarkable accident, entered the aperture and his eye at the same instant, laying him dead on the spot.

At Fuentes d'Onoro the men had had no bread for two days, and were weary with a long march, yet they fought like heroes. Colonel Cadogan put himself at their head, saying: "My lads, you have had no provision these two days; there is plenty in the hollow in front; let us down and divide it." "We advanced," says an eye-witness, "as quick as we could run, and met the light companies retreating as fast as they could. We continued to advance at double quick time, our firelocks at the trail, our bonnets in our hands. They called to us, 'Seventy-first, you will come back quicker than you advance.' We soon came full in front of the enemy. The colonel cries, 'Here is food, my lads, cut away.' Thrice we waved our bonnets, and thrice we cheered, brought our firelocks to the charge, and forced the French back through the town."

In this action the French shouted, and came raging to the very points of the bayonets; but the Seventy-first, after our

first huzza, were silent as death, and all that could be heard was the officers saying, in an under tone, "Steady, lads, steady." The Seventy-first pursued the French a mile out of the town, trampling over the dead and wounded, were then forced back by the cavalry, yet still kept the town in spite of the utmost efforts of the enemy. The Seventy-first lost a great number of men, and the soldier whose journal we have quoted, says, "Often was I obliged during the cavalry charges to stand with a foot on each side of a wounded comrade, who wrung my soul with prayers I could not answer, and pierced my heart with his cries to be lifted out of the way of the cavalry. While my heart bled for them I have shaken them rudely off. Many of the men this day fired one hundred and seven rounds of ball cartridge, till their shoulders were black as coals. When the wounded had been brought in, many of whom had lain bleeding a day and a night, the French brought down their bands on a level piece of ground near the Seventy-first, and the men danced and played football till sunset. The next day the French picked out five regiments of grenadiers to storm the town."

"About half-past nine o'clock," says the author of a Journal of a Soldier of the Seventy-first, "a great gun from the French line, which was answered by one from ours, was the signal to engage. Down the French came, shouting as usual. We kept them at bay, in spite of their cries and formidable looks. How different their appearance from ours. Their hats set round with feathers, their beards long and black, gave them a fierce look; their stature was superior to ours. Most of us were young. We looked like boys—they like savages. But we had the true spirit in us. We foiled them in every attempt to take the town, until about eleven o'clock, when we were overpowered and forced through the streets, contesting every inch. A French dragoon, who was dealing death around, forced his way up to near where I stood. Every moment I expected to be cut down. My piece was empty, there was not a moment to lose. I got a stab at him beneath the ribs, upwards. He gave a back stroke before he fell, and cut the stock of my musket in two. Thus I stood unarmed. I soon got another fire-lock, and fell to work again." In these affairs the Seventy-first lost four officers (two taken prisoners) and four hundred men killed and wounded. Fuentes was, indeed, a day of glory and a day of sorrow to the Seventy-first.

In a skirmish at Alba Tormes, when the Seventy-first were lining a wall, and the French were in great strength in front, a brave lad, letting his hat, full of cartridges, fall over, laid his musket against the wall, vaulted over to the enemy's side, recovered his hat, and through a tremendous fire leaped back like a deer, unhurt. "Though not, as a rule, disposed to plunder, the Seventy-first, when hard pushed, were no great respecters of persons, and at Alba Tormes the temptation was too strong to resist," says the soldier in his journal. "There was a mill on the river-side, near the bridge, wherein a number of our men were helping themselves to flour during the time the others were fording. Our colonel rode down and forced them out, throwing a handful of flour on each man as he passed out of the mill. When we were drawn up on the height, he rode along the column, looking for the millers, as we called them. At this moment a hen put her head out of his coat-pocket, and looked first to one side and then to another. We began to laugh; we could not restrain ourselves. He looked amazed and furious, then around. At length the major rode up to him, and requested him to kill the fowl outright and put it into his pocket. The colonel in his turn laughed, and the millers were no longer looked after."

At Vittoria the Seventy-first fought furiously, and suffered heavily. "The firing was now very heavy," says a soldier who was present. "Our rear had not engaged before word came for the doctor to assist Colonel Cadogan, who was wounded. Immediately we charged up the hill, the piper playing Hey, Johnny Cope. The French had possession of the top, but we soon forced them back, and drew up in column on the height, sending out four companies to our left to skirmish. The remainder moved on to the opposite height. As we advanced, driving them before us, a French officer, a pretty fellow, was pricking and forcing his men to stand. They heeded him not; he was very harsh. 'Down with him!' cried one near me, and down he fell, pierced by more than one ball. Scarce were we upon the height when a heavy column, dressed in great-coats, with white covers on their hats, exactly resembling the Spanish, gave us a volley, which put us to the right-about at double quick time down the hill, the French close behind, through the whins. The four companies got the word the French were on them. They likewise thought them Spaniards, until they got a

volley that killed or wounded almost every one of them. We retired, covered by the Fiftieth, who gave the pursuing column a volley which checked their speed."

And what a price this splendid regiment, the Seventy-first, paid for their victory! Seven hundred men out of one thousand were left on the field. The Scotch soldiers hung their heads, and were silent that night round the camp fires on the heights above Vittoria, and there were tears in many an eye when the pipers played:

Why did I leave my Jeannie, my daddy's cot and a',
To wander from my country—sweet Caledonia?

At the battle of Orthes, M'Rae, a brave piper of the Seventy-first, was killed. A comrade of his, who wrote *Vicissitudes in the Life of a Scottish Soldier*, says of this wild fighter: "M'Rae, our heroic musician, fell to rise no more. This strange being was far from possessing the ordinary coolness of Scotchmen. Although his profession absolved him from intermixing with the combatants, yet, on hearing the noise of an engagement, he seemed to be seized with an irresistible fury, catching up a pole or a firelock, and rushing into the thickest of the fight, dealing blows with the greatest force and efficiency. But fate cut short his career at Aire; he had there even exceeded his former valorous exploits, having levelled many a foe with the aid of his trusty pole; but just as he was poising it on high to insure a weighty blow upon a French soldier's skull, the man anticipated him, by firing the shot which stretched him lifeless in the dust. Certainly it may be said of the doughty M'Rae that 'swords he smiled at, weapons laughed to scorn.'"

At Waterloo the Seventy-first plucked their last and largest bough of laurel. No regiment fought with more ardour and coolness. Charged time after time by cuirassiers and lancers, the Seventy-first threw them off as a bull tosses dogs. The turning moment of the battle is thus described by one of the Seventy-first themselves. A soldier of the Seventy-first says: "The artillery had been tearing away since daybreak, in different parts of the line. About twelve o'clock, we received orders to fall in for attack. We then marched up to our position, where we lay on the face of a brae, covering a brigade of guns. We were so overcome by the fatigue of the two days' march, that scarce had we lain down, until many of us fell asleep. I slept sound for some time, while the cannon-balls, plunging in amongst us, killed a great many. I was suddenly awakened; a ball struck the ground a little

below me, turned me heels over head, broke my musket in pieces, and killed a lad at my side. I was stunned and confused, and knew not whether I was wounded or not. I felt a numbness in my arm for some time. We lay thus about an hour and a half under a dreadful fire, which cost us about sixty men, while we had never fired a shot. The balls were falling thick amongst us. The young man I lately spoke of, lost his legs by a shot at this time. They were cut very close, he soon bled to death. 'Tom,' said he, 'do not tell my mother how I died; if she saw me it would break her heart; good-bye. God bless my parents,' his lips quivered, and he died." About two P.M., the French lancers came down huzzaing, to charge the brigade of guns, behind which stood the Seventy-first. In a moment the men blocked into a square. The general cried, "Seventy-first, I have often heard of your bravery. I hope it will not be less to-day than usual." The lancers were soon put to the right-about. After throwing off several more charges the Seventy-first moved on in column, then formed line, charged, and drove back the enemy. Just then a dashing squadron bore down furiously through the roar and smoke upon the Seventy-first. "We had scarce time to form," says a soldier present. "The square was only complete in front, when they were upon the points of our bayonets. Many of our men were out of place. There was a good deal of jostling for a minute or two, and a good deal of laughing. Our quarter-master lost his bonnet in riding into the square, snatched it up, put it on back foremost, and wore it thus all day. Not a moment had we to regard our dress. A French general lay dead in the square; he had a number of ornaments upon his breast. Our men fell to plucking them off, pushing each other as they passed, and snatching at them. We stood in square for some time, whilst the Thirteenth Dragoons and a squadron of French dragoons were engaged. The Thirteenth Dragoons retiring to the rear of our column, we gave the French a volley, which put them to the right-about, then the Thirteenth at them again. They did this for some time, we cheering the Thirteenth, and feeling every blow they received. When a Frenchman fell we shouted, and when one of the Thirteenth we groaned. We wished to join them, but were forced to stand in square. The whole army retired to the heights in the rear, the French closely pursuing to our formation, where we stood, four deep, for a considerable time.

As we fell back, a shot cut the straps of the knapsack of one near me; it fell, and was rolling away; he snatched it up, saying, 'I am not going to lose you in that way, you are all I have in the world,' tied it on the best manner he could, and marched on."

At that moment Lord Wellington rode up, and entered the Seventy-first's square, which was expecting cavalry. The whole army received the thrilling order to advance. It was attack now, not defence, and after a brief and bloody struggle the French gave way, and Waterloo was won.

The Seventy-first has since distinguished itself in the Crimean war and in the Indian mutiny, where many a Pandy fell before their bayonets.

WILD HUNTSMEN AND WHITE LADIES.

In Upper Hesse there is a chain of mountains called the Vogelsberg, which is at once notable for the abundance of popular legends, remembered to this day by the peasantry, and for the character of the legends themselves. Rarely is more popular mythology, dating immediately from heathenism, to be found than in a small collection of Hessian folk-lore made by Herr Bindewald, an antiquary habituated, from childhood upwards, to the Vogelsberg and its neighbourhood, and rejoicing in the fact that in this, his favourite district, people still "say and sing." One great feature in the few legends which we give here, is their purely non-historical character. When, as in the legends of the Kiffhäuser,* we find a veritable emperor sleeping for ages in some subterranean chamber, we may be perfectly sure that the historical element is an intruder, and that neither Frederic nor Otho are entitled to the strange dignities that have been thrust upon them. History does not breed myth, but myth very frequently condenses itself into a sort of history, or accommodates itself thereto; that is to say, people often have a knack of slipping a noted historical personage into the place of some forgotten deity, who himself was only the incarnation of some natural phenomenon. A notorious illustration of the doctrine here propounded is to be found in the story of William Tell, which, even now, is publicly accepted as a record of facts by nearly all who have not especially studied the subject. Tell, if he ever existed, which is extremely doubtful, must have flourished

in the beginning of the fourteenth century, during the reign of Albert the First, of Austria; but in the Edda of Sæmundus, which is written in the eleventh century, and contains the traditions of ages preceding, we find our patriotic friend in the shape of a Norse prince, who lived nobody knows where, and performed the apple feat exactly in the Swiss fashion. Nay, towards the end of the fifteenth century, Tell turns up again with the new name, Hemming Wulfen von Wavelsflet, a leader of the so-called Dittmarschen, who lived near the mouth of the Elbe, and valiantly defended their privileges against Christian, King of Denmark. In this revived drama, while Wulfen von Wavelsflet represented Tell, the part of Gessler was sustained by King Christian, but the main incident remained unaltered. The fact is, the story belonged to the old Norse mythology, and as it rolled down the course of time, it picked up Tell and Wulfen in its passage. In the production of the following legends, the knowledge of which is derived from oral tradition, no such operation took place. The Wild Huntsman is the god Odin, whom the early Christians converted into a sort of fiend; the White Lady is the being, really beneficent, who, in German mythology, is called sometimes Hilda or Holle, sometimes Perahtha or Bertha.

The Wild Huntsman, whose appearance, with a pack of skeleton hounds, is regarded as an evil omen by the bullet-founders in Der Freischütz, is a personage very familiar to the peasants of Hesse. In the olden time it was believed he made a point, towards the end of every autumn, of descending, after vespers, from the Vogelsberg into the valley below, his path being always denoted by a fiery streak along the sky, and his passage being accompanied by a mingled sound of creaking wheels, cracked whips, and clanging trumpets, with which was mingled a combination of the different voices proper to every variety of man, bird, and beast. The neighbouring forest at the same time became so thoroughly lighted that every leaf was visible. Like ordinary mortals, the Wild Huntsman was, however, subject to accidents. Once, as he was riding along with more than usual speed, one of the wheels came off his chariot, and fell to the ground with a noise like a clap of thunder.

The Wild Huntsman is less frequently seen than heard. One night a peasant, coming to a cross-road on his way home, heard the neighing of a horse, sometimes behind, sometimes before him. Presently

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. vii. p. 104.

he heard likewise the noise of an approaching carriage, but though there was a bright moonlight, nothing was to be seen. At last the whole invisible train rushed past him with such a "close shave," that, for the moment, he fancied himself run over. Fortunately he had suffered no injury, beyond a terrible fright, and when, on reaching home, he told the story to his grandfather, he was somewhat mortified to perceive that he had caused no sensation.

"Ah," said the good old man; "no doubt you have met the Wild Huntsman; that's just his way." Familiarity had bred contempt.

Shepherds, it has been observed, have sharper eyes for spectres than any other class of the community. On the eve of one Advent Sunday, in the vicinity of the Vogelsberg, an old shepherd was sleeping in his hut. A terrific storm arose, and a voice came thundering from the neighbouring forest, "Shepherd, shepherd, show me the way." Opening his door, the shepherd perceived a man with an enormous dog walking up and down the skirts of the forest.

"Whence do you come?" he asked.

"From up yonder," was the reply.

"Where does this lead?"

"To the Wetteraus."

The conversation would probably have proceeded further, had not the shepherd's dog crept between his master's legs, and uttered a dismal howl. Knowing that where ghosts are concerned dogs are sharper even than shepherds, the old man re-entered his hut, and closed the door. But he still heard the call, "Shepherd, shepherd!" till it faded away in the distance.

Near Merlau, a town at the western foot of the Vogelsberg, is a forest called the Linnes, in which the manifestations of the Wild Huntsman's visitations are exceptionally conspicuous. There, on the morning after one of his usual rides, the hares that he had taken were found hanging from the summits of the trees. On one particular pathway through the forest a more profitable discovery might be made on the same day. From a particular tree hung a huge pair of trunk-hose, and some of the passers-by heard a voice crying, "Brush me down! brush me down!" He who obeyed this command, and, when his task was done, put his hand into one of the pockets, was sure to find an old silver dollar of uncommon weight—neither more nor less. No awkward compact was implied in the acceptance of the coin, nor did it bring the owner into disrepute with his

neighbours, the dollars being considered a fair payment for a job honestly done. Nay, only persons born on a lucky day were able to perform the required service. Less fortunate wights, who heard the call, were compelled to remain staring at the hose, and could not pursue their journey till these had vanished.

To a girl of Michelbach, a place in the same district, the Wild Huntsman condescended to show himself in a remarkable manner, not at night, but at noon. She was on her way to a field, where, by her father's order, she was to cut the corn, and suddenly heard the usual sound of whips and horses, but, whereas the darkness was always exchanged for light during the nocturnal chases, light was on this occasion turned into darkness. The whole hunt then became visible. A flock of ravens, notoriously the birds of Odin, led the way, then followed twelve white hounds, and among them was the veritable Wild Huntsman, clad in green, mounted on a tall horse, and—without a head.

Sometimes the Wild Huntsman was fond of playing off practical jokes on the simple Hessians. He was in the habit of passing a certain house, and had become so familiar that on one occasion the poor children who resided there, and had nothing but dry bread to eat, asked him on his passage to fling to them a piece of cheese. An enormous lump of the desired article fell down before them, but it appealed so forcibly to their noses that it never found its way to their mouths. Another trick, much more malicious than droll, was played on a girl who was tending cattle near a wood. A tall huntsman suddenly stood before her, and asked her if she had seen his white goose. On hearing her answer in the negative, he snatched up a calf as readily as if it had weighed only a couple of ounces, sprang into the forest, and, after a short interval, returned with the calf entirely stripped of its hair. "There is a white goose for you," he said, and immediately vanished.

It is a curious fact that the Wild Huntsman is associated in the minds of the Hessian peasants with the Assyrian monarch, Nimrod. This "mighty hunter," whom we have always been taught to regard as a miracle of impiety and presumption, was, according to the Hessian legend, lying upon his death-bed, when he was accosted by the Deity, who asked him whether he would go to heaven or continue his favourite pursuit of hunting. Without hesitation, he chose the latter alternative,

and he and his companions were doomed to a perpetual hunt, without repose.

White Ladies, of a kind very different from the one associated with the royal house of Hohenzollern, likewise abound in the region of the Vogelsberg. On the Grünberg, a mountain at the western extremity of the chain, stands an ancient convent, which has been converted into a castle, and become the habitual residence of local magistrates. The unmarried sister of one of these had sat up till nearly midnight about the time of Advent, when the door of her room slowly opened and twelve beautiful maidens entered, who, forming a circle, sang the most lovely chorus ever heard by human ears. The young woman scarcely knew whether to be pleased or terrified. At last she exclaimed, "This is a visit indeed!" At these words the twelve strangers vanished, but the sound of their voices without was audible for a few moments afterwards. The notion that White Ladies are not happy, is illustrated by a legend connected with an old castle, of which no trace at present remains. After midnight, however, it reappears in all its pristine magnificence, and with its windows brightly illuminated, as though for the celebration of a feast. On such occasions the young lady of the castle is sometimes visible. She is very beautiful, and wears a snow-white dress, but she never speaks, and always seems to be lamenting her past glory and praying for future salvation.

The belief that a salvation, only to be acquired under the most exceptional circumstances, is the cause alike of hope and sorrow in a White Lady, is more developed in a tradition respecting an old shepherd of Liederbach, who was encountered by one of those strange beings. She implored him to work out her salvation, and on his inquiring how this was to be effected, she desired him to bring his little boy to the same spot, at the same hour, on the following morning. If she gave the child three kisses, she said the curse that laid heavily upon her would be removed, and that she would reward the shepherd with the keys of the Mürchberg, a mountain near the town of Leusel, thus making him master of all the treasures which in the olden time had been buried by the Grey Friars.

The offer was too tempting, and on the following morning the shepherd was accompanied by his little boy. At about eleven o'clock the lady made her appearance and snatched up the child. But her style of beauty was not at all to the taste of the little fellow, who, alarmed by her

marble-white face and extremely large eyes, screamed so lustily that his father felt himself bound to tear him from her arms by main force. Enraged at this disappointment of her dearest hopes, the lady flung the bundle of iron keys with so much force at the shepherd, that his arm remained bruised for the remainder of his life. She then declared in a mournful voice that she must now wander without repose until a sprig of hazel that grew upon the Mürchberg had become a big tree, and a cradle had been fashioned from its wood. The first child rocked in that cradle could procure her salvation. She then vanished, and the shepherd never saw her afterwards. It is noteworthy that in these legends the approach of noon seems to be as favourable to the appearance of spectres as the approach of midnight.

The conditions by which the salvation of White Ladies is to be effected seems altogether arbitrary. The story is told of a foundling, nicknamed the "Bettelkaspar," who had been brought up in the village Sichenhausen, and was accustomed for years to tend cattle on the Altenberg, an old mountain in the neighbourhood; but there is a peculiarity in this mountain that had entirely escaped his notice; namely, a deep hole on the summit. If any one lies down and places his ear there, or stamps upon the ground, he will plainly perceive from that sound that he is over a deep hollow.

One evening, while the Bettelkaspar was sitting near the orifice eating his dry bread, a grey little man, with a pleasant expression of countenance, suddenly stood before him. He was very small, very old, and his beard was white as snow.

"You are the very man I want," exclaimed the dwarf, "for you have neither father, mother, nor home, and nobody knows rightly who you are. Through this fortunate circumstance you are in a condition to effect the rescue of two beautiful maidens, who are spell-bound in this mountain. Come to-morrow, at noon, with your cattle, without telling anybody what you have heard. The young ladies will then make their appearance, and you have nothing more to do but to carry their bundles and to soar with them through the air to Mount Sinai, where the keys of the Altenberg are kept, which you will receive as your reward. The maidens will be freed from the curse, and you will open a subterranean door, and find a great store of casks, some filled with choicest wines, others filled with the purest gold."

The Bettelkaspar so far kept his word, that

he told his wife nothing that had happened, though he ordered her to get his breakfast ready somewhat earlier than usual, and set off for the Altenberg. Precisely at noon, the little man was again before him, accompanied this time by the two maidens, whom he treated with the greatest reverence. They were very tall, and their features were extremely regular, but their faces were uncommonly pale. Not only were their garments white, but they had white kerchiefs on their heads, and wore white shoes. Their bundles lay at their feet.

The dwarf told the Bettelkaspar to put the bundles on his back with all possible speed, as "something" might otherwise come, which would carry off the whole party. However, all things considered, there was no great danger.

A sudden misgiving came over the cowherd, and he stood motionless, reflecting that the wind, instead of wafting him safely to the end of his journey, might possibly drop him into the water. Just as he was about to give verbal expression to his thoughts, the young ladies startled him with a piercing shriek, and, looking behind him, he saw a tall, black, horrible-looking man, who breathed fire out of his mouth. He now shouted in his turn, whereupon all that was beautiful, and all that was ugly, vanished in a twinkling, and he found himself alone with his hunk of dry bread and his cattle. The fright proved too much for him, and he was dead and buried before the following spring.

One legend of the district treats, indeed, of a White Lady who haunts the Bilstein, a mountain near Lauterbach, and who is said to have been the daughter of a king, who murdered her father, because he would not consent to her marriage with a man of low degree. Like the others she implores all who come near her to work out her salvation. But generally, it will be seen, the White Lady is essentially a beneficent being, whose misery arises, not from any crime committed during a mortal life, but from that false position in which a heathen deity must be placed after the conversion of a people to Christianity. In modern times the personal existence of pagan gods is, of course, utterly disbelieved; but it was not so in earlier ages. Saint Augustin and other fathers of the Church, far from wholly rejecting the Greek and Roman mythology as a tissue of mere fables, maintained that the false deities were actual demons, who sought to divert the mind of man from the truth. The same view frequently appears in popular

legends, and we may refer particularly to Ludwig Teich's beautiful story of the Faithful Eckhart, according to which the Goddess Venus reigns in a mountain, named after her, as a foe to Christianity. In the Hessian legends given above, the revered Odin has become a hateful spectre, the amiable Bertha a helpless mourner, vainly sighing for redemption.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVII. THE WORLD OF LONDON.

MISS CORINNA NAGLE was now in London, having gone up to seek her fortune, like so many heroes and heroines before her. It might be pronounced that she was fairly capable of working her way, having so readily cast off those who loved her, or that she was constituted of much too stern stuff to excite sympathy or interest. Yet this would be unfair judgment. She had a certain stoical coldness, but, above all, a vast store of pride, and, as we have seen, she shrank from the mortifications that had attended her. She might, indeed, have tolerated the effects of those that had passed, but her father's strange temper, and curious insensibility to delicacy, where money or interest was concerned, made the future a source of peril for her. She had, therefore, cast off all shrinking or timidity, and was in London, at humble lodgings, determined to work for her bread.

Almost at starting she was to feel the mortification, the despondency which attends that operation. The great opera house manager was somehow a different being in his own kingdom to what he was in a country town. Here he became at once more hard and practical, and more "difficult." Everything was to be "by-and-bye." By-and-bye, when she had acquired practice and skill, he would see what could be done. This "by-and-bye" meant, of course, two or three years. At that time there was a chance that she might be enrolled in his troupe, say, as Mademoiselle Corinne, or, as her father had so often dreamed of, the Signora Naglioni, coming on in white, as a white-robed "recipient" of the confidences of the leading lady of the opera. This was not a brilliant prospect, but Corinna was not discouraged.

She secured a sort of home in one of the interminable little new streets in Pimlico with an elderly lady, to whom she had been recommended, and there began her serious

studies. She then began to look out for pupils. Look for pupils! the most hopeless and discouraging task in the world; for the most hopeless and discouraging being in the world is the wistful creature, male or female, who wants to teach French, German, the piano, the violin, or the guitar, or to form the human voice. This operation has the air of a benefaction, and of a charitable work, but it is, in truth, a charity intended for the teacher, a wishing, not so much to teach, as to be supported. The appeal runs not so much "Do let me teach you!" but "Support me!" In fact, the number of would-be teachers runs nearer the number of those capable of being taught than would be supposed. Up this stony acclivity, however, the lovely Corinna determined to toil. She went through the regular course, first putting herself into the hands of one of those useful merchants who supply tenors and sopranos, players, teachers, actors, posturers, organ-grinders, even, at the shortest notice, and, alas! in platoons. It is amazing what an amount of finished talent is kept in stock by these people—the graceful singers, the interesting foreigners, who will warble a French romance in a drawing-room with a dramatic charm that would delight the most exacting connoisseur. There was, besides, the great musical firm who farmed out troupes of singing men and women, to scour the country, and who sent artists out to evening parties, either to sing or play. This patronage Corinna secured through the good offices of the opera director, who, though unwilling to pledge his own resources, was not insensible to the charms of so handsome a creature, and really exerted his great influence for her in these less important directions.

Thus, then, the lovely Corinna set forth on her toilsome and painful course, ready to go through any drudgery. It was a joyful hour when she learned that she was to attend at "Mrs. George Longpride's," wife to the eminent banker, and who had a palatial mansion at Kensington. This gentleman had everything on the most magnificent scale, and gave everything in "style," as it is called. He had no taste for music, beyond recognising some familiar air like Auld Lang Syne, a test which represents a vast amount of popular musical knowledge, and hired his music as he hired his shrubs and waiters for the night, "ordering them" at a music-shop.

It was a noble house, with marble staircase, conservatory, rich furniture, and pictures, all bought by contract. Gilding was

daubed on profusely in every direction, everything was gaudy and magnificent. In the large drawing-rooms long rows of chairs had been set out, while in the inner one a platform had been erected, where were held, in confinement as it were, and railed off round an imposing piano-forte, the band of ladies and gentlemen who were to contribute to the entertainment of the evening. Here was Signor Gentili, the fashionable professor who taught singing to the young ladies of the house at a guinea a lesson, and who had been intrusted with the lucrative "job" of contracting with the performers. He had secured the gentlemanly and interesting young French baritone, who sang so tenderly his little musical "anecdotes" in four verses, about a dying child, or abandoned mammas, or soldiers on the field of battle taking a last look at pictures under their uniform. This artist had only just put out on the great London musical ocean in his little skiff, and the chance of obtaining a stray passenger or two was extended to him, as a favour, by the music-master. There was found here, too, a tenth-rate soprano lady, who by courtesy belonged to the ranks of a great opera house, and was only called on for her services on the off nights in the provinces, but who assumed all the lofty airs of a prima donna, and gave ground for the host's boast, often repeated during the night to his guests, of "having the opera singers." There was also a violin performer, and an Italian bullet-headed singer who gave volubly what appeared to be comic songs, but which were only classical "buffo" performances. Finally, there was a stately girl of great beauty and dignity who attracted all eyes as she sat there apart almost, and who was set down in the bills as Miss Corinna Nagle. The prima donna, a portly, bold, well-painted lady, sniffed at her somewhat disdainfully, though the languishing French baritone and Signor Gentili paid her marked attention. It must be said that this was not the homage that was extended to the general performance, for every song seemed to be the signal for a universal buzz. There was a room beyond the second drawing-room from whence there was no convenient seeing or hearing, and here a large portion of the company bivouacked, more than content with their seclusion, and utterly unconscious that at certain intervals bursts of chattering and genteel laughter were borne in upon the general audience, to the interruption of the music. In vain the hostess, with smiles and some alarm, timorously deprecated the

noise; it died away for a few moments, only to swell again presently in greater force.

There was a wiry, grey-haired little gentleman sitting in the front row, who listened with scrupulous attention to every piece, about whom, at the close of each performance the host would hover, eagerly asking his opinion. This was one Mr. Dodd, who had formerly been a City merchant, and was known for his musical tastes, his "charming parties," his intimacy with the great ladies who rushed about the vast opera stages in agonies of musical emotion, and who came to his house to enjoy those choice dinners which he was celebrated for giving. From the first he had been attracted by Corinna, by her look and attitude, and still more after it had come to her turn to sing.

She had chosen her old song from Orpheus. She felt no nervousness. Her rich, full, noble voice floated across the vacant faces, entered the vacant ears which were turned to her. There was no very profound impression to be produced on such listeners; but there was a round, pathetic tone that vibrated as it went to the hearts of those who had any taste, and made them vibrate. The young men, open-collared Adonises, could, however, pronounce critically on what was within their province, namely, her beauty and attractions; and a burst of genteel applause saluted her as she retired, having sung her song.

A few moments later, Mr. Dodd was beside her, speaking to the conductor:

"My dear Gentili, introduce me to this young lady. Charmed, delighted, Miss Nagle. But I want to ask you a question about that song. Who taught you to sing it in that way? Surely you could never have met my old friend Doughty."

"Yes," said Corinna, simply, "it was Mr. Doughty who taught me."

"How singular," said the other, starting. "I knew his style. I was wondering all the time you were singing. Good gracious! I must talk to you about this. Just allow me to sit down by you, for really this is curious." As soon as he had sat down, he said: "So you are the young lady? Don't start. I heard all about it. No offence, I assure you." Corinna was drawing herself up with dignity. "The fact is, I am one of Doughty's oldest friends, and am too well off, and like him too much, to grudge him his good fortune."

"No one could grudge him that," said Corinna. "He is the most generous and noble of men. He is very, very ill, as I suppose you have heard."

"Yes. But when I say I don't grudge him his money, I do take some merit for magnanimity; as there are some people who would never forgive being cut out by a friend. The testator assured me, only a month before his death, that he had made his will, and left me everything that he had. To be sure, friend Doughty saw a good deal of him in the interval, and I suppose made his hay when the sun shone, that is, when he could."

"No such ideas were in his head, you may depend on it," said Corinna, with some little excitement. "I saw him the night he received the news, and no one could be more unconcerned. You are quite mistaken, I can assure you."

"Perhaps so," said the patron; "and I admire you for taking his part. Forgive me if I say I know the whole, at least all but the latter part of it. For to say the truth, after all that I heard, I am a little surprised to find you here. Don't be angry," he added, hastily. "I ask no questions. I wish to be your friend."

"I am not angry, indeed," said Corinna, "and I believe you wish to be the friend of one who has no friends. Why should you not ask questions? I am willing to answer them. I think I understand what you mean. After all you had heard of what had gone on down there, you are astonished to find me here. Well, I have come to fight the battle of life alone. I have left that town and my family too, because it had become unendurable. I was persecuted, harassed, wounded to the quick; turned into a scheming adventuress, whether I would or no."

"But Doughty would have shielded you; indeed, would have given his life for you. I hope you have not treated him unkindly—or made him a sacrifice."

Corinna looked down on the ground. "It was unendurable," she repeated.

"If he has had the misfortune to offend you," said Mr. Dodd, warmly, "I know that it was unintentional. I presume that the matter is all over now, so I may speak freely. If he seemed to have done anything that hurt you or seemed unkind, I know that he was not to blame."

"He do anything unkind? Never! At this moment I would be by his side, not here in this strange place—if I dared. I let myself seem heartless, selfish, ungrateful, oh, so ungrateful!—that is punishment enough. But no one can understand the position in which I was placed. It may be the fault of my own wretched temperament—my own sensitiveness. But"—

here she paused for a moment, then added more coldly, "this will all sound strange to you, but I forgot for the moment."

"Not in the least strange," said he, with much interest; "and I can understand the whole now. All this does you honour. Scruples of this kind, however, may be carried too far. As you have determined on following this career, we must only help you as much as we can. I am a person of some power in the musical world, and can do a good deal. I see you have wisely chosen a more mundane piece in the second part. That will go more home to this company. It is a lovely and graceful piece, that jewel-song of Gounod's."

He went back to his place, leaving Corinna not a little puzzled, and yet pleased, by his sympathy. Brighter hopes, too, came before her. But here was her turn approaching, and she had to get ready for the performance.

Every musician knows this dainty piece and its piquant graces, its dancing measure, and when Corinna began people at once began to pay attention. Her delicious warbling at once rivetted attention; her attractive presence added to the charm; the buzz was gradually hushed. People whispered, but it was only to express their delight, or ask about her. When she had concluded there was applause that might be called a "burst," considering the fashionable character of the audience.

Then followed introduction. The host had to come up with many a "Miss Nagle, Lady Mantower wishes to be introduced to you"—"Miss Nagle, Lord Leader has asked me to introduce him—great amateur, I assure you."

These noble personages came up simpering and bending, and proposed her singing at their party, or giving lessons to their daughters.

Before the evening closed, Mr. Dodd was beside her again, and with much satisfaction. "You will do. You are on the high road to success."

Corinna felt a thrill, a whirl, all through that delightful night; for success, and a crescendo success, that grows and swells even within the space of a few hours, is always delightful. The flowers, the lights, the pleased faces, the soft words of congratulation and compliment from persons who wished to recommend themselves—these made the whole seem like an agree-

able dream. She felt happy and triumphant, for her resolution to be independent now seemed likely to be justified. The whole, too, had a softening effect on her; she even thought of one now far away, and lying sick, and who would be glad to hear of her triumph.

The party was now breaking up for supper down-stairs. The musicians have generally to take each other, the languishing baritone offering his arm to the stout soprano. The young lord, who sang and played the violin in the ranks of "the Macallum Minstrels," offered his arm to take Corinna down, and was not without disappointed competitors. He told her he was enchanted, and that everybody was enchanted, and that she must sing at the next concert of the Macallum Minstrels. "She was just the thing for them," he added.

They had reached the hall, and were turning into the supper-room, when a servant came forward with one of those amber-coloured envelopes which so often cause excitement, and are opened with eagerness, no matter how familiar we may be with their reception.

"A telegram, miss," he said; "sent on 'ere from your house."

"Good gracious, Miss Nagle," said the musical young lord. "I hope there's nothing wrong. 'Pon my word should be so sorry."

In much trepidation Corinna hurried into the cloak-room, and read:

"From	To
William Gardiner, Brickford.	Corinna Nagle, London.

"They have seized on poor Doughty, and are going to take him away to-morrow, and put him in a mad-house. They have had me arrested to get me out of the way. There is no one to save him. Come down at once, like a brave, honest girl, and I believe that you can defeat them all."

"No bad news, I hope," said the musical lord again. "Should be so sorry. 'Pon my word I really should."

"I must go home at once," said Corinna, agitated. "Would you get me my things? Good night! Thank you."

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SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1873.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LXVII. A CHAPTER OF EXPLANATIONS.

LAURA'S long talk with me cleared up her story.

She was the only daughter of Mr. Grey, of Halston Manor, of whom I had often heard. He had died in possession of a great estate, and of shares in the Great Central Bank worth two hundred thousand pounds. Within a few weeks after his death the bank failed, and the estate was drawn into the ruin. Of her brother there is no need to speak, for he died only a year after, and has no connexion with my story.

Laura Grey would have been a suitable, and even a princely match for a man of rank and fortune, had it not been for this sudden and total reverse. Old Lord Rillingdon—Viscount Rillingdon, his son, had won his own step in the peerage by brilliant service—had wished to marry his son to the young lady. No formal overtures had been made; but Lord Rillingdon's house, Northcot Hall, was near, and the young people were permitted to improve their acquaintance into intimacy, and so an unavowed attachment was formed. The crash came, and Lord Rillingdon withdrew his son, Mr. Jennings, from the perilous neighbourhood.

A year elapsed before the exact state of Mr. Grey's affairs was ascertained. During that time Richard Marston, who had seen and admired Laura Grey, whose brother was an intimate friend of his, came to the neighbourhood and endeavoured to insinuate himself into her good graces. He had soon learned her ruined circumstances, and founded the cruellest hopes upon this melancholy knowledge.

To forward his plans he had conveyed scandalous falsehoods to Mr. Jennings with the object of putting an end to his rivalry. These he had refused to believe; but there were others no less calculated to excite his jealousy, and to alienate his affection. He had shown the effect of this latter influence by a momentary coldness, which roused Laura Grey's fiery spirit; for gentle as she was, she was proud.

She had written to tell Mr. Jennings that all was over between them, and that she would never see him more. He had replied in a letter, which did not reach her till long after, in terms the most passionate and agonising, vowing that he held himself affianced to her while he lived, and would never marry any one but her.

In this state of things Miss Grey had come to us, resolved to support herself by her own exertions.

Lord Rillingdon, having reason to suspect his son's continued attachment to Laura Grey, and having learned accidentally that there was a lady of that name residing at Malory, made a visit to Cardyllion. He was the old gentleman in the chocolate-coloured coat, who had met us as we returned from church, and held a conversation with her, under the trees, on the Mill-road.

His object was to exact a promise that she would hold no communication with his son for the future. His tone was insolent, dictatorial, and in the highest degree irritating. She repelled his insinuations with spirit, and peremptorily refused to make any reply whatever to demands urged in a temper so arrogant and insulting.

The result was that he parted from her highly incensed, and without having carried his point, leaving my dear sister and myself in a fever of curiosity.

Richard Rokestone Marston was the only near relation of Sir Harry Rokestone. He had fallen under the baronet's just and high displeasure. After a course of wild and wicked extravagance he had finally ruined himself in the opinion of Sir Harry, by committing a fraud, which, indeed, would never have come to light had it not been for a combination of unlucky chances.

In consequence of this his uncle refused to see him; but at Mr. Bleunt's intercession agreed to allow him a small annual sum, on the strict condition that he was to leave England. It was when actually on his way to London, which, for a reason of his own, he chose to reach through Bristol, that he had so nearly lost his life in the disaster of the Conway Castle.

Here was the first contact of my story with his.

His short stay at Malory was signalled by his then unaccountable suit to me, and by his collision with Mr. Jennings, who had come down there on some very vague information that Laura Grey was in the neighbourhood. He had succeeded in meeting her, and in renewing their engagement, and at last in persuading her to consent to a secret marriage, which at first involved the anguish of a long separation, during which a dangerous illness threatened the life of her husband.

I am hurrying through this explanation, but I must relate a few more events and circumstances, which throw a light upon some of the passages in the history I have been giving you of my life.

Why did Richard Marston conceive the fixed purpose of marrying a girl, of whom he knew enough to be aware that she was without that which prudence would have insisted on as a first necessity in his circumstances—money?

Well, it turned out to have been by no means so imprudent a plan. I learned from Mr. Blount the particulars that explained it.

Mr. Blount, who took an interest in him, and had always cherished a belief that he was reclaimable, told him repeatedly that Sir Harry had often said that he would take one of Mabel Ware's daughters for his heiress. This threat he had secretly laughed at, knowing the hostility that subsisted between the families. He was, however, startled at last. Mr. Blount had showed him a letter in which Sir Harry distinctly stated that he had made up his mind to leave everything he possessed to me. This he showed him for the purpose

of inducing a patient endeavour to regain his lost place in the old man's regard. It effectually alarmed Richard Marston; and the idea of disarming that urgent danger, and restoring himself to his lost position by this stroke of strategy, occurred to him, and instantly bore fruit in action.

After his return, and admission as an inmate at Dornacleugh, the danger appeared still more urgent, and his opportunities were endless.

He had succeeded, as I have told you, in binding me by an engagement. In that position he was safe, no matter what turned up. He had, however, now made his election; and how cruelly, you already know.

Did he, according to his low standard, love me? I believe, so far as was consistent with his nature, he did. He was furious at my having escaped him, and would have pursued and no doubt discovered me, had he been free to leave Dornacleugh.

His alleged marriage was, I believe, a fiction. Mr. Blount thought that he had, perhaps, formed some schemes for a marriage of ambition, in favour of which I was to have been put aside. If so, however, I do not think that he would have purchased the enjoyment of such ambition, at the price of losing me, at once and for ever. I dare say you will laugh at the simplicity of a woman's vanity, who in such a case could suppose such a thing. I do suppose it, notwithstanding. I am sure that so far as his nature was capable of love, he did love me. With the sad evidences of this my faith, I will not weary you. Let those vain conclusions rest where they are, deep in my heart.

The important post which Lord Rillingdon had filled, in one of our greatest dependencies, and the skill, courage, and wisdom with which he had directed affairs during a very critical period, had opened a way for him to still higher things. He and Laura were going out in about six months to India; and she and he insisted that I should accompany them as their guest. Too delightful this would have been under happier circumstances; but the sense of dependence, however disguised, is dreadful. We are so constructed that it is for an average mind more painful to share in idle dependence the stalled ox of a friend, than to work for one's own dinner of herbs.

They were going to Brighton, and I consented to make them a visit there of three or four weeks; after that I was to resume my search for a "situation." Laura

entreated me at least to accept the care of her little child; but this, too, I resolutely declined. At first sight you will charge me with folly; but if you, being of my sex, will place yourself for a moment in my situation, you will understand why I refused. I felt that I should have been worse than useless. Laura would never have watched me, as a good mother would like to watch the person in charge of her only child. She would have been embarrassed, and unhappy, and I should have been conscious of being in the way. Two other circumstances need explanation. Laura told me, long after, that she had received a farewell letter from Mr. Carmel, who told her that he had written to warn me, but with much precaution, as Sir Harry had a strong antipathy to persons of his profession, of a danger which he was not then permitted to define. Monsieur Droqville, whom Mr. Marston had courted, and sought to draw into relations with him, had received a letter from that young man, stating that he had made up his mind to leave America by the next ship, and establish himself once more at Dorracleugh. It was Mr. Carmel, then, who had written the note that puzzled me so much, and conveyed it, by another hand, to the post-office of Cardyllion.

Monsieur Droqville had no confidence in Richard Marston. He had been informed, beside, of the exact nature of Sir Harry's will, and a provision that made his bequest to me void, in case I should embrace the Roman Catholic faith.

It is to that provision in the draft-will of Sir Harry Rokestone, and to the impolicy of any action while Lady Lorrimer's death was so recent, and my indignation so hot, that Droqville had resolved that, for a time, at least, the attempt to gain me to the Church of Rome should not be renewed.

I have now ended my necessary chapter of explanation, and my story again goes on its way.

CHAPTER LXVIII. AT THE FUNERAL.

A SOLEMN low-voiced fuss was going on in the old house at Dorracleugh; preparations and consultations were afoot; a great deal was not being done, but there were the whispering and restlessness of expectation, and the few grisly arrangements for the reception of the confined guest.

Old Mrs. Shackleton, the housekeeper, crept about the rooms, her handkerchief now and then to her eyes; and the housemaid-in-chief, with her attendant women, were gliding about.

Sir Harry had, years before, left a letter in Mr. Blount's hands that there might be no delay in searching for a will directing all that concerned his funeral.

The coffin was to be placed in the great hall of the house, according to ancient custom, on tressels, under the broad span of the chimney. He was to be followed to the grave by his tenantry, and such of the gentry, his neighbours, as might please to attend. There was to be an ample repast for all comers, consisting of as much "meat and drink of the best as they could consume;" what remained was to be distributed among the poor in the evening.

He was to be laid in the family vault adjoining the church of Golden Friars; a stone with the family arms, and a short inscription, "but no flatteries," was to be set up in the church, on the south wall next the vault, and near the other family monuments, and it was to mention that he died unmarried, and was the last of the old name of Rokestone, of Dorracleugh.

The funeral was to proceed to Golden Friars, not by the "mere road," but, as in the case of other family funerals, from Dorracleugh to Golden Friars, by the old high road.

If he should die at home, at Dorracleugh, but not otherwise, he was to be "waked" in the same manner as his father and his grandfather were.

There were other directions, presents to the sexton and parish clerk, and details that would weary you.

At about twelve o'clock the hearse arrived, and, two or three minutes after, Mr. Blount drove up in a chaise.

The almost gigantic coffin was carried up the steps, and placed under the broad canopy assigned to it at the upper end of the hall.

Mr. Blount, having given a few directions, inquired for Mr. Marston, and found that gentleman in the drawing-room.

He came forward; he did not intend it, but there was something in the gracious and stately melancholy of his reception, which seemed to indicate not only the chief-mourner, but the master of the house.

"Altered circumstances—a great change," said Mr. Marston, taking his hand. "Many will feel his death deeply. He was to me, I have said it a thousand times, the best friend that ever man had."

"Yes, yes, sir; he did show wonderful patience and forbearance with you, considering his temper, which was proud and fiery, you know; poor gentleman, poor Sir

Harry; but grandly generous, sir, grandly generous."

"It is a consolation to me, having lost a friend and, I may say, a father, who was, in patience, forbearance, and generosity, all you describe, and all you know, that we were lately, thanks, my good friend, mainly to your kind offices, upon the happiest terms. He used to talk to me about that farm; he took such an interest in it—sit down, pray—won't you have some sherry and a biscuit?—and such a growing interest in me."

"I think he really was coming gradually not to think quite so ill of you as he did," said good Mr. Blount. "No sherry, no biscuit, thank you. I know, sir, that under great and sudden temptation a man may do the thing he ought not to have done, and repent from his heart afterwards, and from very horror of his one great lapse, may walk, all the rest of his life, not only more discreetly, but more safely than a man who has never slipped at all. But Sir Harry was sensitive and fiery. He had thought that you were to represent the old house, and perhaps to bear the name after his death, and could not bear that both should be slurred by, if I may be allowed the expression, a shabby crime."

"Once for all, Mr. Blount, you'll be good enough to remember that such language is offensive and intolerable," interrupted Richard Marston, firmly and sharply. "My uncle had a right to lecture me on the subject—you can have none."

"Except as a friend," said Mr. Blount. "I shall, however, for the future, observe your wishes upon that subject. You got my letter about the funeral, I see?"

"Yes, they are doing everything exactly as you said," said Marston, recovering his affability.

"Here is the letter," said Mr. Blount. "You should run your eye over it."

"Ha! It is dated a long time ago," said Mr. Marston. "It was no sudden presentiment, then. How well he looked when I was leaving this!"

"We are always astonished when death gives no warning," said Mr. Blount; "it hardly ever does to the person most interested. Doctors, friends, they themselves, are all in a conspiracy to conceal the thief who has got into the bedroom. It matters very little that the survivors have had warning."

Marston shook his head and shrugged.

"Some day I must learn prudence," said he.

"Let it be the true prudence," said Mr. Blount. "It is a short foresight that sees no further than the boundary of this life."

Mr. Marston opened the letter, and the old gentleman left him to see after the preparations.

Some one at Golden Friars, I think it was the vicar, sent me the country paper, with a whole column in mourning, with a deep, black edge, giving a full account of the funeral of Sir Harry Rokestone, of Dorraclough. The ancient family whose name he bore, was now extinct. I saw in the list the names of county people who had come in their carriages more than twenty miles to attend the funeral, and people who had come by rail hundreds of miles. It was a great county gathering that followed the last of the Rokestones, of Dorraclough, to the grave.

THE LAST BATTLE FOR SAMARCAND.

"THAT'S the spoil of the infidel, my father; and he who handled it was a brave man, unbeliever though he was. God has put much bravery in the hearts of the Basurmani (heathens); but we have beaten them, after all!"

So speaks, with a gleam of stern pleasure in his clear grey eye, a stalwart Russian grenadier, whose close-cropped hair is just beginning to turn grey. Emerging from the great mosque of Tashkent (now turned into a powder-magazine by the practical conquerors), I find the veteran munching his ration bread in the shadow of a projecting gateway. The unmistakably Bokhariote yataghan in his belt provokes my curiosity, which he is evidently nothing loth to gratify.

"We have beaten them," he repeats, twisting his huge red moustache; "but we'll have to do it all over again some day. These fellows are like our wolves in winter—never quiet till their skins are hung up behind the stove. They've got to go out some day, anyhow; for it's not to be borne that all the best bits of God's earth should be in the hands of unbelieving heathens!"

"You took this yataghan in battle, then, I suppose?" interpolate I.

"That did I, father, and a hard battle it was. They tell me that the story of it has gone abroad even to the West; but, perhaps, you haven't heard it."

"And if I have, a good story's always

worth hearing twice; so I'll just tell you what we'll do. We'll step across into that *kabak* (tavern) on the other side of the street, and you shall wash the dust out of your mouth, and tell me all about it."

Honest Dmitri's small eyes twinkle approvingly, and he follows me across the street with alacrity. A full measure of liquor is speedily set before him, and sitting down in the shadow of the doorway, he pulls off his cap, crosses himself devoutly, and prepares to enjoy himself. The removal of the cap shows me a long, dark-red scar across his forehead, standing out strongly upon the sun-burned skin.

"Hallo, brother! the unbelievers have left you a remembrance, I see. Did you get that in the battle you were talking of?"

"Just so, master; and from this very *yataghan* that I have been showing you. The *Basurmani* can hit hard when they like, I can tell you; and if this *Khiva* expedition that everybody's talking about here, really comes off, we shall find our porridge hot for us—that we shall! But we'll beat them all the same, please God!"

"Well, but about this battle of yours?"

"Ah, to be sure! Well, you see, in the year '67 it was settled to take *Samarcand* at any price, and General *Kaufmann* was our leader. But what a march we had of it! You've seen something of the mud on your way here, I take it—well, that was just how we had it all the way to the *Kouran-Tau* ridge. Plump you go into the dirt up to your knees, and get all slimy and sticky, like a fly in a pot of milk; then comes a stream, and you get over it anyhow, keeping only your musket and ammunition dry. Then into a lot of thorn-bushes, that stick into you like bayonets; and then more dirt after that, till you're just like a newly-tarred boot. Oh, fathers of the world! what work we did have of it!"

Dmitri breaks off for a moment to drown the horrible recollection in a tremendous swig of raw spirit; while the landlord, foreseeing that the yarn will require a good deal of moistening, nods his head approvingly.

"After we got over the *Kouran-Tau*," continues my extempore *Othello*, "we came out upon the steppe, and there the ground was hard and rocky, and we had better walking of it; but as for the heat, phew! All day we'd be baking like loaves in an oven; and then the sun would set all at once, as if somebody had blown him out,

and it would turn cold all in a minute, and down would come the dew, and we would all be shivering and shaking like a dog shut out on a winter night; and then after that the heat again. We didn't much like it, I can tell you; but what's to be done? When a thing is to be it will be. Besides, our colonel was one of the right sort, that he was. Many a time would he get off his horse, and march three or four *versts* along with the column, just to show that he didn't want to be better off than the rest of us; and when he saw a man beginning to tire, and to drag his feet after him, he would call out cheerily, 'Keep up, my lad; think what your lass at home would say, if she saw her man the first to fall out.' And that would go through us like a sup of vodka, and we'd go forward as briskly as if we had only just started.

"At last we got to *Khodjent*; a sweet little place it is, nestled in its forest like a baby among the standing corn in harvest time, and its mosques glittering over the river like cavalry helmets, and there we halted a day to rest. It was there we got word that the heathen had come out to meet us, and at that we rejoiced greatly, and said we would give them *Adjar** over again. But the spiteful beasts hadn't the civility to stand out and give us a fair chance at 'em; all they did was to hang about us, cutting off our stragglers, and trying to draw us out in pursuit, that they might fall upon us scattered—the cowardly, sneaking, accursed sons of dogs." (Here Dmitri, warming with his subject, branches off into a string of curses worthy of *Ernulfus* and *Œdipus Coloneus*.) "But our father, the general, was too old a wolf to be caught in that trap; he kept us well together, and gave the heathen dogs no chance. All they could do was to hover about us as we marched, just as the crows used to do round me when I went ploughing at home, and perhaps one of them would ride past at full gallop within easy rifle range, and take a flying shot in passing. But our Cossacks knew that game as well they did, and gave 'em pepper to their soup till they had enough. Once or twice they tried to surprise us by night, but our general always slept with his eyes open, and so 'the scythe came upon a stone'† every time they tried it, and after a bit they thought it better to leave us alone. Here, landlord, another half-pint."

* A battle gained by General Romanovski in 1866.

† A Russian proverb, answering to our phrase of "catching a Tartar."

Dmitri's narrative is again interrupted for a few seconds, the landlord surveying him meanwhile with an air of fatherly admiration.

"Now, I should tell you," he resumes at length, "that my great chum in our company was one Nikolai Petrovitch Masloff, from the town of Khvalinsk, on the Volga. Such a merry fellow as he was! always laughing and joking, and telling funny stories; and with his tales, and his songs, and his jokes, he kept us all as merry as boys at a carnival. But the morning after we got to Ouran-Toubeh, which is about half-way from Khodjent to Samarcand, I noticed that Kolia (Nikolai), instead of looking bright and jolly as he generally did, was as dumpish as a peasant who has just been drawn for the conscription—and well he might! Did you ever have a dream, master?"

His voice sinks to a whisper at the question; and a sudden look of solemnity, almost amounting to awe, darkens his jovial face.

"A dream, eh?" answer I, laughing; "why, I'm always having them. I had a very queer one last night, after supping on mutton-pilaff and green tea."

"Ah! I don't mean that sort; this was quite a different thing. Listen, and you shall hear. I had expected to find Kolia jollier than ever, for our general had just got word that the unbelievers were encamped with a great army in front of Samarcand, meaning to fight; and we were all rejoicing at it; but when I looked into Kolia's face, it struck upon me like a chill.

"Why, brother," said I, "what's wrong with you? It's just the time to be jolly, when we're going to square accounts with the unbelievers; and here you're looking as if you'd met the Domovoi' (the Russian Puck).

"Meetya (Dmitri) my lad,' says he, 'take this little cross of mine, and swear upon it that you'll give it with your own hands to my father, Petr Ivanitch Masloff, at Khvalinsk. You will return to Holy Russia some day; but as for me, it is fated that I should leave my bones here—I have had a dream.'

"At that word, master, I felt colder than ever, for I knew that Kolia was a 'znacharr' (fortune-teller), and that his dream could not lie. I said nothing, and he went on:

"I dreamed that we were lying on the bank of a swollen river, beyond which were steep hills; and on those hills lay the army

of the unbelievers; and in the middle of all there rose up one big rock, like the face of a man. And suddenly, like a rising mist, came the figure of my patron saint, Saint Nicholas, right up to where we two lay; and he stooped down and touched you on the forehead—but drew back his hand directly as if he had made a mistake, and laid it on my neck; and it was cold as ice. Then he disappeared; and as I awoke, I heard a strain of music just like a Panikheeda (funeral hymn).'

"Just then came the signal to fall in, and we had no more talk till the evening before the battle. We had been marching all day over a great plain overgrown with wooding, but just about sunset we came out upon the bank of the Zar-Affshan, and saw what was in store for us. The river was in full flood, running like the Volga after a spring thaw, and above it the heights of Tchepan-Atin rose up like a wall, steep and dark against the sky, and scattered all over the slope, like sugar on an Easter cake, were helmets, and spear-heads, and gun-barrels, and embroidered dresses, and all the array of the heathen host, and their guns were pointed right down upon the river, all ready to pepper us if we tried to cross. I was just looking up at them when I felt a hand on my arm, and heard Nikolai's voice saying, 'Look; do you remember?'

"I looked, and it was as if some one had struck me on the face, for there, as he had seen them in his dream, were the steep hills, and the swollen river, and the array of the heathen army, and the big rock, like a man's face, and all! Then I set my teeth hard, for I knew that he must die; but he just took off his little cross, and gave it me, saying only, 'Remember your promise.' We gripped each other's hands, and said nothing more.

"The next morning, in the grey of the early dawn, we mustered for the assault, for the general had taken a good look at their position, and had decided to try it on the right, where the ridge was not so steep. My regiment was to lead, and the colonel stepped to the front, and said, in his old cheery way, looking as jolly as if he were just going to dinner, 'My lads, our father the general has ordered us to carry that position, and so, of course, we can do it. Forward!'

"The next moment we were breast-deep in the river, holding our pieces over our heads. The minute we leaped in the batteries opened upon us, and all over the

hills it was flash, bang, flash, bang, like a thunderstorm, and the water splashing and foaming under the shot, as if under hail; but God blinded the eyes of the idolators, so that only a few of us got hit. We struggled through, and charged up the heights; and, to look at us and them, you'd have thought they had only to open their mouths and swallow us whole. But the heathen have not the strong heart of the true believers; and when they saw us coming right at them, as if we were sure of winning, their courage failed them. The whole army broke up all of a sudden, as the ice on the Volga breaks up in spring, and they threw down their arms and fled. Some of them stood to it, though, in the foremost battery; and among them was a tall fellow in a gay dress, who must have been a chief. Then I said to myself, 'I'll kill that man!' and I ran right at him. He gave me a slash with his yataghan (this one that's in my belt now), and cut through my cap into my forehead; but my bayonet went right through him, up to the very shank. We both fell down together, and I thought the game was done.

"When I awoke again all was quiet, and I staggered to my feet, and bound up my hurt with a strip of the Bokhariote's dress. He was dead and stiff, and I turned him gently over on his face, and prayed that his soul might find mercy, for he was a brave man. But when I turned to go there lay poor Nikolai, stark dead, with his neck half cut through by a sword-stroke, just as the dream had said. I have his little cross still" (he held it out to me in his broad hand, brown and hard as a trencher), "and if I ever get back to Holy Russia I'll give it to his father at Khvalinsk, though I should walk barefoot all the way.

"So there, master, is your story; and if you don't believe it, why, here's the very scar in my forehead still, just where the saint touched it. There now!"

OLD SEA LAWS.

ANY subject connected with the sea must be a matter of interest to England, who owes so much of her wealth, power, and national character to her maritime pursuits.

But although England has now, for a long time, been the acknowledged mistress of the sea, yet she was late in coming to the front; other nations there are who, in past ages, were her superiors in naval power,

but the greatness that they then enjoyed will bear no comparison with her present world-wide supremacy.

Holland, Spain, Genoa, and Venice, have all had their day; they have been great traders and great sea-warriors, and not only, for the time, ruled there in action, but have, especially the three last, contributed a great deal to the theory and principles of maritime law, by compiling and publishing sea codes which are monuments of practical common sense and equitable legislation.

The object of this paper is to give a very brief historical sketch of one or two of these, and then to draw the attention of the reader, a little more in detail, to the provisions of one, the most important of them, the celebrated *Consolado del Mar* of Barcelona.

In the very earliest times law seems to have ended with the sea-shore, just as in the eighteenth century it ended with the Highland line. Gentlemen, therefore, who were bold enough to venture on the sea, were considered to have emancipated themselves from all law except what their own will or interest might suggest.

Thus we are told in the third book of the *Odyssey*, that when Telemachus arrives at Pylos by sea, after he has shared the banquet of the Pylians, Nestor asks him whether he is voyaging with any fixed object, or merely roving over the sea as a pirate bent on indiscriminate mischief, and there is not the slightest hint that his reply would in any degree affect the kind of welcome accorded to him.

That a hospitable reception should be given to a rover may seem strange, though the countrymen of Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins can hardly feel much surprise at the existence and recognition of a trade that was followed with very little disguise even in the days of good Queen Bess. By degrees, however, as time went on, the value of lawful trading was recognised as a means of gain even more successful than piracy, and the necessity for some, at any rate elementary maritime laws, became inevitable.

The Rhodians are the earliest sea lawyers of whose legal labours any result has come down to us. They traded chiefly to the ports of the Mediterranean, though their commercial enterprise led them into the Adriatic, and even into the Black Sea,

Their code of sea laws was compiled with great judgment, and its intrinsic value may be estimated from two facts; first,

that it was adopted by the Romans after the failure of their naval expedition in the first Punic war; and, second, that one particular statute, the *Lex Rhodia de jactio*, was inserted by the Emperor Justinian in the *Digest*, &c., remains an authority in cases of jettison, and is appealed to by modern lawyers even at the present time.

It is remarkable that Rome, the great lawgiver to the world, so far as the land is concerned, yet contributed nothing to the law of the sea, but contented herself with adopting the laws of the Rhodians. The reason, doubtless, is that the Romans in their hearts despised and actually discouraged commerce and trade, and even prohibited it to the equestrian order. Witness the famous law brought in by the Consul Flaminius, and mentioned by Livy, forbidding any senator to possess a ship capable of carrying more than a certain very limited cargo of corn. The value and dignity of a ship of war was recognised; but almost the only idea the Romans had of a merchant ship was to bring corn from the East, for the huge and sometimes starving population of the city.

The Rhodian laws, therefore, maintained their place as the great sea code of the ancients, appealed to by every maritime nation in questions concerning the sea.

Many circumstances prevented the development of commerce till long after the Christian era, and it was not until the twelfth century that any need seems to have been felt for a recognised body of laws, especially applicable to maritime questions.

The first of these seems to have been that known by the title of the *Laws of Oleron*, said to have been compiled by order of Leonora, Duchess of Guienne, about the year 1192. Some authorities, more particularly Selden, have claimed for her son Richard Cœur de Lion this honour; but the Spanish historian, Capmany, energetically contests this claim, though he is compelled to admit that Richard did introduce them into England, and even made upon them some emendations of his own, which may have given rise to the opinion that he was their original author.

Next, in 1280, came the celebrated *Consolado del Mar of Barcelona*.

About the same time, or rather later, that is in or near the year 1288, there was recognised by the northern nations a code of sea laws, known as the *Ordinances which the Merchants and Captains of Ships formed anciently in the magnificent city*

of Wisbuy. The city of Wisbuy, in the island of Gothlandia, in the Baltic, was at this date a great trading centre for the north, and the code of sea laws there promulgated took the same place amongst the nations of the north, as did the *Consolado del Mar* amongst those of the south.

One other body of sea laws must be mentioned before recurring to that one with which this paper is especially concerned.

In 1252, the cities of Lubeck, Dantzic, Brunswick, and Cologne, gave a beginning to the celebrated confederacy of the *Hanse Towns*. At that time the great cities were the chief pioneers of constitutional liberty and commercial enterprise, and they early found that in order to assert their own independence, and to carry out successfully their trading ventures, they must combine to compel something like fair terms from their feudal suzerains; since these were wont to make trade impossible by their absurd restrictions, or unprofitable by their unjust exactions.

With this object, therefore, the famous *Hanseatic League* was initiated by the towns just mentioned, and the scheme was so successful and popular, that the allied cities soon numbered seventy or eighty in all parts of Europe, from Novgorod in Muscovy, to Antwerp in Flanders. With a view to still greater security the cities of the league put themselves under the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, and so great was the power and success of this formidable confederation, that even sovereigns sought the dignity of directors of the *Hanse*.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century, when the league was at the zenith of its power, it actually declared war with Waldemar, King of Denmark, and in 1420 against Henry the Fifth of England, and sent against him a fleet of forty ships, carrying twelve thousand men, besides seamen.

This proof of the strength and courage of the league aroused the fear and hate of the sovereigns in whose dominions the *Hanse Towns* were situated, who therefore required every merchant amongst their subjects to withdraw from the confederation. By this means this great combination was, by degrees, reduced to those cities alone by whom it had been formed, and, in 1791, it consisted of Lubeck, Bremen, Cologne, Dantzic, Brunswick, Hamburg, and Rostock.

Lubeck was considered the seat of the *Hanse*, and in that city were promulgated those sea laws which the extensive shipping

of the associated cities rendered necessary, but which must be refused the merit of absolute originality, since many of their provisions were certainly taken from the Book of the Consolado del Mar.

It may seem somewhat strange that in this enumeration of these early compilers of maritime laws, the name of England is hardly mentioned, except in connexion with the claim made for Richard the First to be the author of the Laws of Oleron. Yet it was not that she was without a navy, or had not begun to assert herself in her own neighbourhood, for Lingard tells us that Edward the Third made it his boast that his predecessors had always possessed the seas between England and France; and in the parliamentary rolls of this king's reign, the Commons declare in quaint Norman French that, "La navie estoit si noble et si plentinouse, que tous les pays tenoient Notre Seigneur pour le Roy de la mier."

It may be that the difficulty or impossibility of very distant navigation, combined with a state of incessant hostility with France, compelled England to confine her attention to the Channel and the sea in her own immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, her trade was not very extensive, for the spirit of commercial enterprise had not then been aroused within her, and what trade there was, even down to the time of Queen Elizabeth, was chiefly carried on by the merchants of the Hanse. The necessity therefore for maritime legislation, felt by some of the continental nations, seems to have touched her very little indeed.

At this time the genial waters of the Mediterranean sea offered to the numerous population of its extended coasts opportunities of navigation and trade far beyond what could then be found elsewhere in the world. Nature, therefore, united with historical tradition and natural capacity in developing in them a spirit of mercantile and maritime enterprise. Thus, the three great maritime powers of the time of which we are speaking, were a couple of Italian republics, and a small Spanish kingdom, Genoa, Venice, and Arragon.

Of these it might have been doubted for a time which should be called the first, Genoa and Venice being so nearly matched, so enterprising and so determined. But the Queen of the Adriatic remained queen of the sea after almost a century of conflict. For eighty years after 1263, an historian remarks, the internecine struggle between the two republics convulsed southern

Europe. Between 1264 and 1272 they fought no fewer than five most sanguinary pitched naval battles, besides innumerable lesser encounters. At last, however, the bloody struggle at Chiozza left both completely exhausted in men, ships, and money. Venice rose rapidly from the effects of the war, for she had been the victor, but Genoa never regained her former proud position.

Throughout these contests for supremacy at sea, we meet the names Catalans and Arragonese, mostly as allied with Venice, and greatly promoting her ultimate success. These people constituted the third great naval power of that period, and as it is with the naval code constructed by them that this paper is chiefly concerned, we will glance for a moment at their position.

Catalonia, with a Mediterranean seaboard of about one hundred and eighty miles, had contained two celebrated maritime cities: the one, Tarragona, founded by the Phœnicians, and destroyed by the Moors about 710, A.D., the other, Barcelona, founded, B.C. 235, by Hannibal's father, Hammilcar Barca, the Carthaginian, and the great emporium of trade at the time of which we are speaking. It had a ruler of its own, certainly, from A.D. 870. A sovereign count of Barcelona, who governed Catalonia, and the twelfth descendant of this early potentate, in the year 1137, united, by marriage, the kingdom of Arragon to his own dominions. Catalans and Arragonese, therefore, during the wars of Genoa and Venice in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were alike the subjects of the kings of Arragon. Majorca and its sister islands he had also acquired in a very questionable manner, whilst Valentia had been taken from the Moors by a king of Arragon in 1239.

These constituted his home dominions, whilst the constant presence, and the prowess of his well-appointed fleets in the Mediterranean, gave him, for a time, the possession of Sicily.

This being the state of these powers, it was natural that they should early feel the want of some settled code of maritime laws to decide disputes that would inevitably arise in the course of the very considerable foreign-trade that they carried on, extending to the Bosphorus, and even to the stormy waters of the Black Sea, and, of course, including the nearer ports of the Mediterranean and Adriatic.

In consequence of this want the Book of

the *Consolado del Mar* of Barcelona was drawn up, and became the text-book of sea law for the maritime nations of southern Europe.

This code, admirably adapted for its purpose, and suitable for its time, at once comprehensive and minute, dealing with large and important mercantile questions, and also with the smallest details, even as to the food of the seamen, was not constructed upon abstract principles, but was to a very large extent case-made law.

A century before its compilation courts had been established in several of the great seaports, such as Genoa, Venice, and Barcelona itself, whose duty and privilege it was to settle disputes which arose in course of trade. These courts were called consulates of the sea; and decided, in an equitable manner, all cases brought before them. They were composed of two or three consuls, and a judge of appeals with two assessors, all of whom, judge, consuls, and assessors, were taken from the merchant class. Professional lawyers were not encouraged; in none of these courts were they necessary, and in some they were absolutely prohibited.

The formalities to be observed at the election of the judges are thus described in the *Book of the Consolado del Mar* of Barcelona, referring to the customs of Valencia. "It is the custom every year, on the day of the birth of our Lord, and at the hour of vespers, for all worthy navigators, masters of ships, mariners, &c., or a goodly number of them, to meet together in our city of Valencia, and then to elect, not by lot, but by choice, two good men of the art of the sea, and not of any other business or art whatsoever, to be their consuls, and a third, of the same profession, to act as judge."

Each court had its official seal; that of Barcelona was ordered to be round with a shield upon it: "whereof two parts shall bear the royal arms of Arragon, and one part certain waves of the sea."

It was from the decisions of the court of the important and influential city of Barcelona that the *Consolado del Mar* was compiled.

Perhaps of all the mercantile cities of Europe, none gave itself up more completely to commerce than did this. Ford, in his account of it, says, "It divided with Italy the enriching commerce of the East, and trade was never held to be a degradation, as among the Castilians; accordingly heraldic decorations are much less frequent

on the houses; the merchant's mark was preferred to the armorial charge." The body of laws compiled from the maritime court of so business-loving a city is as practical and far-seeing as might be expected; but it is more, it is also extremely fair, treating the rights of all parties, owners, merchants, and common sailors, with the utmost justice and impartiality. Indeed, the legal position of a simple seaman of those days was, judging from the laws directly affecting him, much preferable to what it sometimes is at present, when a merchant captain may be, almost with impunity, an intolerable tyrant.

From some of the provisions in the book before us we learn that ships were built and owned in shares of sixty-fourth parts, a plan which we seem to have adopted from them, for at the present time we hold a ship to be technically composed of sixty-four sixty-fourths.

One person called the patron, who was usually the chief owner, seems to have had the general management and responsibility both of the building of the ship and of her trading when built. He arranged the freights with the merchants, he chartered the ship if she were on hire, he engaged and paid the crew; he, in short, had the general responsible government and direction of the ship, and all belonging to her. But he did not necessarily navigate her; that was the work of the sailing-master; yet the patron, when at sea, could draw the same pay and rations as the sailing-master if he took an active part in the navigation. Every one in the ship, including the sailors, had a right, according to his rank, to a space for a small parcel of private goods, with which to trade on his own account, and the most minute regulations are made as to the proportion these shares are to contribute in case of any having to be sacrificed for the safety of the ship.

Amongst the regulations as to shipping goods, and the responsibility of the patron for their security, is one very singular provision. If any goods have been injured by rats during the voyage, the patron shall be compelled to pay their value if he had sailed without any cats on board. But if he had been careful to provide cats, and these had died on the voyage, and it could be shown that the rats had done the mischief after the disappearance of their natural enemies, the patron shall be held free of responsibility. On the other hand, if he had called at any port where cats were to be had, after the death of his own

stock, and had not procured any, then the damage done to the goods fell on him. The patron had authority to inflict punishment upon all on board, in some cases even capital; but under very strict and salutary regulations, which, while they gave him all the power necessary for the government of the ship, yet prevented him from using it in an arbitrary or tyrannical manner.

There is provided what might be called a sort of sanctuary, to which a sailor may run, and where he may defend himself if attacked, even by the patron; the provision is as follows: "If any patron shall use insulting language to one of his men, and shall rush upon him to attack him, the sailor shall flee away towards the prow of the ship, out of the reach of the patron, and if he follows him, the sailor must pass across the chain, and if the patron still follows and attacks him there, the sailor shall call upon the rest of the crew to witness that the patron has passed the chain, and he may then defend himself." The chain was drawn across the extreme forward part of the deck apparently for the very purpose here described. To us, who are accustomed to consider a sea captain an absolute despot on board his ship, this seems a most strange enactment; but it would appear that the seamen who manned these ships were a superior class of men, who every one of them had a venture in the ship, and who probably were citizens of Barcelona or Venice, as the case might be.

Yet, as has been said, power to inflict severe punishment was not denied to patrons of ships when it was necessary. Don Pedro the Third, of Arragon, promulgated certain decrees in the city of Barcelona in the year 1343, one of which ordered any cross-bowman who should cut the cable of the ship, turn the helm, or go on shore without leave, to be hanged by the neck; and another condemned any sailor or cross-bowman who, after agreeing to serve in the ship, shall fly either from fear of armed men, or of the enemy, or of bad weather, to the same punishment.

Again, in the case of the pilot, of course a most important person, it is enacted that if he undertakes to direct the ship's course to any place, the agreement having been entered in the ship's book, and if, when the ship arrives off the coast, the pilot is found to be ignorant of it, he is to lose his head instantly (*encontiente*) without any remission or grace whatsoever. But this sentence must be approved by the whole ship's company, who are to be summoned,

merchants and seamen, and to decide by a majority.

The patron must hold this council, says the law, "because he might have ill will at the pilot, or might wish to succeed to his forfeited goods; moreover, some patrons know not the prow of the ship from the poop, nor what the sea is, and, therefore, are not fit to judge." A passage which shows that the patron was not always a sailor.

Every agreement or contract, concerning the ship, crew, or cargo, had to be entered in the ship's book or protocol, which was under the charge of a special officer, called the clerk or scribe. This book appears to have been very comprehensive in its character; it contained the ship's articles, signed by every one on board, the contracts for freight, the log, the account for ship's stores and men's wages—in fact everything that required to be reduced to writing.

The clerk who kept this book, a highly responsible officer, seems to have united the duties of supercargo, ship's husband, and purser in his own person. He was required to swear to the patron that he would keep the book honestly, never sleep on shore without taking with him the keys of the ship's chest in which it was kept, and never leave it open when on board. If he failed in any of these particulars he was liable to lose his right hand. So jealously was this office watched that no patron could appoint a relation to it without consent of the merchants and co-owners, and no person who had ever been convicted of dishonesty could be appointed under any circumstances whatever.

Very sensible and careful provision is made concerning the food of the sailors. The patron was bound to find flesh for them on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and soup or pottage, literally spoon-meat, on other days. Wine was provided three days in the morning, and three days in the evening, evidently none was to be served out on Friday; every evening the seamen had a light supper of onions, cheese, sardines, or other fish, in addition to their bread. Wine was apparently considered necessary for health, for if it were very expensive the patron was bound to provide raisins or figs, of which to make a palatable liquid in its place. Double rations were to be served out on all solemn feasts of the Church.

The duties of the mate or sailing-master were discharged by a person called the

“contramaestro.” He stowed the cargo, navigated the ship, and generally discharged the duties of executive officer. But if in the course of the voyage he showed himself incompetent, he might be disgraced and sent before the mast, and any sailor on board capable of doing the work could be put in his place. The sailing-master might not take the ship into or out of harbour without consent of the merchants, who, apparently, generally accompanied their goods, but when clear of port he navigated the ship to the best of his knowledge and skill.

The wages of the sailors constituted then, as they do now, a debt upon the ship, which was pledged for them, in the language of the code, to the last nail. Whether the voyage was successful or not, whether the patron had money or not, the seamen’s wages must be paid; if he had no money the patron must borrow, and if he could not obtain it by borrowing, he must sell cargo to the amount necessary, and finally, if there was no other resource left, the ship itself must be sold that the wages of the sailors might be paid. Part of the wages appears to have been payable before leaving port; for when the cargo was on board, the sailors could demand from the patron money with which to buy their own venture, who was, moreover, bound to allow the crew six days in which to do so, one-third only of them being permitted to be on shore for this purpose at the same time.

A ship was clearly in those days a sort of republic, in which each person on board had a stake, and in the government of which he consequently had a voice. Yet discipline was very strictly maintained, especially when at sea. A sailor who was insubordinate lost all his pay and his venture, and could be turned out of the ship even at a foreign port.

One curious law, certainly not very conducive to cleanliness, prohibited the sailing-master, so long as in health, and any of the sailors, from taking off their clothes after the ship had sailed. And any sailor who did so was to be ducked overboard at the end of a rope. Flogging was administered for one offence only, the favourite punishment being ducking, from which it might be concluded that the sailors of the south had a strong antipathy to water.

Sentries were posted immediately after the ship had begun her voyage, who were also apparently look-out men; any of these who slept on duty was to lose his wine

and his supper rations. But if such look-out man or sentry slept on duty while in an enemy’s waters, he was, if a common sailor, to be flogged by the whole ship’s company, or to be ducked in the water three times. If he were a superior sailor he might not be flogged, and he received his ducking by bucketfuls, which were thrown over him, a formidable punishment when we remember that no sailor might take off his clothes, and that they must, therefore, be allowed to dry on his person.

From one of the laws we learn that the merchants of Barcelona had no scruple about trading with the Moors, however they might hate their religion; for it is provided that if a patron should sell the ship in an infidel country, he was bound to hire and provision a coaster, or small ship, in which the sailors might return to a Christian land.

A sailor who fell sick, after signing the ship’s book, received half his pay, if his sickness prevented him from making the voyage with the ship; and if he were so ill that he had to be put on shore after the voyage had begun, the patron was compelled to pay him his whole wages, even if he found it necessary to sell some of the goods on board to procure the money.

Careful rules are laid down for avoiding collision in bringing the ship to an anchor in a harbour or roadstead, and for determining on whom the liability for damages should fall in the event of injury being done by one ship to another. Vessels were also bound to assist one another in distress; and punishment is appointed to sailors who shall refuse to go in the boats to render such assistance, on the order of the patron or sailing-master. One of the duties of the seamen was to put the merchants on shore, and the law bade them be ready to wade in the performance of that duty, if necessary.

One part of the book of the Consolado is taken up with rules as to insurance, which show an acquaintance with that important subject quite remarkable in a work of so early a date. Underwriters, however, seem to have been cautious, for no insurance could be effected on a ship going beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, or to the coast of Barbary. In the matter of honesty human nature was then very much what it is now, for it seems to have been necessary to guard against the insuring of ships which the persons trying to insure knew to be already lost.

Rules are laid down with regard to

convoy, by which the patron may secure himself from responsibility, if he and the merchants differ as to the need for that expensive protection. It is curious to observe that we have borrowed certainly one term from those early Spanish traders: the persons whose special work it was to stow the cargo, which was not the duty of the sailors, were called "estibadores;" these same persons, a well-known and highly-paid class at the present time, retain their original Catalan designation, only slightly altered to stevedores.

From the description that has been given of this remarkable body of laws, it will be seen that nothing has been overlooked, and the reader is at a loss whether most to admire the sound policy and commercial knowledge shown in the rules regulating such large and important questions as contract, insurance, average, and others of a similar nature; or those smaller, but equally necessary, rules which define and determine the relative rights and duties, and provide for the comfort of all on board that complex polity, a merchant ship of the Middle Ages.

A few words ought perhaps to be added on the subject of the actual book itself containing the sea code, which has just been described.

The *Consolado del Mar* was written in the Catalan dialect. This being a language very little known beyond its native country, has caused most foreign attempts to reproduce the book to be somewhat untrustworthy. Venice produced four separate editions of it in the course of the sixteenth century, one of which, a neat little vellum quarto, has been occasionally referred to throughout the foregoing pages. This edition is not, however, available for very general use, as the Venetian editor appears to have had a very imperfect knowledge of the Catalan language, and as, moreover, he has translated it, not into classical Italian, but has largely introduced his own Venetian. On this account, as he states in his preface, and being very desirous that the *Consolado* should be better known, the Spanish historian, Capmany, produced, in 1792, at Madrid, a beautiful quarto edition, published at the expense of the Royal Junta and Commercial Consulate of Barcelona. A native of Catalonia, and therefore thoroughly acquainted both with the quaint old language of his country, and also with the polished Castilian of Spain, he was peculiarly well fitted for the task which he has so admirably discharged. This edition,

admitted to be the highest authority on the subject, has been chiefly used in the preparation of this paper.

PASSION-FLOWER.

THIS verdurous rock is fragrant as of old;
The marble Psyche stands,
White gleaming through the green, so still, so cold,
With titless tresses falling fold on fold,
And lightly lifted hands;
Drooped over by the passion-flower that trails,
As then it trailed in that far distant year.
No touch of all the heart-stored picture fails.
And I—I too am here!

Hush! My heart swelleth. Darling, dost thou know
How often in my dreams,
This bosky haunt of thine has risen so,
The Psyche shining like a thing of snow,
As there she coldly gleams;
With lips no lingering sun-ray seems to flush,
With shyly lowered glance that never lifts;
Though the still west is all a rosy blush,
As day to darkness drifts.

Faithless? ah, nay! The passion-blossom lies
Still near my hungering heart;
Through all the shadows two love-lighted eyes,
Blue as Hope's own, like sister stars would rise;
But we were long apart,
Long, long! And voiceless distance day by day,
Stretched sadder and more silently between,
And ghostly doubtings haunt the lonely way,
Though memory's glades are green.

And what is earthly love? The prey of years
Whose soundless foot-falls slay;
A heart-guest driven forth by faithless fears,
Beguiled by smiles, or overwon by tears.
How dared I surely say
The love-fire lighted in a maiden heart,
In summer hours so few and now so far,
Would burn as brightly—though we dwelt apart—
As some self-lighted star?

Loyal I knew thee; but how much of love
Lives through the eyes alone!
Honour may hold the heart, but shall not move
Its slackened chords to music. Though I strove
To hold thee all mine own,
What were thy truth without the tenderness,
That is to truth as fragrance to the rose?
Forgive the fears that wronged thee! Sorrow's stress
Draws loyal hearts more close.

I feared to find thee statue-cold, and lo!
The passion-flower yet blooms.
No marble maiden greets me; lids of snow
Veil sunny orbs with such a flame aglow
As lightens through the glooms
Of sorrow-darkened years. Oh, heart of gold,
That such assay finds dressless, spirit fine,
Love-loyal through long loneliness. Behold,
The crown of life is thine!

My Psyche, pure as yonder pulseless stone,
Yet passion-flushed and warm,
My spring-faced girl-love, now to summer grown,
Soul-sweet, heart-faithful, fond, and all mine own,
What spirit doth inform
Thy winsome womanhood? The statue's grace,
The blossom's glory, mingle in thy dower;
For thou art fair, as is the Psyche's face,
And sweet as is the flower.

The statue stands, a shaft of sunset lights
Its chill unchanging brow.
So gleamed it through the dreams of many nights,
But foolish fear-born fancies, fond affrights,
All, all are banished now!

Still at my breast the passion-flower lies,
But now two happy hearts against it beat.
My rose-flushed Psyche, lift those soul-lit eyes,
And let our spirits meet!

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

FROM MONTE MARIO.

WE are on the summit of an eminence on the right bank of the Tiber, in the garden of a villa approached by a straggling avenue of ilex and cypress.

The word "garden" suggests to our insular ears something bright and trim, and carefully tended. On the southern side of the Alps, however, it seldom means this. In the grounds of this old villa, it means an irregular space, sloping here, rising there; intersected by paths covered with coarse pebbly sand; and full of ilex and cypress trees growing up from plots of grass vividly green at this season of the year, and abundantly dotted with daisies. There are a few flowers scattered capriciously amidst the undergrowth of green, succulent-looking plants which thrive in the shadow of the ilex. A subtle odour of violets is in the air. Birds chirp and flutter with a soft whirr of little wings. Above is the spring sunshine, and an unfathomable depth of stainless blue. Out of the fretted lights and shadows beneath the gnarled old trees we step on to an open terrace, and look down on Rome and the Campagna.

Oh the beauty, and the wonder, and the sadness—the ineffable sadness—of all the vanished centuries which seem to linger above the scene, like disembodied spirits which have done with mortal life, and yet hover, earth-bound, round their ancient dwelling-place! And the beauty! Yes, for the varied hills before us are steeped in depths of colour, are rich with an infinite play of light and shade, are crowned by wreaths of fleecy snow melting into wreaths of fleecy clouds above them. They are piled up in one place like gigantic ocean waves which have suddenly stayed their rolling course, and hang poised and motionless, intensely, darkly blue, with crests of foam. Yonder is the towering peak of Soracte (the modern Sant' Oreste) sharp and stern. Shining whitely on the lower slopes of the blue hills are Tivoli, Frascati, Albano. Southward, the range sinks softly down, and melts into the vast expanse of the Campagna, purple on the distant horizon, and, nearer at hand, lovely with numberless tints of green, from dark olive to the tender hue of springing wheat, through which old Tiber winds his silent way.

And for the wonder of the scene, there is Rome at our feet! Rome, with her crumbling grandeurs, among which we know the petulant new life that fills her streets is now coursing heedlessly. Past the Forum and the Coliseum, as under the shadow of St. Peter's dome, carriages flash by with shining panels, and a glitter of silver, and a vision of gay head-gear and fair foreign faces. In the long line of the Corso we know that crowds troop up and down, and stare at the Parisian gew-gaws behind clear sheets of glass, and bow, and grin, and sneer, and chatter. In Trastevere the brown-tinted children shout and play. The tinman hammers at his wares. The carpenter and the marble-cutter are at work with saw and chisel; and the bricklayer—carrying just such small cubes of baked clay as his remote forefathers built with—mounts his ladder leisurely, and pauses, with southern nonchalance, to consider where he shall deposit his by no means heavy load.

We know all this; and we know, too, somewhat of the things which History and Art are dumbly preaching to us from the stones of the Eternal City. But yet, looking down from this summit of Monte Mario, it is—shall I confess it?—not the greatness, but the littleness, of Rome, which oppresses my spirit. The aspect of nature is too vast, too impressive, too mighty, for even Rome to vie with it here.

What is this mistress of the world that we gaze upon?

A handful of pebbles, white, brown, and cream-coloured, flung down upon a limitless plain, stretching in mournful majesty to the limitless sea. The wilderness flows up to her very gates like a flood, and seems threatening to efface her. Her proud dome which covers such wealth, and pomp, and beauty, stands like a sentinel upon the edge of the mystical Campagna. The mountains and the plain are greater than the greatness of the city. They remain, awful in their enduring beauty, whilst palace, and temple, and Forum crumble slowly into dust. Cæsar and Brutus; soldier and slave; poet, orator, pontiff, and artisan; hordes of human creatures from north, south, east, and west, bringing tribute or terror; victors or vanquished—have passed in strange procession within view of yonder blue peak of Soracte, and marched from eternity to eternity across the purple plain of the Campagna.

Hark! Do you not hear martial music? See, far beneath us on the dusty road,

which shows from hence scarcely broader than my hand, there winds along a stream of ant-like specks. The breeze carries to our ears the blare of their trumpets, and the pulse of their drums. They are soldiers of the army of Italy, subjects of the king who reigns at the Capitol. Their music is echoed back from the walls of the Vatican where dwells that viceregent of Heaven, whose dominion *urbi et orbi* has at length come to an end, even as commonwealth and empire have ceased in the old days before him. March on, under the blue brightness of the Roman sky, oh, ye fighting men of to-day! March on—whither?

Unspeakable is the beauty, unspeakable the melancholy of the mountains, and the poetic plain, and the ineffable lights and shadows. Rome hums and stirs, lives and suffers in the midst. The soul feels strange yearnings—a strange sadness that is not all pain, an ecstasy of admiration that is not all pleasure. Down in the streets of the city, she will presently thrill at the contact of humanity. She, too, will feel the influence of the vivid, though transient, present, and live her fragment of mortal life in Rome, and awake to its wonders; to its greatness, its squalor, wealth, beauty, and decay. But here, and now, she longs with a vague longing as for the wings of a dove. She melts with a vague pity for the myriads who have played out their brief part upon this stately theatre of the world, and whose place knows them no longer.

Chirp! chirp! sings a little bird in the branches. The leaves of the ilex tremble a little in the breeze, and the cypress sways slowly, bending its taper summit with a graceful motion. A dark-eyed child steals up and thrusts a bunch of odorous violets into my hand. The soft wind ruffles them too, and carries their delicious breath away upon its wings. Fainter and fainter the sound of drum and trumpet seems to flicker in the distance like a dying flame, now high, now low. The sun is sinking westward, glorious in cloudless effulgence. Soon the brief southern twilight fills the sky; a sea of melted pearl, with a pale crescent moon and one attendant star sailing silverly through its depths. Tiny wings flutter restlessly, and then are still, among the dense dark foliage. The great mountains grow sombre, and the plain glimmers ghostly and grey. Yonder glides something that looks like the phantom of some classic Roman shrouded in voluminous white drapery. No; it is a wreath of mist, the fatal breath of the Campagna, the

deadly malaria in a visible form, crawling stealthily towards the streets of Rome.

The night is falling. Let us go down.

IN AN OMNIBUS.

JERK! Bang! With a clatter of hoofs on the stone pavement, as the horses slip back on their haunches, we suddenly pull up. There are six persons in the omnibus, which is constructed to hold twelve, so that we have ample room and verge enough. Of the six, one is English, one is an *impiegato*—a clerk in one or other of the government offices—one is a priest (N.B. I have not yet been in a Roman omnibus without finding at least one priest among the passengers), two are *popolane*, women of the people, and the sixth is a little old citizeness belonging to the circle just above these in the social scale; as is denoted by her bonnet, and a pair of kid gloves with the tips of the fingers cut off, which adorn her hands. The *popolane* wear nothing on their heads save a mass of greasy black plaits. In the case of the younger woman these appear to be made of hair growing on her own head. In the case of the elder—a fat, lemon-coloured person, who might pass for a Japanese *duenna*, if there be such things as *duennas* in Japan—the plaits seem to have been growing, at some antecedent period, on a horse's tail. Chignons and false hair are by no means confined to the aristocratic classes. Both these women are enveloped to the chin in common shawls, which allow nothing more to be seen of their attire than about half a yard of cotton-print skirt, reaching to the ankle. Of the ankle itself, and the foot, there is nothing complimentary to be said. They look rather as if they had been turned out of wood with a clumsy lathe, and supplied cheap. The priest is dignified, though dirty, in his voluminous black cloak and shovel hat. The Roman *impiegato* is rather spruce, with a dazzling rose-pink necktie. Of your humble servant the Englishman, there is no need to say a word of description, inasmuch as you have but to look out of your window to see a dozen like him.

Especially is it not worth while to waste time in describing him, because we began with a jerk, and a bang, and a sudden pulling up, the explanation of which you are waiting for all this time. But *pazienza!* That is our watchword, our motto, our open and shut sesame. You must not be in a hurry, good reader. Nobody else is so here.

We all sit still and look at each other,

or at the opposite side of the street for a minute or so, and then some one asks what is the matter. No one can say. At least, no one does say; so there ensues another, briefer pause, during which the Englishman with the restless energy of his nation, and the *impiegato*—who is evidently a rather lively fellow—crane their necks out of their respective windows to look ahead and see the cause of our sudden stoppage.

It is a somaro that has fallen down in the middle of the street. A somaro is a donkey. And this special donkey is heavily laden with sacks full of charcoal hanging on either side of him. The street is very narrow, and thickly frequented, and the prostrate somaro impedes the whole traffic. There he lies, poor beast, reposing on his side on one heap of sacks, whilst the opposite heap sticks up mountainously. His master contemplates him with a countenance whose expression is obscured by a thick layer of charcoal dust all over it. Our conductor leaves his post on the step of the omnibus, and goes up with folded arms to contemplate the donkey, too. Some shoemakers, who occupy a dark little shop under a beetle-browed archway, come to their door, last in hand, and also look steadfastly at the donkey. Meanwhile the donkey lies there very quietly, and betrays not the remotest intention of attempting to get up again. He has broken no bones, nor does he even seem to be hurt in any way. But there he lies with the air of finding a recumbent position a decided improvement on a standing one, and with a world of mild obstinacy expressed in every hair of his sagacious face, and every line of his poor lean body.

I must testify, to the honour of my Roman fellow-passengers, that they one and all express pity for the luckless animal. The women are very sorry for him. The *impiegato* observes that he has probably come a long way that morning heavily laden, and without a breakfast; and adds, shrugging his shoulders—sympathetically, not unfeelingly—"Già si vede ch'è mezzo affamato, povero diavolo!" "You can see he's half-starved, poor devil!"

Another pause, during which a volunteer comes forward and gives a tug at the old piece of rope which serves our somaro for a bridle, apparently with the expectation of thus inducing him to get on his feet. Not at all! The somaro merely winks slowly, and flicks his tail about in the dust. Now bounds upon the scene a little street boy, whooping that peculiar

whoop which is the universal language of street-boys, so far as I have observed the species. But even he soon desists from any active demonstration. He leaves off yelling, and stands to contemplate the donkey with the rest. A gentle melancholy is stealing over us all. I believe the omnibus horses have taken this opportunity to indulge in a nap. I know the priest has. The two *popolane* whisper in a subdued voice of their private affairs. Nobody seems to think of getting out. Nobody seems to think of going on. The Englishman begins to speculate on the possibility of finding his way to his inn on foot, through a labyrinth of back streets, inasmuch as there appears to be no prospect of the omnibus proceeding on its journey for an indefinite time to come.

All at once, with a loud rattle and clatter reverberated from the walls of the lofty old houses, drives up another omnibus behind us, and necessarily comes to a stand-still in our rear. To the surprise of the Englishman, but apparently without making much impression on any one else, the driver of omnibus number two launches, from the high vantage-ground of his box, a volley of scornful reproaches at the conductor of omnibus number one; our omnibus. "Now, then," he cries—to translate his modern Latin into barbarian vernacular—"what are you up to? What are you doing there, you parcel of blessed fools? Why don't you help? You, there," leaning down and throwing his sonorous syllables point-blank at the head of our conductor, "you, why don't you go and help to pick up the donkey? Are we to be here all day?"

A fiery spirit, this! A most extraordinarily impatient and eager spirit. He actually wants to get on! There must be some strain of classic Roman blood in the fellow. He is as haughty, as trenchant, as angry, and as ready to command all and sundry, as if he could boast of an unbroken descent from Coriolanus himself. Our conductor, however, is not destitute of dignity. When Coriolanus repeats disdainfully, "Now then, stoo-pid, why don't you go and help to pick up the donkey?" he merely ejaculates, with a languid half-turn of the head, and a superb arching of the eyebrows, "Io!" "What, I!" It is more eloquent than a longer speech. Meanwhile, such is the power of character, the energetic objurgations of Coriolanus have stimulated the charcoal man to something like exertion. After some vigorous

tugs at the rope bridle, and one or two resounding thwacks with a cudgel on the somaro's shining flank—neither of which applications produce the least effect on the unfortunate brute—the donkey's master hits on the bright expedient of unloading him.

"Of course!" says the *impiegato*, smiling sarcastically. "That is the only way. He could never get up with that load on his back. That is what should have been done before." One rather wonders why the *impiegato* has refrained from suggesting this obvious course before. But no doubt he has his reasons. When about half the sacks have been removed, the poor donkey struggles to his feet, and is led away beneath an archway, and down a narrow, gloomy lane, hanging his head, and staggering along on his thin weak legs, an affecting spectacle of unmerited affliction.

Our horses are startled from their doze by a sharp crack of the whip, and on we go again, rattling and clattering over the stony streets. Coriolanus follows in our wake mutely triumphant, and having gained his point, deigns to cast neither word nor glance upon us more. The *popolane* get out at a street corner, and slouch leisurely away, wrapped in their shawls. The *impiegato* presently leaves us with a flourishing salute to the foreigner. Lastly, the priest alights near to a church, and stalks up the steps of it.

He is succeeded by a railway porter with a bundle on his knee. And after the porter enter three stout shop-keepers, who reluctantly throw away their half-consumed cigars; for smoking is not allowed in the Roman omnibuses, "by order of the municipality," as is attested by a ticket hung up near the door.

Presently, in passing the church of St. Ignatius Loyola, we find ourselves in the midst of a dense crowd, and gradually decrease our pace, until we come to a full stop. The door of the church is open, and we have a glimpse of crimson damask, and of a blazing firmament of lighted tapers. A numerous congregation is pouring from the church, and a still more numerous body of spectators fills the street outside to see them pass. One of the Lent sermons preached by the Jesuits, and addressed chiefly to the noble dames of Rome, has just come to an end. The railway porter, a burly, broad-faced fellow with burnt-sienna coloured hands, begins a mono-

"Ha! Here's a crowd to be sure! Per bacco! There are more people outside the church than in, certainly; but still, what a lot are pouring out of the doors. Well, it is wonderful. What do they come for? In the old days the churches were mostly empty. The folks wouldn't go to church, not they. And now that we've put down the priests, these geese flock to mass and vespers by the hundred. I believe they do it out of spite! Some folks are never contented. When the priests were uppermost, they wouldn't go to church. And now—just look! Per dio! Yes; I believe they do it out of spite."

Our conductor, standing on his step, and within easy conversational reach of the passengers inside the vehicle, suggests with a tolerant air of giving the devil his due, that perhaps some people may go to church out of devotion. The railway porter neither looks at, nor directly addresses him, but continues soliloquising like a man in a play; throwing his speech well at the audience, but yet not appearing conscious of their presence.

"Che devozione!" says he, as though the phrase had arisen spontaneously in his own mind, and were not the suggestion of an outsider. "Devotion, indeed—pooh! This is devotion," slapping his pockets; "make money, that's the thing! A good supper and a flask of good wine, that's devotion. Talk of devotion, indeed—che!"

Until the end of our journey our friend continues to pour out a voluble stream of words strongly flavoured with garlic, and all of the same illogical and inscrutable character. His eloquence is quite independent of coherence or intelligibility. What it tends to—if he knows—he is unable to convey to his hearers. But, like some orators of greater pretensions, he is quite satisfied with sound, if sense be wanting, and rambles on fluently, only stopping occasionally to chuckle and grin at some witticism of so subtle a character as to escape the appreciation of everybody save himself. But his great point, the phrase on which he piques himself, and repeats about thrice in every sentence, is, "They go out of spite."

"Don't tell me," says he, wagging his broad face and bull throat from side to side; "when the priests were uppermost, do you think the folks would flock to church? Nossignore! But now, only look! Per bacco! They do it out of spite, and nothing else!"

He is still harping on this rhetorical

triumph, when the omnibus reaches its journey's end. Suddenly descending from his rostrum, and associating with his brother mortals on common ground, he tucks his bundle under his arm, looks round on his fellow-passengers with a grin of good humour, touches his cap to them, nods familiarly to the conductor, and dives into a little wine shop; while the rest of us take our different ways across the huge space where the fountains of St. Peter's are sparkling in the sun.

NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE EVENING BEFORE.

ALL Brickford, as may be conceived, was in commotion at the news that was now spread about. It was known that Mr. Doughty's relations had at last felt it their duty to interfere, and that the "unfortunate gentleman" was at that moment in restraint, or at least carefully watched in his own house. There was much astonishment, and much more moralising over this sad news.

The greatest wealth, it would be said, was not exempt from drawbacks. No matter how blessings might be distributed, there was still a general level to which most things were reduced. Still, there was a great deal of sympathy, for he was a charitable, gentle-tempered man, who had done good and won popularity; and there was a certain class of business men who, by a sort of instinct, arrived at the true conclusion, namely, that it was a suspicious-looking affair, and that there was some plotting at the bottom. These matters were talked of a great deal, and as Will Gardiner was not very restrained in his speech, and his wife said everywhere that the proceedings taken had been at the instigation of "the Dukes," it was not surprising that rumours should have begun to swell, and that much indignation should be expressed. The whole position of affairs indeed offered the strangest contrast to the state of things when our characters were first introduced to the reader. An amiable virtuoso, whom nobody thought anything of—a humble music-master and his daughter timorously trying to make their way—some polite average ladies and gentlemen of society clustering round. Now, the amiable virtuoso had become the victim of a con-

spiracy; the music-master's daughter had become a heroine, and been driven out on the world, and the average ladies and gentlemen have changed into fiercely contending parties, carrying out their ends without scruple or remorse.

Two of the conspirators met on the evening of that day—when it had grown dark; for such points the great lady now found herself considering. She made her way to the office of Mr. Birkenshaw. She was admitted in a secret and confidential fashion.

"It was imprudent not to have settled the matter to-day, and have done with it," said Mr. Birkenshaw; "the thing will get about in the town, and be talked of."

"Let it," said Lady Duke, stiffly. "They are welcome to talk. We, the relations, are acting in his interest."

"No doubt," said the other, with a deferential look; "but I still think it was unwise. That Gardiner will be sure to get himself released—he has plenty of friends, and he will give a great deal of trouble."

"You seem to me to misunderstand the whole matter," said Lady Duke, in her haughtiest manner. "By your way of talking, it would seem that there was some plot on foot. We are only acting in the regular way."

Mr. Birkenshaw again looked at her, and shook his head.

"No; you are under a mistake. Disabuse your mind of that at once, Lady Duke. If it were all regular, we should have no trouble. Neither would you have come to me. But these views are beside the matter; the point is, having got so far successfully, to finish off the whole on to-morrow. You should not have opposed me to-day at the house. By this moment he would have been safe, and under restraint, and undergoing the treatment proper for him."

He spoke these words decidedly, if not sternly, and Lady Duke felt a little awed, as if in the presence of some disagreeable and masterful personage. She did not contradict him, and after some further discourse of the same confidential kind, went her way, not without some misgivings.

CHAPTER XLIX. AN ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

IT was late in the evening, about the time when Brickford had nearly finished its dinner, and the lamps were lighted in the streets, that Corinna arrived. She did not go to her father's house in the

Crescent, but went straight to Mr. Doughty's. It was, indeed, a different Corinna to the one that had left it such a short time before. She had gone away a heroine, and returned one; but it was now a different kind of heroine. The first was all self-sacrifice, a sense that imparted a certain coldness, or the sternness of duty; the second a glowing, eager, impulsive girl, with fire and heroism in her eyes.

"I can have no scruples now," she said to herself again and again. "And, indeed, I allowed them to prey on me too long. Let them say what they will now. I am called on to act. I should be the most ungrateful and ungenerous of creatures, as indeed he must long since have thought me."

She felt a sort of elation at this casting away the bonds which had restrained her so long. Her plan was—and she felt a secret confidence that her strength in a good cause would overcome all that could be opposed to her, no matter how superior in force—her plan was to rescue this generous friend from his oppressors, set him free, and then return to the life of drudgery she had laid out for herself. Certainly she might seem a curious, incomprehensible being, as indeed she often appeared to herself.

Mr. Doughty was in his room on this night. Notwithstanding the curious events of the day he was in good spirits, ever and anon smiling to himself, and walking about with a sort of exultation. The guardians who were officially in charge were close at hand, though Doctor Spooner did not venture to show himself. Perhaps he felt that he could not longer carry out the fiction of its "all being for his own good" and "in the interest of the patient." He had thrown off the mask, and felt that the only thing remaining was to carry out the bold scheme he had contrived, fearlessly, to the end. It was a gloomy house at that time, that seemed oppressed with a sense of guilt and shame.

"This," said Mr. Doughty, as he paced to and fro, "has made the scales fall from my eyes. Now, indeed, the world and human nature have been revealed to me with a vengeance. I that used to think everybody so amiable and well-intentioned!—here am I now assailed, persecuted, and hunted by a vile set of conspirators. And she, too! For no fault of mine, but because I dared to like and to love her, do I find myself deserted! She has fled from me as if I were infected. I should not mind being deceived in the rest, but to be deceived in her! It

serves me right, though. What business had a middle-aged man with love or admiration? That is only for the young. When she hears the new revelation—which she will of course—this feeling will become contempt. It will be an insult that an elderly fellow, with nothing to compensate for his blemishes, should have dared to—but what am I saying—I do her injustice. I know I do! What was there in me, a poor foolish reclude, that should have attracted her. However, it was a pleasant dream while it lasted, though I would that I had not dreamed it, for it has left me cold, unhappy, and deserted. I must now only go back to my music and my fiddles, and try and get such comfort as I can out of them. Ah, mine is to be a weary life unto the end! But it serves me right."

And his head drooped upon his hands. The room was half darkened, the twilight was departing—he sat there in shadows. A gentle hand touched his shoulder, but he was not conscious of it. It touched him again, and then with a weary, though not surprised air, he raised his head.

He started up almost with a cry. She, the divine Corinna, stood before him with the sweetest and most encouraging expression. He gazed and wondered. He thought it was a vision, and that his long weary dream was still going on. For a moment he could not speak, but remained gazing at what seemed a beautiful apparition. After the long weary time that had gone by, the sickness, the imprisonment, he felt now like a captive whom some sweet angel had come to visit.

"You have come to me! I knew you would. I thought so all along," he said at last in a low voice. "Oh, if you knew how I have thought of you! How good, how noble, how generous of you to think of poor deserted me."

Somehow he did not seem to believe that this was any chance visit; he seemed by a sort of inspiration to have reached at the truth. He knew that she had come back to him to shield or to save him.

"I came," she said, "the instant that I heard. A kind friend let me know. I fear that you have thought me very unkind and very cruel, but if you were to know the reason, you would not think so hardly of me. All this I will tell you later, but now all I wish to show you is, that there is one friend who feels for you, and would do anything in the world to save you from your cruel persecutors."

Mr. Doughty was looking at her with

unspeakable gratitude, and almost adoration. All he could do was to repeat several times :

"And you have come to me! And what injustice I have done you. I thought I had offended you—made you my enemy by my foolish admiration, and driven you away—forced you to enter on a hard-working, toilsome life."

Corinna coloured a little, her eyes were cast down. She answered :

"I fear if we speak of offending—but all that is past now. We must save you from these wretches—I shall do it, if all the rest are wanting."

"You!" he said, with a curious look. "But have you thought of the difficulties? What can you do? They are all against me, every one. I am helpless here."

"No matter. I have instinct within which tells me I shall find means and strength. They will not dare to oppose me. I have confidence and I shall save you."

"But have you thought," he went on slowly, and still gazing at her with that look of earnest admiration—"have you thought of another danger, not for me, but for yourself?—what the cruel tongues of these people may do, how they will be busy with your name again?—making you suffer the old torture once more, just as they drove you from this place before? You must be saved from that."

"I have not thought of that," said Corinna. "Rather I am prepared to accept the worst as some penance or expiation. For I disdain to be carrying on any hypocritical pretences any longer, or to be imposing on your noble nature. I did not suffer from such things; I despised them too much for that. But there was another reason for this absurd sensitiveness."

Mr. Doughty was following her every word. With that sort of gentle chivalry which was his nature, he was determined to anticipate any confession that might hurt her pride, even at the risk of a new mortification for himself.

"You thought," he said, hesitatingly, "that your motives would be misconceived—by me, I mean; that your father's position, your own, mine—the 'great millionaire,' as they called me—excluded everything from the matter but self-interest. Yours was too lofty a nature to endure the suspicion of being made a mere instrument for securing money and fortune. And so you left this place, and went out into the world. I did not see this then, as I ought to have done; but what

you have done to-night has revealed it all to me."

She looked at him gratefully.

"This is the true solution," he went on, rather hurriedly; "for love or liking was of course a childish absurdity. You had given your heart to the young, as you should have done, or," he added, nervously, "you would have done had you found a heart worthy of you. As for myself, there was nothing but absurdity in the idea of a cold autumn love like mine, which I had the presumption to think of offering to you."

Corinna looked at him with honest, beaming eyes. "As you have spoken so generously and openly, I shall do the same. Why should I let you have such an idea, or think so meanly of me. No; of your love, the love of a noble, generous man, I should have been proud; I should have welcomed it as an honour. I was, indeed, caught for a time by the apparent devotion of another, but I soon saw how I had been led away. There was no real worth there. When I found that I had allowed myself to be so deceived, when I could so lightly have thought of giving my heart to the first that offered, I determined that I would not offer you the mere débris of such affection as I had to give. I felt that you might come at last to despise me, and thus it was that I appeared to make such a return to all your kindness. There is my whole confession, which I feel confusion in making to you. And I will tell you this further: had you, indeed, been a poor man, it would have been my pride to show you how much I felt the honour you had done me in thinking of one so unworthy of you as I am."

A sort of light seemed to spread over the listener's face, a sort of exultation.

"You do not mean this, surely?" he said. "These are merely words of comfort addressed to the poor invalid. How am I to venture to tell you? And you must learn to-morrow, if not sooner. And then you may fancy yourself bound by those words. Oh, Corinna! what will you do when you hear what I have to tell you?"

She looked at him in astonishment, but said, gently :

"Let me hear it at once."

"It was you, recollect," he went on, with a sort of pleading manner, "that said it. But you may not have thought what you were saying. Nor must you for a second think yourself bound by it. But oh, Corinna," he added, with an effort, "here

is the truth. I am the poor man such as you describe. The wealth that I was credited with has passed from me to another, and I am the poor, lonely, musical recluse that you first saw me!"

He did not dare to look at her face for a few moments, then raised his own doubtfully. She was smiling at him. He read in those holy eyes that all his troubles were ended.

CHAPTER L. CONSPIRATORS DISCOMFITED.

THE following morning was the brightest that Brickford had seen for many a day. There was some little flutter among the characters who have figured in this history, especially in the members of the Duke confederacy, who witnessed the approach of the momentous hour that was to see the crowning stroke of their operations.

It was an early hour when a carriage drove up to the door of Mr. Doughty's house, and when Mr. Birkenshaw and Doctor Spooner hurried out of it. Their ill-omened attendants were already waiting near the door, and met them as they came up. Now the stroke was to fall; and some good people passing, who knew "that poor Doughty," lamented the sudden toppling over of a fine intellect, a catastrophe, however, which was unhappily but too common, and was too often found to follow on a sudden access of wealth.

Mr. Doughty was in his room, waiting the guests that he expected. Who would have known him now—restored, bright, young—even as was the transformed Faust in Monsieur Gounod's opera? That night had brought him back his health—at least he thought no more of his sickness or his pains. Hope, joy, and even exultation, were on the face of that middle-aged lover.

The visitors entered with a hurried and determined manner, as though anticipating a disagreeable task, but were not a little confounded at the spectacle of the beaming, well-dressed, and even gay personage that had taken the place of the gloomy and almost hypochondriacal invalid they had quitted the day before. The cordiality and good humour with which he welcomed them was no less embarrassing. Doctor Spooner, however, began at once.

"Mr. Doughty," he said, "I must ask you to come with me for a short journey. I am authorised to do it, and hope you will not make any opposition, for it is for your good."

Mr. Doughty smiled and bowed with en-

joyment, as though he were laying himself out for a pleasant scene in a comedy.

"I know all that," he answered, gaily. "It is your duty, with other honourable motives, that prompts you. That, of course."

"That, of course," said Doctor Spooner, uneasily. "And we had better not lose any time, which, for you, is no doubt highly precious."

"Ah! visitors, I see," he said, from the window. "Come to say good-bye to me before I go."

Doctor Spooner answered rather roughly:

"We can have no more delays. No persons can be admitted here. I will not allow any such scenes as we had yesterday. See, Mr. Birkenshaw, that no one be admitted."

"Surely," said the other, mildly, "you would not deny me this small favour. It may be long before I have such a chance again. You are not going to be harsh to me on such an occasion."

There was a curiously ironical tone in all Mr. Doughty's words, that was making them more and more distrustful each moment.

"We have had trifling enough," said the doctor, "and can't allow any more."

"I fear you are too late," said Mr. Doughty. "Here are the visitors. What, William Gardiner! Why, I thought they had secured you. And my old friend Dodd come down to see me, at such a critical time! Well, this is kindness!"

It was, indeed, Will Gardiner, with his open, beaming face mantling with smiles and good humour.

"My dear, dear Doughty," he said, rushing to his friend, "this is more of your kindness. Oh, these rascals are here, are they!"

"Hush, hush!" said Mr. Doughty, angrily. "You must not speak to these gentlemen in that style. They are only doing their duty, and are to take me away in a few moments—that is, if they will think it worth their while, now that Mr. Dodd has come."

That gentleman advanced, smiling.

"My poor Doughty," he said, "in what a way to find you! I received your telegram," he went on, "and the amazing news it contained. Why, it is a romance. I saw Miss Nagle this morning, and she is coming here."

"Look here, gentlemen," said Doctor Spooner, with a sort of dogged fury in his eyes. "There is some understanding here

among you all. And I suppose you have planned all this. But, let me tell you, we are not to be put off from carrying out our purpose. We are authorised to do so by the proper parties, and are acting legally. I warn you, I have assistance here, and will tolerate no interference."

"No one shall interfere, my good Doctor Spooner," said Mr. Doughty. "You may depend on me. I shall go with you, never fear—that is, if you will take me."

"And these various parties," said Mr. Dodd, "if I might ask, who are they?"

"The relations, sir. Lady Duke and her husband. They will be here in a moment; I have sent for them. Never you fear; we know what we are about."

"Then I think she ought to be present. We might wait a moment for her. There can be no harm, especially as our friend here shows such willing dispositions."

They did wait, moodily and gloomily, for a few minutes. Doctor Spooner and his friend retired into the window. Will Gardiner looking at the two confederates with a wicked hostility that made them uncomfortable.

Mr. Dodd had just time to say to his friend, "Why, this is the noblest and most generous act in the world. But can you be serious—surely you know—" when the door opened, and Lady Duke entered excitedly. She started as she saw the room crowded, but instantly recovered herself, and then said with great promptitude and decision:

"Lose not a moment, Doctor Spooner. I authorise all, and am responsible. I wish everybody to be present now, as they insist on intruding here. The certificate is duly signed, and I am the nearest relation. There is an indelicacy in all this confusion and interference, but I am not accountable. Who is this gentleman?"

"An old friend of Mr. Doughty's, madam."

"It will not do, sir," said the lady, "if he gathered all the old friends he had in the world; they shall not be allowed to interfere."

"The lady is quite right," said Mr. Doughty. "And I think it is time this rather unpleasant scene should end. I am quite ready to go."

"There, you hear," said Doctor Spooner; "and I will ask all the visitors to retire."

"Yes, my dear kind friends, do go," said Mr. Doughty, "and let me get ready for this unusual journey. In fact, I am quite ready. My things can be packed later. In

fact, what shall I want with things in the palace I am going to visit?"

"You hear," said Lady Duke, in a low voice. "You hear those words—'a palace?'"

"This excitement," added the doctor, "may have the worst consequences, and increase our difficulties materially. I entreat you, gentlemen, go."

"I must just say one word," said Mr. Doughty, "as I may not have so favourable an opportunity hereafter, and my words will not naturally have the same effect. Lady Duke and Mr. Spooner will not object, I am sure. It is as to the property which I am supposed to be possessed of."

The doctor and Lady Duke looked intelligently at their neighbours.

"Supposed to be possessed of," he repeated. "I have no anxieties on that score to disturb me. Some time ago I had prepared a will leaving the whole, with the exception of a few legacies, to a person for whom I had the greatest regard. That will I destroyed, and it is just as well that I did, for I was disposing of what I had really no title to."

Again intelligent looks on the part of Lady Duke and her allies.

"Really what I am going to tell seems like a bit of romance; but you will understand it all in a few moments. My watchful friends here, Doctor Spooner and others, will recollect that they often found me searching through those trunks, and examining the papers they contained. The truth is, I not long ago found a memorandum alluding to a document which made quite a different disposition of the property as having been made, and I felt it my duty to search for it, which I did with great pains. I was rewarded for my trouble."

Lady Duke was beginning to turn pale. Doctor Spooner and his ally began to breathe hard.

"I was rewarded, I say, though some might think it was an odd sort of reward. I found," he went on slowly, "this paper, which is a WILL, a will of much later date than the document which made me be considered such a lucky man. There stands the real legatee, Mr. Dodd, the old friend of the testator. It is all his!"

A cry broke from Lady Duke. A furious burst of rage from Doctor Spooner.

"Now," continued Mr. Doughty, placidly, and rising from his chair, "having made my little disclosure, I am ready to go with you; will you take me?"

CHAPTER LI. LAST SCENE OF ALL.

A SORT of stupor settled on the confederates.

Mr. Dodd inspected the document that was handed to him, with due gravity, and said:

"Ah! I had expected this, and, to say the truth, was a little astonished when I heard that another had been chosen. I am sorry for you, Doughty."

"I am not," said Mr. Doughty, smiling; "the loss of this, as you must know, may save me from some inconveniences which these good people were meditating for me. Liberty cannot be too dearly purchased. However, if they insist on it, I suppose I must go."

He still seemed to delight in keeping up the comedy of the situation.

"They have been at a vast deal of trouble, attending and watching me. Lady Duke, here, has been like a sister of charity. They are so concerned for my state that they have brought their people, and carriage, and everything. So, perhaps, we ought not to detain them."

Lady Duke was looking at him darkly.

"This is all very pleasant for you, and you think you have brought this trickery very happily to an end. As you say, justly, we have acted in your interest, and watched, and taken care of you. We are therefore prepared, in your interests," she added, sneeringly, "still to look after you. And, as all is ready for your removal, I am still willing to undertake your removal to a place where you will be duly cared for. Give the proper instructions, Doctor Spooner, and see that they are carried out."

Spite, rage, and disappointment were contending with each other in her face. But her agent only shook his head, as who should say, "the game is up."

"What," said Mr. Dodd, smiling, "my poor friend, who was known, and is known, as the shrewdest and most sensible of men, though under a very quiet and simple exterior, to be made out astray in his intellects! You made a sad mistake, madam, when you and your friends selected him for a victim—pitched on the wrong man entirely. But this is trifling. You may send away those people of yours that I saw below at the door. And this disinterested doctor and his friend may retire from your house, Doughty?"

Mr. Doughty, still pleasant over the matter, answered:

"Well, I am not going to force my com-

pany on them. But really, after this eagerness of weeks, and the general anxiety about, it is a little mortifying to find myself reduced to the position of a mere cypher. I am afraid that nobody will care about me now, or what becomes of me."

The two men retired, but Lady Duke held her ground. This proud lady was determined not to slink out in company with her defeated emissaries, but would hold her ground until some more creditable way of retiring offered. She trusted to the chances of events. But there was more mortification in store for her.

Mr. Doughty had gone several times to the window with some anxiety.

"I am glad you are remaining, Lady Duke," he said, "as I should wish you to be present when I have to make a little announcement rather interesting to myself and one other person."

"I have no interest in the matter," said the lady, haughtily.

"What, all gone within a few minutes?" inquired Mr. Doughty, good-humouredly. "Don't say that, for consistency's sake. Ah, here they come."

"My goodness gracious!" said a familiar voice. "My poor fellow, how they have been treating you." It was Mr. Nagle who had entered. "And so all the fortune's gone to another. This gentleman, I suppose." And Mr. Nagle looked at the new inheritor with a curious questioning look, as though trying to discover whether any musical tastes lurked within, whether he was married or single, or any way suited to prosper and further the Nagle fortunes. "Well, it can't be helped. By the way, here's Corinna coming up the stairs. She would come and see her old friend."

Lady Duke started. All her enemies were gathering to confront her. And here was the worst mortification of all, that this girl should arrive at such a moment to see her defeat. For Corinna she always entertained a special dislike, that began with that little scene where she had interrupted the composition of the posters. In presence of the lofty character of Corinna she always felt inferior. The girl, too, showed no awe of the woman.

There stood the enchanting Corinna, the music-master's daughter, in the doorway, looking round on them all with an expressible air of dignity and nobility. She seemed to be Corinna Victrix—the heroine who had won the victory through all the little vicissitudes of the story. Her gentle

gaze rested without hostility even on Lady Duke.

Mr. Doughty, no longer Old Doughty, so bright and happy was his face, advanced to meet her, and taking her hand led her into the room.

"At last," he said, "my troubles and trials have come to an end. Yet all through I have had this guiding star. True, I have lost all my wealth, but I have found this compensation and consolation, which I dared not have looked for had I kept my riches. As it now stands there is no connexion between the loss and the gain; but I can say this," he added, looking on the face of Corinna, "had I believed that this sacrifice was necessary, as the price for your affection, I should have paid it cheerfully."

Mr. Nagle was listening with wonder in his face. He said nothing, but it could be seen plainly that he thought this to be a foolish, weak, and injudicious view. However, he "washed his hands of the matter."

Corinna's eyes wandered round the room to the faces of all present, then rested on Mr. Doughty's.

"Henceforth my life is yours," she said. "Long before this," she added, "it would have been yours had the world here allowed it. It is my pride and joy to let this be known."

"A splendid gift," said Lady Duke, scornfully. "You bring quite a dowry to the husband you are so proud of."

"Lady Duke speaks with great accuracy," said Mr. Dodd. "Miss Corinna does bring with her a very sufficient dowry. I am a rich man myself, and am independent of any such windfalls as these. My old friend has refused to take back even a portion of what ill luck has deprived him of. But he cannot prevent me giving a portion to the young lady who has chosen to be his partner. When I return to town, I shall settle half of what has come to me on her. And much good may it do her," added the old amateur very warmly.

The cloud of doubt and bewilderment which for many weeks had hung over Mr. Nagle's face was now miraculously cleared away. He became of a sudden again the old familiar Nagle, proud and hopeful, such as he was seen at the commencement of this story.

L'ENVOI.

THE rest the ingenious reader will readily supply. He can easily call up the image of the enchanting Corinna, stately and magnificent, living in town, happy, loving, and a queen of song, admired and loved by her husband. Neither was she ashamed of, nor did she disclaim, or banish into rural districts with an allowance, that "odd father" of hers. She rather lent all her exertions to get him on. Thus aided he has found his way into fashionable circles, and really hopes in time to put down that pushing, "squeaking" Tympano who teaches the duchesses. A racy spectacle it is to see the veteran sit down to the instrument at some private party, and give the Death of Nelson after the fashion of the "late imperishable Braham." Fashionable people, however, receive this performance, the grotesque smilings, secret conferences with the keys, &c., with much amusement. Not in such company is found the great Lady Duke, about whose family and their fate one significant word was but too often uttered in polite circles when inquiries were made about it, namely, "smashed." She long lived in France, at Dinan, where the general naturally took high social position. Their son travelled about with his regiment, and was married, having been "taken in" by a faded young lady, an attorney's daughter at Chatham, a far worse match than the enchanting Corinna. That image often comes back on him in his uncomfortable life.

The last word shall deal with that heroine, who was more and more admired and followed, and by none more than by her husband, formerly familiarly known as Old Doughty, but now called by that irreverent appellation no longer. With him, and with many pleasures, her life goes on in a charming round. She wants nothing; has all that money and music can furnish; and having once chosen music in preference to money, shall never again "be put to her election" between "NOTES OR GOLD."

END OF NOTES OR GOLD ?

Next week will be commenced
A NEW SERIAL STORY,
ENTITLED
YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE,
 By the Author of "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER I. BY WAY OF PROLOGUE.

ABOVE and on either side the chancel arch of our village church—an edifice of exceeding antiquity—certain decorations in fresco had been long, long ago ruthlessly smeared over and shrouded with whitewash. The churchwardens of that period, it seemed, had pronounced against ecclesiastical art as a vain, idolatrous, and altogether abominable pursuit. Time, however, had fought upon the side of the fresco. Its veil had been rent in many places; had peeled off in flakes or fallen in clouds, shedding a sort of hair-powder, gratuitously, upon the congregated heads below; something of the original work could certainly be discerned. No distinct or coherent design perhaps; but here were patches of clouded crimson or dull blue; there gleams as of dead gold leaf; in sundry places, suspicions of shape and outline, with surely now and then spectral faces, indistinct of feature and vacant of expression, peering through the haze and struggling to assert their existence. The fresco still survived, if, like a paralytic, with limited force and deficient faculties. To wandering eyes or flagging attention during sermon time, or the less interesting incidents of our village service—which had indisputably its moments of irksomeness—the picture was an irresistible object of contemplation. I am only narrating of myself; then a child of tender years prisoned in a high pew and encompassed with hard hassocks, plucked at or pushed by admonitory hands whenever excess of restlessness afflicted me, or my mental vagrancy became too obvious an outrage

upon decorum; but I am sure I may also speak on behalf of others. That nebulous fresco in its own dim way, if given power of discourse, would have much to say as to the gapings and blinkings, the staring and studying it has provoked among generations of remiss and drowsy worshippers. And our maltreated mural painting had this merit about it: the more one looked at it, the more one perceived in it, or thought one perceived in it. The cruel coat of whitewash it had been constrained to wear was in this respect a positive gain. Fancy came eagerly in aid of its shortcomings. Our thoughts pieced out its imperfections. There were moments—sometimes during the service, but more often in the course of the sermon—when the whole design seemed clearly disclosed to me. The whitewash was altogether gone. The colours were bright and fresh, the drawing manifest, and the artist's intention in all its integrity, patent and demonstrated beyond all gainsaying. Heaven had opened; and in a flood of light and a glory of prismatic hues, saints and martyrs in holy congress, and benign angels in resplendent groups, stood forth fully revealed. A moment, and then—upon the nudge of a warning elbow, or the lunge of a sharp-rimmed prayer-book, administered by reproving authority—the vision vanished. All was as before, only less intelligible. Fancy had been deposed and driven away; the whitewash was again supreme. The task of interpreting the fresco had to be undertaken entirely anew.

The little boy, whose early church-going was thus faulty and reprehensible, time has thrust far from me into the distant past. Years and years have sundered us and changed us so that our identification is now as a thing almost incredible. To

me that child now appears not myself but another; his character and conduct matters in which I have no concern. At least, I feel myself at liberty to discuss, and, if need be, condemn them in the plainest terms. It may be, however, that our disunion is less absolute than it seems to be, or than I am myself fully conscious of. Age appears alien to its own youth; dissimilar and distinct in aspect as in every other way. Yet the time when the twain parted company, when the child ceased and the man began, is so hard to fix, that doubt upon the question becomes unavoidable. Some subtle imperceptible filaments linking them together may ever remain: a leaven of the child affecting the man, or some embryonic element of age possessing influence even in extreme youth.

At least, if I resemble in nothing else the boy studying the whitewashed fresco, I am like him in that I am now studying, with much of his desire, to comprehend and interpret a large, confused, and partially lost or hidden picture. I mean the past. I desire to render it intelligible if I can, and to relate concerning it. Just now all seems vague and vast, remote and incoherent. The sun may presently break forth, however, and abate, if not wholly dispel, the obscurity. Or, possibly, fancy may assist me when fact falls short. It is indispensable, indeed, in such a case, that conjecture should now and then be permitted, when more worthy evidence is not forthcoming. In a story, or what purports to be a story, it is not to be supposed that all the witnesses are upon oath, or that all the circumstances stated are capable of being formally and legally proved.

So much by way of prologue.

CHAPTER II. "CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME."

I was Childe Roland, and Overbury Hall was my Dark Tower.

Not that I was a very knightly person: a slim, swarthy, undersized boy of some ten or twelve years, perhaps. Not that it was a particularly romantic-looking place; a stiff, square, stone building, with sham battlements and numberless windows, of the Manchester warehouse or county infirmary order of architecture, built in George the Third's reign after the total destruction by fire of the old hall—a real hall which Inigo Jones had designed. But I was of the age and the humour to be fascinated by it; and, accordingly, it fascinated me.

A child with a lively faith in fays, giants, enchanted castles, and other of the established possessions of fable, readily finds stimulants to his belief, easily feeds his appetite for the mystic and marvellous. He is in his own eyes a knight-errant, his hazel switch a falchion, his infantile attire a suit of burnished mail; deeds of chivalric prowess are to him matters of most easy accomplishment. Fiercely lashing a bed of stinging nettles, he believes himself the vanquisher of a mighty Paynim host. He invents his adventures, and counts himself a hero on the score of supposititious achievements. Perhaps it is not children only who do this, however.

And there was something to be said for Overbury Hall. Its existence was a sort of secret. Though you climbed the highest eminence of the neighbourhood—Beacon Mount for instance—you could catch no glimpse of the hall, not even of its chimney-tops. But if you stole up a very dark twisting avenue; the moss on the roadway deadening the sound of your footfalls, the crowded gnarled boughs above stooping down to knock your cap off, or pluck you by the hair, the shrubberies whispering wickedly together as you passed, taunting, threatening you, hissing out your name even; if you had nerve to accomplish thus much, you came suddenly upon the great house as though by magic. It barred your progress and confronted you in the most massive and imposing fashion. Though you had sallied forth on purpose to find it, and would have gone home disappointed if you had failed in your quest, it was quite a shock when you did find it, even though you had come upon it in the same way a score of times before.

It not only lay in the hollow of the park, enwrapped and buried by huge and thickly congregated trees; but it was also dead, stone dead. Its eyes—by which I mean its windows—were fast closed and boarded up. No breath of life, in the shape of smoke, ever issued from its chimneys. Birds built their nests in every nook of its façade; rabbits frisked about its front door-steps, as though they were dancing on its gravestone. Lord Overbury had long been absent from England. His estates, heavily encumbered, were said to be vested in trustees for the benefit of his creditors. Meantime, the hall was tenantless. It was certainly a most corpse-like place, mouldy and mildewed, with thick green slime upon its walls and an odorous atmosphere about it as from a

newly opened sepulchre. A lake washed one side of it, a standing pool, black and sedgy, that never seemed to catch glimpses of blue sky or reflections of heaven's light. Sombre trees bent over it as though meditating suicide, and beneath, in the dark shadows of their boughs, reptiles croaked, and water-rats plunged, and wild fowl, rustling among the rushes, uttered strange cries of warning or of suffering, awful to listen to.

Nominally, the hall was under the charge of old Thacker, a superannuated gardener, and his wife, who received a small stipend just sufficient to keep them out of the Union, in return for the services they rendered, or were supposed to render. They lived in one of the park lodges, a quarter of a mile or so from the great house. I don't think they ever went any nearer to it, or indeed troubled themselves at all about it. Mrs. Thacker was always busy, either in boiling cabbages, or in hanging out ragged clothes to dry upon the tumble-down palings of the park. Old Thacker, when he wasn't staring at his pig—his "peg," he called it—was invariably hurrying to or from the Barley Mow public-house, "up street," Purrington. I should have said that he was either hurrying thither, or loitering back; in the latter case, his nose, which was of a bulbous pattern, was usually very red, and the flavour of strong liquors much affected his exhalations.

Apart from the fascinations I have described, Overbury Hall had other charms for me. I had clearly no business within its boundaries, and it was situate at a distance of some three miles from my home. In visiting it, therefore, a journey and the commission of a trespass were involved; enhancing the attractive venture-someness of approaching the Dark Tower at all.

One morning I had stolen unharmed up the mysterious avenue and found myself close upon the great building; it lay across my path like a recumbent giant of granite. All was still, save that the leaves were muttering as ever, clouds of rooks were sailing away overhead, cawing discordantly as they darkened the sky, and some wild creature my steps had disturbed was making its way with a furtive rustle through the long rank grass; otherwise, all seemed as usual. I was quite alone, and the Dark Tower was within a few paces of me.

Suddenly I perceived a certain change in the aspect of the dead hall. It was not much, yet it was something; and, under

all the circumstances of the case, something remarkable, decidedly. One of the many eyes of the corpse had opened! From a window on the ground floor the shutters had been removed. It was black, whereas all the others were white, or whity-brown. Clearly, in my character of Childe Roland, I was bound to see what this change portended.

I was, as I have said, of low stature, and the window was some few feet from the ground. Still, it was easy, by mounting on the projecting ridge of rusticated stone that marked the base of the house, and grasping the window-sill, to draw myself up to the desired elevation. A pause, perhaps of longer duration than was quite worthy of a valiant knight-errant, for reflection and the summoning of sufficient breath and nerve, and then—I had climbed to the window and was looking in.

For some moments, flattening my nose against the cold glass, I could distinguish nothing but the reflection of my own face, and even that was not very clear. Stay, was it my own face, I asked myself? Surely it was larger, redder, older, fatter. I hadn't such staring black, blood-shot eyes, so spongy-looking a nose, such a grinning mouth. If I was looking in, some other person was looking out, and but a window pane hindered the absolute contact of our features!

Then came a shout and a burst of noisy laughter. The window was flung up, and before I had time to descend and escape, I found myself seized by the collar of my jacket and drawn headlong into one of the lower rooms of Overbury Hall. I was roughly treated, but I was not hurt. A strong pair of arms held me aloft swinging in the air for a few seconds, and then I was dropped on the floor. I came down on my feet with a sound of hob-nailed boots clattering on bare boards. I staggered a little, but I didn't fall.

"Don't be frightened," said a hoarse rough voice.

"I'm not frightened." It was not strictly true; but of course a Childe Roland could not confess to the sensation of fear.

Then the air of the room seemed full of laughter again; of laughter and tobacco smoke. I began to laugh myself and to cough, for the smoke was dense and pungent.

I was a child; but I knew that mirth was a sort of guarantee of safety, or at any rate of immunity from punishment.

CHAPTER III. MY ADVENTURE.

THE room was small, and barely furnished. A fire burnt in the grate, and on the hob a little brass kettle was steaming. A bottle and a tumbler stood on the table, and soon I perceived that, in addition to the tobacco smoke, the fragrance of hot rum-and-water pervaded the air of the chamber.

I found myself in the presence of a man, rather untidily than shabbily dressed. He wore a swallow-tailed, claret-coloured coat, with basket buttons, a figured blue satin waistcoat, and drab trousers buttoned at the ankle. His frilled shirt was fastened by a brooch, and a white cravat was loosely twisted round his neck. But he had the tumbled appearance of a man who had slept in his clothes. He wore rings upon his fingers, but his hands were so dingy and hairy that they looked like the paws of some animal. His wristbands were creased and soiled into a pattern of dirty circles.

As to his face, I could only think of it in relation to an old engraving I knew of, hanging in one of the attics at home, and representing a satyr bending over the sleeping form of a nymph.

The man had just the look of that satyr; the protruding lower jaw, the thick lips, the broad, crooked, depressed nose, the low corrugated forehead, the strong lines running from the nostrils towards the corners of the mouth; there were even tufts of hair that stood erect upon his temples, and did duty for horns. I could not help glancing towards his lower limbs, half expecting to find him possessed of the crooked legs of his kind. It was with some disappointment that my eyes lighted upon his drab trousers. I consoled myself with reflecting that they might nevertheless encase goat-like legs.

"Where do you come from?" he demanded, closing one of his eyes, as though he could in that way see me better; I was so small. But the action imparted a most satyr-like expression of winking to his face. His bristling eyebrows lowered, but his mouth was still laughing.

"From the Down Farm," I answered.

"The Down Farm? Out beyond Purington? Why, that's Hugh Orme's land, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"And he farms that water meadow in the valley, don't he? and the arable and pasture stretching out beyond towards the Steepleborough road? To be sure he does. I remember now. Are you his son?"

"No, he's my uncle."

"Your uncle, eh? And so you come here bird's-nesting, or snaring rabbits, or what not?"

"I didn't mean to do any harm," I said, not quite in a Childe Roland tone.

"Well, I don't know that there's much harm done," he observed, with a gruff laugh.

"Here, have a drink." He held out a steaming tumbler to me. I tasted its contents.

"Do you like it?"

"Not much," I answered, coughing. "It's too fiery." Then fearing lest I had given offence by my frankness of speech, I added, "I dare say I should like it better if I was bigger."

He laughed very much at this, and I laughed too with a vague notion that my remark was more funny or clever than it really seemed to me to be. And then I thought the satyr's laughing a good sign, and that it behoved me as much as possible to encourage his mirth.

"You're quite a young shaver," he said, presently. "Take a pinch of snuff." And he held out a large gold box to me.

I took a pinch, terribly afraid, however, that he designed to snap the lid suddenly, and catch my fingers. But he didn't do that. Of course I sneezed very much. And the more I sneezed the more the satyr seemed amused.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Duke," I said.

I had been christened Marmaduke, but from a general feeling that it was inconveniently lengthy for the ordinary purposes of life, the name had been cut down to one syllable. "Duke" had about it a certain savour of the peerage, and, therefore, in my position, of false pretence, which was distasteful to me. Still I preferred it to Marmaduke, which had entailed upon me various disadvantages, including personal conflicts with such of the village boys as thought it humorous to accost me as "Marmalade"—a liberty I had felt bound to resent. Painful results, in the way of a bruised face and abraded knuckles, had ensued; but I endured them patiently enough, and even with a sort of pleasure, as evidences of my valour and victory. I must own that my correction of my satirists and contemnners would have been less complete if our head carter, Jim Truckle, had not, whip in hand, come to my aid at a critical moment of the proceedings.

"Duke, eh?" repeated the satyr. "A recent creation, evidently."

I knew beforehand that he would make a joke about it. Everybody did. But I could not join in his laugh this time. I felt that it was too much at my expense. And to tell the truth I did not clearly comprehend his joke.

"But Duke what?" he asked presently. "You're Duke of Something or Somebody, I suppose?"

"Duke Nightingale," I said.

"Nightingale, eh?" and he rubbed his dirty hand across his low red forehead, with a look as though he were trying to recollect something. He did not speak again for some minutes. Then he suddenly inquired, "Mother living? At the Down Farm? Hugh Orme's sister?"

I answered all these questions in the affirmative.

"To be sure," he said; and then he grew silent and thoughtful again. "What were you born in these parts?" he began to question me anew, after a long pause.

"Yes," I said.

"So far as you know, I suppose, you mean. Ever been to London?"

"Never."

He stared at me very hard indeed. "Nightingale!" he muttered, musingly. Then he drained his glass, and proceeded to mix himself another, pouring hot water from the little kettle on the hob. "I suppose you won't smoke a pipe with me?" he asked.

I said that if he had no objection I thought I would very much rather not.

He filled and lighted his own pipe, and soon enveloped himself in a thick cloud of smoke, through which, however, I could perceive his bloodshot, protruding, black eyes still staring at me.

"Do you go to school?" he next inquired.

"No. Mother teaches me. And Mr. Bygrave, the curate. He comes over to the farm twice a week from Purrington. I get my lessons and exercises done ready for him when he comes."

"And to-day you're playing truant?"

"No, to-day isn't one of his days."

"So, Bygrave's the curate, is he? What's become of old Gascoigne, then? Dead?"

Mr. Gascoigne was our rector. I explained that he was still living, but was now very old and infirm, and had, of late, been assisted by a curate, Mr. Bygrave. But the satyr did not seem to be listening

to me. He was muttering "Nightingale!" over and over again.

Suddenly he rose, and opened a door opposite to the fireplace. It led into a large dark, oak-panelled room. I learned afterwards that it was the library of the hall.

"Come here," said the satyr, and I followed him into the room. I could see nothing at first, but he unfastened the shutters of one of the windows and allowed a broad shaft of dusty light to dart through the clouded panes.

There was a large, faded, ragged Turkey carpet upon the floor, a heavy carved table with a thick nap of dust and fluff upon its surface in the centre, and standing straggling apart from each other, as though declining all intercourse or association, a few high-backed chairs covered with worn velvet of a dim green hue. I perceived no books anywhere, and the furniture seemed very scanty in proportion to the vast size of the room. I could scarcely see to its further end, it was so distant and the light so feeble; but the whole aspect of the place was dismantled and neglected.

"Look at that," said the satyr, and he pointed to a picture in a broad gold frame that hung above the mantelpiece of yellow marble, on the front of which was carved in bold relief the coat-of-arms, supporters, and legend of the house of Overbury.

The picture, clearly a portrait, represented a tall, slender gentleman attired in robes of crimson velvet trimmed with ermine. He wore white silk stockings, and a heavy chain of gold hung round his neck; he was leaning against a richly draped table upon which were many books and scrolls of paper, and a highly ornate inkstand, well supplied with feathery-looking pens. One white hand rested upon the table, the other—very taper as to the fingers, and these adorned with filbert-shaped nails—gathered together the folds of his robe as though the better to exhibit the slim symmetry of his legs. He was of pale complexion, with brown hair clustering in curls low down upon his forehead. His eyes wore a bright surprised look, and his red lips were curved into a most amiable smile. Behind him there was a fluted column, with flapping curtains in some way suspended from its capital by gilded cords and tassels. In the extreme distance was painted a dim landscape backed by purple hills, over which lowered lurid clouds very billowy in form.

I looked at this picture for some time; it was to me an impressive work, and the

gentleman it portrayed seemed somehow to have fixed his gleaming eyes upon me; as I moved his glance followed me; he even appeared to raise himself on tip-toe the better to view me. The satyr, I noticed—he had brought his smoking tumbler with him, and was holding it with both hands, as though to warm them—did not look at the picture at all; all the time I was looking at it he was looking intently at me.

"Well, what do you think of it?" he asked, at length.

"Very grand," I said. "The most beautiful picture I ever saw." To tell the truth I had seen very few pictures. I merely desired to convey my great and genuine admiration of the work, and I could find no other way of expressing myself.

"Do you think it's like?"

"Like who?" I inquired, innocently.

"Why, like me," said the satyr, with a noisy laugh.

"No," I answered, with a start; for it had never once occurred to me that the picture was meant to be a portrait of him.

"Not a bit?"

"No; not a bit."

"Why, what's wrong about it? Why isn't it like? Come, let's have your opinion."

"Well," I said with an effort—yet as he pressed me I felt compelled to speak—"I think it's too good-looking."

He roared with laughter at this, and cried again and again, "Too good-looking, eh! That's your opinion is it? Too good-looking, eh?"

I thought, perhaps, I had been candid overmuch. "I don't say that you're not good-looking, you know," I observed.

"But do you think it, you young Jesuit, you? Honestly?"

"Well, no, honestly, I don't." For I was brought to bay; but he only laughed. He was a wonderful satyr for laughing.

"It was meant for me, however. I sat for it. Years ago though, now; and a lot of money was paid for it. A chap up in London painted it."

He looked at me curiously as he spoke, and seemed to wait for me to answer. I simply said, "Oh, did he!" not having any other kind of observation ready.

"But as you say, it's not a bit like, and the man that painted it was a fool." I had not said that, by-the-bye, nor anything like it. I greatly admired the picture, although not as a portrait of the satyr, certainly. "It's better looking, although it's a white-faced, sickly, simpering idiot all the same. Let's

see whether a glass of hot grog will bring any colour into his face."

As he spoke he flung the contents of his tumbler at the picture. There was a smoking wet patch upon the canvas; the gentleman still smiled and looked at me, although he seemed to be shedding very hot and copious tears.

"It's improved him, by the Lord," cried the satyr. "He's so far like me, then. Real navy rum, hot, does him good. Come away, shaver; this room's enough to give one the horrors."

As I followed him out I took one parting glance at the picture. Then for the first time I saw, or thought I saw, that the gentleman's features bore some faint resemblance to the satyr's; but they were so much more refined, the face so much more smooth of surface and delicate of colour, that the likeness, I decided, could never have been a very striking one. However, the satyr, young, and slim, and clean, if he had ever been so, might have looked something as that picture looked. Except the smile. I held it impossible that the satyr could ever have smiled like that. He could only laugh—he could never have done anything else—and exhibit to the utmost advantage his abundant supply of large, yellow, tusky-looking teeth.

"Well, shaver, you've seen something, and now I'm going to have a nap, and you'd better cut home. What time do you dine?"

"At two o'clock."

"Ah, then you'll be late unless you run all the way. Shake hands."

I shook hands with him. There was a chink of money about our performance of the operation. Three sovereigns were slid from his palm into mine.

"For me?" I said; "oh, thank you, sir." I was nearly saying satyr.

"For you, and don't spend it all in rum or tobacco, or such like. A little snuff, as you seem fond of it, I wouldn't so much object to. But be a good boy and mind your books, and always tell the truth and try and be a comfort to your uncle and mother, and generally behave yourself properly, and do all that sort of thing. It's so long since I've said anything of that kind that I'm not quite sure of the correct text; but I'm pretty sure it comes near to what I was saying. It was gabbled over to me often enough when I was your age, and perhaps it's been gabbled over to a good many more in the same case, and I dare say a deal of good it's done the lot of us. Don't be

a prig, or a sneak, or a fool, if you can help it. Learn your Church Catechism and take a few lessons in boxing, if you get a chance. They always come in handy at some time or another. Snare a few rabbits now and then if you like, or fish in the lake, only don't fall into it, because there's not many here to pull you out. And now, God bless you; cut your lucky."

Thereupon he lifted me up, and rather threw me out of the window than helped me to climb out in my own way. I alighted on my feet, however, and as I hurried down the dark avenue I could hear his loud, harsh laugh sounding after me, and echoing among the dense plantations on either side of me.

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE FIFTIETH ("THE DIRTY HALF HUNDRED").

WHY certain regiments, formed of casual collections of men of various ages, nationalities, and districts, should from the very first enrolment acquire a special name for obstinate courage, tenacious bravery, and almost reckless eagerness for the onslaught, it is difficult to say. The original stock, depend upon it, was good, and the officers who first moulded the now material excellent soldiers. The standard once raised to a certain height, the pride of the regiment is to keep up that standard; the tough jobs are given the corps to achieve; the posts of honour awarded it; it is let slip at the most critical moments; in a word, its career soon commences, and the path of glory, red with brave men's blood, but lined with ever-green laurels, lies before it.

The nicknames of regiments afford a subject of great interest, and there are often quaint and memorable stories about how they acquired them. The gallant Fiftieth derives its sobriquet, however, rather from an accident in dress than from any of its numerous exploits. It was called the Dirty Half Hundred in the Peninsula from the sombre black cuffs and collars of the regimentals, or, as some writers on these subjects assert, from the badly fixed black dye working off upon the men's faces when they wiped them with their cuffs during the sweat of battle. The regiment, after its return from Abercromby's expedition to Egypt, was for some time called the Blind Half Hundred, as nearly all the men suffered from ophthalmia, and this is still rather a sore subject with the famous Half Hundred.

As the Dirty Half Hundred the regiment will flourish, we hope, for ever. Whenever the Springers (Sixty-sixth); the Pot Hooks (Seventy-seventh); the Old Fogs (Eighty-seventh); the Old Five-and-Threepennies (Fifty-third); the Lacedemonians (Forty-sixth); the Orange Lilies (Thirty-fifth); the Saucy Greens (Thirty-sixth); the Green Linnets (Thirtieth); the Light Bobs (Forty-third); the Two Fours (Forty-fourth); the Old Stubborns (Forty-fifth); the Die Hards (Fifty-seventh); the Steel Backs (Fifty-eighth); and the Saucy Sixth, are called to the battle, the Dirty Half Hundred will never be slow to follow.

The services of the Fiftieth in Egypt, and against Junot at Vimiera, we have no room to here recapitulate; but we will start with them from Corunna, where they covered themselves with glory. Lord William Bentinck's brigade (Fourth, Fiftieth, and Forty-second regiments), on the right of the British line, fell in on the morning of January the 16th, 1809. Just before the advance, the wife of an Irish soldier of the Eightieth, with a baby in her arms, was sent in by Marshal Soult. She had lain in on the march, and been kindly attended by the French doctors. The marshal sent his compliments by her, and that he should soon wait on the Fiftieth. The ensigns of the Fiftieth, Moore and Stewart, unfurling the colours by order of the brave Major Napier, who, in allusion to Soult's message, said, with generous enthusiasm, "Open the colours that they may see the Fiftieth;" and the men remained with ordered arms loaded, as quietly as in a barrack-yard, awaiting the attack. One shot from the French battery entered the earth at the very toes of the right centre company. The men drew away in a semicircle, the captain then called "Dress," and the men dressed up to the yet twirling shot. At this moment the French light infantry approached briskly, and wounded some of the Fiftieth, who were standing like a wall near the encampment; the whole brigade then received the word "Forward," and advanced firing and charging with the bayonet. The Fiftieth pursued the French light troops, meeting the enemy's heavy columns in the village of Elvina, which stood in the valley between the two armies. A severe struggle then ensued, the dead and wounded of the English and French falling on each other, so close was the fighting. Here Major Stanhope, of the Fiftieth, fell dead,

and the two ensigns, Moore and Stuart, were mortally wounded, so, also, was Lieutenant Wilson, who had been in extraordinary spirits all the morning, and had dressed himself daintily in a new suit of regimentals "to meet Master Soult," as he playfully expressed it.

When the Fiftieth regiment rushed down from their camp in pursuit—says Captain Macarthy, of the Fiftieth—an officer, seeing the church on an eminence over the turn of the road, and supposing it to contain a body of the enemy in ambush, and beholding, also, the French rapidly filling the lane close by, considered it necessary to oppose them, and prevent the probability of their turning their fire on the rear of the Fiftieth regiment when the latter had passed. He, therefore, extending his arms, stopped several of his men, and having arranged them at the corner of the church, himself entered the building, which, however, was empty; but the priest's house, between the church and the lane, was full of French soldiers. The officer came out, ran round, and rejoined his men, who, being screened by the angle of the church, kept up a brisk fire upon the enemy in the lane, and several times cleared the opening. A French officer, rather below the middle stature, stick in hand, exerted himself most gallantly to supply the gap; on which his men laid their firelocks, and killed two, and wounded three of this little band; but fortunately the British officer had picked up a dragoon carbine on the road near Corunna, which he retained as "a friend in need." This he had previously loaded with two small buttons from the collar of his regimental coat, and having been supplied with French cartridges in the church, he was able to assist his men by discharging his carbine many times in defence of his post; and the French officer at the gap, seeming resolved to force his way at the head of his men, the dragoon carbine, rested against the corner of the church, insured an aim which for ever checked his progress, and his men drew back. "The defenders of the church," with their officer, immediately made a dash at the priest's house, the enemy—upwards of twenty—within it, rushed out; but not being able to reach the gap, turned suddenly round, and instead of cutting off the church party, fled into the house, shut the door, and fired at random out of the windows, which afforded the church party an opportunity of retiring from their hazardous attempt.

Before the Fiftieth advanced, while standing under the cannonade, the balls at first went about a foot or two over their heads, and the men stooped, or, as it is called by soldiers, ducked. Standing in front, Napier said, laughing, "Don't duck, the ball has passed before you hear the whiz." The ducking, however, was continued by all but one little fellow, who stood erect, and Napier said to him aloud, "You are a little fellow, but the tallest man in the Fiftieth to-day for all that; come to me after the battle, and you shall be a sergeant." Every one heard Napier, yet, strange to say, no one afterwards knew who the soldier was, nor could his name be learned. It is supposed he fell, and the agitation of the moment had made others forget or not notice him.

Even a closer view of the doings of the Fiftieth in this battle is given us by Sir Charles Napier in an extraordinary graphic piece of autobiography. As a fragment of a soldier's life, it stands unrivalled.

Speaking of a temporary check of the Fiftieth, Napier says: "This misery shook us all a good deal, and made me so wild as to cry and stamp with rage, feeling a sort of despair at seeing the soldiers not come on. I sent Turner, Harrison, and Patterson, the three officers with me, to bring them on, and they found Stanhope animating the men, but not knowing what to do, and calling out 'Good God, where is Napier?' When Turner told him I was in front, and raging for them to come on for an attack on the battery, he gave a shout, and called on the men to follow him, but ere taking a dozen strides cried out, 'Oh, my God!' and fell dead, shot through the heart. Turner and a sergeant, who had been also sent back, then returned to me, saying they could not get a man to follow them up the lane. Hearing this, I got on the wall, waving my sword and my hat at the same time, and calling out to the men behind among the rocks; but the fire was so loud, none heard me, though the lane was scarcely a hundred yards long. No fire was drawn upon me by this, for a French captain afterwards told me he and others prevented their men firing at me; he did not know, nor was he told by me, who it was, but he said, 'Instead of firing at him, I longed to run forwards and embrace that brave officer.' My own companions called out to jump down or I should be killed; I thought so too, but was so mad as to care little what happened to me."

Soon after Napier was taken prisoner,

entangled in one of the deep lanes. "The Frenchmen," he says, "had halted, but now run on to us, and just as my spring and shout was made the wounded leg failed, and I felt a stab in the back; it gave me no pain, but felt cold, and threw me on my face. Turning to rise, I saw the man who had stabbed me making a second thrust, whereupon, letting go my sabre, I caught his bayonet by the socket, turned the thrust, and, raising myself by the exertion, grasped his firelock with both hands, thus, in mortal struggle, regaining my feet. His companions had now come up, and I heard the dying cries of the four men with me, who were all bayoneted instantly. We had been attacked from behind by men not before seen, as we stood with our backs to a doorway, out of which must have rushed several men, for we were all stabbed in an instant, before the two parties coming up the road reached us. They did so, however, just as my struggle with the man who had wounded me was begun. That was a contest for life, and, being the strongest, I forced him between myself and his comrades, who appeared to be the men whose lives I had saved when they pretended to be dead on our advance through the village. They struck me with their muskets clubbed, and bruised me much, whereupon, seeing no help near, and being overpowered by numbers, and in great pain from my wounded leg, I called out 'Je me rend!' remembering the expression correctly from an old story of a fat officer, whose name, being James, called out 'Jemmy Round.' Finding they had no disposition to spare me, I kept hold of the musket, vigorously defending myself with the body of the little Italian who had first wounded me, but soon grew faint, or rather tired. At that moment a tall dark man came up, seized the end of the musket with his left hand, whirled his brass-hilted sabre round, and struck me a powerful blow on the head, which was bare, for my cocked-hat had fallen off.

"Expecting the blow would finish me, I had stooped my head in hopes it might fall on my back, or at least on the thickest part of the head and not on the left temple. So far I succeeded, for it fell exactly on the top, cutting into the bone, but not through it. Fire sparkled from my eyes; I fell on my knees, blinded, yet without quite losing my senses, and holding still on to the musket. Recovering in a moment, I regained my legs, and saw a florid, handsome young French drummer holding the

arm of the dark Italian, who was in the act of repeating his blow. We had not proceeded far up the old lane, when we met a soldier of the Fiftieth walking down at a rapid pace; he instantly halted, recovered his arms and cocked his piece, looking fiercely at us to make out what it was. My recollection is that he levelled at a man, and I threw up his musket, calling out, 'For God's sake don't fire, I am a prisoner, badly wounded, and can't help you. Surrender.' 'For why should I surrender?' he cried aloud, with the deepest of all Irish brogues. 'Because there are at least twenty men upon you.' There were five or six with us at the time. 'Well, if I must surrender—there!' said he, dashing down his firelock across their legs and making them jump. 'There's my firelock for yez.' Then coming close up he threw his arm round me, and giving Guibert a push that sent him and one or two more against the wall, shouted out, 'Stand away, ye bloody spalpeens, I'll carry him myself, bad luck to the whole of yez.'

"My expectation was to see them fall upon him, but this John Hennessy was a strong and fierce man, and moreover looked bigger than he was, for he stood upon the higher ground. Apparently they thought him an awkward fellow to deal with; he seemed willing to go with me, and they let him have his own way."

The Fiftieth had already expended seventy rounds of ammunition, and collected all they could from their fallen comrades and the enemy, and being too far advanced to receive a further supply, were obliged to retire to a terrace above the church, facing outwards parallel to the lane. Here they kept the French at bay, sustained a heavy fire, and prepared to hold their own with the bayonet, not a single cartridge being left. They knelt for some time, till many of the men were shot through the head, then lay down, anxiously waiting for ammunition. Towards dusk the Guards advanced, halted on some land above the Fiftieth, and called out that they were come to relieve them. The Rifles were all this time sharply engaged in front. The Fiftieth in this brave struggle lost four officers, while five were severely wounded. The loss of rank and file was very severe.

To prevent a recurrence of events described in former articles, we propose to concentrate our reader's attention chiefly on two or three of the exploits of the Fiftieth, rather than glance briefly over all.

At the siege of Badajoz, one of the most gallant leaders of the storming party was Captain Macarthy, of the Fiftieth. To this gallant volunteer was intrusted the management of the scaling ladders at the storming of the castle. The hilarity of the officers and soldiers beforehand was remarkable; the officers and men packing up their portmanteaus and packs to leave safe in the encampment for their return; the men laughing and fixing the best flints in their muskets, and all forming in column eager for the assault at eight P.M. Picton at last pulled out his watch, and said to the Third Division:

"It is time, gentlemen, to go. Some persons are of opinion that the attack on the castle will not succeed, but I will forfeit my life if it does not."

Macarthy was chosen by Major Burgoyne to lead the party, and on one occasion when he fancied he had missed his way; Picton declared he was blind, and drawing his sword, swore he would cut him down. But all went well, and Picton was appeased when he reached the first parallel, where the division had to enter the trench. "Down with the palings!" And the men rocked and tore down the palisades in the fosse, and the division poured in. "Up with the ladders!" was the next cry, and seizing the ladders they pulled and pushed them up the mound. With difficulty five ladders were placed against the mound, which was swept by round shot, broken shells, and bundles of cartridges. At that moment four ladders with troops broke near the upper ends, and fell. From the remaining ladder a private soldier, attempting to get over the wall, was shot in the head as he looked over the parapet, but the next instant another sprang over. Macarthy at once cried out, "Huzza! there is one over—follow him." More ladders were then placed, and Macarthy cheered the men, to encourage the Fourth and Light Divisions at the other breaches. Macarthy had just rearranged the ladders, when his right thigh was fractured by a ball, and he fell on a man who had dropped by his side. Macarthy then requested a field officer to desire some of his men to carry him out of the stream of fire. A soldier came up and took him up on his back, but was obliged to drop him in even a more exposed place. A bugler, just then as he mounted the wall, sounded the "Advance!" and was killed in the act of cheering on his comrades.

"I remained," says Macarthy, "where

the soldiers were obliged to drop me, at the base of the mound, amidst expiring brother sufferers. During the night the moans, prayers, cries, and exclamations of the wounded fully expressed the degrees of their agonies in the varieties of sentences and cadence of tone, from the highest pitch in the treble to the lowest note in bass. Some of the wounded were, undoubtedly, raving mad, violent, vociferating dreadful imprecations and denunciations; others calling incessantly 'Water, water!' 'Bearers! bearers!' some singing; many shouting the numbers of their regiments (as 'Oh, Forty-fifth!' 'Oh, Seventy-fourth!' 'Oh, Seventy-seventh!') to attract their comrades to their aid. Many of the fallen heroes received additional wounds during the night. One man sat on my left side rocking to and fro, with his hands across his stomach; in the morning he was dead, stretched on his back, and bleeding out of three wounds in his head, from shots he subsequently received there; his head rested heavily on my hand, which I had not the power to withdraw. . . . While here an officer of the Eighty-third regiment, without his hat, came staggering behind me, and, on approaching, inquired how I was hurt, said he was wounded in the head, and that he would stay by me for mutual consolation, and sat down; but as my spasms were extremely severe, and regular as the pulse, I had no interval for conversation. He left me, and placed himself with his back against the palisades, near the opening to which the enemy's shots continued to rattle. I saw him in the same position at daybreak, but knew not if he was alive or dead. Two other men, whom I requested to remove me, were also obliged to set me down, unfortunately at the base of the mound, with my fractured limb placed upwards on the bank, so that I could only support myself by placing my hands behind to prop me in a sitting position, in which I remained immovable till late in the afternoon of the next day, amongst numerous brother sufferers."

Alvarez is another crimson word blazoned on the banners of the Fiftieth. This, too, in which the whole regiment joined, was a most gallant enterprise. Alvarez was an important fort half-way between Badajoz and Madrid. Its Fort Napoleon was strongly fortified with a double ditch, armed with eighteen twenty-four pounders, and connected by a floating bridge with a battery of six guns on the

opposite side of the river. The garrison was numerous, the stores plentiful, and they were in full communication with the great arsenal at Seville.

Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill issued orders for his first brigade to storm Fort Napoleon on the 18th of May, 1812. The second brigade was to make a false attack on the front of the castle, which is situated on the peak of a sugar-loaf mountain, at the side of a pass on the main road from Truxillo. The first brigade (Fiftieth, Seventy-first, and Ninety-second regiments) worked round the valley by the base of the mountains, through winding sheep-walks in the brushwood, which were considered impassable. The march was so tedious that the Fiftieth regiment and the left wing of the Seventy-first were not able to reach the fort till six A.M. on the 19th, when the sun was in full shine. They therefore lay down in ambush not to be seen from the battlements. Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart of the Fiftieth, in command of the brigade, then obtained leave to make a rush at Fort Napoleon without firing a shot. The men were especially ordered to not even load their muskets till they were under the walls, and not to waste time in giving more "than a few inches of bayonet," as a compliment in passing, to any Frenchman.

The soldiers ran on in three divisions, and advanced through a sweeping and tremendous fire, preceded by the men bearing the ladders. The bearers of one ladder were all struck down, but the ladder was at once caught up and carried on by their comrades. The ladders proved rather short, and exposed the escaladers to a rapid fire while scrambling over the parapet. Captain Candler, of the Fiftieth, leading his company first up the ladder, was pierced by several balls, and fell dead inside the fort. The Fiftieth, growing impatient at the crowded ladders, crawled up by breaks in the wall, and pulled up their eager comrades, who had laid down in the inner ditch, till all were gathered, and then dashed forward gallantly, led by Colonel Stewart. In vain the French twenty-four pounders poured in showers of grape and round-shot; the enemy had soon to fly from the fort to the bridge that led to the opposite battery, cutting the bridge as they fled, thus leaving their friends helpless in the rough hands of the Fiftieth. The deserted French, forced back again into the fort, were bayoneted chiefly in the gateway, where the fighting was furious.

In half an hour the Fiftieth and their allies had taken Fort Napoleon and its garrison of three thousand resolute men. The governor, furious at the English success, became almost mad, refused to surrender his sword, and flourishing it in defiance, attempted to strike an officer of the Fiftieth, upon which an angry sergeant wounded the governor with his pike, to the great regret of the English officers. The wounded man died during his removal to Merida. In the fort was a French artillery officer's wife, dressed half like a man in a pelisse, travelling cap, and Turkish trousers. She was protected, and restored to her husband by Captain Stapleton of the Fiftieth. Fort Napoleon was by this daring exploit entirely destroyed, and the important pass of Almarez thrown open. The Fiftieth lost in this fine achievement one officer and twenty-six rank and file killed, one captain, three lieutenants, three ensigns, five sergeants, and eighty-seven rank and file wounded.

In the Sikh war the Fiftieth won great honour. At Moodkee, twenty-two miles from Ferozepore, the Fiftieth first tried their bayonets on the Sikhs, who attacked our advanced guard vigorously, but were repulsed, and driven back three miles, with the loss of many a turban, and seventeen pieces of cannon. The British troops then pushed on to Ferozepore, and joined Sir John Littler. The united forces now advanced somewhat rashly on the Sikh entrenchments, which were garnished with one hundred and eight guns, more than forty of them of battering calibre. The Sikh camp was a parallelogram, enclosing the village of Ferozeshah, the shorter sides looking towards the Sutlej and Moodkee, the longer towards Ferozepore and the open country. This last face we attacked. It was a dead flat, covered here and there with thick jungle, and dotted with sandy hillocks. The English had sixteen thousand seven hundred men present, and sixty-nine guns, the Sikhs from forty-eight thousand to sixty thousand men. Sir Hugh Gough led the right wing, and Sir Henry Hardinge the left. The line advanced, with the artillery in the centre, through a tremendous fire, which our lighter artillery could check, but not silence. In the face of this the Fiftieth and their colleagues carried the batteries, but were unable to defeat the Sikh infantry, although Sir H. Smith captured part of the position, and even the Third Light Dragoons charged and took some batteries. Nightfall left the Sikhs still masters of half the great fortified quadrangle,

and there our troops bivouacked, interrupted by firing, and exhausted by fighting and thirst. Many of the Sikhs, clad in chain armour, and wrapped up in their quilted ragilas, which a bayonet would scarcely penetrate, lay about the tents and guns, shamming dead, and in many cases sprang up, cut down the sleeping English, and retook the cannon. The Sepoys, afraid of the Sikhs, fought badly. In the night a heavy gun had to be captured, and whenever moonlight discovered our position, the enemy's fire reopened, dismounting our pieces, and blowing up our tumbrels. In the morning, however, the English awoke fresh, and soon settled the affair. Ferozeshah was taken, and the camp turned. Two hours after Tej Singh came from Ferozepore, with a new army, and made two desperate efforts to regain the position. It was time to win, for the gun ammunition was entirely expended, and our cavalry was exhausted. Luckily for us, Tej Singh had enough of it first, and abandoned the field. We had taken seventy-three pieces of Sikh cannon, and were at last victorious.

The battle of Aliwal was a great field-day for the Fiftieth, and seldom have English bayonets had harder work to pierce Oriental coats of mail. In January, 1846, Sir Henry Smith, then near Hurrekee, marched to join Colonel Godby, who was somewhat hemmed in by the Sikhs near Loodianah. Colonel Wheeler's brigade, consisting of the Fiftieth, Forty-seventh, and Forty-sixth regiments, joined him on the 25th of January, and after a few days' rest, a united attack was planned for the 28th. The Sikh force consisted of twenty-four thousand men and sixty-eight guns, many of them officered by French artillerymen. Sir H. Smith led twelve thousand men, and thirty-two guns. The hostile Sikhs held a very strong position, their rear resting on the river, their flanks well entrenched. The heart of their position was the village of Villeewull, and another post, almost equally important, was the village of Aliwal, which gave its name to the battle in which it suffered so severely. The enemy, nothing loth, hurried forward to meet us on a ridge of which Aliwal was the centre. Our infantry columns deployed into line upon open hard grass-land, good for fighting. Sir H. Smith then, to prevent being outflanked by the enemy, broke into open columns, and wheeled into line. The line advanced, with the coolness and precision of soldiers on a field-day. One hundred and fifty yards further, at ten A.M., the Sikhs opened fire fiercely.

Sir H. Smith halted the men under fire, and then resolved at once to carry the village of Aliwal, and to throw his forces on the Sikh left and centre.

The village was carried at a rush, and the enemy's cavalry thrown back on their infantry. In the mean time Brigadier Wheeler, with the Fiftieth Foot, the Forty-eighth Native Infantry, and the Simoor battalions, was charging and carrying guns, again joining his line, and moving on for fresh work with the most gallant coolness. The enemy, forced back on the left and centre, then endeavoured to cover the passage of the river, and occupied the village of Bhoondee till our lancers broke up the Sikh squares, and the Fifty-third carried the village at the point of the bayonet. The Sikh artillery rallied under the high banks of a nullah, but were again driven out, and exposed to the fire of twelve of our guns at only five hundred yards' distance. Our troops were now gradually pressing in towards the ford, to which the Sikhs were converging. The Sikhs, hemmed in, threw themselves in disordered masses into the ford and boats. Our twelve-inch howitzers played on the boats, and a great slaughter ensued. The Sikhs lost sixty-seven cannon, and forty swivel camel guns; their camp baggage, and vast stores of powder, shot, shell, and grain. In this great victory the Fiftieth lost one officer and nine men, and ten officers and fifty-nine men were wounded. In his despatch, Sir H. Smith especially eulogised the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Ryan, of the Fiftieth.

At Sobraon, our crowning victory, the Fiftieth hotly joined in attacking the Sikh's triple line of breastworks, flanked by redoubts on both sides the Sutlej, bristling with artillery, and manned by thirty-two regular regiments of infantry; thirty thousand Sikhs protected the bridge at Hurrekee. So hot was the fire of the Khalsa troops, that at first it seemed impossible to storm such a camp; the Sikhs contested the captured place in fierce conflict sword in hand. Our cavalry then rode into the entrenchments. Gradually the Sikh fire slackened, and the enormous army loosened and rolled down towards the Sutlej bridge, perishing by hundreds under our fire. Lieutenant Grimes, of the Fiftieth, was killed in this battle, which ended the war. Lieutenant-Colonel Bunbury, who fought at Sobraon, says that near the swivel wall pieces, the Sikhs had dug oblong holes, in which fifty men could be concealed to at-

tack the takers of the batteries unawares. The order was given to search all such holes, and bayonet the inmates.

At Alma and Inkermann the soldiers with the blue facings distinguished themselves among the bravest. In 1864 and 1865, the Fiftieth had a rough life of it in New Zealand against the rebellious and fanatical natives. They were at the assault and capture of Rangiawhea, February, 1864, and the gallant repulse of the crafty enemy's attack; at Nukumarū, January, 1865. They were at the action of Kakarama, and helped to open the road to Taranaki. They also aided in the capture of the Putahi Pah. At Nukumarū, the natives had been told by the prophets that they were invulnerable, and they fought well. One daring Maori seized a soldier of the Fiftieth, and tried to drag him off bodily; but the native was sabred by one of our cavalry. The Fiftieth had some twenty men wounded. The native attack was made under cover of the smoke of some scrub in front of the camp, which General Cameron had fired to prevent surprise. Two of the Maori divisions attacked the English camp, while the third pushed forward to attack the tents. They were at last entirely routed.

HOPE DEFERRED.

A DREAMINESS came o'er me
Once, on a dim spring day;
The summer on before me
Seemed far and far away.

Full dark had reigned the winter,
With cloud, and mist, and gloom;
My spirit longed to enter
Into the fields of bloom.

The tempest's wild repining,
Made sorrow in my soul;
I craved the cheerful shining
When heavy clouds unroll.

I saw a gleam on heather,
Stray through a rifted cloud;
The masses swept together,
The winds spoke fierce and loud.

The mist upon the mountain
Dropped down in hopeless rain;
Fell in a bitter fountain
Over the grieving plain.

IN THE SILENT CITY.

To City men the idea of silence being connected, in any way, with the City may appear in the highest degree ridiculous. They are so used to a perpetual excitement from the time they enter it to the time they leave it; they are so infected with the everlasting bustle, the eternal jingle of money, and the unceasing roar of the worshippers of the Golden Calf, that quiet to

them would mean panic, and silence bankruptcy. City men never experience silence in the City. Its silence has been broken long before they arrive at their offices in the morning, and its hum continues long after they have left in the evening. The great cauldron of commerce is bubbling even before they commence their daily work, and it continues to simmer long after they have reached their mansions at South Kensington and Bayswater, or their suburban villas at Hampstead, Highgate, Lewisham, Camberwell, and Denmark Hill, or their river-side retreats, anywhere you please between Putney and Windsor. They know nothing whatever of the silence of the City. This knowledge is only given to night policemen, to wakeful octogenarian City housekeepers, to bank watchmen, and to housebreakers. On second thoughts, perhaps the latter class know little of it; they seldom go anywhere unless there is business to be done, and although they know that there are plenty of cribs worth cracking in the City, the whole place is so watched that it renders their be-crackment a matter of considerable difficulty as well as danger.

The present writer, who is neither a night policeman, nor a wakeful octogenarian City housekeeper, nor a bank watchman, nor a housebreaker, recently went for a tour in the silent City. He had not been to the fancy ball at the Mansion House; neither had he been banqueting with the Most Worshipful Company of Serene Stevedores; nor had he been dining with the captain of the guard at the Bank of England; nor was he on his way back from the Guards' mess at the Tower; nor had he arrived at some unreasonable hour by a tidal train at London Bridge. He had done none of these things, and yet there he was—no matter why—standing in front of the official residence of the Lord Mayor, just at that period when silence is beginning to steal over the City like a mist, and settle down on it like a dense fog—a fog which seems to muffle every voice, put india-rubber tires round all the wheels, tie up every knocker with white kid, shoe every horse with felt, and every passer-by with American goloshes.

I find I am particularly fortunate in the evening: I have selected. There is no great civic festival going on, my meditations will not be broken by the clatter of a hundred carriages, the rapid conversations of a myriad of powdered footmen, and the flash of lights innumerable. A competitive examination in clock striking has just been held by the various steeples in the neigh-

bourhood. Every one has struck twelve according to its own time and its own tune; each in its turn strives to impress upon the silence that its own is the only right way of striking, and that it is the only regular and well-behaved clock in the neighbourhood. Such an impressive way have all the chimes of doing this, that when a disgracefully laggard clock, St. Tympanum-by-the-Sideboard, rings out twelve with querulous distinctness, at least a quarter of an hour late, one is firmly convinced that it must be the steadiest and most accurate time-keeper in the City of London.

Your first thought, whilst standing upon the kerb-stone of what is, in its normal condition, the busiest centre of London, is—what can possibly have become of all the omnibuses? Do they all sleep out of town as well as the City merchants and City clerks? Where, again, are all the newspaper boys? Where are the disreputable, dirty, ragged "prisoner's friends" who always hang about the pavement when the court is sitting at the Mansion House?" Is anybody left in that mysterious cell under the dock, from which the prisoner emerges like a jack-in-the-box, and to which he retires, also like a jack-in-the-box, when the chief magistrate puts the lid down with a sentence of six months' hard labour? Is any one there, and if so, what is he thinking about? Is he determining, in his own mind, to turn over a new leaf, and so one day to become Lord Mayor of London? The clocks are commencing another competitive examination, and St. Tympanum-by-the-Sideboard, which, by the way, does not shine at all in striking the quarters, is being run hard by St. Thomas Tiddlerius, and we have no time for idle speculation; so take my arm, gentle reader, and let us cross the road. In the daytime we would not venture to do this unless we had previously insured our lives heavily in the Accidental, but now we could roll about the road, or play a game of hopscotch in it, if we forgot our dignity in the darkness and stillness of the night. Let us coast round the Bank, and dance gaily over the heaps of treasure that are buried beneath our feet. I wonder it has never occurred to some of those energetic people who are always pulling up the roadway under the excuse of gas, water, or paving, to make a secret burrow under the Bank, hoist up treasure in buckets of mud, and carry it away in mud-carts, till the Governor and Company of the Bank of England awakened some fine morning and found themselves bullionless. I protest I should

like to wander about the interior of the Bank—with no burglarious intention let it be distinctly understood—and see the Temple of the Golden Calf in its silence, when its high priests were asleep. I should like to wander through the Three per Cent office when all the books were closed, when the brisk young clerks who are so particular about signatures were asleep, and when the imbecile old ladies, with money in the funds, were dreaming of the perils they had gone through in being knocked about from beadle to clerk, and from clerk to beadle, in the pursuit of dividend; to see the Parlour with all the chairs tenantless, the entrances beadleless, and the Rotunda silent as the grave. Are there any clerks left in charge all night? If so, I take it for granted that they sleep upon mattresses of dividend warrants, and lay their heads upon pillows of crisp bank-notes. Possibly the wraith of Mr. Matthew Marshall, accompanied by a ghostly Bearer, rises now and then to haunt these unfortunate watchers with demands impossible to be satisfied. Who shall say? It is certain that few things look more inscrutable and adamantine, and none less sympathetic, than the outer walls of the Bank of England in the dead of night.

Let us glance at the Grocers' Hall as we go by—which looks like a well-endowed Dissenters' chapel in the dim light, and as if excellent dinners and superb wines had never been consumed within its precincts—and turn down Lothbury. There is not a soul stirring besides ourselves, and the stock-brokers' cab-stand in Bartholomew-lane is untenanted. We turn up Capel-court: there is no bellowing of bulls, nor growling of bears now; our footsteps re-echo with such startling distinctness that we turn round sharply, thinking we are being followed, and that there are other prowlers about besides ourselves. The flags themselves look so innocent of speculation and jobbery, so full of good intentions, that they might serve as paving-stones to that quarter, to which the descent, according to classical authority, is so easy. As for the portals of the Stock Exchange itself, they appear to be closed so tightly that you wonder how it will be possible for them to be opened again at the proper time to-morrow morning. "The House," indeed, looks so serious, so dignified, so severely respectable, that it might be the Tomb of the Stocks, the sepulchre of shares, a mausoleum for bubble companies. One can hardly realise the fact that in

a dozen hours' time these doors will be everlastingly on the swing; that a roaring, frantic, anxious crowd will be tearing up and down the worn steps; and that whatever there may be within the walls of our mausoleum will be galvanised into feverish and frantic life. As we turn to leave this dismal court we hear a species of Gregorian chaunt being dismally crooned, on a fourth-rate concertina, somewhere up on the top floor. What is the meaning of this? Is there an asylum for demented jobbers in this quarter, or is it the "sweet little cherub who sits up aloft and keeps watch o'er the life of poor Stock," who is giving this melancholy performance?

We take our way to the Royal Exchange, for we would fain see what goes on here at the witching hour of night. Do the merchants of long ago troop down here after twelve o'clock and whisper spectral quotations, and conclude phantom bargains? Does the ghost of Sir Thomas Gresham perambulate the French, American, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Greek, and Dutch walks, attended by sprites in the form of gigantic grasshoppers frisking and chirruping gleefully? We pass in at the principal entrance. We notice the doorway to Lloyd's closed hard and fast, as if Lloyd were dead, and all the underwriters had gone out of town to attend his funeral, or as if Mr. Plimsoll's agitation had made the insurance of ships illegal, and Lloyd—who, by the way, is, or was, Lloyd?—has closed his establishment in despair. We peer through the ornate iron gate at the entrance to the quadrangle. The whole place is dark and deserted. There is not even a beadle to break the monotony of the view; we can just catch a glimpse of the lights in front of the Mansion House winking and glittering through the western gate on the other side. A cold blast comes whirling through the elaborate gates; it chills us—we walk briskly away across Cornhill and enter Change-alley. We pause beneath the shadow of Garraway's, and think how the neighbourhood must be haunted with the uneasy spirits of the mad dabblers in the South Sea Bubble. There is a light in the windows of a banking-house giving on the alley. What is going on? Are fraudulent directors cooking accounts, or is it merely a staff of hard-worked clerks "on the balance?" It is neither the one nor the other. It is simply some men whitewashing the interior of the office. You see time is so precious in the City that they cannot afford to sacrifice even a moment for cleanliness and beautification.

Hence bankers are compelled to do their work by day, and their washing by night. The whitewashers do not seem to like their job: they are depressed; they do not whistle blithely, and slap the ceiling merrily after the usual fashion of healthy whitewashers. They do their work stealthily, as if whitewashing were a capital offence, and they were afraid of being discovered every moment. We jump up and tap playfully at the window: the whitewasher starts and peers anxiously in the direction of the noise: he looks scared, and no doubt thinks he has seen the ghost of Mr. Secretary Craggs, Sir John Blunt, or any one of the wild speculators who flourished a century and a half ago. Out into Lombard-street—Lombard-street, dark, sad, and silent. There are no anxious crowds jostling one another, no doors continually on the swing, like popular gin-shops in a low neighbourhood, as happy mortals plunge wildly in to drink of the Pactolean fount; no rustle of bank-notes, no auri-ferous jingle of sovereigns, no pleasant song with the refrain of "Owlyeravit." This happy hunting-ground of Thomas Tiddler might just as well be the Great Desert of Sabara, for all the use it would be to me at the present moment if I wanted to get a cheque cashed. Why should banking operations be confined to the hours between nine A.M. and four P.M., and why should not bankers have a clerk for nocturnal duty, on the principle of the innkeepers, who have a porter up all night? Supposing I were to ring the bell and present a properly signed cheque, at one of these banks, is it likely that some ancient housekeeper would come down with a weird cloak thrown over her night-dress, and give me the change? I think it is far more likely that the night watchman would awake suddenly from his slumber, and that I should find myself without delay in charge of the nearest policeman.

The silence increases. We can hear distinctly the measured tread of the policeman at the other end of the street, and we feel compelled to speak in whispers, in order that he may not overhear our conversation. There is no one about, there are no roysterers and no revellers; the thunder of late trains has entirely died away, and the thunder of early ones has not commenced. In the whole length of Fenchurch-street we encounter but one person, and he is a stalwart Irish gentleman who has charge of some works in connexion with pulling up the roadway, or illuminating an ancient lantern, or keeping

a very black cutty pipe in full blast, we cannot tell exactly which. Mincing-lane, gayest and most varied of the many retreats of commerce, is the most deserted and dismal quarter we have yet visited, and we shudder as we see our faces reflected in ghostly fashion in the vast plate glasses of the office windows, as we pass by. The most curious part is that there is no sign, no vestige of the vast business conducted here, remaining. Who would ever dream of the sales of every description that are going on in this lane daily? Of rice, of sugar, of pepper, of nutmegs, of cinnamon, of tea, of coffee, of indigo, of hides, of ginger, of logwood, of shellac, of gum benjamin, of myrabolams, of nutgalls, and a hundred other articles of which particulars are given in catalogues which look like serious play-bills run to seed. Not a sign of any of these things is to be seen. We can gaze right into some of the offices, and see that they seem to be swept and cleared, as if they were going to be let to-morrow morning. The dismal passage by the Commercial Sale Rooms looks more dismal than ever, as we gaze through the iron gate and note the one lamp fitfully flickering in what appears to be the entrance to some third-rate baths. We drift into Mark-lane, and find there the silence to be even more intense; we can distinctly hear the tick of a clock within a house as we pass by. We gaze through the windows of the Corn Exchange: it looks like a bankrupt railway station, about to be converted into a literary institution. The stands seem as if they were going to be transformed into reading-desks and newspaper slopes, and there is not so much as a grain of corn to be seen anywhere on the premises. We become objects of suspicion to a policeman, who evidently thinks we want to break into the Corn Exchange: we move on, and descend a somewhat steep and tortuous lane, and find ourselves in Thames-street. Here we are in a region of cellar-flaps, which groan dismally or wheeze asthmatically, in different keys, as we pass over them. We turn our faces westward and pass the Custom House. It looks as if the freest of free trade had been established; as if all duties, inwards and outwards, were entirely abolished, and the whole building converted into one vast crèche for poor children, in which all the inmates went to bed at seven o'clock. There are no lights to be seen except in a couple of windows on the top floor. Who is this burning the midnight gas, I wonder? Is it a surveyor-general, an inspector-

general, a comptroller of accounts, a landing waiter, a searcher, or a jerquer? I have rather an idea that it must be a jerquer. I have not, of course, the least notion what a jerquer is; except that he must be something very mysterious, and, I should opine, more likely than any one else to carry on his operations at two in the morning. We meet a dilapidated chiffonier, who is grubbing about amongst the rubbish heaps, and he is evidently very much scared at finding two tolerably respectable-looking individuals on his own ground so early in the morning. We pass through Billingsgate Market, but we are too early, there is no one astir yet; but the bright light glimmering in the upper windows of a certain famous hostelry, close to the river, indicates that in an hour's time the place will be busy enough. In Darkhouse-lane we meet an individual, something between a decayed merman and a pinchbeck Diogenes, who is carrying a lantern, and talking to himself, and under the church of St. Magnus we meet a misanthropic scavenger who is talking to his horses something about "Hullywhoop." These are the only persons we encounter. And yet, in a little while, this thoroughfare will be crammed with waggons, porter will jostle porter, and each vie with the other in the depth and variety of his objurgations. There will be shouting and screaming; there will be a loading and unloading of merchandise; warehouse doors will be thrown open; shops will display their wares, and the whirr and whiz of the crane will be heard without ceasing. And yet, at the present moment, it is as quiet and deserted as the back street of a small cathedral town. There are noisome odours as of decomposed fish, of decayed fruit, and of bilge water. There is an irritating dust containing splinters of straw, which our friend the scavenger has distributed in the ardour of his occupation. Let us go up the steps on to London Bridge, and see if we can get a breath of fresh air.

Up the dirty, greasy, disreputable steps we pick our way gingerly. There we find one or two poor creatures, one or two poor women in rags, sleeping so soundly, enjoying a few hours' fitful oblivion, only to wake up and find life more wretched than ever. Tread softly, hush your voice; do not let us take away the small scrap of comfort that oblivion alone can give. The bridge is almost deserted, for the scavengers have finished their work; there are no vehicles on it, so you have every chance of crossing without seeing the proverbial

grey horse. There is a policeman on one side of the way and a young lady in a red shawl on the other, and one or two shapeless masses—it is hard to say to which sex they belong—crouch on the stone seats here and there. We find a seat that is untenanted, and we lean over the parapet, and gaze down-stream at the lights winking in the dark night, and glittering in the black river as it hurries to the sea. Far away down the Pool can we trace them; down past the Tower, through the groves of masts and the tangle of cordage, past the forest of Dockdom, the picturesque shores of Wapping, and as far as Limehouse can we see the tiny glitter of lamps, like fallen stars in the distance. Here and there we notice a red or a green light, marking the situation of some pier or station; there are no busy boats about, no fussy penny steamers to break the ceaseless swirl of the dark river as it hurries away from the silent City. There is nothing to check the monotonous rush of its onward course. Stay, what is that black mysterious boat that is hovering about, and shattering the long lines of lamp-reflections. Is it the police boat? Or is it the craft of some aquatic burglar? What is that they are towing astern? They break the silence of the night by shouting. There is some sign of life on board the Hull steamer at Fresh Wharf; there is a clanking of chains, and a faint steam issuing from her funnel; a heavy waggon has just lumbered over the bridge in the direction of the Borough Market, and a couple of cabs have clattered along in the opposite direction; there are sounds as of the shunting of carriages, and bumping of turn-tables in the Cannon-street Station. The spell is broken. Here comes an empty hansom. Let us jump into it, and drive home, for in a little while the City will be no longer silent, but will wake up to that feverish anxiety of speculation, to the everlasting fighting and struggling for so much per cent, to trade, to barter, to profit and to loss, which will last as long as Commerce lives, and until Enterprise retires from business.

GOOD OLD ENGLISH FARE.

At a moment when the School of Cookery is likely to become one of the most popular schools in England, it may not be unwise to ascertain the rise and origin of that peculiar theory of plain food which exercises an unquestioned supremacy over the affections

of Englishmen. It is worthy of remark that in this country the example of the more elevated ranks, so omnipotent in other questions of fashion, has entirely failed to influence the rank and file of Englishmen on the one great subject of cookery. The coarse food of our Saxon ancestors has not only survived the shock of the Norman conquest, but has, in spite of continental innovations, gained perceptible ground over "kickshaws" and "messes" during the last two centuries.

Plain roast and boiled have fought their way up in the world, and the food of the people finds favour in the sight of those whose ample means command the resources of an elaborate cuisine. This is the more remarkable, as the Normans introduced into this country a system of cookery of a very high order, and it appears strange to the antiquarian that the traditions of the Norman school should have become completely obscured during the last century—a period of heavy coarse eating, and hard drinking, in all classes of society. Compared with the banquets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the repasts of the last century sink into insignificance. At the tables of the early Norman kings profuse quantity was exhibited, and, despite the occasional use of coarse material, the excellence of the cookery throws into the shade the puny efforts of later epochs.

The monasteries were not only the depositories of what little learning had survived the irruption of the barbarians, but served also as culinary libraries. A spirit of magnificent hospitality was maintained, and many instances are given of the generous profusion exhibited by great ecclesiastics. When Ralph, Abbot of Canterbury, was installed in 1309, six thousand persons were entertained, and the dishes served up on that occasion amounted to three thousand. Robert Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, provided daily victuals for five thousand poor people, and immense crowds of the sick and infirm, who were unable to attend at his gate, were supplied with necessaries at their own houses. With the sympathetic feeling of true "bons vivants" the churchmen of the day did not forget their own repasts, and the magnitude and portentous length of these entertainments gave rise to the following anecdote:

"An Italian, having a sute here in Eng-lande to the archbishoppe of Yorke, that then was, and commynge to Yorke, when one of the prebendaries there brake his breade, as they terme it, and thereupon made a solemne longe diner, the which

perhaps began at eleven and continued well nigh till fower in the afternoone, at the whiche diner this bishoppe was. It fortuned that as they were sette the Italian knockt at the gate, unto whom the porter, perceiving his errand, answered that my lord bishoppe was at diner. The Italian departed and returned betwixte twelve and one; the porter answered, they were yet at diner. He came again at two of the clock; the porter told hym they had not half dined. He came at three a clocke, unto whom the porter in a heat answered never a worde, but churlishlie did shutte the gates upon hym. Whereupon others told the Italian that ther was no speaking with my lord almoste all that daie for the solemne diner sake. The gentilman Italian, wonderyng much at such a long sitting, and greatly greved because he could not then speake with the archbysshoppe's grace, departed straight towards London; and leaving the dispatch of his matters with a dere frende of his, toke his journey towards Italie. Three yeres after, it happened that an Englishman came to Rome, with whom this Italian by chaunce fallying acquainted, asked hym if he knewe the archbshoppe of Yorke. The Englishman said, he knewe hym right well. 'I praye you tell me,' quoth the Italian, 'hath that archbshoppe yet dined?'

In the days of chivalry it was a costly business to ask a few friends to dinner. They were not content to eat and drink at the expense of the host, but fully expected—if the banquet partook of a ceremonial character—to carry away something more negotiable than a headache or an indigestion. They looked forward with a keen financial appetite to gifts of silver vessels, falcons, coats of mail, goodly horses, "certain gemmes, by curious art sette in gold; of purple and cloth-of-gold for men's apparell." Imagine a dinner-party of the present day at which cups and covers, weight-carrying hunters, bracelets and bangles should be distributed between the courses, and from which no guest should be permitted to depart until he had accepted sufficient cloth to make him a new suit! Ancient banquets were not only expensive but cumbrous. Many inconvenient ceremonies contributed to lengthen the hours consecrated to gastronomy. Certain dishes were brought in by a regular procession, the boar's head by a deputation of domestics, and the peacock by a contingent of fair dames. The peacock was styled "the food of lovers and the meat of lords."

It was roasted and served up whole, covered after dressing with the skin and feathers, the comb entire, and the tail spread. Sometimes the noble bird was covered with gold leaf instead of its feathers, but the prevailing taste appears to have been in favour of the peacock in full plumage. This triumph of culinary decoration was achieved in this wise:

"At a feeste roiall pecokkes shall be dight on this manner. Take and fle off the skynne with the fedurs, tayle and nekke, and the hed thereon; then take the skyn with all the fedurs, and lay hit on a table abrode; and strawe thereon grounden comyn; then take the pecokke and roste hym, and endore hym with rawe zolkes of egges; and when he is rosted, take hym of, and let hym coole awhile, and take and sowe hym in his skyn, and gilde his combe, and so serve hym forthe with the last cours."

Edward the Third dispensed a romantic hospitality, wherein eating and drinking, tournaments and love-making, were agreeably mingled; but it was under the reign of his immediate successor, Richard the Second, that the magnificent prodigality of royal entertainments rose to its greatest height. The cost of these banquets was enormous, and the salaries of the cooks—if they were ever paid—must have greatly helped to lighten the royal coffers. Two thousand cooks and three hundred servitors were required to dress food for, and wait upon, the ten thousand visitors who daily attended the court. To furnish food for this almost incredible number of guests, twenty-eight oxen, three hundred sheep, myriads of fowls, and immense quantities of game, were immolated daily.

Richard the Second was not only a magnificent host, but a true epicure, and it was during his reign that the celebrated *Forme of Cury* was compiled by his master cooks, A.D. 1390. This curious vellum roll contained one hundred and ninety-six formulæ for the concoction of the dishes most in favour towards the close of the fourteenth century. Apparently the master cooks were not the sole authors of this curious work, as it was compiled by "assent and avysement of maisters of phisik and of philosophie," who dwelt in the court of King Richard. "First it techith a man for to make commune pottages, and commune meetis for howshold as they shold be made, craftly and holsomly. Afterward it techith for to make curious potages, and meetes, and sotiltees for alle maner of states, both hye

and lowe." The roll is preceded by a table of contents to "teche a man without taryng to fynd what meete that hym lust for to have."

The enduring qualities of certain popular French dishes is clearly demonstrated by the *Forme of Cury*. Our Gallic neighbours have proved the conservative nature of their instincts by retaining even unto this day their fondness for cabbage-soup. The ancient recipe stands thus :

"Caboches (cabbages) in potage.—Take caboches and quarter hem, and seeth hem in gode broth with oynonns y mynced and the whyte of lekes y slyt and corve (cut) smale and do thereto saffron and salt and force it with powder donce (allspice)."

Barring the saffron—a pestilent ingredient of mediæval cookery—this recipe differs but little from those now in use.

Rabbits and chickens were treated in this wise :

"Connynges (rabbits) in gravey.—Take connynges, smite hem to pecys. Parboile hem, and drawe hem with a gode broth, with almandes blanchèd and brayed. Do (put) thereinne sugar and powdor gynger and boyle it, and the flessch therewith. Floor it with sugar, and with powder gynger, and serve forth."

Rabbits were also converted into a dish called :

"Egurdouce (aigre-doux, sour-sweet).—Take connynges or kydde, and smyte hem on pecys rawe, and frye hem in white grece. Take raysons of corrance (currants), and frye hem, take oynonns, parboile hem, and hewe hem smale, and frye hem; take red wyne, sugar with powder of pepor, of gynger of canel (cinnamon), salt and cast thereto, and let it seeth with a gode quantite of white grece, and serve it forth."

This dish was probably called sour-sweet from there being no trace of anything sour in its composition. Most of the recipes in the *Forme of Cury* recommend the use of sugar and ginger, where those condiments would be suppressed by Monsieur Gouffé.

Hoche-pot, or hotch-potch, had also its mediæval representative :

"Gees in hoggepot.—Take gees and smyte hem on pecys. Cast hem in a pot; do thereto half wyne and half water; and do thereto a gode quantite of oynonns and erbest (herbs). Set it over the fyre, and cover it fast. Make a layor (mixture) of brede and blode, and lay it therewith. Do thereto powder fort (a mix-

ture of the stronger spices), and serve it fort."

The digestive organs of our ancestors were probably equal to the task imposed upon them by stewed goose—apparently a powerful dish—but many of the preparations recommended by King Richard's cook are exceedingly delicate, as, for instance, "blank-mang," a very different dish to the opaque kind of jelly now served under the name of blanc-mange :

"Blank-mang.—Take capons and seeth hem, thenne take hem up. Take almandes blanchèd. Grynd hem, and alay (mix) hem up with the same broth. Cast the mylk in a pot. Waisshe rys and do thereto, and let it seeth. Thanne take brawne of caponns, teere it small and do thereto. Take white grece, sugar, and salt, and cast thereinne. Lat it seeth. Then messe it forth and florish (garnish) it with aneys in confyt rede, other whyte (anised confectioned, red or white), and with almandes fryed in oyle, and serve it forth."

Dishes of this nature explain the enormous consumption of raw material in mediæval kitchens, and also throw a light upon the cause of the impecuniosity of the Plantagenet kings. It is worthy of note that the confection of "purées" of vegetables was not unknown in the days of Wat Tyler. "Peerey of peson" is simply Norman English for a *purée de pois*, or green pea soup, a dish not unknown to the banquets of to-day. The Crusades had added to sauces of Western Europe that known as :

"Sawse Sarzyne (Saracen sauce).—Take heppes (hips) and make hem clene. Take almandes blanchèd. Fry hem in oyle, and bray hem in a mortar with heppes. Drawe it up with rede wyne, and do thereinne sugar ynowhg (enough) with powder fort. Lat it be stondyng (stiff), and alay it with floer of rys, and color it with alkenet, and messe it forth, and florish (garnish) it with pomegarnet. If thou wilt, in flesshe day, seeth capons, and take the brawn and tese hem smal and do put thereto, and make the lico (liquor) of this broth."

Cooks of Chaucer's day took small account of capons. They constantly recommend the student to take capons and "smyte hem in pecys," or "hewe hem in gobbets," or tease them small or bray them in a mortar. Almonds also appear to enter largely into the composition of the best dishes. Almonds must have cost a startling price in the fourteenth century, when transit was necessarily slow, difficult, and dan-

gerous. Many of the dishes of "fyshe" were highly elaborated. Among others we find a recipe for making salmon into a kind of thick soup or purée, with almonds, milk, and rice-flour. Chysanne was a fish stew scientifically prepared. Laumpreys were served in what was then called galyntyne—a hot preparation very different from the galantine of modern days. The strict observation of fast days accounts for the large space devoted to fish cookery, and for the strange fishes, such as conger, sturgeon, and porpoise, set down in the list of delicacies. The authors of King Richard's cookery-book knew well how to dress "oysters in gravey," to make mussel-broth, and to make "cawdel"—a sort of thick soup—of these shell-fish. They also give sundry recipes for making white and brown sauces for capons, and recommend the roasted and pounded livers of the fowl for making "sawse noyre," surely an excellent plan. We also discover that rissoles and croustades were not unknown to these artists, who give the following recipe for:

"Daryols.—Take creme of cove, mylke of almandes. Do thereto ayren (eggs) with sugar, safronn, and salt. Meddle it yfere (mix it thoroughly). Do it in a coffyn of two ynche depe, bake it wel, and serve it forth."

It is remarkable that throughout the *Forme of Cury* we find it impossible to discover the slightest trace of plain food. When anything is to be boiled we are told to "seeth it in a gode broth," or a court bouillon made of wine and water. Roasting is only spoken of as a preliminary to some operation of a more complicated description, and broils are not mentioned. Meat roasted and boiled was apparently left to "those of the meaner sort," for so far as we can discover the great lords contented themselves with stews, hashes, and made dishes generally.

A curious roll, which bears the date of 1381, differs but slightly in style of cookery, but much in spelling, from the *Forme of Cury*. This is evidently the work of a philosopher, for the author declares that "cookery is the best medicine." The English of this artist is, however, so peculiar, that we shall only extract one recipe, that for making furmenty, still a favourite Easter dish in the western counties. It will be observed that "nym" in 1381 signified simply "take," and had not yet acquired its later meaning "steal." Shakespeare clearly applies the word to Falstaff's follower in the latter signification.

"For to make furmenty.—Nym clene wete (wheat), and bray it in a mortar well, that the holys (hulls) gon al of and seyt (seeth) yt til yt breste and nym yt up and lat yt kele (cool) and nym fayre fresch broth and swete mylke of almandys or swete mylke of kyne and temper yt al. And nym the yolkys of eyryn (eggs). Boyle it a lityl and set yt adon (down) and messe it forthe wyth fat venyson and fresche moton."

The mention of fresh mutton may provoke a smile, until we recollect that, during the Middle Ages, both sheep and oxen were slaughtered in the autumn and salted for the winter. Stall-feeding was almost unknown, and there is no doubt that the great mass of the population lived upon salted meat, that is to say when they got any meat at all. In the days of cattle-lifting, it was doubtless a great comfort to the owner of lands and beeves to get as many of the latter as possible salted, and safely stowed before the approach of winter.

Even at this early date the art of larding was well known, and is recommended for "cranys and herons, pecokys and partrigchis." In the account of the great feast at the enthronisation of the "reverende father in God George Nevell Archbishop of York and Chancelour of Englande, in the VI yere of the raigne of Kyng Edwarde the fourth" we find curious evidence of the favour in which strange edibles were then held. Among the goodly provision made for the banquet we find enumerated in addition to one thousand sheep, one hundred and four oxen, three hundred and four "veales" and a like number of "porkes," four hundred swans, six wild bulls, one hundred and four peacocks, two hundred and four cranes, a like number of bitterns, four hundred herons, a thousand egrets, one hundred curlews, and twelve "porposes and seales."

At this sublime feast the "Earle of Warwicke" officiated as steward, and the guests were placed at various tables according to rank. It does not appear, however, that on this great occasion the bills of fare graduated in like proportion as was done at the enthronisation feast of Wilham Warham in 1504.

At all these ceremonial banquets a most important place was filled by "sotiltees." These were curious devices mainly in sugar and pastry, and adorned either with the arms of the host, or with allegorical groups more or less germane to the matter in hand. The lengthy description of these "sotiltees"

leave no doubt as to the skill of the ancient confectioners, who expended much time and skill in the building of these singular edifices.

That the art of cookery should have declined rapidly in England after the Elizabethan period appears singular, but it is vain to seek in the records of later banquets for the magnificence that distinguished those of an earlier date. Dropping down to the period of the Revolution we find that coarse food had almost entirely supplanted the delicate dishes of the mediæval cooks, and about the reign of the king who was puzzled by an apple dumpling the culinary art sank, as might have been expected, to the lowest depths of degradation. Perhaps this decadence was due in great measure to the coarse tastes of the Georges, of whom the first liked stale oysters, and the last, in spite of his pretended refinement, was a gross feeder, who preferred a shoulder of mutton and onion sauce to the loftiest inspirations of his chef. It would, however, be unfair not to admit that the splendid quality of English meat and vegetables has had much to do with the national indifference to refined cookery. The raw material is so good in itself that it is almost impossible to spoil it. Hence has arisen a barbarous indifference to the culinary art which is often denounced in this country as a mere device for making bad food palatable. Foreign travel, however, is gradually producing a reaction in our national cuisine, and the establishment of a School of Cookery at South Kensington will probably do much to introduce not only economy but elegance to the tables of England.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BOSH AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LXIX. A SEARCH.

THE funeral was over; but the old house of Dorraclough was not quiet again till the night fell, and the last tenant had swallowed his last draught of beer, and mounted and rode away, through the mist, to his distant farm over the fells.

The moon shone peacefully over mere and fell, and on the time-worn church of Golden Friars, and through the window, on to the grey flags, that lie over Sir Harry Rokestone. Never did she keep serener watch over the first night of a mortal's sleep in his last narrow bed.

Richard Marston saw this pure light,

and musing, looked from the window. It shone, he thought, over his wide estate. Beyond the mere, all but Clusted, for many a mile, was his own. At this side, away in the direction of distant Haworth, a broad principality of moss and heath, with scattered stretches of thin arable and pasture, ran side by side with the Mardykes estate, magnificent in vastness, if not in rental.

His dreams were not of feudal hospitality and the hearty old-world life. His thoughts were far away from lonely Dorraclough. Ambition built his castles in the air; but they were nothing very noble. He would subscribe to election funds, place his county influence at the disposal of the minister; spend money on getting and keeping a seat; be found in his place whenever a critical vote was impending; and by force of this, and of his county position, and the old name—for he would take the name of Rokestone, in spite of his uncle's awkward direction about his epitaph, and no one could question his relationship—by dint of all this, with, I dare say, the influence of a rich marriage, he hoped to get on, not from place to place, but what would answer his purpose as well, from title to title. First to revive the baronetage, and then, after some fifteen or twenty years more of faithful service, to become Baron Rokestone, of Dorraclough.

It was not remorse, then, that kept the usurper's eyes wide open that night. His conscience had no more life in it than the window-stone. It troubled him with no compunction. There was at his heart, on the contrary, a vindictive elation at having defeated, with so much simplicity, the will of his uncle.

Bright rose the sun next morning over Dorraclough, a sun of good omen. Richard Marston had appointed three o'clock, as the most convenient hour for all members of the conference, for a meeting and a formality. A mere formality, in truth, it was, a search for the will of Sir Harry Rokestone. Mr. Blount had slept at Dorraclough. Mr. Jaricot, a short, plump man, of five-and-fifty, with a grave face and a bullet head, covered with short, lank, black hair, accompanied by his confidential man, Mr. Spaight, arrived in his gig, just as the punctual clock of Dorraclough struck three.

Very soon after the old vicar rode up, on his peaceable pony, and came into the drawing-room, where the little party were assembled, with sad, kind face, and gentle, old-fashioned ceremony, with a little pow-

dering of dust in the wrinkles of his clerical costume.

It was with a sense of pleasant satire that Richard Marston had observed old Lemuel Blount ever since he had been assured that the expected will was not forthcoming. Those holy men, how they love an annuity. Not that they like money, of course; that's Mammon; but because it lifts them above earthly cares, and gives them the power of relieving the wants of their fellow-Christians. How slyly the old gentleman had managed it! How thoughtful his appointing himself guardian to the young lady; what endless opportunities his powers over the settlements would present of making handsome terms for himself with an intending bridegroom!

On arriving, in full confidence that the will was safe in its iron repository, Christian could not have looked more comfortable when he enjoyed his famous prospect from the Delectable Mountains. But when it turned out that the will was nowhere to be found, the same Christian, trudging on up the hill of difficulty in his old "burthened fashion," could not have looked more hang-dog and overpowered than he.

His low spirits, his sighs and ejaculations, had amused Richard Marston extremely.

Mr. Blount, having, as I said, heard that the vicar had searched the "safe," and that Mr. Spaight, accompanied by Mr. Marston and the housekeeper, had searched all the drawers, desks, boxes, presses, and other locked-up places in the house, in vain, for any paper having even a resemblance to a will, said, "It is but a form; but as you propose it, be it so."

And now this form was to be complied with.

Mr. Marston told the servant to send Mrs. Shackleton with the keys.

Mr. Marston led the way, and the four other gentlemen followed, attended by the housekeeper.

There was not much talking; a clatter of feet on uncarpeted floors, the tiny jingle of small keys, opening of doors, and clapping of lids, and now and then Mrs. Shackleton's hard treble was heard in answer to an interrogatory.

This went on for more than twenty minutes up-stairs, and then the exploring party came down again, Richard Marston talking to the vicar, Mr. Blount to Mr. Spaight, and Mr. Jarlcot, the attorney, listening to Mrs. Shackleton, the housekeeper.

Richard Marston led the party to Sir Harry's room.

The carpet was still on the floor, the curtains hanging still, in gloomy folds, to the ground. Sir Harry's hat and stick lay on the small round table, where he had carelessly thrown them when he came in from his last walk about Dorracleugh, his slippers lay on the hearth-rug before his easy-chair, his pipe was on the mantelpiece.

The party stood in this long and rather gloomy room in straggling disarray, still talking.

"There's Pixie," said old Mr. Spaight, who had been a bit of a sportsman, and loved coursing in his youth, as he stopped before a portrait of a greyhound. "Sir Harry's dog; fine dog, Pixie, won the cup twice on Doppleton Lea thirty-two years ago." But this was a murmured meditation, for he was a staid man of business now, and his liking for dogs and horses was incongruous, and no one in the room heard him. Mr. Jarlcot's voice recalled him.

"Mr. Marston was speaking to you, Mr. Spaight."

"Oh! I was just saying I think nothing could have been more careful," said Mr. Marston, "than the search you made up-stairs, in presence of me and Mrs. Shackleton, on Thursday last?"

"No, sir; certainly nothing; it could not possibly have escaped us," answered Mr. Spaight.

"And that is your opinion also?" asked Mr. Jarlcot of Richard Marston.

"Clearly," he answered.

"I'll make a note of that if you allow me," said Mr. Jarlcot; and he made an entry, with Mr. Marston's concurrence, in his pocket-book.

"And now about this," said Mr. Jarlcot, with a clumsy bow to Mr. Marston, and touching the door of the safe with his open hand.

"You have got the key, sir?" said Marston to the good vicar with silver hair, who stood meekly by, distraught and melancholy, an effigy of saintly contemplation.

"Oh, yes," said the vicar, wakening up. "Yes; the key, but — but, you know, there's nothing there."

He moved the key vaguely about as he looked from one to the other, as if inviting any one who pleased to try.

"I think, sir, perhaps it will be as well if you will kindly open it yourself," said Marston.

"Yes, surely; I suppose so; with all my heart," said the vicar.

The door of the safe opened easily, and displayed the black iron void, into which all looked.

Of course no one was surprised. But Mr. Blount shook his head, lifted up his hands, and groaned audibly, "I am very sorry."

Mr. Marston affected not to hear him.

CHAPTER LIX. A FIND.

"I THINK," said Mr. Jarlcot, "it will be desirable that I should take a note of any information which Mr. Marston and the vicar may be so good as to supply with respect to the former search in the same place. I think, sir," he continued, addressing the vicar, "you mentioned that the deceased Sir Harry Rokestone placed that key in your charge on the evening of his departure from this house for London?"

"So it was, sir," said the vicar.

"Was it out of your possession for any time?"

"For about three quarters of an hour. I handed it Mr. Marston on his way to this house; but as I was making a sick call near this, I started not many minutes after he left me, and on the way it struck me that I might as well have back the key. I arrived here, I believe, almost as soon as he, and he quite agreed with me that I had better get the key back again into——"

"Into your own custody," interposed Marston. "You may recollect that it was I who suggested it the moment you came."

"And the key was not out of your possession, Mr. Marston, during the interval?" said Mr. Jarlcot.

"Not for one moment," answered Richard Marston, promptly.

"And you did not, I think you mentioned, open that safe?"

"Certainly not. I made no use whatever of that key at any time. I never saw that safe open until the vicar opened it in my presence, and we both saw that it contained nothing; so did Mrs. Shackleton. And, I think, we can all—I know I can, to my part—depose, on oath, to the statements we have made."

Mr. Jarlcot raised his eyebrows solemly, slowly shook his head, and, having replaced his note-book in his pocket, drew a long breath in, through his rounded lips, with a sound that almost amounted to a whistle.

"Nothing can be more distinct; it amounts to demonstration," he said, rais-

ing his head, putting his hands into his trousers-pockets, and looking slowly round the cornice. "Haven't you something to say?" he added, laying his hand gently on Mr. Blount's arm, and then turning a step or two away, and Marston, who could not comprehend what he fancied to be an almost affected disappointment at the failure to discover a will, thought he saw his eyes wander, when he thought no one was looking, curiously to the grate and the hobs; perhaps in search, as he suspected, of paper ashes.

"I am deeply sorry," exclaimed Mr. Blount, throwing himself into a chair in undisguised despondency. "The will, as it was drafted, would have provided splendidly for Miss Ethel Ware, and left you, Mr. Marston, an annuity of two thousand five hundred a year, and a sum of five thousand pounds. For two or three years I had been urging him to execute it; it is evident he never did. He has destroyed the draft, instead of executing it. That hope is quite gone—totally." Mr. Blount stood up and said, laying his hand upon his forehead, "I am grieved; I am shocked; I am profoundly grieved."

Mr. Marston was strongly tempted to tell Mr. Blount what he thought of him. Jarlcot and he, no doubt, understood one another, and had intended making a nice thing of it.

He could not smile, or even sneer, just then, but Mr. Marston fixed on Lemuel Blount a sidelong look of the sternest contempt.

"There is, then," said Mr. Blount, collecting himself, "no will."

"That seems pretty clear," said Mr. Marston, with, in spite of himself, a cold scorn in his tone. "I think so; and I rather fancy you think so too."

"Except this," continued Mr. Blount, producing a paper from his pocket, at which he had been fumbling. "Mr. Jarlcot will hand you a copy. I urged him, God knows how earnestly, to revoke it. It was made at the period of his greatest displeasure with you; it leaves everything to Miss Ethel Ware, and gives you, I grieve to say, an annuity of but four hundred a year. It appoints me guardian to the young lady, in the same terms that the latter will would have done, and leaves me, beside, an annuity of five hundred a year, half of which I shall, if you don't object, make over to you."

"Oh! oh! a will? That's all right," said Marston, trying to smile with lips that

had grown white. "I, of course, you—we all wish nothing but what is right and fair."

Mr. Jarlcot handed him a new neatly-folded paper, endorsed "Copy of the will of the late Sir Harry Rokestone, Baronet." Richard Marston took it with a hand that trembled—a hand that had not often trembled before.

"Then, I suppose, Mr. Blount, you will look in on me, by-and-bye, to arrange about the steps to be taken about proving it," said Mr. Jarlcot.

"It's all right, I dare say," said Mr. Marston, vaguely, looking from man to man uncertainly. "I expected a will, of course; I don't suppose I have a friend among you, gentlemen, why should I? I am sure I have some enemies. I don't know what country attorneys and nincompoops, and Golden Friars' bumpkins may think of it, but I know what the world will think, that I'm swindled by a d—d conspiracy, and that that old man, who's in his grave, has behaved like a villain."

"Oh, Mr. Marston, your dead uncle," said the good vicar, lifting his hand in deprecation, with gentle horror. "You wouldn't, you can't."

"What the devil is it to you, sir?" cried Marston, with a look as if he could have struck him. "I say it's all influence, and juggling; I'm not such a simpleton. No one expected, of course, that opportunities like those should not have been improved. The thing's transparent. I wish you joy, Mr. Blount, of your five hundred a year, and you, Mr. Jarlcot, of your approaching management of the estates and the money; if you fancy a will like that, turning his own nephew adrift on the world in favour of Methodists and attorneys, and a girl he never saw till the other day, is to pass unchallenged, you're very much mistaken; it's just the thing that always happens when an old man like that dies; there's a will of course—every one understands it. I'll have you all where you won't like."

Mrs. Shackleton, with her mouth pursed, her nose high in air, and her brows knit over a vivid pair of eyes, was the only one of the group who seemed ready to explode

in reply; Mr. Blount looked simply shocked and confounded; the vicar maintained his bewildered and appealing stare; Mr. Spaight's eyebrows were elevated above his spectacles, and his mouth opened, as he leaned forward his long nose; Mr. Jarlcot's brow looked thunderous and a little flushed; all were staring for some seconds in silence on Mr. Marston, whose concluding sentences had risen almost to a shriek, with a laugh running through it.

"I think, Mr. Marston," said Jarlcot, after a couple of efforts, "you would do well to—to consider a little the bearing of your language; I don't think you can quite see its force."

"I wish you could; I mean it; and you shall feel it too. You shall hear of me sooner than you all think. I'm not a fellow to be pigeoned so simply."

With these words, he walked into the hall, and a few moments after they heard the door shut with a violent clang.

A solemn silence reigned in the room for a little time; these peaceable people seemed stunned by the explosion.

"Evasit, erupit," murmured the vicar, sadly, raising his hands, and shaking his head. "How very painful!"

"I don't wonder. I make great allowances," said Mr. Blount. "I have been very unhappy myself, ever since it was ascertained that he had not executed the new will. I am afraid the young man will never consent to accept a part of my annuity—he is so spirited."

"Don't be uneasy on that point," said Mr. Jarlcot; "if you lodge it, he'll draw it; not—but I think—you might do—better—with your money."

There was something in the tone, undefinable, that prompted a dark curiosity.

Mr. Blount turned on him a quick look of inquiry. Mr. Jarlcot lowered his eyes, and turned them then to the window, and remarked that the summer was making a long stay this year.

Mr. Blount looked down and slowly rubbed his forehead, thinking, and sighed deeply, and he said, "It's a wonderful world, this; may the Lord have mercy on us all."

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER IV. THE DOWN FARM.

I HURRIED home, running nearly all the way. I avoided Purrington, taking the shorter cut through the meadows, over the hatches, and so, round by the mill, on to the open down.

I was thoroughly content. I had been the hero, at last, of a real adventure. True, it had not involved that peril of life or limb which ordinarily should attend the experiences of knights errant. But something had come of my visits to the Dark Tower. I had seen a satyr.

Now that I had quitted him, and knew myself to be none the worse, but, indeed, somewhat the better, for having seen him, I rather regretted that he had not been a giant, or even a mysterious dwarf, addicted to strange gestures and wild speeches, his colour a bright yellow, perhaps, if choice were permitted in that respect. Still a satyr was something. I was well inclined towards satyrs. They were not very intelligent perhaps. And I had some scorn in particular for that one of whom Æsop related, who was so angry with his entertainer, the cottager, for breathing on his fingers to warm them, and blowing on his porridge to cool it. A satyr who could not distinguish between these two processes must certainly have been rather stupid. But altogether satyrs, what with their delight in dangling bunches of grapes before them, in wearing wreaths of vine-leaves for raiment, in playing on their pan-pipes, and dancing and leaping in the air, the inevitable result, probably, of their being endowed with goat legs, presented many interesting characteristics. My satyr had

eschewed vine-leaves, and adopted civilised costume; he had produced no grapes, but he had consumed much rum-and-water; he had not played on the pipes, although he had smoked one. Still, as things went, there was much to admire about him. He had shown me a fine picture, his snuff still set me sneezing at intervals, and he had given me three sovereigns. Such conduct might be unusual with satyrs, but otherwise it could not be said to be objectionable. On the whole, I greatly approved my satyr.

The Down Farm, our house—I say "ours" simply because I was permitted to live in it many years, and to view it as my home—was an old red-roofed, red-faced building, that could claim little admiration on the score of its looks. It was two-storied, of irregular design, crowned with towering stacks of chimneys, and boasting a large sun-dial above its roomy, worm-eaten wooden porch. But what with drab and orange lichen patches, a partial tapestry of ivy, and a coating here and there of bright green velvet moss; to say nothing of luxuriant creepers that tried hard to conceal its harsh outlines by flourishing about their graceful arms, and proffering flowers and foliage in unexpected places; the Down Farm House had some title to be considered picturesque. It stood alone—there was no other habitation nearer than two miles—built in a hollow of Purrington Down, the shoulders of which sheltered it somewhat from the fierce and chill blasts that often swept over Steepleborough plain. A neat garden, with a smooth elastic carpet of lawn, standard rose-trees, laurel shrubberies, and trim, firm gravel paths, fronted the house. The farm-yard, stables, out-buildings, and offices were in the rear, and these were backed by a noble old barn, its timbers a kind of dun purple in hue, with

a thickly-thatched roof, grey and rusty from lapse of time and long exposure to sun and rain. Flocks of pigeons were for ever hovering about this building, holding mysterious bird-parliaments or congresses—occasionally, indeed, something very like prize-fights—in its neighbourhood, and relieving its sober tints with a pleasant freckle of dazzling white. And yellow rotund barley or wheat ricks usually flanked the farm-house, standing sentry there in a stolid and corpulent way, as though to ward off intruders and to vouch its dignity and prosperity.

The Down Farm was the property of my uncle, Hugh Orme; his own freehold, as it had been his father's, and his grandfather's before him. But his land was light in quality, and, as farms were accounted in our part of the country, of limited extent. He had secured a lease, therefore, of many adjoining acres, including certain rich water meadows on the marge of the Purr, the little river, a branch of the Rumble, which twists and glitters, like a silver chain on a lady's neck, about the dips and crevices of Steeple-borough plain. He was thus both a landed proprietor and a tenant farmer upon the estate of Lord Overbury. But inasmuch as the strength of a thing is determined by its weakest part, so his social position—a matter strictly viewed in our county—was ruled to be that of a tenant farmer. It was well understood that he was not to be classed among our landowners and gentry. This was of the less consequence, seeing that "gentlefolks" did not abound with us. Lord Overbury, the great man of our district, was, as I have already stated, an absentee. Other magnates of the county, such as the Englefields, the Templemores, and the Rockburys of Hurlstone Castle, lived miles and miles away from Purring-ton. Moreover, the matter was of the very slightest concern to my uncle, an unambitious man, of simple tastes and habits, leading a very homely sort of life, devoted to his farm, and rarely crossing the borders of his parish.

Hugh Orme was a bachelor. He was now perhaps between fifty and sixty, and it was presumed that he would not enter the married state. He was said to be rich, but on that head he had never spoken a word in my hearing. He was reserved, sparing of speech, and somewhat ungracious of manner; but he was much respected by the whole country-side as a right-minded neighbourly man, and an authority, in an old-fashioned way, upon all agricultural

questions. He was one of the churchwardens of Purrington. The whitewashing of the fresco, however, had been long before his time. I am not sure that he would not have approved of it, but, at any rate, he must be absolved of all blame attending its accomplishment.

With my uncle, presiding over his household, lived his sister, Mrs. Nightingale, my mother. I was her only child. Of my father I knew nothing, but that he had died shortly after my birth, and that his widow and infant son had thereupon become the charge of his brother-in-law, Hugh Orme.

There are few things the very young estimate more erroneously than the age and stature of the elders about them. I am now conscious that I believed all the mature friends and acquaintances of my early life to be much older, and a great deal taller, than they really were. The eyes of childhood are in the nature of magnifying glasses; its point of view is on a very low level. I long thought my uncle to be of patriarchal age, his height colossal. Our cook, whose name was Kem, and who was, no doubt, a robust and portly woman, I held to be an elderly person of most marvellous bulk. And my first impression of my mother suggests to me a lady of advanced years and towering figure. I am now satisfied that I was much mistaken about this subject. At the time of which I am narrating my mother must have been still young, and she was scarcely above middle height. She held herself upright, however, and her hair was even then very grey, having been originally of that deep black hue which so rapidly and prematurely blanches. She had well-defined brows, and large, luminous dark eyes; her features were handsome and regular, if her expression was fixed and stern. She spoke in deep, firm tones, with a peculiar distinctness and deliberation of utterance. Her manner was dignified and composed even to severity. She was usually dressed in black, her cap of white lace or fine muslin, gathered and fastened under her chin, as the matronly fashion then was. A certain majesty, wholly natural and unaffected, usually attended her movements.

I entered the house by the back way, through the kitchen, as, indeed, most people did, the front door being seldom used, except on solemn occasions of rare occurrence. Moreover, the shortest way in was certainly through the kitchen.

I knew at once that I was late, for I found

Kem—to this day I don't know whether that was her christian or her surname, I never knew her addressed or referred to but simply as Kem—lifting a steaming pudding from a pot on the kitchen fire. There was a pleasant smell of wet cloth and hot pudding-crust.

"Apple, isn't it, Kem?" I asked.

"Yes, Master Duke, but you're main late. I thought you were lost. And what a heat you've run yourself into. I kept the dinner back five minutes. More I durstn't do, for the master was terrible sharp with me, and the mutton was spiling. Go in, my dear, before all's quite cold."

Kem kissed me, as she was fond of doing, rasping me rather with her rough hot face, a scorched crimson in colour from her incessant bending over the glowing fire. We were fast friends, Kem and I; and I did not so much object to her caresses, except that they betrayed too pungently her overweening appetite for onions. I wished that she could have kissed me less, or abstained more from that potent vegetable.

"Where have you been straying, Duke? and how late you are," said my mother, as I entered the parlour. "And you're quite out of breath with running. No, don't speak now. I see you've something to tell us. But we'll hear it by-and-bye. Eat your dinner first. It's your own fault that it's cold."

My uncle said nothing. He busied himself with carving the leg of mutton for me.

I may say that as a child I rarely underwent formal scolding or punishment. I was made sensible of my misdeeds by being subjected to a sort of silent and unsympathetic treatment. Moreover, the eyes of my mother and uncle seemed to be fixed upon me, something after a mesmeriser's fashion, for hours and hours together.

I don't think that they were fully conscious of this conduct of theirs, or had adopted and systematised it with aforethought. But people leading as they did secluded lives in a remote country place, are apt to acquire the ruminating habits of the cattle in their fields. When my uncle, holding his peace, watched me persistently with an air of intense inquiry and meditation, I cannot fancy that I was any more virtually present in his thoughts than I engaged the ruminations of one of his sleek oxen reclining in the water meadow, and staring with benignant vacancy at the surrounding landscape. Both seemed to be gazing and studying earnestly; but probably no real intention or intelligence animated their occupation.

As I ate my dinner in silence, my uncle, watching me, leant back in his chair, and, as his way was, stirred his finger round and round the interior of his circular snuff-box, as though he were performing upon some mute and diminutive tambourine. My mother also closely regarded me, her thin mitted hands folded before her upon the table-cloth.

The withholding of sympathy is a real punishment to a child; in such wise his natural loquacity is suppressed, and he is denied the privilege of bartering his own small thoughts for the more valuable mental wares of his elder neighbours. A child is a most social creature, much dependent for his welfare and happiness upon communion with the world around him.

I had returned home, bent upon setting forth at full length my adventure at the great house. But gradually my intention waned and relaxed. The difficulties of my narrative became more and more apparent to me; its charms for others less manifest. To begin with, I had to confess dereliction of duty in straying so far as the hall, and in entering the park.

My story, when the time came at last for telling it, was therefore much more brief and ineffective than I had originally designed it to be. It simply amounted to this: I had met a gentleman who had taken me into the great house and shown me a picture. I did not describe him as a satyr, and I withheld all mention of the rum-and-water, the pinch of snuff, and the three sovereigns he had given me. It had suddenly occurred to me that my receipt of these might be judged improper or unlawful in some way; or they might be taken from me, and stored in a money-box, for my behoof upon some future and far-distant occasion; a possible plan of which I by no means approved. A money-box out of one's own control always seemed to me no better or safer than somebody else's pocket.

"You were committing a trespass, and liable to punishment," said my uncle, very soon after my recital had commenced.

This did not encourage me to extend it. Indeed, I brought it to a close as speedily as I could, conscious that there was very little in it, and that even from my own point of view, its interest had undergone grave abatement.

"You should not wander so far from the farm, Duke," said my mother, simply. "You only over-fatigue yourself. And you should try and be punctual at meal times."

So my adventure, as a story, seemed to be rather a failure. And yet I felt that I had moved the curiosity of my auditors more than they cared to confess, or than they desired me to perceive. I caught them interchanging significant glances at one point of my relation. My mother once started and seemed about to speak with some eagerness, though she checked herself immediately, and turned to look out of the window. I noticed my uncle's eyebrows lift and twitch; I knew he was surprised at something I had said. Still they shrunk from questioning me, or urging me to narrate with more particularity. Their attitude was one of listening, with a patient indifference that was rather affected than real.

There was a pause when I had finished. It was as though an opportunity was given me to continue or to amplify if I felt so inclined. But I was not incited to go on by interrogation or expressions of interest.

"You had better prepare your Greek *Delectus* for Mr. Bygrave," said my mother, presently. "He comes to-morrow."

I quitted the room, not to study my *Delectus*, however. I hastened up-stairs to the attic, and examined the old engraving I have mentioned. It was blotched with yellow damp-stains and ragged at the edges. I read the name, "N. Poussin," in the left-hand corner. The chief figure was certainly very like my satyr—wonderfully like. The more I looked at it the more convinced I was of that.

As I descended I heard my uncle's foot-step. He was passing from the kitchen to the parlour. I could hear him say to my mother:

"It's true enough. Lord Overbury arrived at the hall last night. Reuben met him on the London road. He was walking—probably from Dripford."

"What can he want here?" asked my mother.

"What, indeed!" said my uncle.

And he closed the parlour door. I could hear no more.

Had they doubted my story? It had received unexpected confirmation at any rate. Reuben was my uncle's head shepherd.

But a thing I had never thought about was now revealed to me. My satyr was Lord Overbury. I might have been sure of it, of course; the picture he had exhibited to me portrayed him in his robes as a peer. He could be none other than Lord Overbury. But then I was such a

child. I had thought a nobleman must be noble-looking; and certainly my satyr was anything but that. Childish imagination has its limits. I could believe myself Childe Roland, or any other personage of equal chivalric fame; but I had a difficulty in crediting that my satyr—with his dirty face, his crumpled dress, his tobacco and rum-and-water—was really a peer of the realm. Yet such seemed clearly to be the fact.

CHAPTER V. KEM.

I FOUND I could unfold to Kem what I could not relate to my mother and my uncle. A certain lack of judgment is perhaps indispensable in a child's confidant. Moreover, it was no part of Kem's duty to censure or admonish me. She had but to listen, and bear with me affectionately, as she never failed to do.

My childhood was of a lonely kind, in that I was without companions of my own age. There were, of course, the farm-boys in my uncle's employ; Josh and Jabez, the under-carters; David and Tobias, the ploughboys, and others, with whom I occasionally associated, and from whom my speech caught a Purrington tone and accent—to say nothing of forms of expressions—it long retained. But I had no close friends, such as a child usually makes, comrades of his own standing, whose sports he shares, whose sympathies quicken and support him, and from communion with whom his ideas expand and his character forms and develops. I had passed through a sickly infancy, falling into one violent illness after another, until my survival came to be considered generally rather as a matter for marvelling than congratulation. According to the opinion, medical and otherwise, of our neighbourhood, I ought to have died many times over, and it was a kind of charge brought against me that I had persistently disappointed expectation in this respect, besides inflicting infinite trouble upon my only living parent. It was held that the weakly life of a puny boy, with no distinct mission in the world to fill, and with little to commend him to favour in the way of looks or endowments, was scarcely worth all the distress and discussion it had occasioned. That my early death would have stayed all concern about my life was a kind of platitude that met with hearty acceptance and currency in the parish of Purrington. "That boy of Mrs. Nightingale's has been took with scarlet fever now," the neighbours had

been heard to say of me, regarding me as quite an incorrigible offender. "It's but six months gone he had the hooping-cough. What will he be up to next, I wonder? The boy will break his mother's heart sure-ly," they went on. "And she such an excellent woman, too! But there, there's children as seem to come into the world merely to be a worry to their parents. Maybe, however, he won't get over this attack." But I did.

There was in those days no school anywhere near Purrington, so that, even had my health permitted, I could not have been sent from home for educational purpose, except to a distance that in itself constituted a fatal objection to such a measure. The majority of my Purrington friends were stay-at-home people, who took pride in the fact that they had rarely strayed beyond the boundaries of their parish. A desire to travel was viewed as symptomatic of an ill-regulated and discontented mind. A visit to Steepleborough, seven miles off, on market-days, was held to be as much as any reasonable man should achieve in the way of roving from his hearth. That there was safety in the neighbourhood, and peril outside its limits, was a very prevalent opinion. My mother was my first, and for some years my only, teacher. I fear my early education taxed severely her store of learning. She spared herself no pains, however, and even mastered the rudiments of Latin, the better to impart them to me. My uncle lent some assistance, but only in an intermittent way. His own acquirements were limited, and had waned much under the action of time. Nor did he lay much stress, I found, upon the advantages of education—"book-learning," as he termed it. When, at last, my mother found herself unequal to further instruction, and proposed my transfer to the care of Mr. Bygrave, the curate, my uncle, I remember, did not express very cordial approval of the plan. He did not oppose it, however. His manner to my mother had always about it an air of tender deference and consideration, in which I now see much to admire. He sought to comply with her wishes, simply because they were her wishes, and quite apart from his own views as to their worth.

In Kem, over the kitchen fire—not that it was cold, but there being a fire, it seemed compliance with a law of nature to approach it—I found an eager and sympathetic listener. I rehearsed my adventure from first to last at great length;

not, perhaps, without that heightening of colour and general embellishment which are almost inevitable in a detailed story. I set forth all I had said to the satyr, all he had said to me, and all I had said after that. I frankly described him as a satyr, which much bewildered Kem, who was without information as to that species. For her enlightenment I exhibited the engraving after Poussin.

"I hope he had more clothes on, that's all," said Kem, simply.

I calmed her mind upon that head. But she begged me to remove the engraving from the kitchen, alleging that the sight of it affected her with that grave discomfort known commonly as "a turn."

"But why did you tell him that you was Purrington-born, dear?" she interrupted.

"Well, it was true, wasn't it, Kem?"

"No, dear. You came here, quite as a infant, with your ma, in a po-shay. I remember it well. I wasn't cook here then. But I did field-work for the master. My father was head mower, and I helped nows and thens in the kitchen. Purrington-born you're not, though where born I can't say."

This was quite new to me. And I thought it, at the time, rather an uncomfortable and reproachful circumstance that I was not "Purrington-born," like the people about me.

"You couldn't help it, you know, dear," said Kem, with a soothing air. "One can't choose one's birthplace. It's as it may be, always. And it's never a thing to fret about, or to cast at any one. I'm Purrington-born myself, and so was father before me. But mother wasn't. She came from Dripford; was cook many years at the rectory there. And she was as nice and tidy a woman as need be, was mother. So you see, dear, it don't hardly matter where one's born, so long as one's English. And you are that, dear, and no mistake."

Still I could see that she rather pitied me, as, indeed, I pitied myself, for not having been born in Purrington parish.

"Kem," said I, after musing awhile, "did you ever see my father?"

"No, dear, never."

"And you never heard of him?"

"No, dear; only that he was dead and gone, poor soul, before you was brought here; and never knew the brave little man his son would grow up to be."

Thereupon she administered one of her heartiest and most odorous kisses.

"I wonder whether he was Purrington-born, Kem."

But she couldn't tell me. She thought not. Mine was not a name known in those parts, she said. We were both silent and even sad for some minutes, as though pondering this serious matter.

"Now, dear," Kem said at length, "go on telling me about the slater," for so she preferred to call my friend of the Dark Tower.

I resumed my narrative.

"And who do you think the satyr was, Kem?" I asked, as I concluded.

"Who, dear?"

"Why, Lord Overbury."

"Never."

"But I'm sure—that is, I'm almost sure it was, Kem."

"But you said he was a slater."

I now perceived the inconvenience of the romantic aspect I had imparted to my recital. And the reputation I had already acquired as a teller of strange and interesting stories stood much in my way. I had been in the habit of describing to Kem all I had read in books, or chanced to hear of the marvellous and adventurous. Often for her entertainment I had enhanced my discourse by liberal draughts upon my imagination. In return she had no results of reading to communicate, for her education was deficient: she read with difficulty, and in the way of writing could do little more than accomplish her mark; nor was her fancy of a ready or fecund nature; but she had a store of village lore and nursery legends with which to entertain me. I heard her always with interest; and she in her turn was a most devoted listener. Generally I found her appetite for stories only equalled by her powers of belief and digestion. She had, so to say, swallowed, without a scruple, all the wonders of the Arabian Nights. Suddenly she refused to credit my adventure at the Dark Tower. The mention of Lord Overbury's name seemed to her clear proof of the falsity of my story.

"I thought you were making it up all out of your own head, dear," she said, with a sigh, implying that in such case she would not have withheld her faith. The introduction of his lordship she clearly viewed as an inartistic and unallowable blending of fact with fiction.

"But it *was* Lord Overbury, Kem," I urged. "And, see, this is what he gave me." Thereupon I exhibited the three sovereigns.

She was very reluctant to touch them. "Take care they ain't fairy money, such as you was telling me of the other night, that turns to dead leaves in the night."

It was with difficulty I persuaded her to try their soundness. But at last she rang them upon the kitchen dresser, and even tested them by denting their surfaces with her sharp white teeth.

"It seems good money, certainly," she said. And thereupon she tendered me the genuine, if commonplace, counsel to take care of the coins—not to let them burn a hole in my pocket, and not to spend them all at once.

"It's like a lord, giving that money," Kem mused; but still her faith was not whole.

"Did you ever see Lord Overbury, Kem?" I inquired.

"Yes, dear; but not of late years."

"What was he like?" But her descriptive powers failed her. She refused to allow, however, that he in the least resembled my account of him, or the figure by Poussin.

"No, dear; he wasn't a slater; nothing like that. Not that I pretend to know much of the matter. I was never one for staring at the gentlefolks as some do. There's some as will gape and gaze at their betters, as though they was no more than pigs in a pound. But I have seen his lordship, and I bear in mind what folks said of him."

"What did they say, Kem?"

"Well, dear, folks will say most anything. It isn't for me to be judging my betters. But the word went that he was a bad man, though, as far as I could learn, he did worse harm to himself than to others. Gentlefolks will be gentlefolks, and their ways isn't our ways, and perhaps what would be wicked in poor people isn't of so much account if you're rich. Not but what they said he was poor; though how that could be, and he owning the great house and so much land hereabouts—real good honest land, as every one knows—is more than I can say. And of course his being poor didn't mean his going to jail or the work-house, as would happen with me and such like. But there was talk of his horse-racing, and gambling, and that; of his drinking ways—though for that matter there's a many that blamed him that would be glad enough, for certain, to drink as much as him, and more, if they had the chance, and the money. For there's folks about here that's terrible set upon drinking, to be sure.

You could no more trust them with a gallon of ale than a cat with cream. But at one time they was all in a charm" (that is, all talking loud) "about his lordship and his wickedness. I heard many a tale of him, but I've most forgot 'em all now. And perhaps such things is best forgot. It's certain sure he was no better than he should be. But it's hard to be reckoning all the bad ways of a man, and keeping no score of his good. Something I do mind, though, about a young woman of these parts, as 'twas said—"

She stopped suddenly, feeling that there was a certain unfitness about the nature of the matter she was about to disclose. Or more probably because she perceived that we were no longer alone. A third person had entered the kitchen.

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MONSIEUR CHOSE.

VI. THE BOULEVARD GAVROCHE.

"MONSIEUR CHOSE," said my wife to me, "with your politics and principles, your régimes and constitutions, and the rest of your revolutionary baggage, I know my Paris no longer. Will you be good enough to tell me the name of the street in which I live?"

"My dear creature," I replied with studied politeness, "I believe we inhabit the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois."

"We did yesterday," madame retorted, as she tossed her gloves upon the table; "but have the goodness, Monsieur Chose, to step to the corner and inquire for yourself."

I obeyed. I have lived all my life in the Marais, and have seen few changes in it. The quiet business life of the place has hardly been ruffled by the political storms that have swept over our devoted city. They changed the Rue St. Louis years ago into the Rue Turenne, and we mourned over it. But I never imagined, in my wildest dreams, that any set of men would be desperate enough to lay their hands upon the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois. Yet it is doomed; although the desecration has not been yet accomplished. While I stood at the corner gazing at the old familiar words that I could once read—ah, me!—without spectacles, Patin, the grocer, stepped up and said:

"It is decided. We shall live henceforth, Monsieur Chose, in the Rue Pipe-en-Bois."

"Never!" I cried.

"Yes, yes! It is voted by the council—the representative council. It is hard to bear, Monsieur Chose, but principles must be respected."

"Principles!" I cried. "It is infamous."

But Monsieur Patin laid his hand upon my shoulder, and bade me observe that the council had been elected by the people. And then he said: "The fault lies not with the voters who returned the council which to-day dooms you and me to sleep in the Rue Pipe-en-Bois, but with the citizens who did not vote."

The observation of Monsieur Patin was just, and I returned home ashamed of myself for having wasted my right as a municipal elector. I found Captain Tonnerre having a brisk conversation with my wife. As I entered, they both turned upon me, and cried with one voice, "Well, well, where do you live now?"

Captain Tonnerre was not to be calmed.

"My dear Chose, it seems that we have been living under the most extraordinary errors. You and I are fools; but there is this consolation, we are part of a mighty company. I had an idea that Napoleon was the great captain of his age; that his nephew freed Italy on the battle-field of Solferino; that Isly, and Magenta, and Sebastopol were French victories; that Bayard was a pure Christian knight, of whom France was proud; that Henri Quatre was a hero dear to the Gauls; that, in short, we had deeds of valour and men of courage enough to glorify the streets of Paris and London rolled into one. Confess, Chose, that you were vain enough to cherish this patriotic idea under your flannel waistcoat."

"I confess it, and," I added with emphasis, and, I hope, with dignity, "I maintain it now."

"Nonsense, Monsieur Chose. As a politician you know better. We are just going to begin the proper history of France. I have lived all my life (when not fighting for my country) on the Isle St. Louis; to-morrow I shall be an inhabitant of the Isle St. Adolphe, and my shortest way to it will be by the Boulevard Gavroche. They are scraping St. Louis, the third and fourth Henrys, and fearless Bayard, and the man of Austerlitz, and the man of Solferino, and Saint-Arnaud of the Alma, ay, and Macmahon (while he lives) from the walls. The Abbatuccis, who, from father to son, have died on the field of honour—so says my military history—have not a name good enough to figure upon a

blind alley. The Empress Josephine is a myth; the beautiful Hortense a crazy poet's dream. You thought our army was covered with glory, and that its glittering legions had, within the memory of men still living, swept triumphantly through Europe. What vanity, Monsieur Chose! French knights have yet their spurs to win. The Napoleon legend is as unsubstantial as that of the Wandering Jew. Five years ago you used to say that it commanded the respect of the world. What nonsense! They are pulling it from the walls like an old playbill, and the soldiers are looking on! This is surely enough to prove to you that you have wasted two-thirds of your life in the bewildering darkness of error. Do you hear me, Monsieur Chose?"

"It is a humiliating result of the elective principle, I admit," was my answer.

"Elective idiocy!" was Madame Chose's exclamation.

"Elective principle!" Tonnerre retorted. The old soldier who had fought with the père Bugeaud, and had ended his active career before the Mamelon, shook with emotion. "Your elective principle and your equality are pretty! Your savans have a grand debate whether they shall call a certain prince monseigneur, while your deputies banish another across the frontier. While one pretender gives a banquet to the forty Immortals in the heart of Paris, another is not allowed to travel through the country. You talk about republican simplicity, and the extravagance of the fallen dynasty; and the couturières tell you that never in the gayest of the 'twenty years of corruption' did a dress cost much more than half one of the present fashion. You must even have two suppers to a ball. The streets are unsafe. They seize your newspapers—three at a time. We soldiers are insulted in the streets. Every unfortunate officer is a traitor. 'Capitulard!' cries the gamin at the heels of troopers who fought at Magenta. 'Traitor!' is the sound that falls upon the ears of every officer who has been unfortunate. In the old days the vanquished warrior was treated with chivalrous respect; to-day you stone him."

"What will they do to-morrow? Perhaps Monsieur Chose can tell us." Madame Chose made this observation with marked severity.

I protested, being roused by her sarcasm in the presence of Tonnerre, that I had no satisfactory explanation to offer.

"Then, my friend Chose," Tonnerre said,

still panting with excitement, and sopping his heated brows with his handkerchief, "permit me to ask you, what becomes of all this study of the politics of your time? You read the papers all round, even to the *Polisson Illustré*—a charming print; and when we are threatened with the rechristening of Paris from Passy to Vincennes, you haven't a word of comfort or explanation to give us. On what principle, let me ask you—since principle is your strong point—on what shadow of a principle is the Rue Marie-Antoinette to be called the Rue Antoinette?" The old soldier folded his arms, and paused for a reply.

"I don't pretend to be the key of the position, my good Tonnerre," I observed. "As well ask me to explain why a journalist the other day likened the Obelisk of Luxor to a *parfait au café*; or why, a few years ago, they copied it as a stripe for the *gandins'* trousers. But surely you can understand that there are men of base and vain minds, who delight in degrading everything that has gone before them, and would blot out Raphael's Virgin to make a canvas for their own portrait. They want the deluge before them and behind them. The logical consequence of the rebaptism of Paris is the repainting of the historical portraits in the Louvre. There are admirable canvasses there, upon which Bergeret, and Pyat, and the rest of the Immortals of the gutter, might be limned. Let us be logical."

"There he is again with his logic," cried my wife: I am sure chiefly to please Tonnerre.

"Let Chose develop his idea, madame," the brave soldier interposed.

"Let us, I was observing, when Madame Chose interrupted me, 'be logical.'" Here I bowed with impressive gravity to my wife, who shrugged her shoulders. "Why end at the street corners? Why not take down our shop signs, and turn the Belle Jardinière into the Belle Petroleuse, the Deux Magots into the Deux Hugos, the Grand Condé into the Grande Incendie? When they have rebaptised our streets and shops, and transformed the city, until the reign of Rochefort and Vermersch is marked upon every lamp-post, why, pray, should not they rebaptise us?"

Madame Chose started to her feet, and with a comprehensive curtesy, swept out of the room. The bare idea was too much for her. But I continued: "If they may scratch our history out of our public monuments, use the flags we have taken

from the enemy as republican pocket-handkerchiefs, and haul down our trophies, they may surely tear pages out of our school histories, and teach the young idea to look upon Wagram and Austerlitz, Sebastopol and Solferino, as myths that beguiled Frenchmen in the infancy of the nation."

I had reached this point of my observations when we were interrupted by a smart rap at the door. Monsieur Patin stood before us. The poor man was breathless.

While we begged him to tell us the news, we implored him to be calm, and take his own time.

"It's carried by a majority of ten. Paris is no longer Paris!"

"The man's raving mad!" shouted Tonnerre. "Explain yourself, sir. These are not times for jesting."

"Alas, there is no jest in me, mon capitaine," Patin now said, in tones of profound melancholy. "They have carried it, I tell you. My next-door neighbour has come from the sitting. Paris is Paris no longer."

"Is it Bagdad?" I asked, really provoked by Patin's procrastination.

"No, no. They had changed the streets, the avenues, the squares, the places, but that was not enough."

Tonnerre growled some fearful oaths, and would have seized Patin by the throat had he delayed his revelation another moment.

"What have the rascals changed now?" he roared.

"Paris! For the future, the city is to be called—Belleville! And the Seine is to be the Bièvre!"

"The very gudgeon will die with shame," said my wife, who had re-entered the room, attracted by the loud voices.

VII. MADAME CHOSE AT VERSAILLES.

"A SET of unruly boys at play; that is my opinion, Chose, and none of your fine phrases will move me from it."

I had, in an imprudent moment, consented to take Madame Chose to be present at a debate in the National Assembly. While we were on the way to Versailles, I repented, for I saw that she was bent upon presenting all she saw to her friends in a diverting light; and that she was arming herself with a fresh weapon against me—which was not necessary. We assisted at a debate in the course of which there were two or three warm incidents; but these, or, more properly speaking, the reasons for these, passed almost unnoticed by the severe critic who is my permanent censor.

It was as we came through the corridors of the palace, and just as we were passing a corner roughly canvassed off for the Official Journal, that madame put down the wise men of her country as so many unruly school-boys. She pointed with her parasol to the canvas partition, and added, contemptuously:

"There is du propre!"

It was very dirty, more like a gipsy's stabling than the head-quarters of the parliamentary staff of the Official Journal of France. It smote villanously upon the practised eye of one who prides herself on her order and love of cleanliness. I endeavoured to keep the subject at a distance by suggesting to my wife that an ice would probably refresh her before taking train for Paris. She accepted the ice, but she declined to adjourn the expression of her opinion on the afternoon to which, as she kindly said, I had "doomed" her. I had played many tricks upon her knowingly and unwittingly, but never had she been disturbed, and dragged away to Versailles, and stuffed in a seat not big enough for a child ten years old, on so shallow a pretext as this.

"I shall have some news to tell of to-day, Monsieur Chose. Yes, some news to tell about—a half-empty theatre; a sculpture corridor treated like a high-road; a set of shabby fellows lounging about, where splendid officials were intended to be; a scramble up dark stairs to boxes that were clean once upon a time. You say the deputies were elated by the prospect of breaking up to-morrow for the Easter holidays; but is that any reason why they should behave like bears? For my part, I think they would do vastly well under a tent in the Court of Honour, instead of being allowed to turn a place built for the amusement of kings into a fool's paradise, where every one wants to hear himself speak. I remember a time, Monsieur Chose, when you would have been ashamed to let your wife drive up to the gates of the palace in a tumble-down omnibus. To-day I was jolted almost to death, and was ready to drop when, after all that ridiculous ceremony, I was shown to the avant-scenes to see a little of the modelling of the destinies of France."

In this way Madame Chose entertained me all the way back to Paris, where we expected Captain Tonnerre to dine with us.

"Beware how you touch upon the Assembly," I said to the captain while we took our absinthe, and madame changed

her toilette. "She is furious, and I am very sorry I took her. It has destroyed the little confidence she had in our legislators. I shall suffer for it."

The captain smiled, and was gallant enough to say that madame was a woman of extraordinary perceptive powers. I take it there is nobody who enjoys the extraordinary powers of a lady less than that lady's husband. I implored my friend to encourage the comments of Madame Chose as little as politeness would permit. But my precaution was in vain. The spirit of Madame Chose had been, as the captain observed, profoundly stirred, and not even the president himself would have kept her silent. I was put aside, and madame addressed herself exclusively to Tonnerre.

"When I had got over my vexation at being dragged so far to see so little, I passed my opera-glass over boxes and pit. By the way, there ought to be a gallery for Monsieur Gambetta's clients. Well, your National Assembly looked very like a half-deserted theatre. They have not taken the trouble to remove the proscenium. There are the big angels holding a prodigious crown over the fleur de lys—above the heads of the Left and Right Centres—just as they did in the days of the Grand Monarch. The stage is a stage still, with the footlights removed; I presume to keep the way clear when the Radicals want to rush at the throat of a plain-speaking rural. The tribune faces the audience, and above the tribune appears the president, just as the parson sits above the clerk. The background is a common red drop-scene. Even the entrances are, as you see them, upon the stage. Monsieur Thiers, with the rest of the saviours of France, sits on the first pit bench fronting the tribune; I suppose, so that they may not lose a word of the bad language that is prepared for them. Every minute I expected to see a chorus or a file of retainers come on, or even a corps de ballet, to relieve the comedy. For nobody was listening to the speaker, who had perched himself in the tribune, with a file of papers, and was, I suppose, unfolding the contents of them in a voice that just rose now and then beyond the general conversation. The pit was half empty, but the men who were there were lounging, chattering, reading, or writing, as though they were not in the least degree concerned in the subject the person in the tribune was talking about, except that now and then some word brought the en-

tire company into action. I heard the word barricade fall from a speaker's lips. Then the crowd in the pit on the left all roared together; a little forest of fists was raised towards the tribune; the speaker folded his arms defiantly; the crowd on the right applauded as though Patti had just made her appearance; and above all, the shouting and clapping of hands, the president rang a bell. It was like the main avenue of a fair on a Sunday. A drum would have completed the illusion. The remembrance of it gives me a headache. Fetch me my salts, Chose."

The salts having unfortunately revived my wife, she began to laugh heartily, saying that the entire scene was the very drollest thing in the world. "You must know," she continued, still addressing Tonnerre, "that every possible precaution is taken, lest, in the noise and confusion, some of the golden words spoken by the person in the tribune should be lost to posterity. They are obliged to plant a shorthand writer on the right and left of the speaker; yes, at his two elbows, and there, poor fellows, they stand with their books in their hands, writing away as hard as they can go, till two more come to relieve them. Chose said they were relieved so frequently, because they must have time to write out their notes; but I know better—it is to prevent them from going mad under the torrent of nonsense that is poured into their devoted ears.

"You cannot imagine, monsieur, the games the deputies carried on. I never heard such rude interruptions. Manners! When the crowd on the left was agitated, the uproar was deafening, and every man seemed ready to make short work of his neighbour. But the president rang them down, appealed to them like naughty children, and, while a group of men were shaking hands with, and hugging, the person who had just finished his glass of water, and left the tribune, another candidate for the inattention of the Assembly went up the steps. It was quite like a drama. As the new performer took his place, a lacquey came on from the opposite side of the stage, carrying a tumbler of water upon a plate, which he deposited near the hand of the honourable opponent of the man who was being hugged.

"Then the play went forward another scene. The same shouting, talking, clapping of hands, rude remarks, and walking about. Papers strewn, like bills of the play, all over the pit; people yawning in

the boxes; men clambering over seats; and the very largest collection of bald heads I ever saw under one roof. I should say that a reception at the Institute could not muster such a show."

"And pray," Tonnerre here ventured to ask, "what was the subject of debate to-day?"

"Monsieur Tonnerre," my wife replied, in a most charming voice, "is that a serious question? Do you think there were twenty people in the theatre who distinctly understood the subject in hand?"

I had resolved to bear no part whatever in the conversation; but this was too much for me.

"It is too bad, madame, to exaggerate that which is, unfortunately, only too ludicrous when soberly described. The subject was——"

"Monsieur Chose, the captain asked me the question. Permit me to answer it. You will have opportunities enough for reflections on the ideas of a foolish woman at your café. I have no doubt I appear atrociously stupid to your majestic understanding."

I bowed, and left the field open.

"Monsieur," my wife went on, addressing herself to Tonnerre, "I hope I am not very much more stupid than the average of human creatures; but I do declare to you that beyond a vague notion that some money was to be given to Paris, and that it was in consequence of the war, I could make out nothing. Some said the idea was infamous, that it was a premium to ruffianism, and others were very magnificent indeed about noble Paris, and were very angry that the pittance of a few millions was not quadrupled. If the Right are correct, the Left are fools, and something very much worse; and if the Left have reason on their side, the Right are both immoral and incompetent. The copper and the kettle were both black, and were bumping against one another all the time I was at Versailles. That's my experience, and I can only wonder what the foreigners in the diplomatic box thought of the sooty warfare. Monsieur Chose will tell you that it was magnificent, when one gentleman, having said that France was still great and glorious (which we all know), swallowed a whole tumbler of cold water, and resigned himself to the embraces of his friends. I thought, like a foolish housewife that I am, some of that water might have been used to wash away the dirt that had been flying about. For,

after all, Monsieur Tonnerre, haven't we had enough of this abuse? Isn't it time to cease from attributing the lowest motives to political opponents? Because you don't approve the principle on which your friend levies taxes, do you think it quite fair or honourable to accuse him of filling his pockets from the till?"

Tonnerre made a profound bow, while he answered:

"You are quite right, madame. Our army has suffered as much from the slander of friends as from the guns of the foe. You must have remarked a grave face, well-known and well-loved, in a box by the stage."

"The marshal! He looked sad and worn while the uproar went on."

"Do you think he has not suffered under this hail of calumnies, more than tongue can tell?"

"Yes, yes," Madame Chose answered, enthusiastically; "I am sure of it. And not a woman in all the theatre who did not rejoice to see that he was looking on."

"You are really a dangerous person," I observed seriously to Madame Chose; "and I beg you will change the conversation. Tonnerre, you owe me a revenge—at dominoes. Let us play."

LITTLE BACCHUS.

(TO THE STATUE OF A CHILD BY DAVID.)

FROM the great beech, green and old,

Little Three-year-old!

From the first bough of the beech,

Just in reach,

Droops a vine-branch dragged with clustered gold.

Bright black eyes turned upward shine;

Like a charm, the vine

Draws thy dusk brows clipped with curls,

Almost melts the pearls

In that rosy little mouth of thine!

All ten dimpled fingers, now,

Striving for the bough,

Grasp and crush, with fiery thirst,

The cluster till it burst,

Showering wine on upward face and brow!

Somewhat still too high to suit,

Swings the bleeding fruit;

Thou must lift thy lip up—so—

Hang to it and grow,

As a kid doth, poised on tip-toe foot.

Crushed in both hands, through thy lips,

Exquisitely drips,

From the ravished loop of vine,

Beverage divine,

Sweeter than the beaker Helen sips.

Where the gold-girt bee sucks still

Have thy luscious will!

Still on thine unwearied lip

Ceaseless nectar drip,

Quenching thirst that is unquenchable!

May no chill white winter bleach
 Thy vine-branch and beech ;
 But for ever hang thou so
 On thy tipmost toe,
 And for ever droop thy bunch in reach !

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE SCOTS GREYS (SECOND DRAGOONS).

THIS redoubtable regiment, that has so long fought to protect the right, was first enrolled to defend the wrong. In 1678, when the unwise Act was issued for establishing episcopacy in Presbyterian Scotland, and in 1679, when the still more tyrannical Act, forbidding prayer-meetings in the open air, was passed, the brave and pious people of Scotland began here and there to rise in arms. In 1678, two troops of Scotch dragoons were raised to carry out these Acts, and from these troops the present Scots Greys are descended. The first troop was commanded by Lieutenant-General Thomas Dalziel, an old Cavalier officer who had fought for the Czar against the Tartars; the second by Lord Charles Murray, second son of John, first Marquis of Athole, and afterwards the Earl of Dunmore; of a third troop, levied a few months later, Lord Francis Stuart, one of the Life Guards, and grandson of the Earl of Bothwell, a gentleman not unknown to us, thanks to the pages of Old Mortality, was the commander.

The murder on Magnus Moor of Archbishop Sharp excited the rough soldiery to cruel reprisals. They fired into groups of praying men, and shot, arrested, and tortured many preachers and leaders of the poor wandering folk. Foremost among the persecutors, and the most untiring, the most pitiless, was Captain Robert Graham—the Claverhouse—the Bonny Dundee of Scott's best ballad. With no religion, no compassion himself, he trod the poor fugitives under his horse's feet. At Drumclog the Covenanters at last turned upon him; he lost thirty men in a sharp skirmish, and had a horse killed beneath him. The next day the elated Covenanters attacked Glasgow, but were repulsed. The battle of Bothwell Brig soon followed, where the wild young Duke of Monmouth led on the Scotch Dragoons, a few English horse from the Border, and the Earl of Mar's regiment of foot. They were faced by four thousand grim and "sour Covenanters." While preaching and wrangling the Covenanters were attacked by Captain Stuart's Scotch Dragoons. The three hundred stubborn Kippen and Galloway saints who held the

bridge, commanded by Hackston of Rathillet, fought till their last cartridge was gone, and then gloomily fell back. The key of the Covenanters' position was lost for ever. The foot guards soon cleared the bridge; the army passing across, opened what was then considered a heavy cannonade, and at the same time the Scotch Dragoons went to work with their swords on the insurgents' flanks. The game was hopeless. The Covenanter horsemen fled. One thousand two hundred foot surrendered without striking a blow, and the remainder ran back to their morasses. Then came the legal butchery of those cruel and persecuting times; two preachers and five leaders were hung, and three hundred honest men transported to the plantations. In many a Scotch home, in the year 1679, a Rachel mourned for her children, and refused to be comforted. Again, in 1680, the Scotch Dragoons were employed in more of this hateful service. In a hot fight at Ayr Moss, in the shire of Ayr, twenty Covenanters, including a preacher, were slain; and Hackston of Rathillet, one of the murderers of Archbishop Sharp, and a leader at Bothwell Brig, was taken. The dragoons lost several men and horses, and Lieutenant Crichton was severely wounded. Hackston and three of his comrades were soon afterwards hung at Edinburgh.

In 1681, Charles the Second ordered three additional troops of dragoons to be raised, and the six troops were incorporated into the Royal Regiment of Scots Dragoons, Lieutenant-General Dalziel, the coarse and eccentric old bearded Cavalier, being appointed colonel; while a second regiment was intrusted to the unscrupulous Claverhouse. The Scots Dragoons at this time wore back and breast pieces, and a pot helmet. They had swords, and carried carbines and horse-pistols, fourteen inches long in the barrel. Twelve soldiers of each troop and the non-commissioned officers bore halberds, the other soldiers matchlocks and bayonets, "or great knife," as it is called in a warrant of 1672. In 1687, the dragoons were ordered to carry snap-hanse muskets, with bright barrels, three feet four inches long, cartouch-boxes, bayonets, grenade pouches, buckets, and hammer hatchets.

After much shooting of poor conscientious peasants, who would not disown by oath all plots against the king, the Royal Scots had at last once more armed enemies to meet who were worthy of their steel. In 1685, James the Second ascended the

throne, and Scotland again burst into a flame. The proscribed Earl of Argyll landed from Holland with three hundred men, and a rebellion began. Near Dumbarton the earl and the king's forces joined issue. The rebels were sheltered by a small enclosure, and the Scots Dragoons (at that time trained to fight on horse or foot) dismounted, and scaled the defences. The rebels took post in a wood, held it till night, and then dispersed. The Royal Scots lost several men in this brief struggle. Captain Clelland was killed, and Sir Adam Blair, his successor, shot through the neck. Sir William Wallace, of Craigie, was also severely wounded. The Duke of Argyll was captured the same day, and soon afterwards beheaded at Edinburgh. On their way to join the royal troops who overthrew the Duke of Monmouth at Sedgemoor, the Royal Scots heard of the battle, and returned to their old position. On the death of Lieutenant-General Dalziel, King James conferred the colonelcy of the Royal Scots on Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Charles Murray, soon after created Earl of Dunmore. In 1688, the young regiment was sent to ravage the lands of Macdonald, of Keppoch, who had killed some of the Mackintoshes who favoured James. They burnt the Macdonalds' houses and corn from Lammas to the 10th of September, and were then marched from Inverlochty to the English border, a tramp of two hundred miles, to resist the Prince of Orange's invasion, and Claverhouse was created Viscount of Dundee.

At this time the privates of the Royal Scots received one shilling and sixpence a day, and the cornets five shillings. In Dundee's rebellion a lieutenant-colonel and several captains of the Royal Scots were arrested for sending intelligence to the rebels. After this the Royal Scots, however, remained faithful, and were active against the fierce and agile Highlanders, dispersing the Macleans, who had attacked the Laird of Grant, and joining in the battle of Killiecrankie, where Dundee fell in the moment of victory. The Royal Scots also aided largely in the well-executed surprise of the Highlanders' camp near Balloch Castle, in Strathspey, where some four hundred Highlanders were shot and cut down. The Royal Scots, we are glad to say, had no share in the cruel massacre of Glencoe.

Fresh enemies now awaited the Royal Scots. In 1694, King William sent them

over to Flanders. In 1695, they helped to cover the siege of Namur, and were also employed in observing Marshal Villeroi's movements. They returned to England at the peace of Ryswick in 1697. In 1702, the Royal Scots were sent to Holland to join in the war of Accession. In this year the regiment was first called the "Grey Dragoons," and it is supposed that William's Dutch Life Guards having been mounted on grey horses (*à la Wouvermans*), when the Dutch left England the king mounted the Royal Scots in a similar manner. The Life Guards already affected black horses, and the French had the custom of distinguishing their corps-d'élite by the colour of their horses. In Marlborough's battles those grey horses were now to strike terror among the French. In 1702, the Scots Greys were in Spanish Guelderland, and covered the sieges of Venloo, Ruremonde, and Stevenswaerk, one squadron serving as a guard to Marlborough himself. On his way to Holland, escorted by a squadron of Greys, Marlborough and General Cohorn were captured on the Maese by a French partisan leader, and only escaped by an attendant slipping a French pass into Marlborough's hand, he having disdained any such safeguard. In 1703, the Scots Greys distinguished themselves by defeating a French detachment, which had captured a quantity of English specie, recovering the spoil.

In 1704, Lord John Hay, son of the Marquis of Tweeddale, was appointed colonel of the Scots Greys. This year Marlborough crossed the Rhine and Moselle, and pushed on to the Danube, to assist the Emperor Leopold, then threatened by the French and Bavarians, who had broken through the Black Forest. At Schellenberg the Scots Greys attacked the heights, and, serving as infantry in the attack of the trenches, helped to drive the French across the Danube. The regiment here lost Captain Douglas and seven men, and nineteen others were wounded.

At Ramilies (1706) the Scots Greys covered themselves with glory. When Churchill and Mordaunt's regiments descended from the heights of Foutz, and drove the French into a morass, where they sank or were butchered, the Scots Greys attacked the enemy's left, routed the French cavalry, and cut several squadrons to pieces. They then spurred into the village of Autreglize, and sabred all the infantry they met. Emerging from Autreglize, flushed with victory, they broke into the

French Regiment du Roi, which at once surrendered, and gave up its colours and arms to the riders of the grey horses. In a Dutch account of this battle it is stated that one regiment of our dragoons took sixteen or seventeen colours and standards. It is probable that this regiment was the Scots Greys.

One of the private soldiers of the Scots Greys, wounded at the battle of Ramilies, proved to be a woman. Her name was Mrs. Christian Davies, and her life and adventures were afterwards published in a small octavo volume. She states she was a native of Ireland, and that, her husband having entered the army, she put on men's clothes and went in quest of him; but not meeting with him, she enlisted in a regiment of foot, and in 1702 in the Scots Greys, served in the campaign of that and the following year, and in 1704 was wounded in the leg at Schellenberg. After the battle of Blenheim, when escorting French prisoners towards Holland, she met with her husband, who was then a private soldier in the First Royal Foot. She made herself known to him, and from this time passed as his brother, until after the battle of Ramilies, where she was wounded by a shell, and her sex discovered by the surgeons. "No sooner had they made this discovery," she observes in her narrative, "but they acquainted Brigadier Preston that his pretty dragoon (for so I was always called) was a woman. The news spread far and near, and reaching my Lord John Hay's ears, he came to see me, as did my former comrades; and my lord called for my husband. He gave him a full and satisfactory account of our first acquaintance, marriage, and situation, with the manner of his having entered the service, and my resolution to go in search of him. My lord seemed very well entertained with my history, and ordered that my pay should be continued while under care. When his lordship heard that I was well enough recovered to go abroad, he generously sent me a parcel of linen. Brigadier Preston made me a present of a handsome silk gown; every one of our officers contributed to the furnishing me with what was requisite for the dress of my sex, and dismissed me the service with a handsome compliment."

The Greys had plenty of fighting at the French fortified camp of Malplaquet, in 1709. They and the Royal Irish had to charge the French household cavalry three times, before they would give way. The Duke of Marlborough was especially pleased

with these bull-dog charges, and personally thanked them. The Greys lost about thirty officers and men killed and wounded.

In 1742, George the Second reviewed the Scots Greys on Kew Green. "Fine, hardy fellows, that want no seasoning," says the Champion of June the 24th of that year. They were all bound to Flanders to help towards making up the sixteen thousand British troops contributed by George to assist the House of Austria against the Bavarians, French, and Prussians. On the 16th of June, 1743, the French crossed the Maine, and attacked us at Dettingen. Through a thunderstorm of French cannon came volleys of musketry and fierce charges of cavalry. The Greys at first merely supported the infantry, which George the Second himself led on, but, soon eager for more fighting, Lieutenant James Campbell led his grey horses against a line of steel-clad cuirassiers, who soon broke and fled to the rear of their own lines. The Greys then dashed upon the celebrated French household cavalry, broke them too, and captured a white standard, a trophy that had hitherto never been seen in Westminster or Guildhall. George the Second, delighted at the overthrow of such troops, the flower of the French army, at the close of the battle nominated Colonel Campbell a Knight of the Bath. The standard captured by the Greys was of white damask, finely embroidered with gold and silver, a thunderbolt in the middle, upon a blue and white ground, and bearing the motto, "Sensere gigantes." The Greys had fought with such swiftness and spirit that only a lieutenant and a few troopers were wounded, and four horses killed.

In 1758, George the Second changed the dress of the Royal North British Dragoons. The new coats were scarlet, double-breasted, and lined with blue, with slit sleeves, turned up with blue; buttons of white metal, and white worsted aiguillettes on the right shoulder. The waistcoat and breeches were blue, with blue cloth grenadier caps, having on the front the thistle within the circle of Saint Andrew, with the motto, "Nemo me impune lacessit." On the red flaps was the white horse of Hanover, with the motto, "Ne aspera terrent," over it. The boots were of jerked leather, the cloaks scarlet, with blue collars and linings. The officers were distinguished by silver-lace embroideries, and crimson silk sashes, worn across the left shoulder. The sergeants had blue and yellow worsted sashes round their waists.

At Waterloo the Greys particularly distinguished themselves, carrying off one of the special trophies of the battle.

"When we got clear through the Highlanders," says James Armour, of Glasgow, a rough-rider of the Scots Greys, "we were soon on the charge, and a short one it was. A cross-road being in our way, we leaped the first hedge gallantly, traversed the road, and had to leap over another hedge. At this time the smoke from the firing on both sides made it so dark that we could not see distinctly. We had not charged many yards till we came to a column. As yet we had stuck pretty well together, although a great number had fallen about the cross-roads. In a very short time we were down upon the column, making pretty clean work of them. Numbers by this time had dropped off, still we pushed forward, and very soon came upon another column, who cried out 'Prisoners!' threw down their arms, stripped themselves of their belts, in accordance with the French discipline, and ran like hares towards the rear. We pushed on still, and soon came up to another column, some of whom went down on their knees, calling out 'Quarter' in tones of supplication. Now, then, we got among the guns, which had so terribly annoyed us, and paid back the annoyance in slaughter such as never before was witnessed; artillerymen were cut down and ran through, horses were houghed, harness was cut, and all rendered useless. Some who were good judges of such work," adds Armour, by way of parenthesis, "reckoned we had made a very good job of it. I was engaged amongst six or seven guns, all brass, where almost all the artillerymen were cut down, and most, if not all, of the horses houghed. While at work amongst these guns, no thought had we but that we should have nothing to do when we were done but to retrace our steps. I own I was much surprised when we began to return whence we came to behold great numbers of the cuirassiers and lancers pushing across betwixt us and our own forces. They were the first troops of this kind I had ever beheld in my life, and now they were forming up to cut off our retreat. Nothing daunted, we faced them manfully. We had none to command us now. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton had been killed, and many of the officers killed and wounded. But every man did what he could. Conquer or die! was the word. When the regiment returned from this charge the troop to which I belonged did not muster above one or

two sound men, unwounded, belonging to the front rank. Indeed, the whole troop did not muster above a dozen; there were upwards of twenty of the front rank killed, and the others wounded."

Such was the hot haste of the Greys to throw themselves into the thick of the battle, that one of the Greys, in recounting to Sheriff Alison, the historian of Europe, the story of their charge, states he is afraid that in many instances they rode over the Highlanders, who gallantly retorted, however, the shout of "Scotland for ever!" and, although occasionally remonstrating with the horsemen, in cannie Scotch, "I didna think ye wud hae used me sae," clung in most instances to the stirrups of the Greys, and were carried further into the fight.

Laurie, one of the Scots Greys, from Ayrshire, had eighteen sword and sabre wounds, the greater number of which were inflicted by the French after he was on the ground, dismounted. A few days previous to the battle he had had accounts of his father's death, by which he became possessed of twelve thousand pounds. He says that he saved his life in the end only by calling out in French, as the enemy were charging over him, "Oh, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! Mes amis! mes amis!" By which contrivance he was taken for one of their own men. Colonel Cheney, of the Greys, on whom the command of that regiment devolved on the 18th of June, in consequence of the death of Colonel Hamilton, and the wounds of other officers, had five horses killed under him. Yet, almost by miracle, he himself escaped without a wound.

The capture of the French eagles is thus related by brave Sergeant Ewart himself:

"The enemy," says the hero, "began forming their line of battle about nine in the morning of the 18th. We did not commence till ten. I think it was about eleven when we were ready to receive them. They began upon our right with the most tremendous firing that ever was heard, and I can assure you they got it as hot as they gave it. Then it came down to the left, where they were received by our brave Highlanders. No men could ever behave better. Our brigade of cavalry covered them. Owing to a column of foreign troops giving way, our brigade was forced to advance to the support of our brave fellows, which we certainly did in style. We charged through two of their columns, each about five thousand; it

was in the first charge I took the eagle from the enemy; he and I had a hard contest for it; he thrust for my groin; I parried it off, and cut him through the head; after which I was attacked by one of their lancers, who threw his lance at me, but missed his mark, by my throwing it off with my sword by my right side. Then I cut him from the chin upwards, which went through his teeth. Next I was attacked by a foot soldier, who, after firing at me, charged me with his bayonet, but he very soon lost the combat, for I parried it, and cut him down through the head; so that finished the contest for the eagle, after which I proceeded to follow my comrades, eagle and all, but was stopped by the general saying to me, 'You brave fellow, take that to the rear. You have done enough until you get quit of it'—which I was obliged to do, but with great reluctance. I retired to a height, and stood there for upwards of an hour, which gave a general view of the field; but I cannot express the horrors I beheld; the bodies of my brave comrades were lying so thick upon the field that it was scarcely possible to pass, and horses innumerable. I took the eagle into Brussels amidst the acclamations of thousands of the spectators who saw it." The eagles taken belonged to the Forty-fifth and One Hundred-and-fifth regiments, and were superbly gilt and ornamented with gold fringe. That of the Forty-fifth was inscribed with the names of Jena, Austerlitz, Wagram, Eylau, Friedland, &c., being the battles in which this regiment—called the Invincibles—had signalised itself. The other was a present from the Empress Louise to the One Hundred - and - fifth regiment. One was much defaced with blood and dirt, as if it had been struggled for, and the eagle was also broken off from the pole, as if from the cut of a sabre; but it was, nevertheless, preserved. The eagles taken had only been given to the respective regiments at the Champ de Mai. On the 1st of June they had there glittered over the heads of the Parisians amid cries of "Vive l'Empereur!"

Viscount Vanderfosse, in a letter to Sir John Sinclair, especially praised the Scots Greys for their humanity to the French prisoners. The royal permission was given after Waterloo for the badge of an eagle to be displayed on the guidons of the Scots Greys, and the word Waterloo on the grenadier corps. The brave winner of the French standard, Sergeant Ewart, was rewarded in 1816 by an ensigncy in the

Third Royal Veteran Battalion. At the peace the regiment was reduced to five hundred and forty-four officers and soldiers, and three hundred and thirty-three troop horses.

Never, perhaps, says Alison, speaking of the Heavy Brigade at Waterloo, had a charge of an equal body of horse achieved greater success; for besides destroying two columns five thousand strong, and taking three thousand prisoners, we have the authority of the great military historian of Napoleon for the fact, that they carried, cut the traces, and rendered useless for the remainder of the day, no fewer than forty pieces of cannon.

In the battle of Balaklava, the Scots Greys displayed, as is well known, a heroism against overwhelming numbers worthy of old Rome. It will be remembered that the object of the stealthy Russian attack on the memorable 25th of October, 1854, was to seize our outer line of defence, the camp of the Ninety-third Highlanders, as well as the Turkish camp, near Kadikoi, beginning with the work on Canrobert's Hill. This Russian surprise began by the advance of General Gribbé at five A.M. The vast herd of Russian cavalry our six hundred dragoons had to wedge their way into, Mr. Kinglake computes as at least two thousand. Lord Raglan had ordered Lucan to advance, and Lucan had ordered Scarlett, who commanded the Heavy Brigade. In the first line rode those old comrades and friends, the Inniskillings, with the Greys on their left. From desire to ease the men, helmet-plumes, shoulder-scales, stocks, and gauntlets had been laid aside. The four horsemen who led the charge were General Scarlett, Alexander Elliot, his aide-de-camp, behind them the general's orderly, Shegog, and a trumpeter. Taking advantage of the Russian cavalry halting, and eager to strike his blow, Scarlett sounded at once the charge, shouting, "Come on," to the Greys, as with a wave of his sword he dashed in among the Russian troopers far ahead of his men. Elliot, cutting down a Russian officer, sprang in also, followed by Shegog, and the trumpeter. The Greys, spreading almost into single line in their advance, were received with a dropping carbine fire, one bullet disabling Colonel Griffith, who commanded them. Besides Major Clarke, who led the first squadron, the officers who charged with the Greys were these: Captain Williams with the second squadron; Manley, Hunter, Buchanan, and Sutherland the four troop leaders of the regiment; the adjutant was Lieutenant Miller; the serre-

files were Boyd, Nugent, and Lenox Prendergast. "And to these," says Kinglake, "though he did not then hold the Queen's commission, add the name of John Wilson, now a cornet, and the acting adjutant of the regiment, for he took a leading part in the fight."

Major Clarke, now really the leader of the light squadron of the Greys, lost his bear-skin, and rode into the Russian ranks bare-headed. The Scots Greys, says an eye-witness, "gave a low eager fierce moan," the Inniskillings went in with a rejoicing cheer. The Russians, unable to fall back, struggled in vain with the enemies they had imbedded. In some open spaces, says Kinglake, ten or twelve Russians would fall out of their ranks, and try to overwhelm two or three Greys or Inniskillings, who seemed lost in the crowd of jostling horsemen. Our men hewed and slashed with their swords, and with their bridle hands tried to tear the Russians from their saddles. In many cases the swords of the Greys rebounded from the thick coarse grey coats of the Russian horsemen. The Russians nearest the Greys seemed to encounter them with distrust and hopelessness, for their assailants were taller and reached further, and seemed contemptuously certain of victory. General Scarlett received five slight wounds, and had his helmet cloven through. Elliot was pierced in the forehead, had his face divided by a slash, and received a sabre wound in the skull. He had altogether fourteen sabre cuts. Clarke, who led the squadron bare-headed, rode deluged with blood from a wound in the head, of which he was himself long unconscious. Many of the Greys cut quite through the column, and then hewed their way back. In the midst of this entangling struggle the Inniskillings came plump on the Russians' left front. Then the Royal and Fifth Dragoon Guards, seeing the Greys lapped in by the enemy's right wing, broke in also to their aid. Alexander Miller, the acting adjutant of the Greys, famous for his tremendous voice, roared out of the midst of the *melee* the words, "Rally—the Greys. Face me." Cornet Prendergast also, and Clarke, joined in this endeavour. Another charge of Hunt's squadron of Inniskillings shook the great crowd of Russians, and soon the columns wavered, trembled, shook, and fled.

In this desperate combat the heavy dragoons lost seventy-eight killed and wounded; the Russians suffered heavily. When Sir Colin Campbell galloped up soon after in advance of the Ninety-third High-

landers, he uncovered to the Greys, and said :

"Greys! gallant Greys! I am sixty-one years old, and if I were young again, I should be proud to be in your ranks."

A French general officer present declared he had never seen anything so glorious as the defeat of the enormous numbers of Russian cavalry.

"The Russians," says Mr. Russell, when describing this gallant affair, "advanced down the hill at a slow canter, which they changed to a trot, and at last merely halted. Their first line was at least nearly double the length of ours—it was three times as deep. Behind them was a similar line, equally strong and compact. They evidently despised their insignificant-looking enemy, but their time was come. The trumpets rang out again through the valley, and the Greys and Inniskilliners went right at the centre of the Russian cavalry. The space between them was only a few hundred yards; it was scarce enough to let the horses 'gather way,' nor had the men quite space sufficient for the full play of their sword-arms. The Russian line brings forward each wing as our cavalry advance, and threatens to annihilate them as they pass on. Turning a little to their left, so as to meet the Russian right, the Greys rush on with a cheer that thrills every heart. The wild shout of the Inniskilliners rises through the air at the same instant. As lightning flashes through a cloud, the Greys and Inniskilliners pierced through the dark masses of Russians. The shock was but for a moment. There was a clash of steel and a light play of sword-blades in the air, and then the Greys and the red-coats disappear in the midst of the broken and quivering columns. In another moment we see them emerging and dashing on with diminished numbers, and broken order, against the second line, which is advancing against them as fast as it can to retrieve the fortune of the charge. It was a terrible moment. 'God help them! They are lost!' was the exclamation of more than one man, and the thought of many. With unabated fire the noble hearts dashed at their enemy. It was a fight of heroes. The first line of Russians, which had been smashed utterly by our charge, and had fled off at one flank and towards the centre, were coming back to swallow up our handful of men. By sheer steel and sheer courage Inniskilliner and Scot were winning their desperate way right through the enemy's squadrons, and already grey horses and red

coats had appeared right at the rear of the second mass, when, with irresistible force, like one bolt from a bow, the First Royals, the Fourth Dragoon Guards, and the Fifth Dragoon Guards, rushed at the remnants of the first line of the enemy, went through it as though it were made of pasteboard, and, dashing on the second body of Russians as they were still disordered by the terrible assault of the Greys and their companions, put them to utter rout. This Russian horse, in less than five minutes after it met our dragoons, was flying with all its speed before a force certainly not half its strength."

Among the Scots Greys who were recipients of the Victoria Cross, we find two of the heroes of Balaklava, whose services are thus recorded:

Sergeant-Major John Grieve, in the heavy cavalry charge at Balaklava, saved the life of an officer who was surrounded by Russian cavalry, by his gallant conduct in riding up to his rescue and cutting off the head of one enemy and disabling and dispersing the others.

Sergeant Henry Ramage, at the battle of Balaklava, galloped out to the assistance of private M'Pherson of the same regiment, on perceiving him surrounded by seven Russians, and by his gallantry dispersed the enemy and saved his comrade's life. On the same day, when the Heavy Brigade was rallying and the enemy retiring, finding his horse would not leave the ranks, he dismounted, and brought in a prisoner from the Russian lines. On the same day, when the Heavy Brigade was covering the retreat of the light cavalry, he lifted from his horse private Gardiner, who was disabled from a severe fracture of the leg by a round shot. Sergeant Ramage then carried him to the rear from under a very heavy cross fire, thereby saving his life, the spot where he must inevitably have fallen having been immediately afterwards crossed by the Russian cavalry.

As long as a regiment can furnish heroes like this, who can deny it the right to bear on its banners the motto of the Scots Greys, "Second to none"?

A FEW PET FERNS.

FOR one great garden, there are a good many little ones; and for one garden with numerous greenhouses, there are numbers of gardens with none at all. Having no greenhouse, must an amateur therefore altogether renounce the culture of plants which re-

quire more or less of shelter and peculiar treatment? By no means, if I may venture to say so. Even if compelled to live in a stall which served us for garden, and greenhouse, and all, we may cut our garment according to our cloth, that is, may suit our plants to our available accommodation. Is not the *Solanum Pseudo-Capsicum* also called Oranger des Savetiers, or the Cobblers' Orange-tree? Certainly, I should like to have orchids, palms, and tree-ferns—just as I should like ten thousand a year. Not having that, and consequently not being called upon to choose between conflicting systems of fines and boilers, I contrive somehow to raise without them a few choice things, both green and gay.

One day, the postman delivers a small parcel from Brittany, which contains a little square green turf cut out of the living sod on that weather-beaten coast. Inspecting the turf, I find its surface mainly composed of miniature laurel-leaves, less than an inch in length. Great jubilation. The very thing I want! I have here the smallest fern that has hitherto turned up, *Ophioglossum lusitanicum*, the Dwarf or Portuguese Adder's Tongue; which is no more confined to Portugal than the Tunbridge Film Fern, *Hymenophyllum tunbridgense*, is to Tunbridge Wells. A smaller, *O. minimum*, is reported from New Zealand; but we may safely consider it as merely a dwarf race of a species naturally diminutive—as the Shetland pony of the Adder's Tongues.

An earthen pan, made of flower-pot clay, two and a half inches deep and eight inches in diameter, is the parterre in which my specimen is planted, surrounding it with congenial earth, and leaving the turf intact and entire. The friend who found and sends it, writes, "February 20, I dug the *Ophioglossum* with my knife out of a turfy heath, as you may see, and send it in the state I found it. You must take good care not to disturb it, but to leave it exactly as it is, giving the usual cultural attentions and planting it in heath-mould if you can get it. In a fortnight or a month, it will disappear. But don't be alarmed; in October it will come up again, and produce its fruit—the little mock adder's tongues which give the plant its name—in November or December. You will doubtless be able to keep it alive for two or three years. When you lose it I will send you more. During summer, the *Ophioglossum* will be replaced by a darling little plant, *Trichonema columnna*, whose linear leaves have already sprouted from the turf."

The Dwarf Adder's Tongue is a British subject, solely through its certificate of birth in Guernsey. It probably might be found in the west of England and in Ireland, if botanists would but time their trips between the months of October and March. This and the Common Adder's Tongue display the peculiarity of having their young frond folded straight, or doubled in two, instead of being rolled round like a bishop's crozier, as in other ferns.

In Brittany, this pigmy grows sometimes on the stony seaside hillocks which are formed at the base of schistous cliffs, mixed up with grasses, the vernal squill, and *Ixia bulbicodium*; sometimes on sandy heaths, where it often attains the enormous dimensions of four inches high. These hillocks are dry in summer (when the plant disappears to take its repose); but in winter, incessant rain, or nearly so, must render those slopes exceedingly wet. We may therefore presume that abundant moisture will help it to prosper in captivity. But some of these little fellows are better tempered than we might expect, and put up with occasional neglect without resenting it by committing suicide.

Nevertheless, it cannot stand frost, which infallibly kills it. This year, from some unknown cause, it has not been liberal with its fructification; but being a perennial, we hope it will make up for it this time twelvemonth. Its Breton associate, a charming little Irid, the aforesaid *Trichonema columna*, is one of the daintiest spring plants possible—not a show thing; never forcing itself upon your notice, either by its own pretentiousness or through the intervention of an exhibiting gardener. Like Eve, it is one of those modest beauties

That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retired,
The more desirable.

Nor does it gratify the eyesight only. The Breton children seek it out through a less ideal and more childish motive. They eat its bulbs, which are by no means bad.

Amongst these wild gatherings from the cliff and the rock, there will often spring up plants with a historical, almost a romantic interest. What boy who has revelled in the perusal of Cook's voyages does not remember Scurvy-grass? Amidst collected ferns a true scurvy-grass, *Cochlearia*, has sprouted with me from unsuspected seed, and I fondly watch the development of its peltate leaves, "round as my shield." The substitute for scurvy-grass which Cook employed, at Forster's recommendation, to cure his scorbutic

sailors, was probably *Lepidium piscidium*, a native of madreporic islands. Another *Lepidium*, *L. oleraceum*, grows on the sands of New Zealand, where it replaces the water-cress. Cook's plant, with little doubt, may be referred to this same genus. Our common garden cress is also a *Lepidium*, and we may remember that Sir Edward Parry, during his Arctic explorations, grew it on the flues of his cabin, as one of the best specifics for his invalid sailors—probably the most northerly point at which horticulture has ever been practised.

If any apology were needed for the mention of these homely and unpretending herbs, I would simply quote Sir Thomas More: "For me, there is manie a plant I entertayn in my garden and paddock which the fastidious would cast forthe. I like to teache my children the uses of common things—to know, for instance, the uses of the flowers and weeds that grow in our fields and hedges. Manie a poor knave's pottage would be improved, if he were skilled in the properties of the Burdock and Purple Orchis. The roots of wild Succory and Water Arrow-head mighte agreeable change his Lenten diet, and Glass-wort afford him a pickle for his mouthful of salt-meat. Then, there are Cresses and Wood-sorrel to his breakfast, and Salep for his hot evening mess. Howbeit, I am a schoolboy prating in presence of his master, for here is John Clement at my elbow, who is the best botanist and herbalist of us all."

One desideratum, namely *Eriscaulon septangulare*, has not in this way played jack-in-the-box, starting up when least expected, and I begin to fear never will. It is some consolation to know that I am no poorer than not a few grand Botanic Gardens. Once upon a time it grew at Killarney, but the assiduities of collectors may have exterminated it. Why they should so ruthlessly have hunted it down is incomprehensible, unless for its rarity. It is a poor, puny, paltry-looking plant, to which few amateurs would give garden or house room. Its interest is purely botanical; because it represents, all by itself, without a single near relation, a family which is numerous and abundant in America, and especially in Australia. One would like to see, in a living state, a little bit of a plant, which, even in a dried and mummified condition, has its value as an aid to reflection. Why should it linger here, like the last rose of summer, quite alone, while all the rest of its botanical

companions are long since emigrated and gone?

Who does not admire the forced Moss-rose, potted in autumn, kept snug all winter, and warmed into flowering in April or May? How delicately tender the green of its leaves! How sweet the odour, how perfect the form of its expanding bloom! There has been no worm in the bud (unless with the gardener's connivance and complicity) to feed on its damask cheek. Its very thorns tempt you to be pricked by them.

There are ferns, as hardy out-doors as the moss-rose, which well repay a similar sheltered and stimulant treatment. Take one, a North American stranger, *Onoclea sensibilis*, arrived in 1699—long enough to make itself at home—and its beauty will induce you to experiment with more. Naturally forward and precocious, it willingly yields to your kind persuasion. The form of its fronds is strange and original; their hue is at the same time bright and tender, and the veins are traced by a shining satin-thread, which is sadly dimmed by exposure to weather. These charming fronds are deciduous; and, like the wise and wealthy man, rising early, they retire early to rest. But when the plant has completed its decorative duties in-doors, you can turn it out (in the shade) in the open ground, and it will be the better rather than the worse for the change. What may sound strange, it is a roving plant, not making a perennial, stationary crown (like the Male Fern and so many others), but constantly creeping about and shifting its place, sometimes appearing where you least expect it. Supposing it to advance three inches a year, how many years would it take to get from America to Europe, if it could find a North-East passage?

There was a capital leader in the Gardener's Chronicle of January the 25th, about the roots of plants liking "to feel the pot." The horticulturist is generally satisfied as to the future of a plant—or at least for some time to come—when assured that the roots have reached the sides of the pot. If this should be the case with any "miffy" or troublesome grower, the countenance of the cultivator gives unmistakable proof of the value he attaches to such a condition. The *Onoclea's* propensity to feeling the pot amounts to a passion; it lays hold of it, hugs it, overlaps it, as if it feared the pot should escape from its embrace. Nor is it alone in this curious habit: the Haresfoot and Maidenhair ferns

do the same. Why the *Onoclea* should be called *sensibilis*, I have yet to learn. Inquiring once of a high authority, the high authority not daring to confess, "We do not know," replied that its fronds, when cut, withered with sensitive rapidity. I am unable, however, after growing it several years, to discover that it is at all more sensitive, in that or any other respect, than other members of its order.

Struthiopteris germanica makes quite a grand plant, either for the pot or the open ground. Its title means the German Ostrich-plume Fern, because its fronds, in their development, take the form of such plumes in different degrees of drooping and erectness; only, instead of composing a flat bunch or bouquet, like the Prince of Wales's traditional feathers, they make, when completely opened, an elegant green vase, of imposing dimensions in old-established plants, and exceedingly pretty in even quite young ones. These are the sterile fronds; that is, those which bear no spores. Later in the season, the fertile or spore-bearing, stiff, stalky fronds start up from the middle of the vase, soon after which the others lose their freshness and begin to decay, the plant being strictly deciduous.

The *Struthiopteris* may be highly recommended to all who have not yet made its acquaintance. It is a perennial of the easiest culture, requiring only sufficient pot-room, regular watering, and shade. It does not itself wander about, like the *Onoclea*; but it sends forth its progeny to seek their fortunes, at the extremities of tough underground roots or suckers, in the most extraordinary manner, regardless, in pure wantonness and defiance, of whatever it may meet in its way. Sometimes it will direct its course right through a tuft of another species of fern. In a pot, in its struggles to get away, it will throw out the earth, like a mole, in early spring. The less the mother plant wastes her strength in this curious production of runners year after year, the more stately and magnificent she becomes. But it is not easy to prevent her doing so, if she has taken to the habit. Advance two feet per annum, in how many centuries, or geological epochs, will the German Ostrich-plume Fern, starting from Berlin, accomplish its invasion of the Bois de Boulogne?

Stru-thi-op-te-ris Germanica! Lovers of graceful form, please copy. Hard names are to be avoided when it is possible; when it is not, we must make a virtue of necessity, and train our mouths to pronounce

the polysyllables as smoothly as teeth and tongue will permit. But is strathiopteris more difficult than chrysanthemum, which has long since been a household word? For those who know Greek, the latter is a golden flower; for those who do not, also a white, crimson, or pink one; but no one forgets chrysanthemum, even if he curtails it into zanthum. Besides, allowance may be claimed for domestic Latin and Greek, when we see advertised, in staring capitals, such things as a new Campanula Medium—not the only campanula assailed by bad language. Invited by a lady to go and see her Pirramy Doll (although still young, she was past her doll-hood), I obeyed, to have my curiosity satisfied by a well-grown plant of Campanula pyramidalis. Others will talk of their Japonicas, as if the only japonicas were camellias. But sour critics will only carp at this. Let him who never wrote dog-latin, or uttered a false quantity, find the first fault. With the ever-increasing hosts of plants, it is impossible to stick to the vernacular. Crack-jaw names must not complain if they suffer in return an occasional fracture.

More fashionable, and better known in Warden cases on drawing-room tables, is the Tunbridge Film Fern, *Hymenophyllum tunbridgense*. I keep it under a bell-glass, (sold for covering cheese), looking like a patch of green seaweed growing in air. It is, in reality, an amphibious plant; and an extra-moist atmosphere being indispensable to its health, that of living-rooms is, of course, too dry. We can hence understand that the Tunbridge Film Fern is certainly a difficult plant to retain; but the difficulty, perhaps, is exaggerated. When it is apparently dead, we should not be in too great a hurry to complete its interment. Months after its supposed decease, if kept in favourable conditions (in a warm moist atmosphere under a bell-glass), it will slyly renew its filmy fronds. This proves a certain tenacity of life; for in Brittany, where it luxuriates, it is accustomed to soils and sites constantly saturated with ever-renewed, not stagnant, moisture. Its fronds frequently even serve as conduits to the water which drips down the face of rocks.

The above-mentioned are ferns in their normal and natural state; but many of them put on whimsical disguises under which their best friends would hardly recognise them. The change is often magical. Thus, the Lady Fern transforms herself into a tuft of curled parsley (*Athyrium Filix fœmina*, var. *crispum*), or a bunch of

green feathers (plumosum), or a knotted cat-o'-nine-tails (*Frizelliæ*). I have one of the last which now and then throws off the mask by producing true Lady Fern fronds, partially or wholly. All these merit a hearty welcome as pets. Under kind and judicious treatment, the older they grow the more beautiful and attractive they become. They are ably catalogued by Mr. Robert Sim, of Foot's Cray, Kent, a skilful cultivator of their tribe, and the portraits of the most remarkable are given in Moore's Nature-printed British Ferns.

But note: The varieties described in such catalogues are not, as some may suppose, proofs of the power of what Art can do, even in so natural a family as Ferns. Art, I believe, has done nothing in originating, or, as the French would say, creating, those varieties. Their pretended origin from hybridisation may be regarded at least as questionable. They have been found wild (many of them have been named after their finder—*Polystichum angulare* var. *Kitsoniæ* was found at Torquay by Miss Kitson, in 1856), or have accidentally and unaccountably appeared in cultivated ferneries. All that art, that is, horticultural skill, has done, is to search for, nurse, and propagate them, mostly by division of the crown or the rhizoma; but it is curious that not a few of them come true to their variety (not their species) from spores, proving the tendency of organic peculiarities to be hereditarily transmitted. There are nurserymen, both at home and abroad, who are especially successful in multiplying fern varieties in this way. And they are an important item in horticultural commerce. Striking forms are so much the fashion and so much sought after, that the discovery of any new and original variation from the specific type, will obtain an offer of money for it, or—which is the same—of plants in exchange. About a thousand species of foreign ferns are grown in the various gardens of this country. These may be regarded as about one-third of all the species known to botanists. Now, in all these three thousand species, and throughout the wide world, only three truly annual ferns are known; and I have the one of them, which claims to be British, by territorial rather than geographical right. It might easily however become naturalised and obtain a settlement in the course of time. All three are curious in their ways.

One, *Ceratopteris thalictroides*, besides being annual, is also the only individual of its order really entitled to be called a water

fern. Several species, as *Lastrea The-lypteris*, the Female Buckler Fern, and *Osmunda regalis*, the Royal or Flowering Fern, though natives of the marsh, will grow and even flourish in places that may be called dry. But the *Ceratopteris*, widely dispersed throughout the tropics, always grows in wet, often flooded, spots. Its sterile, viviparous fronds float on or below the surface of the water, as may be seen in the *Victoria* tanks at Kew. But, being annual, to keep it, care must be taken to preserve its spores. In spring, they should be sown in a shallow pan of loamy soil made wet like mud, and kept in that state. When the plants are of sufficient size, the pan may either be filled with water, or be plunged in a tank to the depth of an inch. But in spite of its attractive singularity, the hot-house culture required to make it prosper prevents its becoming everybody's fern.

The other two annuals are *Gymnogrammas*. One of them, *G. chœrophylla*, also a hothouse plant, with delicate fronds from two to six inches long, grows freely enough. Its spores vegetate abundantly, often as a hothouse weed. The other, *G. leptophylla*, the Small-leaved *Gymnogram*, of the same diminutive stature which I possess, or ought to—for at this moment it is still in its invisible state—is more chary of its presence. Nevertheless, it can be coaxed into showing itself, when the proper time arrives for it to appear.

Had Sir Thomas Browne cultivated this pretty little plant, it would have removed some of his botanical doubts: "Whether all plants have seed, were more easily determinable, if we could conclude concerning hartstongue, fern, the capillaries, lunaria, and some others. But whether those little dusty particles, upon the lower side of the leaves, be seeds and seminal parts; or rather, as it is commonly conceived, excremental separations; we have not as yet been able to determine by any germination or univocal production from them when they have been sowed on purpose; but having set the roots of hartstongue in a garden, a year or two after, there came up three or four of the same plants, about two yards distance from the first. Thus much we observe, that they seem to renew yearly, and come not fully out till the plant be in its vigour; and by the help of magnifying glasses, we find these dusty atoms to be round at first, and fully representing seeds, out of which at last proceeds little mites almost invisible; so that such as are old stand open, as being emptied of some bodies

formerly included; which, though discernible in hartstongue, is more notoriously discoverable in some differences of brake or fern."

There is no way to propagate this fern except by seed. Mr. John Smith, excurator of the Kew Botanic Gardens, advises that when its fronds decay in autumn, the pot should be covered with a piece of glass, and put in a dry place until the proper season arrives in spring, when the application of moisture will cause the latent spores to vegetate. The annual *Gymnogramma* (sometimes called *Grammitis*) ordinarily makes its appearance in early spring. It likes a shady spot, but, at the same time, a warm aspect, then succeeding with very little care and becoming almost a weed in congenial situations. It is admitted as British, because it thrives in Jersey, where any light sandy soil seems to suit it. Mr. Ward presented Mr. Moore with a portion richly furnished with spores. Scattered on the surface of a flower-pot filled with sandy loam, this earth yielded an abundant crop of plants.

But the earth in which any favourite ferns have grown, or which has accompanied them when received, should always be scrupulously preserved; because there are always hopes that it will produce fresh plants. The spores of ferns often take several years to germinate, and we should never despair of their showing themselves, if we only give them a fair chance of doing so.

The fact is a valuable hint for Mr. Cook's next party round the world. Set foot on any little-trodden land, grasp a single handful of earth, and you know not what you may bring away with you—a rough diamond, a fossil bone of an early progenitor, proofs of inexhaustible alluvial fertility, specks of gold suggestive of nuggets close by, traces of coal-fields to enrich future colonies, or unseen spores of some beautiful fern which, after lining the pocket of the lucky nurseryman in whose establishment it "originates," descends in price till it is obtainable by humble admirers like the present writer.

WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

CHAPTER LXXI. WHICH ENDS THE STORY.

Two or three notices, which, Mr. Jarlot said, would not cost five pounds, were served on behalf of Mr. Marston, and, with these, the faint echo of his thunders

subsided. There was, in fact, no material for litigation.

"The notices," Mr. Jarlocot said, "came from Marshall and Whitaker, the solicitors who had years before submitted the cases for him, upon his uncle's title, and upon the question of his own position as nearest of kin and heir-at-law. He was very carefully advised as to how exactly he should stand in the event of his uncle's dying intestate."

I was stunned when I heard of my enormous fortune, involving, as it did, his ruin. I would at once have taken measures to deal as generously with him as the other will, of which I then knew no more than that Sir Harry must have contemplated, at one time, the possibility at least of signing it.

When I left Golden Friars I did so with an unalterable resolution never to see Richard Marston again. But this was compatible with the spirit of my intention to provide more suitably for him. I took Mr. Blount into council; but I was disappointed. The will had been made during my father's lifetime, and in evident apprehension of his influence over me, and deprived me of the power of making any charge upon the property, whether land or money. I could do nothing but make him a yearly present of a part of my income, and even that was embarrassed by many ingenious conditions and difficulties.

It was about this time that a letter reached me from Richard Marston, the most extraordinary document I had ever read; a mad letter in parts, and wicked; a letter, also, full of penitence and self-upbraiding. "I am a fiend. I have been all cruelty and falsehood, you all mercy and truth," it said. "I have heard of your noble wishes; I know how vain they are. You can do nothing that I would accept. I am well enough. Think no more of the wretch. I have found, too late, I cannot live without you. You shall hear of me no more; only forgive me."

There are parts of this strange letter that I never understood, that may bear many interpretations.

When Mr. Blount spoke of him he never gave me his conclusions, and it was always in the sad form, "let us hope;" he never said exactly what he suspected. Mr. Jarlocot plainly had but one opinion of him, and that the worst.

I agreed, I think, with neither. I relied on instinct, which no one can analyse or define; the wild inspiration of nature;

the saddest, and often the truest guide. Let me not condemn, then, lest I be condemned.

The good here are not without wickedness, nor the wicked without good. With death begins the purifying. Each character will be sifted as wheat. The eternal judge will reduce each, by the irresistible chemistry of his power and truth, to its basis, for neither hell nor heaven can receive a mixed character.

I did hear of Richard Marston again once more; it was about five months later, when the news of his death by fever, at Marseilles, reached Mr. Blount.

Since then my life has been a retrospect. Two years I passed in India with my beloved friend Laura. But my melancholy grew deeper; the shadows lengthened; and an irrepressible yearning to revisit Golden Friars and Malory seized me. I returned to England.

I am possessed of fortune. I thank God for its immunities; I well know how great they are. For its pleasures, I have long ceased to care. To the poor, I try to make it useful; and I am quite conscious that in this there is no merit. I have no pleasure in money. I think I have none in flattery. I need deny myself nothing, and yet be in the eyes of those who measure charity arithmetically a princely Christian benefactress. I wish I were quite sure of having ever given a cup of cold water in the spirit that my Maker commends.

A few weeks after my return, Mr. Blount showed me a letter. The signature startled me. It was from Monsieur Droquille, and a very short one. It was chiefly upon some trifling business, and it said, near the end:

"You sometimes see Miss Ware, I believe; she will be sorry to hear that her old friend, Mr. Carmel, died last summer at his missionary post in South America. A truer soldier of Christ never fell in the field of his labours. Requiescat!"

There was a tremble at my heart, and a swelling. I held the sentence before my eyes till they filled with tears.

My faithful, noble friend! At my side in every trouble. The one of all mortals I have met who strove with his whole heart to win me, according to his lights, to God. May He receive and for ever bless you for it, patient, gentle Edwin Carmel. His griefs are over. To me there seems an angelic light around him; the pale enthusiast in the robe of his purity stands saint-like before me. I remember all your tender care. I better understand, too, the

wide differences that separate us, now, than in my careless girlhood; but these do not dismay me. I know that "in my father's house are many mansions," and I hope that when the clouds that darken this life are passed, I may yet meet and thank and bless you, my noble-hearted friend, where, in one love and light, the redeemed shall walk for evermore.

At Golden Friars I lived again for a short time. But the associations of Dorraclough were too new and harrowing. I left that place to the care of good Mr. Blount, who loves it better than any other. He pays me two or three visits every year at Malory, and advises me in all matters of business.

I do not affect the airs of an anchorite. But my life is, most people would think, intolerably monotonous and lonely. To me it is not only endurable, but the sweetest that, in my peculiar state of mind, I could have chosen.

With the flight of my years, and the slow approach of the hour when dust will return to dust, the love of solitude steals on me, and no regrets for the days I have lost, as my friends insist, and no yearnings for a return to an insincere and tawdry world, have ever troubled me. In girlhood I contracted my love of this simple, rural solitude, and my premature experience of all that is disappointing and deplorable in life confirms it. But the spell of its power is in its recollections. It is a place, unlike Dorraclough, sunny and cheerful, as well as beautiful, and this tones the melancholy of its visions, and prevents their sadness from becoming overpowering.

I wonder how many people are living, like me, altogether in the past, and in hourly communion with visionary companions?

Richard Marston, does a waking hour ever pass without, at some moment, recalling your image? I do not mistake you; I have used no measured language in describing you. I know you for the evil, fascinating, reckless man you were.

Such a man as, had I never seen you, and only known the sum of his character, I ought to have hated. A man who, being such as he was, meditated against me a measureless wrong. I look into my heart, is there vengeance there against you? Is there judgment? Is there even alienation?

Oh! how is it that reason, justice, virtue, all cannot move you from a secret place in my inmost heart? Can any man who has once been an idol, such as you were, ever perish utterly in that mysterious shrine—a woman's heart? In solitary hours, as I, unseen, look along the sea, my cheeks are wet with tears; in the wide silence of the night my lonely sobs are heard. Is my grief for you mere madness? Why is it that man so differs from man? Why does he often so differ from the nobler creature he might have been, and sometimes almost was? Over an image partly dreamed and partly real, shivered utterly, but still in memory visible, I pour out the vainest of all sorrows.

In the wonderful working that subdues all things to itself—in all the changes of spirit, or the spaces of eternity, is there, shall there never be, from the first failure, evolved the nobler thing that might have been? I care for no other. I can love no other; and were I to live and keep my youth through eternity, I think I never could be interested or won again. Solitude has become dear to me, because he is in it. Am I giving this infinite true love in vain? I comfort myself with one vague hope. I cannot think that nature is so cynical. Does the loved phantom represent nothing? And is the fidelity that nature claims, but an infatuation and a waste?

END OF WILLING TO DIE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER VI. REUBE.

THIS was Reuben Heck, the shepherd, commonly called Reube, a tall, ungainly, gipsy-looking man, with a hooked nose, hawk's eyes, and a thick frill of iron-grey beard hiding the lower part of his tanned, weather-battered face. He was round-shouldered, and slouched as he moved, his knees much bent, and his enormous feet turned out quite in excess even of the fashion prescribed by dancing-masters. In our district Reube was known on this account as a "dew-pitter," or dew-beater, it being alleged of him that his extended toes brushed the dew off the grass inordinately as he went along.

With a heavy, labouring, clumping tread Reube entered the kitchen. He was understood to be an admirer of Kem's; indeed, the general opinion went that the twain had been "keeping company" for many years. It had never seemed to me, however, that they were on particularly tender terms with each other, or that their courtship made any kind of progress. Kem was usually very sharp and abrupt in her manner of addressing him, although she may thus have been applying vinegar, as a certain Carthaginian general is said to have done before her, for its softening properties. Reube appeared to be usually either in a grinning mood—in which case he was speechless—or in a state of intense gloom and repining, when his observations were engrossed by his troubles and responsibilities as a shepherd, and he could only talk about the lambs and ewes (to be pronounced "yoes") under his care, especially in relation to the flocks of a rival

herdsman, one Garge, employed on an adjoining farm. Between Reube and Garge there existed the bitterest antagonism and enmity, arising from the more or less "forward" condition of their fleecy charges. To think that such innocent creatures should be the direful spring of so much wrath and malevolence! I don't remember ever having seen Reube perfectly content and at ease but once; it was when Garge's sheep were suffering most severely from foot-rot.

Reube's speech possessed, to quite an infectious extent, the characteristics of our country dialect. Conversing with him, one caught, as of necessity, something of his drawl and twang, and took up with his queer words and curious phrases. It was so with me, I know; and I observed that Kem adopted a much broader and more provincial language when she addressed Reuben than she usually employed in speaking to myself or to others. But perhaps this may be a sort of involuntary compliment commonly paid to those uttering speech of peculiar quality. I have certainly known many of my compatriots talk broken English to a foreigner indifferently acquainted with our tongue, by way of meeting him half-way, and descending to his inferior level of information.

Reube spoke in a gruff tone, swaying his head from side to side as though he were jerking his words out, giving them a final shake with his teeth before dropping them, like a terrier disposing of a rat. This had the effect of adding a redundant syllable to many of the words he uttered. "Terrible" thus became "terri-able," "surely" "shu-er-ly," and so on.

"There," said Reube, "I be most averd to look measter i' the face; the lambs be doing that terrible bad, I be all i' a muggle. The weather bloomy too, and no fault to

find with narra one. I dunno how 'tis. Another of they chilver lambs gone dead. As nice and sprack a looking lamb as heart could wish. Things has got in a caddling way somehows. And that Garge'll go grinning and gaping about, and saying as 'tis my vault. Never had such bad luck with the sheep avore—never. Cusnation!" (This expletive, of obscure origin, was a favourite of Reube's). "'Tis amost enow to break a mun's hairt. I be aweard now to go anight the vold, lest I should see another stark lamb. 'Tis main hard upon a mun—so 'tis. I be right down mammered (bewildered), that's what I be."

"Coom, Reube," interjected Kem, pitifully, "hev a dubbin o' drenk" (mug of beer).

"Reube," I said, to turn his thoughts from his professional grievances, and to obtain confirmation of my story, "didst see Lord Overbury yesternight?"

"I see un vast enow," replied Reube, his voice rumbling in his mug. "He was cooming along London road—from Dripford moast like, where the coach stops. I couldn't think who 'twas at virst; yet I knowed un by sight, though I couldn't call un by's neame." He set down his mug empty, rubbing the back of his red-brown hand over his lips.

"You'd seen un bevore, Reube?"

"Ay, times, Measter Duke. Yet I couldn't, directly-minute, get it into my yead who 'twas. There; I had the lambs on my moind, and was thinking about a hep o' things. But I come upon him close anont the virst milestone out o' Purrington."

"How was he dressed?"

"There; I dunno as I took purtickler notice, Measter Duke. But a' had a vrill to's shirt, and a brooch or zammut stuck in's craw (breast). 'Well, shepherd,' a' says—and then I knowed un. 'Twas his lordship, sure as sure. 'Whose sheep be theesum?' a' says—for 'twas anight the vold. 'Measter Orme's,' I says, and I made my obedience to un; but I couldn't think to call un 'my lord,' as I should ha' done, he'd come upon me so sudden-quick. 'A vine vlock, shepherd,' a' says. 'Ees,' I says, for it weren't for I to be tellun un how poor they'd been doing. 'And are those the chilvers out yonder?' a' axes. 'Ees,' I says. 'Bide where you are,' a' says, and a' ups and looks at 'em. And then he gie I half a crown, 'to git drunk with,' a' says, and then he laughs and shuts his eye, and looks at I again. I was

certain sure it was his lordship arter that. 'Twas just his way I'd seen times avore."

"Now, Kem, you see," I said to her.

"And a' went to the great house?" she inquired of Reube.

"A' did. Leastways I see un go thitherwards. 'Twasn't fit I should follow un, so when a'd done talking I hiked off. But I axed old Thacker, this morning, and a' says his lordship came there last night. But what vor, or how long to stay, a' couldn't tell me. 'Tis main drouthy talking," observed Reube in conclusion.

Kem supplied him with some more beer. He was regaled also with what he called a "crim," meaning a crumb, of bread-and-cheese.

"Isn't Lord Overbury a bad man, Reube?" I asked presently. "Haven't you heard tell so?"

"Surely," he answered. "But it isn't for I to be saying so. He gie I half a crown. I wish there was a many such bad men about."

I was inclined to agree with Reube. His lordship had given me three sovereigns. I found a new pleasure in keeping my hand in my pocket. The money was most musical. It chinked with a delightful sound, far above the common jingling of silver or copper coins. My experience, thitherto, had been limited to the inferior metals. Lord Overbury's was the first gold I ever possessed. Certainly his lordship could not be so bad as people rumoured.

"But you know, Reube," said Kem, "he was terrible wild and wicked."

"Maybe," observed Reube. "He threw away his money, I've been told. Perhaps that's what rich volks most comes into the world vor. Happen there's a poor man to catch it, I don't see there's much to vind vault wi' their chucking their money about. It's like barley sowing, it seems to me. Sow it in the vurrows and it will come up a credit to you. But some valls outside; and the birds gets it, or it rots and turns to naught. There's allus waste any ways. For horse-racing and jockeys and that, I don't say. The poor man don't gain by that sort, maybe. Yet he may pick up zammut heres and theres. While for women—"

"How can you talk, so, Reube," interrupted Kem, "and you setting up for a tidy steady man, and a chapel-goer."

"Well, there," said Reube, "I go to chapel most-in-deal (ordinarily), when the sheep'll let me. But they're amost too much for a man. I can't listen to the

minister for thinking of things going wrong i' the vold; voot-rot, or scouring, or dead lambs, or what not. I can't sleep o' nights, let alone saying my prayers. Garge is a church-goer. I seen un times and times going over the down, carrying's prayer-book, though I knows a' can't read un. Oh, he's a church-goer. But there's some volks as has no conscience. I doan't say as a' hasn't got a tidy looking lamb or so among his vlock. A' knows how to cosset 'em up vor show. And there's vools about as hasn't got eyes to see a whole vlock at ance. They'll look at one or two, maybe, and take Garge's word vor the rest. But there; there's sheep in his vold as I'd be shamed to own. If mine were so desperd bad as some of 'issen I'd take and drown myself in sheep-pond, that's what I'd do. Oh, Garge is a church-goer, certain sure."

"You needn't be so main scrow (cross) about it, Reube," said Kem. "Garge's church-going won't harm un, nor's vlock neither. I'm a church-goer, Measter Duke's a church-goer. We're all church-goers in this house. Not that I'd say a word against the Methodys. My own mother was one on 'em. And I've known a many main tidy volks Methodys."

"Drattle Garge, that's all I ses," observed Reube, by way of a final deliverance against his rival. After which, the beer perhaps gradually instilling comfort through him, he fell into a grinning silence as he surveyed Kem. But his mute courtship seemed to have, as usual, but an irritating effect upon its object. The more he grinned at Kem, the more she appeared to frown upon him. She preferred him, I think, in his splenetic moods, when he was maundering about his troubles with his flock, or inveighing against Garge, holding him, perhaps, in that condition, to be more like a sane creature. I remember her once observing that she liked a man who knew how to "downarg"—the word signifying to contradict or argue after a very peremptory and downright manner.

"Thee bist terrible dummell (stupid), Reube," I heard her say as I quitted the kitchen. I concluded that her admirer's grinning was becoming unendurable.

I had to con my lessons for the morrow. A little room had been allotted me for the purposes of study. It was at the side of the house, and looked on to a pathway leading to the farm-yard. Here were stored such books as the Down Farm possessed. Some were old treasures that had long been in the keeping of the Orme family; ser-

mons preached in Steepleborough Cathedral by long-departed bishops, deans, canons, and prebends; works on farming, account-books, cookery-books, and manuscript volumes full of all sorts of precious recipes for the cure and comfort of human and animal kind. Others had been purchased, I understood, by my uncle at cheap sales in the neighbourhood, with a view to my mother's entertainment during the long winter evenings. He had bought them by the score probably, with the very slightest heed to their contents. His own reading was confined to the county paper, an organ of True Blue opinions, fiercely expressed, but more valued for its local news, its readers caring little about politics in that their minds had long been quite conclusively made up on that head. My mother had rarely looked into the volumes, I think; she read but little; her sight had failed in regard to near objects, though curiously powerful as to things at a distance. But she valued my uncle's gift, or, at least, the kindness that had prompted it; always dusting the books herself rather than permit them to fall into ruder hands, providing neat covers for those more ornamentally bound, and remedying with paste or needle and thread such as were in a decayed condition, or had suffered from hard usage. Certain of them she was wont to lay upon the table upon Sunday afternoons as appropriate literary food; Hervey's Meditations, Blair, Fordyce, Doctor Young's Night Thoughts, Sturm's Reflections, and a few other such works. It was a mere form, for nobody ever read them; still it was a form which, begun as a duty, was persisted in, rather as a matter of habit than for any clearer reason, except that departure from it would somehow recal and revive its origin, and seem neglect of duty.

Much of the small library I pronounced detestably "dry;" still it contained volumes that were to me thoroughly delightful. I think their existence was known only to myself. Records of travel and adventure, venerable romances, odd, old-world magazines, and collections of fairy tales. One of these last I remember contained in it an inscription in faded ink, "To little Charlotte Augusta, on her birthday." No more than that. I often wondered as to this mysterious maiden. Did she live still? I asked myself. She was dead, probably, poor child, or how could her book have come into my hands? Dead as a child, at any rate, even if she survived as a woman. Had she

read it with the fond appetite and admiration I experienced? I should never know. But the book's best stories, I noticed, bore the most finger-marks and dog's-ears. Reading these pages I felt I was following the footsteps down most pleasant paths, with vague childish tenderness, of the unknown little Charlotte Augusta.

I recollect my distress at finding the story of Count Fathom incomplete—certain volumes were missing. In later years I have thought it quite as well that this was so. But the purity of a child's nature deodorises his reading. The armour of innocence affords very sure and staunch protection.

It was a homely little room enough, yet comfortable withal. Over the mantelpiece there hung a mirror—in which I delighted to view myself transformed by its convexity into a pantomimic creature with a colossal head and diminutive extremities—surmounted by peacock's feathers, a fox's brush and dry bunches of wheat and barley ears of phenomenal size and beauty. At the window—on the sill of which stood usually a yellow jug full of flowers—my mother was accustomed to pay the labourers on Saturday evenings, relieving my uncle, on the score of her superior readiness in arithmetic, of this portion of his farming duties. The men came in turn to receive their wages, and with them oftentimes some cheering little present for the sick wife or the ailing child in the cottage home. My mother's desk rested on a side table. The shelves of books were ranged opposite the fireplace.

I sat down to my lessons. But I was too fresh from the interesting converse of the kitchen; my morning's adventure in the Dark Tower still occupied me. I lived in a small and confined world; its mole-hills were very mountains to me. My Latin exercise distressed me much. There was something wrong with the dictionary; it did not contain half the words I wanted; and then I was in trouble about my pens; they wouldn't write; they would splutter, and blot, and make the thickest of up-strokes.

Those were the days of grey goose quills. Steel had not yet been applied to writing purposes; or at any rate the invention had not come into use down our way. In vain I strove with a blunt pocket-knife and most imperfect art to better my pens. They grew worse; rough-edged stunted objects, with nibs of unequal

pattern and length—like wooden-legged men—I could do nothing with them. I grew hot over my Latin exercise; dissatisfied and enraged with it, myself, the world about me, and the nature of things generally.

I looked round for help. My mother's desk! It contained pens, I knew—bright, clean, transparent quills of perfect form and finish. For she took pride in her penmanship, producing a firm large hand, a little formal in character, perhaps, but still shapely and most legible. But the desk was usually fast locked. The thing was worth trying, however—my stress being so urgent.

The desk was unlocked, by some strange chance. I raised the lid. I could not at first light on what I sought. When I perceived the pens my eyes fell also upon an object that was new to me—a something of oval form enclosed in a case of soiled wash-leather. Of course I proceeded to examine it.

It was a miniature set in a narrow rim of gold—or what looked like gold—with a ring at the top, through which ran a faded blue ribbon. It was the portrait of a young man, attired after a bygone fashion, in a braided brown coat with a fur collar. He had large dark eyes and refined symmetrical features. He wore his hair combed down his forehead nearly to his eyebrows, and a high full white cravat swathing his neck.

The drawing seemed rather tinted than fully coloured; or perhaps the pigments had dimmed by lapse of time. There was blue sky at the back, and the face was highly finished with that delicate stippling which miniature painters much affected in times past. But the dress and accessories were only sketchily treated, the pale yellow of the ivory ground being left apparent towards the edges of the picture.

The light was waning, and I moved to the window to view the portrait to more advantage. Suddenly a hand came between me and the light, and closed over the miniature.

"Duke!" said a voice. I knew the voice as I knew the hand to be my mother's. She gently took the portrait from me before I had half done with contemplating it.

CHAPTER VII. DEAD AND GONE.

"I MEANT no harm, mother. I was searching for a pen; I knew you had some in your desk. Then I saw this picture. I couldn't help looking at it. But I was

not going to take it away. I intended to put it back. Indeed I did."

"It's wrong to pry, Duke. But I am to blame; I should have locked my desk." Then she added after a pause: "You may look at the picture if you will, Duke;" and she replaced it in my hands.

She was not angry with me; yet there was a certain pained look in her face; and I noticed that she was very much agitated. And though there were no tears in her eyes, there were, if I may say so, tears in her quivering lips, in the increased paleness of her cheeks, in her low plaintive voice. I had never before seen her so much moved; and the sight impressed me with a sort of vague awe.

Again I looked at the picture; but I thought of it now less than of her. Her hand rested upon my shoulder as she stood behind me; I could feel that she was still trembling violently, that her breathing was very troubled; I almost fancied that I could hear the quick throbbing of her heart.

"You like it, Duke?" she asked presently.

"I think it's a beautiful picture."

"It's a portrait of your father, Duke," she said, faintly.

I knew not what to say. The picture interested me, but not deeply. I felt dissatisfied with myself that I could not share, could not fully comprehend, the excitement it seemed to kindle in her. I was concerned in that she seemed distressed; penitent, because her evident suffering had been brought about by my thoughtlessness; still her sorrow, her emotion, was not mine.

And the fact that the picture represented my father did not affect me as I had a kind of suspicion it should have done; as indeed, at the time, I could have wished it to do. I was surprised, but not otherwise stirred. Certainly I felt no sudden leaping of the heart; no awakening of new affection; no passionate thrill of yearning. Interest to the extent of curiosity; but nothing much better or higher than that.

Even to myself this seemed like callousness, heartlessness; and, in a way, shocked me. My father was nothing to me; that was the plain truth. His portrait was to me little more than the portrait of a stranger. But then it is to be said for me that I had never seen him that I could remember; that I, in truth, knew nothing of him. His name was never mentioned; from my mother and uncle I had

never once heard even the most distant reference to him. It had been as though he had never existed. He had died and left no trace. My home had not been his. And certainly I had not been taught, as other fatherless children often are, to cherish and reverence the memory of the departed one; to set store upon some words he had spoken, or some deeds that he had done. But for this picture, accidentally discovered, he was not even as a shadow to me.

"My father," I repeated, mechanically.

"Your father, Duke."

"And he's dead." I scarcely knew what I said.

"Dead." Her voice seemed a broken wailing echo of mine.

I returned the portrait. She replaced it in her desk. Then she said, with an effort: "I intended to show it you; but not yet; when you were older; when you could better understand— But there's no harm done, dear. It shall be yours some day—soon, perhaps; and all I have in the world besides. That's little enough, Heaven knows. Indeed, what have I in the world but you, Duke, my poor boy? But—you shall have the picture—for your own—to keep always; only not yet. And don't speak of it again, dear. Let this be a secret between us, Duke—a close secret, not to be mentioned again by either of us. Try and forget that you have ever seen the picture; that you have ever seen me thus."

Her arms were round my neck, and her tears were now falling fast. What could I say or do to comfort her? I could find no words to express my sympathy, imperfect as it was, because of my condition of wonderment and surprise.

Presently she grew more composed.

"How your forehead burns, my boy," she said, as she kissed me. "Are your lessons very hard to-day? Let me see if I can help you. See, here are pens. Now, which book are you upon? The Latin exercise? Is it really so very difficult? Come, two heads are better than one. Let us try and puzzle it out between us."

She sat down beside me, and took possession of the dictionary. It was marvellous how rapidly her light, deft fingers turned over its leaves; how obedient it became to her, revealing mysteries I had vainly been labouring to penetrate; yielding up its treasures promptly upon her faintest bidding, although, but for a few moments before, it had been striving its utmost to baffle and bewilder me. Yet I

knew that her learning on the subject was not in advance of my own. I had been handed over to Mr. Bygrave, indeed, because I was supposed to have outgrown her powers of instruction. She seemed to me like the good fairy in the nursery story, who at a word imparts order and method to the tangled skeins of many-coloured silk. Her magic was simply kindness and intelligence. But she left me particularly well-prepared to encounter my preceptor on the morrow.

Gradually she resumed her accustomed sobriety, and even gravity of demeanour. For usually she had seemed to despise demonstrations of feeling as though she held such to be evidences of weakness and folly; priding herself, I think, upon her courage to endure silently, and to suppress emotional displays. I could not remember that I had ever seen her shed tears before. I felt almost as though I had once again been stricken with severe illness, for at such times I had learned to recognise her deep and earnest affection for me, shown in her ceaseless watching by my sick cot, her devout solicitude for my recovery and welfare. I fear I had always viewed her toils and anxieties in this respect with the wonted thoughtless ingratitude of infancy, and especially of invalid infancy. The sick child is ever as a despot, imposing taxes, and inflicting hardships with the very slightest regard for the convenience or the feelings of those he rules over. Their care, and labour, and allegiance he claims as his lawful dues, nor deems it worth while in any way to acknowledge their prompt payment. Certainly she had not lacked affection for me then, when my need of it was most urgent. And if she seemed, or if I ever fancied that she seemed, to love me less when I was well and strong, it was perhaps because then I had so much the less occasion for her love.

Now, I was not ill; I was even growing quite hearty and robust, and yet she had been betrayed into a curious exhibition of emotion and tenderness. It was very strange to me, and set me pondering much. Could it be only because she had found me with my father's portrait in my hands? That father of whom she never spoke to me—or, so far as I was aware, to others; of whose life and story I knew nothing; concerning whom a reserve and a silence, that were surely strange, had always been studiously maintained? There was more in it than that. I felt that there

must be. But should I ever know how much more?

I slept but ill that night. The adventures of the day had been of a most unwonted kind. They possessed me, and excited me. I turned and turned restlessly in my bed, and heard the kitchen clock chiming hours that it was a dissipation even to think of; they seemed so viciously alien to my usual way of life. Had I ever been awake before at two o'clock in the morning? I asked myself. Only perhaps when I was too much depressed by severe sickness to keep account at all of the flight of time. Yet I heard two strike, and even three; enjoying the sound somewhat as a new experience. There was a sort of manliness, I thought, in being awake so late, or so early, in defiance of all social prescription, although I was pained, too, by it, for my head was feverish, my bones ached, and I needed and courted sleep. How silent all was! I could even hear the movements of an uneasy horse in the farm stable, two hundred yards or so from the house, rattling his halter, or kicking against the side of his box. Was it the old grey, I mused, or the chestnut? And why was he so restless? Did horses ever suffer from the nightmare? Absurd.

There was this remarkable fact about the events of the day. They had brought me into the presence of two pictures. These impressed me the more, no doubt, in that, at my age, I had seen so very few pictures, as I have already stated. But apart from this, they were in themselves notable works, while the manner of my seeing them had been sufficiently strange. The one a tall canvas, that towered above me some feet; the other, a mere scrap of ivory that I could close in my hand. Lord Overbury in his robes as a peer, the size of life; my dead father in a fur-trimmed, old-fashioned coat. A miniature portrait. How different! And yet—was it mere fancy?—did not some subtle tie exist between them? or was this their association simply in my childish mind, due to the circumstance that I had seen both on the same day, the one but a few hours after the other?

I was half dreaming. But this I know: the pictures somehow became curiously blended and confused together. They changed places, and changed back again like shuffled cards. Now it was Lord Overbury's face on the ivory; now my father surveyed me from the elevated position over the library mantelpiece in the

great house. They were distinct persons surely; unlike in feature, air, and expression, and yet there were moments when I could not separate them—when all was blurred, and not two portraits, but only one existed, and this of some strange man I knew nothing of, although by quaint jerks and twitches, as it were, he bore a resemblance of a sort now to Lord Overbury, now to my father. Then, on a sudden, the pictures parted again; the large canvas was on the wall, the ivory was in my hand. But this satisfactory condition of things was not lasting. Even while I looked at them the canvas diminished and descended from its place; the ivory expanded and escaped from my grasp. It was most perplexing. For greater certainty, it became necessary to search the Latin dictionary—at least this seemed to be the advice of the old grey cart-horse, whose long, wise-looking face, with a tuft of mane hanging low upon his forehead, had suddenly appeared at the foot of my couch. My mother turned over the leaves for me—how quickly; the rustling of the pages seemed quite to shake the room, and—

“Why, Duke, do you know what time it is?”

I was awake. It was broad daylight. My mother was standing by my bedside, her hand gently resting on my shoulder. I had overslept myself, and had been dreaming, that was certain.

“And the pictures,” I murmured, “and the old cart-horse?”

“It’s late, Duke. How feverish your hand is. Are you ill, my boy?”

No, I was well enough; but I needed a moment’s pause; I had so abruptly been summoned from the land of dreams. Things about me had not yet completely assumed their every-day guise. Their outlines were blurred; their shapes were not yet clearly defined. Familiar objects were still strange to me, not yet wholly released from the mists and magic in which night and fancy had enwrapped them.

Yes, sure enough, I was in my own little bedroom overlooking the garden. My mother had opened the casement, and the morning air was rushing in, fresh from coursing over the downs, laden with the fragrance of the heather and a thousand flowers. And life was in full stir out of doors. The farm-yard was broad awake and busy. The pigeons were fluttering and cooing about; the cocks were crowing stridently, intent upon the whole world

hearing them; the hens, with maternal “chucks” of pride and jealousy, were calling their broods about them, or proclaiming with excess of triumph, as though it were an entirely unprecedented effort on their part, that they had once again accomplished the feat of laying eggs. Insects hummed in the sunshine, and a butterfly hovered about the window-sill. The air was full of noises: the lowing of cattle, the clamour of pigs, and the whinnying of the farm horses, as they champed their bits or jingled their harness, or beat the ground with their hoofs.

“Then, the pictures——” I murmured again, rubbing my drowsy eyes.

“My boy, you’ve been dreaming,” said my mother, as she kissed me. “Make haste and dress yourself, or the breakfast will be all gone.”

FASCINATION.

WHEN facts have repeatedly been proved to exist, it is in vain to deny them for the reason that we cannot comprehend their causes. We cannot understand how the Earth, merely because she is a magnet herself, should be able to compel other magnetic bodies to execute her word of command, and present arms to her by drawing themselves up into the attitude of attention, with eyes straight directed to her magnetic poles, with more than military obedience, whenever they are free to do so. Nor can we conceive why a steel needle should, and a wooden skewer should not, be a magnetic body. Nevertheless, nobody now questions the fact that the compass points approximately north and south with such unfailing certitude and obstinacy, as to be surely depended on to guide the sailor across the roughest, darkest, least familiar seas. The fact is indisputable; the influence which causes it slips through our intellectual grasp; but influence of some sort there assuredly must be. The same of fascination—the strange attraction, repulsion, or mastery, which some living creatures exert on others.

As there are rays emitted by the sun which, though invisible, are potent in promoting heat, chemical action, vegetable growth, and perhaps even animal life, so may there be more influences at work in heaven and earth than are dreamt of as yet in our infant philosophy. Not that we ought to underrate the present degree of advancement of human knowledge; for,

when we think of it, the wonder is, not that we know so little, but that we know so much and so accurately, and have acquired that amount of knowledge in so brief an interval of time. All which, instead of being a discouragement, should make the belief that there are mysteries yet to be unravelled a spur to further investigation. Clearly, there are all-important problems which the human intellect can never hope to solve; but no mortal, I think, has hitherto proved his competence to draw the line between the fathomable and the unfathomable depths of science. We may, in the end, succeed in knowing more than the most sanguine amongst us now dares hope to know.

Little or nothing do we know about many influences to which we feel ourselves daily subject. We find names, nevertheless, for their effects; such as hypochondria, the spleen, nervousness, low spirits, dislike, aversion, impending change of the moon or the weather, infatuation, fascination. That one living creature does influence another in the various ways of attraction, repulsion, and command, without any exertion of physical force, is too old a world-belief and too frequent an occurrence, to be open to a denial. The first propounders of animal magnetism obtained a hearing and made their way in consequence of the general conviction that there was some truth—however small a fraction—mixed up with their falsehoods and their trickery. The table-turners, spirit-rappers, mediums, and somnambulists, continued that suspected line of business, with even a smaller grain of truth combined with a still larger dose of imposture and charlatanism. We cannot but hold them doubly guilty; guilty of knavery and deceit, and guilty of putting an extinguisher on a difficult and delicate branch of inquiry. They have checked, for a time, the investigation of several curious and interesting topics—the investigator fearing to have forced upon him the title of visionary, from one set of people, and of impostor from another.

It may be assumed, then, that there is such a thing, or influence, or phenomenon, as fascination, which we must admit, though we cannot account for it. A belief in it may be traced to early ages and through far-distant regions of the earth. The word itself is Latin, slightly modified in spelling from the Greek *βασκανία*, *baskania*, which connects it with the idea of envy, detraction, disparagement, and slander, making it fascination for malevolent purposes, an

influence analogous to the evil eye. It bears out this sense when applied to the fascination exercised by snakes, whose victims fall an easy prey through their inability to resist the power.

Medusa fascinated all who beheld her, in the same way as the boa or the cobra di capello. She had been exceeding beautiful, with the finest head of hair in the world. To avenge a desecration of her temple (in which poor Medusa was the unwilling victim) the goddess Minerva changed her hair into snakes, and made her aspect so terrible as to transform all who looked on her into stone.

The most ancient authors have spoken of the basilisk (the regulus, or little king of serpents, commonly called the cockatrice) as a serpent which had the power of striking its victim dead by a single glance. Others have pretended that it could not exercise this faculty, unless it first perceived the object of its vengeance before it was perceived by it. Either case is only an intense form, or an exaggeration, of the power of fascination. Sir Thomas Browne discoursed seriously "Of the Basilisk," as he did of many other curious things.

"According to the doctrine of the ancients, men still affirm that it killeth at a distance, that it poisoneth by the eye, and by priority of vision. Now, that deleterious it may be at some distance, and destructive without corporal contact, what uncertainty soever there be in the effect, there is no high improbability in the relation. For if plagues or pestilential atoms have been conveyed in the air from different regions—if men at a distance have infected each other—if the shadows of some trees be noxious—if torpedos deliver their opium at a distance, and stupify beyond themselves, we cannot reasonably deny that (beside our gross and restrained poisons requiring contiguity unto their actions) there may proceed, from subtler seeds, more agile emanations, which contemn those laws, and invade at distance unexpected.

"That this venenation shooteth from the eye, and that this way a basilisk may empoison—although thus much be not agreed upon by authors, some imputing it unto the breath, others unto the bite—it is not a thing impossible. For eyes receive offensive impressions from their objects, and may have influences destructive to each other. Thus is fascination made out; and thus also it is not impossible that the visible rays of their eyes carry forth the

subtilest portion of their poison, which infecteth first the brain, and is from thence communicated unto the heart. But that this destruction should be the effect of the first beholder, or depend on priority of aspersion, is a point not easily to be granted, and very hardly to be made out upon the principles of Aristotle, Alhazen, Vitello, and others."

A similar vulgar and common error, "that a wolf, first seeing a man, begets a dumbness in him," long existed throughout the small civilised world of antiquity. When any one became hoarse, the French, quite recently, said, "*Il a vu le loup*," "he has seen the wolf." "Such a story as the basilisk is that of the wolf, concerning priority of vision, that a man becomes hoarse or dumb, if a wolf have the advantage first to eye him. And this is in plain language affirmed by Pliny; so is it made out what is delivered by Theocritus, and after him by Virgil. The ground, or occasional original hereof, was probably the amazement and sudden silence the unexpected appearance of wolves doth often put upon travellers; not by a supposed vapour, or venomous emanation, but a vehement fear, which naturally produceth obmutescence, and sometimes irrevocable silence."

The power of fascination takes sundry shapes, and is attributed to diverse causes. An old writer tells us, "In the Moluccos are serpents thirty feet long, which eat a certain herb, then get upon trees by the banks of the sea or rivers, and vomit up the herbs; to which the fish gather, and are intoxicated; which makes them float on the water and become the serpent's prey." The same compiler records that, "In Manila there are serpents of a great length, that hang by the tail on trees, draw men and beasts with the force of their breath; and the only way to prevent it is to beat the air betwixt them and the serpent; they are called *ibitin*."

Subsequent naturalists have admitted the existence of some mysterious agency with a hesitating sort of half-belief, not denying the effect but doubting the cause. It was for a long time taken for granted that the rattlesnake had the power of torpifying by its breath (which is one thing), and of fascinating (which is another), that is, of forcing its prey, by its glance alone, to precipitate themselves into its mouth. This, however, is softened down by Cuvier into the idea that the rattlesnake is enabled to seize its victims only in consequence of the irregular movements which

the fear of its aspect causes them to make. But that the mere sight of a reptile should paralyse any other creature with terror, almost decides the point at issue. Whether by the fear which they inspire, or by a sort of magnetic or magic power, the fact remains that serpents can stupefy and fascinate the prey which they are desirous to obtain.

There are travellers who clench the nail by assuring us that squirrels, on being fixedly regarded from below by a serpent on the ground, hissing and darting its forked tongue as it watches their movements, are constrained to fall from the summits of trees into the hungry reptile's mouth. Credible eye-witnesses have beheld things of the kind not much less astounding. In the steppes of America, there are serpents, the *durissus* and the *boiquira*, who must possess some charm by which their prey is forced into their mouths. Hares, rats, frogs, and other reptiles, as soon as they catch sight of their foe, seem petrified with terror, and far from attempting to fly, will precipitate themselves upon the fate which awaits them. Even at a sufficient distance for escape, they are paralysed by the threatened danger, and deprived of all their faculties in a manner that appears, if not supernatural, at least unaccountable.

Once, in the fens of Cambridgeshire, I caught a common snake, *Coluber natrix*, the serpent that swims, in the act of swallowing a full-sized yellow frog. At my approach, it retreated back a little way and closed its jaws, but showed no intention of going without its dinner in consequence of the ill-timed interruption. The frog continued motionless, in its usual squatting position on the ground, as if it were sitting for its portrait. Except for its rapid and violent panting, you would have said it was lending itself to the performance with as much nonchalance as one acrobat helps the execution of his brother acrobat's tricks. An abrasion of the skin, which had drawn blood, on one of the frog's sides, denoted that the passage down the throat promised to be rather a tight fit; otherwise, no wound or injury was visible. On pushing the frog with my walking-stick, he leapt into the water and swam away, apparently more afraid of me than of his intending appropriator. The snake glided off in another direction. I had not time to wait and see whether the pair, thus disunited, came together again to renew their intimacy and complete the happy despatch.

In some parts of Europe an attractive power is unhesitatingly attributed to several species of snakes. A person of education assured the Abbé Bonnaterre (author of *Tableau des Trois Règnes*, 1790), that he had seen a wren thus fascinated by a collared snake. The reptile, open-mouthed, kept his eyes fixed on the bird, which made vain efforts to escape. But, detained by some magic influence, it could only utter faint cries of alarm and grief. At last, irresistibly drawn on, it rushed of its own accord into the serpent's mouth.

Sudden fright, it may be said, benumbed the bird's faculties, paralysed its movements, and choked its utterance. Fear, which will break a man's legs, may render a wren's wings powerless. But that fear should drive it into its enemy's jaws is utterly inconceivable—unless an account be taken of that unknown something which Linnæus called magical attraction, and which we can conceive to be similar to the temptation, felt by not a few, to throw themselves over a precipice or jump from the top of a cathedral tower.

Monsieur B. Saint-Marc (of *L'Illustration*, *Journal Universel*) found himself in a green oasis at the foot of Mont Ventoux (a mountain whose distant and hazy majesty strikes the visitor to Avignon), on a sultry day, without a breath of wind, when heat was visibly flickering over the surface of the soil. His ear caught strange cries from a little bird, one of the sedge-warblers, which was curiously fluttering in the air, a few yards above the ground. With outspread tail, bristling feathers, and beating wings, it seemed to be struggling in vain to escape from some terrible danger. As if held, like a boy's kite in a gale, by an invisible thread, it darted to and fro in all directions; but the unseen thread retained it firmly, and dragged it closer and closer to the ground.

Glancing from it perpendicularly downwards, Monsieur Saint-Marc saw peeping above some thistles, a small triangular, flattened head, whose eyes, darting singular glances, steadily followed and mastered the movements and efforts of the bird, doubtless fascinated by those horrid eyes. The jaws were making ready to unhinge themselves and open wide to entomb the poor victim. It was a full-sized yellow-green common snake, standing, with the help of the thistles, erect on its tail. The bird's cries, grown weaker, more hurried, and more plaintive, showed that its strength was at last exhausted. In another instant,

it would have been buried quick in a living tomb.

Opportunities of witnessing such a "feeding time" are rare. But Monsieur Saint-Marc had not the heart to let the fatal catastrophe arrive and allow the hideous animal to feast on a living fellow-creature. He threw a big stone at the fascinator. The snake drew back and ceased to show himself. The charm was broken.

The bird darted straight away, describing a long parabola, and fell to the ground at fifty paces distance, where it leapt exactly like a fish taken out of water. You would have thought it was in a convulsive fit. But it soon recovered, stood firmly on its legs, shook its ruffled plumage into tidy shape, made two or three skips above the grass, and finally flew away, disappearing behind a group of lofty trees.

Monsieur Saint-Marc then tried to dislodge the snake from the bramble-bush into which it had retreated, without much caring to succeed. He detests the whole family of limbless beasts, with cloven tongues and lidless eyes, who advance by winding, who can walk on the tips of their tails, who coil themselves up into nothing, and then dart forward with the force of a spring, whose muscles are as hard and as strong as steel, and which live after the brute is chopped up into bits. But the incident left him completely convinced of the snake's astounding influence. At the same time, he makes no attempt to give any physiological explanation of the fact, or to say what this fluid, this magnetism, this irresistible allurement can possibly be.

Nor is fascination more easy to define than to explain. There is a mixture of fear, which urges the victim to flee, and of attraction (apparently dependent on the eye) compelling him to remain and even to advance to meet destruction. "But in truth," says the Abbé Bonnaterre, "is it more surprising to see a serpent attract a bird into its mouth, than to see a loadstone draw towards it a piece of iron?"

But fascination is not confined to snakes. By what charm an honourable member catches the Speaker's eye and enforces attention, it might not be parliamentary to inquire, but we know that the Ancient Mariner possessed a spell from which his auditor could not escape until he had told how he shot the albatross.

As there is fascination by terror, despair, and what may be called repulsive attraction, so is there fascination by attractive attraction, love, and the inspiration of de-

voted attachment. A man thus fascinated will ruin himself, disgrace himself, sacrifice his life, for the object who exercises this all-powerful influence. That object, in his eyes, is without a fault; or rather those faults are regarded as beauties, distinctive marks of unusual merit. The charm which enthral him is like the sunshine of the south, gilding hovels, covering foul places with deepest shade, and giving putrid mists the semblance of radiant halos.

Titania is enamoured of Bully Bottom with the ass's head. When the self-satisfied weaver brays out a song, the Queen of the Fairies exclaims:

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?
I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

The fascinator in human form—the Latins sometimes wrote it “fascinatrix”—possesses, in common with the boa, the power of engulfing anything without making wry faces, and then, at the first opportunity, asking for more. Michelet says that a *Camellia*—meaning a *Dame aux Camellias*—will swallow more than a whale. Not a few prowls about the dry wildernesses (the thirsty places) of the world, seeking whom they may devour. When their prey is fairly caught, mastered, and either assimilated in totality or metamorphosed into an inexhaustible milch-cow, we may wonder at the phenomenon and pity the poor victim, but it is simply a fact in natural history. The anaconda has fascinated the sprightly young buck, and made a meal, or a provision for life, out of him. What matters that to you? The snake must live. She only employs the means wherewith nature has gifted her.

Even in fascination by attraction there will be differences. One man will love his love with an A, because she is an angel in disposition; another with a B, because she is simply a beauty, and much run after; her possession flatters his vanity. A third will love with a C some not-pretty maiden, but who, nevertheless, is courteous, well-bred, and winning; whilst a fourth will pick amongst the D's, and become the slave, or the Van Amburgh, of a diabolical lady-love. For your she-devil termagant will have her admirers in men who are over-peppery or over-dull themselves, especially if the fiery hook be baited, as it often is, with beauty, cleverness, and wealth.

I come to wive it wealthy in Padua;
If wealthy, then happily in Padua.

Think you a little din can daunt mine ears?
Have I not in my time heard lions roar?
And do you tell me of a woman's tongue?
Say, that she rail; why, then I'll tell her plain,
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale.
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
As though she bid me stay by her a week;
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banna, and when be married:
But here she comes; and now, Petruccio, speak.

It is only poetical justice and fair retaliation that the tribe of Ophidians who exert this magic power should themselves be subject to a similar influence—their own weapons turned against themselves. Of snake-charmers and their ways there is no space to speak here now. There are men who can exercise a like power over rats they have caught; but, unlike the case with snakes, it appears that they must catch them first. But snakes seem to be coming into fashion. A tame snake, returning from a visit, was one of the articles sent by post last year.

The most charming snake-charmer is Mrs. M., whom an inquirer, “not very much afraid of snakes,” has been kindly allowed to interview. Mr. M., who received the visitor, after remarks upon the weather, produced out of a cupboard a large boa constrictor, a python, and several small snakes, which at once made themselves at home on the writing-table among pens, ink, and books. Interviewer was a good deal startled when the two large snakes coiled round and round Mr. M., and began to notice himself with their bright eyes and forked tongues. Mr. M. then went to call Mrs. M., leaving him alone with the boa deposited on an arm-chair. He felt queer when the animal began gradually to come near him, to improve their tête-à-tête, but was soon relieved by the entrance of his hosts, followed by two little children, charming and charmers also. The lady and the children went at once to the boa, and, calling it by the most endearing names, allowed it to twine itself most gracefully round about them. This boa constrictor, as thick round as a small tree, twined playfully round the lady's waist and neck, forming a kind of turban round her head, and expecting to be petted and made much of like a kitten. The children over and over again took its head in their hands, and kissed its mouth, pushing aside its forked tongue in doing so. “Every one to his taste,” as the old man said when he kissed his cow. The animal seemed much pleased, but kept continually turning its head towards interviewer, until he allowed it for a moment to nestle its head up his

sleeve. This splendid serpent coiled all round Mrs. M. while she moved about the room and when she stood up to pour out coffee. He seemed to adjust his weight so nicely, and every coil with its beautiful markings was relieved by the lady's black velvet dress.

About a year ago Mr. and Mrs. M. were away for six weeks, and left the boa in charge of a keeper at the Zoo. The poor reptile moped, slept, and refused to be comforted; but when his master and mistress appeared, he sprang upon them with delight, coiling himself round them, and showing every symptom of intense delight. The children are devoted to their "darling Cleo," as they call the snake, and smiled when interviewer asked if they were ever frightened of it.

Interviewer's conclusion. It is mere prejudice, when snakes are not venomous, to abhor them as we do. They are intelligent and harmless, perfectly clean, with no sort of smell, make no kind of noise, and move about far more gracefully than lap-dogs or other pets. These seemed very obedient, and remained in their cupboard when told to do so.

A MAY NIGHT.

MYSTICAL odours creep
Through shadows weird and dim blue distances,
Odours the hot day knows not, such as steep
The wearied sense in pure deliciousness,

When poppy-fingered Sleep
Hath stilled the importunate stir of waking strife,
Which drowns the soft low strains that make the
accords of life.

Stillness and silence lie
Like voiceless benedictions over all;
There floats no cloud between us and the sky,
To stay one star glance; silvery swift they fall,
Were every star an eye
Of some benignant white winged watchful sprite,
Were surer peace our guard than circles us to night?

How stirless stand the trees—
Creep closer love, the hour is all our own—
And yet beneath the shy glad silences,
The swift spring quickening stirs. And I alone,
I know that, as with these,
Though silence robes thee like the night-hushed air,
The love-fire in thy heart is quickening unaware.

And hark! a sudden trill
From forth the circling dusk, a tremulous low
Beginning of sweet sound, that, though it fill
The ear with quick delight, yet fitteth so
The hush so calm, so still,
One dreams that Peace, long brooding, voiceless long,
With Joy's resistless rapture thrilleth into song.

It is the bird of night,
Whose song wars not with silence, but accords
With quiet and fair solitude. How bright
This silver-mist moon flooded! Hast no words
To speak serene delight?
Love, let yon warbler's clear and changeful song
Voice that rapt joy that dies to silence on thy tongue.

What ecstasy of heart
Thrills in those mellow flutings; what uprise
Of pure earth-spurning passion seems to start,
Sound-winged, on each swift fluttering trill that tries
To scale the heavens! Some part
Of human yearning pulses through the beats
Of that ebullient song, which still thine heart repeats.

Say sweet, is it not so?
Pure as thy passion, fervent as thy love,
Now silver-shrill, now saintly soft and low
As is thy gentle voice my nestling dove—
The bright and joyous flow
Of thy love quickened life, shall it not be
Typed by yon rapturous songster's variant melody?

The glamorous grey surrounds,
Dim, dusk, soft-stretching, silent, home of dreams.
But lift thine eyes; through all the azure bounds
Of heaven the star-hosts rain irradiant gleams.

Oh season of low sounds,
And subtle odours rapt from drowsing flowers!
Foretaste of what far peace in what Elysian bowers—

Lovely art thou, and love,
Shy love and silent, haunts thee as its home,
The still rapt passion brooding like a dove
At the hidden heart of life. My darling, come!
Arise sweet, let us move
Forth in the moon-gleam that thine eyes may tell
Soul secrets that thy pure lips guard so sweetly well!

"THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE DANUBE."

HAVING pretty clearly ascertained that even when it is in thorough working order—probably about the middle of June—the Vienna Exhibition will be neither more nor less than a huge bazaar, differing scarcely one whit from its predecessors, save that the classification of its contents has not been attempted, and that its outward aspect is anything but attractive, I thought I would run away from the Kaiserstadt for a little change of scene. The man with a cynical mind, and a free ticket, can doubtless get great enjoyment out of the contemplation of the melancholy aspect of the visitors who have paid several florins to see empty crates, or glass cases half filled with such wares as are to be beheld for nothing in the shop-windows; but even this pleasure palls after a time, and one really pities the wretched Viennese, who begin openly to express their fears that they have been far too sanguine in their anticipations in regard to their show, and who dread that the heavy commercial failures which have recently occurred amongst the speculators on the Bourse, will be supplemented by far heavier and wider-spread ruin, which, in due course, must overtake those who have looked to the success of the Exhibition to recoup them the vast outlay which they have incurred. It would be pleasant, moreover, to get rid, for a time, of the perpetual

entourage of etiquette, to rub shoulders with peasants instead of princes, and to rest one's eyes on shabby woollen capotes instead of dazzling uniforms. The only question is where to go. The compliment, or the reproach, of being a Bohemian, has been so often addressed to me, that I have half a mind to go to Prague, just to see what my capital is like; but then I am assured that, if I desire perfect change and novelty, I should go to Pesth, which is on the extreme confines of civilisation, where I shall find a people bold, frank, and open-hearted, submissive to Fate, but not servile to their conquerors, and in mind, manners, and appearance, exactly the reverse of the haughty, imperious Austrians. Pesth, then, let it be, by all means! When Monsieur de Montalembert wanted a "bath of liberty," he took it in England; I will take mine in Hungary water.

You can travel from Vienna to Pesth by steamer or train, but should you choose the latter, you will be unable to talk of your "voyage on the Danube" on your return home, and thereby miss a chance of distinguishing yourself in society. Moreover, the route by water is far more agreeable. The steamer in which the larger portion of the voyage is performed (she lies some little distance down stream, and you are taken off to her in a small tug or launch) is most commodious, reminding those who have travelled in America of the Fall River or the Hudson boats, and the cuisine, wines, and general table arrangements are quite equal to those in the first hotels in Vienna. There is a hurricane-deck for promenade, and a large general saloon, in which a table-d'hôte dinner is served at one P.M.; and there are some half-dozen private cabins, holding four persons, where you can be supplied with your selection from a liberal *ménu*, at whatever time you wish.

I would earnestly advise those who, reckoning on the occasionally enthusiastic Murray (an adventurous traveller, but a poor gourmet), have looked forward to the enjoyment of choice dishes at the Vienna restaurants, and have come away sad at heart and sick at stomach from the watery soups, the flabby fish, the greasy entrées, the woodeny meats, and the flannel-blankety mehlspesen, to take a run down the Danube, if it were only for the sake of the breakfast and dinner which will be so well served to them on their transit. Such a traveller will be above the influence of weather, or the quality of his fellow-travellers; he will

have no occasion to stir from his cabin, on the walls of which hang the *ménu* and the wine-list, duly priced; the neatest and most attentive of waiters will attend his call; and when he arrives at the end of the voyage, he will not merely feel that he has passed through some exquisite scenery, and made progress on his way to the boundary of western civilisation, but will be tempted to exclaim, with Sidney Smith's epicure, "Fate cannot harm me; I have dined to-day!"

There are, however, those to whom fine weather is a necessary ingredient of a pleasant trip, and they would have failed to have admired the aspect of affairs. The rain which was falling in torrents when we left Franz-Josef's Quai, and while we remained on the tug, subsided into a thin, vapoury, drizzling Scotch mist by the time we reached the larger steamer, and though it sometimes cleared away from immediately above us, and we had a half-hour's interview with the sun, who came to us now faint with glimmer, now fierce with rays, there were always ominous clouds in the horizon, and the opportunities for deck promenading were rare. Not that this matters much during the earlier portion of the voyage, for, for miles below Vienna, the banks of the Danube are as those of the Thames in Essex, a dead level of dreariness, or rather—for in every landscape abroad there is some element not to be found in any English scene—reminiscent of the Rhine between Düsseldorf and Emmerich. There was no use in disturbing oneself to catch fleeting glimpses of such scenery; it was better to lie back smoking one's cigar and listening to the one enthusiastic member of the party, who, with one eye looking out through the blurred cabin-window, and the other on his Murray, volunteered information to the rest.

"I say, by Jove, here's Lobau!"

"Who's he?" asks a voice through a tobacco fog.

"He, nonsense! island, you know. Napoleon hid behind it—not Louis, you know, the old swell—pounced out on the Austrians and gave them an awful hammering at Wagram! And, I say, here's Schwächat."

"How do you spell him?"

"S-ch-w—oh, bother, never mind!"

"Oh, I don't mind, but what did he do? What was his little game?"

"At this place the celebrated John Sobieski had his interview with the Emperor Leopold, perhaps one of the most depraved monarchs——"

"Ah, shut up about Sobieski and the depraved monarchs. Call the Kellner and let us have a bottle of Gumpoldskirchner and a syphon of soda."

Ever and anon the steamer, borne along at a swinging pace by the swift current of the river (which by the way is nowhere that I have seen the "beautiful blue Danube" of the ballad, but rather a brown and muddy stream), stops to take up passengers at the landing-stage of some little village. We get along with infinitely less fuss and shouting than is to be found anywhere out of England, and there to greet us stands the agent of the steam-boat company, radiant in gold-laced cap, and the porters, most of whom wear sleeved-waistcoats, flower-embroidered, soberer versions of the well-known theatrical garment appropriated to the virtuous peasant who "doms" the squire for exaggerated flirtation with his daughter. The intended voyagers are penned away behind a huge barrier at the far end of the platform, and when the signal is given for their release they rush headlong forward, and with much chattering and shouting they make for the narrow gangway. Sombre-clad people for the most part, poor and hardly-worked, the women in rough homespun clothes, and frequently barefoot, carrying on their backs huge baskets filled with garden produce, or lime, or coal—for in Austria and Hungary the women are the beasts of burden—the men in greasy woollen garments, huge coats reaching to their heels, and flap hats, or close-fitting skull-caps, all stained, and frowsy, and filthy. Here and there some one of a better, but not a cleaner class, a Jew in a long clinging gaberdine, so worn and rubbed, and grease-soaked, as to look as if it had been originally made of watered silk instead of dingy cloth, or a man of some authority, receiving haughtily the salutation of the packet-agent and sweeping along in his fur-embroidered cloak, and his Astracan skull-cap. These people are hurried along by the boatmen to the fore part of the steamer where they huddle together underneath the dripping canvas awning, and manage to keep up their spirits in what is, under the circumstances, a highly creditable manner. They drink a little, and they fiddle a little, and they sing a little, and they smoke a good deal, and altogether seem much happier, though much damper, than the more distinguished company in the saloon, of whom the only happy members are a young couple engaged in a quiet flirtation, and an old gentleman

who had just defeated the waiter in single combat, and reduced the amount of his dinner bill by twopence.

It is something to know that we are actually in Hungary, but the scenery continues much of the same character. On either side lie huge tracts of marsh land, fringed here and there with stunted pollards, and bearing apparently great crops of long rank grass. Then the foreground undulates a little more and a small chain of hills rises against the horizon, and the quality of vegetation changes. It is now grazing land, the grass richer and not so rank, and spreading over it, browsing, resting, or madly galloping about without apparent cause, we find here a huge drove of long-horned oxen, then an immense number of small wiry horses. Moored in a row on either side of the river, so as to catch as much as possible of the current, we come on a double line of barges, one of every two being fitted as a water-mill, while the other serves as the miller's residence. Near the towns some of these millers have tried to ornament their barges, dusky and funereal as that which bore King Arthur from St. Bedivere's straining gaze, by the addition of a little flag, or a small bunch of greenery. But in most cases no such attempt has been made, and the "dark round of the dripping wheel" stands out against the shapeless bulk which supports it.

The Danube is often compared to the Rhine, and, as I have said, even in the flat uninteresting shores common to portions of both rivers, there is a resemblance. Below Cologne, however, and indeed, now-a-days, below Bonn, the Old Father, as the Prussians love to call him, is but little known to English travellers, and, consequently, it will probably not be until they arrive at Theben that they will be reminded of their Rhenish experiences. At Theben there is the regulation rock and the regulation ruin, the "castled crag" duly "frowning," and all the rest of the business, on a large scale. There is a legend, too—betrothed couple, stern parent, blighted beings, lover's leap—all you can want; and though there are now and again long intervals of the Purfleet pattern, there are some bits of surpassing grandeur, bigger, sterner, better than anything the Rhine can produce. This quiet, dull-looking town, nestling under the high cliff and creeping down to the water's edge, is Presburg, associated probably in the British mind with biscuits, but having even a higher claim to fame. For in the Schloss, which once crowned the

cliff, and whereof the four walls forming the square outer shell still remain, Maria Theresa made her heart-piercing appeal to the Magyar nobles, receiving as reply the ever-memorable declaration, emphasised with drawn and heaven-pointed blades, "Moriatur pro rege nostro, Maria Theresa!" (We will die for our king, Maria Theresa!) Presburg is now such a sleepy place one wonders it could ever have endured so much excitement. A couple of old women are unloading a barge at the wharf, the cracked bell of the church, which is adorned with a short spire growing out of a gilt-enthroned cupola, tinkles faintly, a creaking cart drawn by a pair of asses, and with a young donkey running loose alongside, crawls up the street; and an old man, with a feather broom in his hand, throws open one of the windows of a bath-house, and gazes listlessly after us as we steam away.

The river is now so intersected with long narrow islands, so broken into different channels, so drained off into divers outlets, themselves the size of tolerable rivulets, that we find it difficult to tell whether we are being borne along on the main stream, or what course we shall pursue when we have rounded the next headland. This puzzling navigation reaches its height at Szörny, where, after having deposited some passengers, we steam right across the breadth of the stream (hitherto unsuspected, as fully half of it is shut away at this point behind a thickly wooded island), and find ourselves in front of the celebrated fortress of Komorn, the garrison of which, in 1849, under General Klapka, made such a gallant and successful resistance to the Austrians, who were commanded, by the way, by that Marshal Haynau who afterwards, while in London, paid a visit to Barclay and Perkins's brewery. Komorn is said to be impregnable; it has never yet been taken, and if they only retain on the establishment the two trumpeters who were practising against each other in the courtyard during the ten minutes that the steamer stopped there, I will guarantee it as impervious to any assault, unless undertaken by an army of deaf mutes. Probably the most "effective" view on the voyage, that which would most delight the artist, is the first glimpse of Gran, scattered here and there over the rising country, its huge cathedral-crowned cliff, its poplar-lined avenues leading to the river, and the grand chain of purple hills forming the background of the scene. The excellent Bo-

deker, following Fluellen's line of argument in the Macedon and Monmouth matter, compares the Gran Cathedral with St. Peter's, on the principle, I suppose, that each has a dome and a portico. Nevertheless, the Gran Cathedral is very fine both in its site and its architecture. The river, taking a sweep here, remains at an enormous width until our goal is gained. Only one more romantic spot, the ruins of the Castle of Wissengrad is passed, then the banks on either side become flatter. The mills and rafts are here numerous, so are the tug-boats, each conveying a fleet of barges against the stream, each officered by beautiful beings in gold-laced caps, which they pull off in salute to our officers who return the compliment, until finally the helmsmen in each let go their wheels that their greetings may be courteously interchanged. Now two or three tall chimneys, a huge fortress-covered mountain in the distance, on its side a complete town of white-faced houses, immediately opposite to it a quay lined with large and handsome palaces. The steamer passes under a fac-simile of the Hammersmith suspension-bridge (the two were built by the same engineer), and makes for its wharf, and five minutes afterwards we step ashore and enter the capital of Magyar-land.

HELL-HOUNDS.

At midnight, on the eve of Saint John, so the story goes, a weird procession of gaunt fiery-eyed hounds, with blood besprinkled sides, sweeps through the long dark lanes about Dartmoor, until at a blast from their black master's horn they sink into the earth. These are the Wish, Yelk, Yell, or Heath-hounds, supposed by some to be the spirits of unbaptised children. Often heard by night-walkers, the dogs of darkness are occasionally seen, careering across the moors in hot pursuit of some lost spirit, doomed for earthly sin to be hunted for ever by the demon pack.

Still as the traveller pursues his lone way,
In horror at night o'er the waste,
He hears Sir Tregagle with shrieks rush away,
He hears the Black Hunter pursuing his prey,
And shrinks at his bugle's dread blast.

Sometimes the quarry is the spirit of a beautiful woman in the shape of a hare. Once it was that of Sir Francis Drake, driving a hearse drawn by headless steeds, on which occasion the dogs too left their heads behind them. Although spirits are

their ordinary game, the ghostly hounds now and again hunt less shadowy prey. One windy night, a poor herdsman, hurrying home across the moors, with a three-mile tramp before him, heard afar off the horrid baying of the devil's pack. Fear gave new vigour to his weary legs, but nearer and nearer came the sound of the hunter's holloa and the yelping of his hounds. Casting a scared glance behind, the herdsman beheld a tall, horned, tailed, black figure bearing a long hunting-pole in his clawed hand. The ground was black with dogs snorting fire. No place of refuge was nigh, and the unlucky wayfarer, giving himself up for lost, already felt the fangs of the dandy-dogs in his flesh. Just as the pack, sure of their victim, rushed open-mouthed towards him, the herdsman, inspired by a sudden thought, dropped on his knees, and prayed as he never prayed before. The hounds, stayed as if by magic, stood at bay, as though confronted by a foe, howling most dismally. Suddenly the Black Hunter shouted, "Bo shrove!" the ancient vernacular for "the boy prays," and he and his dandy-dogs vanished on the instant, to the relief of the herdsman.

Dandy-dog seems an odd synonym for hell-hound, but there is meaning in it. Dando, a priest attached to the old priory church of St. Germans, was a priest of the Tuck order; free with indulgences, easy at confessional, and as ardent a lover of manly exercises as a modern athlete. He was a mighty hunter in the land, who would never ware wheat or anything else. As he grew older his love of hunting grew stronger; he was ever in the saddle, and neither he nor his hounds kept sabbath. One Sunday, after a splendid run on the Earth lands, Dando, having emptied every flask at his command without allaying his thirst, swore he must have more drink, telling his men if they could not get any on earth, to go to hell for it! As he uttered the profane pun, a well-dressed gentleman, pressing forward, proffered his flask and bade the priest drink deep. Dando drank with a will, and as he returned the flask, asked, "Do the gods drink such nectar?" "Devils do," was the response. "I wish I were one then," exclaimed the rash man. In a moment, the stranger seized him by the neck, flung him in front of him, and spurring his jet-black steed, galloped down the hill, the hounds following close at his heels; a general leap in the Lynke, a splash, a blaze, a boiling of the waters, and all were lost to sight. Dando was never seen again, but his dogs may

still be heard in full cry early on Sunday mornings. In St. Teath the dandy-dogs are called Cheney's hounds, after a dead squire, in whom the ruling passion was so strong, that though he has been buried many a year, he still hunts the country with a spectral pack, as regularly as he was wont to hunt it in the flesh, with dogs of earthly mould.

When the stormy winds do blow among his mountains, the Welsh peasant listens for the cry of the Cron Annwn—big black hounds with eyes and teeth of fire, according to his account; but those who should know better describe the dogs of Annwn as canine beauties, boasting clear, glossy, white coats and red ears—"a mystical transformation of the Druids with their white robes and red tiaras." Black or white, their mission is to hunt the spirits of the dead, and let the world know by their howling that some man of evil deeds has nearly run his race here, and will soon be running one in air at which they will assist. The Welsh Druidical dogs are akin to the "Gabriel's Hounds" of Staffordshire and Yorkshire, "doomed, with their impious lord, to chase the flying hart for ever" through the realms of air. "I, too, remember once," sings a Sheffield poet:

At midnight dark,
How these sky-yelpers startled me, and stirred
My fancy so, I could have then averred
A mimic pack of beagles low did bark!
Nor wondered I that rustic fear should trace
A spectral huntsman doomed long to that moonless
chase.

The sky-yelpers being, in fact, simply innocent wild geese bound on their annual excursion beyond seas. "You will hear them coming," says Captain Hawker, "like a pack of hounds in full cry."

The wild-goose theory, however, fails to explain the existence of hell-hounds like that through which the Aylesbury milk-dealer came to grief. This ill-used individual, going one summer night to milk his cows in the field, found the gap in the hedge through which he was accustomed to pass filled by a black creature, resolving itself, upon nearer view, into a great dog, evidently bent upon disputing his right of way. The animal looked so well able to do so, that, declining the challenge, the milkman left him master of the position, and sought a less dangerous path. The next night it was the same, and the next, and the next; the brute was never off guard. The milkman did not care to try conclusions with his tormentor, not being of Smallbones's opinion that if the dog was one of the devil's imps it was his duty as

a Christian to oppose him, although there was no "if" in the dog-haunted man's mind. One evening, happening to have a friend with him, the man of milk plucked up his courage, and determined, dog or no dog, not to be barred from his short cut, without a tussle for it. He found the foe waiting, looking uglier, bigger, fiercer than ever; but down went his pails, up went his yoke—to descend, cleaving the air, and the air only. The dog vanished, leaving his assailant stretched senseless on the ground; not dead, indeed, but worse than dead. He had lost the use of his limbs and his tongue, and never walked or talked afterwards.

The ancient Castle of Peel, in the Isle of Man, was once haunted by a spectre spaniel of most unspaniel-like dimensions, which, being of a sociable turn, used to come into the guard-room with the lights and keep the soldiers there company. His presence did them no harm, for, so long as his black body, or semblance of a body, was in front of the fire, his companions were careful to keep their conversation clean, and let their favourite oaths remain unaired. Accustomed as they grew to their ghostly visitor, not one had sufficient confidence in his good intentions to remain alone with him; and as the Manthe Dog came out of the passage leading from the guard-room to the captain's quarters, about the time when the castle keys were taken to the officer in command, a comrade always went with the man to whom that duty fell. One night, a soldier, rendered bold by an extra glass or two, swore he would carry in the keys by himself, and if the creature followed him, would see whether he wore dog or devil. Deaf to all remonstrance, the pot-valiant fellow snatched up the keys and went on his errand. By-and-bye, a terrible noise greeted the horrified ears of the expectant listeners, but none were brave enough to dare the dangers of the passage. At last, the soldier returned, sober enough now, and all waited impatiently for an explanation of the mysterious uproar. They waited in vain. The man was stricken dumb, and in three days died "in agonies more than is common to a natural death."

Some years ago—we would be more precise if we could—a Dorsetshire farmer tackled a dog-fiend to more profitable purpose. This lucky man lived within a mile or so of Lyme Regis, and coming home one evening, was about, according to his custom, to take his seat in the chimney corner, when he became aware that the opposite seat was occupied by a strange

black dog, seemingly quite at home there. He did not disturb his new acquaintance, and the dog became a regular nightly visitor, and as he ate nothing, drank nothing, and interfered with nobody, the farmer was deaf to all inhospitable suggestions. This, however, was attributed by his advisers to cowardice rather than kindness, and they lost no opportunities of hinting as much; until one night, after a drinking bout, made savage by the "chaff" of his friends, he went home resolved to give his black lodger notice to quit. As usual, the intruder, all unconscious of his host's altered sentiments, lay coiled up by the fireside. The farmer seized the poker, but the object of his wrath was off the seat ere he could strike. Away went dog, and away went man, racing up-stairs and through passages. The dog, making good use of his start, reached the top of the house first, rushed into an attic, paused a moment for a spring, and vanished through the roof. As he disappeared, his baffled pursuer aimed a desperate blow at him, resulting in a downfall of plaster and something beside; for when the farmer cleared the dust from his eyes, he saw at his feet a small oaken box, which being opened was found to be full of gold and silver money bearing the effigy of King Charles the First. Having thus honourably paid for the temporary accommodation vouchsafed to him, the mysterious dog never faxed the farmer's patience again. He did not, like his Manx brother, vanish altogether from human ken, but still prowled round the farm at night. He was on the same beat some sixteen years back, for a woman, described as a sober-minded, intelligent, judicious matron, going through a lane in the neighbourhood, saw a fiery-eyed, shaggy black dog, as big as a young calf. As it passed by her it made the air cold and dank, and then, growing bigger and bigger as it went, became as high as the trees by the wayside, till, swelling into a large cloud, it disappeared in the air. This awful apparition was only visible to the aforesaid intelligent woman; her husband, trudging along by her side, seeing nothing but a fog coming up from the sea.

In Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, a dog-fiend known as Shuck haunts lonely churchyards for some inscrutable purpose. Lancashire lads call a like creature Trash and Shriker, giving it the first name in imitation of the noise it makes in travelling—a noise resembling that made by a heavily-shod walker on a miry road, and the second in imitation of the peculiar shrill yell with

which it warns the hearer of the approaching death of some near relative or dear friend. Further north it goes by the name of Bargest. One Billy B. made Bargest's acquaintance as he walked home from Grassington one moonlight night. Billy was in the happy condition of Burns's immortal brewer of a peck o' maut, not "fou" but just "a wee drappie in his e'e," and, therefore, not easily frightened. As he was pushing down a dark lane, something brushed by him; he heard the clanking of chains, but seeing nothing he knew it was the Bargest, and hurried on towards the bridge, thinking there to part company, as the demon dog was supposed to be unable to cross running water. To Billy's astonishment and dismay, he heard the "brush, brush, brush," with its clanking accompaniment, just ahead of him when he had passed over the bridge, and as the moon peeped from behind a cloud, caught a glimpse of a black tail. Billy quickened his steps, and was soon home. "When I gat to t' door," said he, "there war a grit thing like a sheep, but it was larger, ligging across t' threshold of t' door, and it war woolly like, and says I, 'Git up,' but it wouldn't git up. Then says I, 'Stir thysel,' and it wouldn't stir itself; and I grew valiant, and I raised t' stick to baste it wi', and then it luiked at me! and sich oies they did glower, and war as big as sarcoers, and like a cruelled ball. First there war a red ring, then a blue one, then a white one, and the rings grew less and less, till they came to a dot. Now I war none feer'd on 't, though it grinned at me fearfully, and I kept on saying 'Git up,' and 'Stir thysel,' and t' wife heerd as how I war at t' dore, and she came to open it, and then the thing gat up, and walked off, for it war mare fretted o' t' wife than it war o' mé; and I told t' wife, and she said it war Bargest; but I never seed it since."

A writer in the Book of Days says the black dog is still a dreaded bogy in Hertfordshire. Some three miles from Tring, a poor old woman, suspected of being a witch, was, in 1751, killed by the water test. A chimney-sweep, who was the principal perpetrator of the deed, was hanged and gibbeted near the place where the murder was committed. While the gibbet stood, and long after it had disappeared, the spot was haunted by a black dog. It was seen by the village schoolmaster not many years ago. "I was returning home," said he, "late at night in a gig with the person who was driving. When we came near the spot, where a portion of the gibbet had

lately stood, we saw on the bank of the roadside, along which a narrow brook or ditch runs, a gleam of fire as large as a man's hat. 'What's that?' I exclaimed. 'Hist,' said my companion, all in a tremble, and, suddenly pulling in his horse, made a dead stop. I then saw an immense black dog lying on the road just in front of our horse, which appeared trembling with fright. The dog was the strangest-looking creature I ever beheld. He was as big as a Newfoundland, but very gaunt, shaggy, with long ears and tail, eyes like balls of fire, and large long teeth, for he opened his mouth, and seemed to grin at us. He looked more like a fiend than a dog, and I trembled as much as my companion. In a few minutes the dog disappeared, seeming to vanish like a shadow, or to sink into the earth, and we drove on over the spot where he had lain." A similar apparition much troubled the mind of a Cornish blacksmith some two years since, by persisting in keeping nightly watch outside a house wherein lay a sick man, with whom the blacksmith sat up o' nights. Following the advice of a white witch, the blacksmith charged a gun with broken fourpenny pieces, and took such good aim at the beast, that he blew it whence it came, for not an animal atom was to be found in the morning, and the creature was never seen more.

A rarer species of spectral hound is that animated by the soul of some man or woman condemned to the performance of everlasting penance in canine guise, in expiation of wickedness wrought when they walked the earth in human shape. The Hound's Pool, at Dean's Prior, Devon, takes its name from its being haunted by a hapless creature of the kind. Once upon a time, a man named Knowles, famous for his skill as a weaver, dwelt in the hamlet of Dean Combe. After a long, hard-working life, he died, and was buried; but the morning after his body had been laid in the churchyard, he was sitting, as usual, at the loom. Not knowing what to do in such a case, his son set off to the vicarage, and told his strange tale there. Equal to the occasion, the vicar hurried to the house, and ordered the spirit to come down to him, which, after a little demur, it did, to receive in its face a handful of churchyard mould, and became instantly changed into a black hound. Still obedient to the parson's command, the phantom dog followed him into the wood, until they reached a pool beneath a waterfall. Taking up a nutshell with a hole in it, the vicar said,

"Take this shell, and when thou shalt have dipped out the pool, thou may'st rest—not before!" and at mid-day or midnight, those who have eyes to see such unearthly sprites may behold the transformed weaver at his hopeless task. What poor Knowles had done to merit so merciless a sentence tradition does not vouchsafe to say.

We are left equally in the dark as to why a similar frightful example was made of Lady Howard, a Devonshire beauty of the days of James the First, unless the fact of her having had four husbands justified her being transformed into a dog, doomed to run between midnight and cockcrow, from the gateway of Fitzford to Okehampton Park, returning whence she started with a single blade of grass in her mouth, and repeating the journey night after night, until there was not a blade of grass left for her to glean, when the world and her work would end together. A lady told Mrs. Bray she had seen the hound start on her nightly trip, and Mrs. Bray did not doubt it, for her father-in-law rented Fitzford, and kept a pack of hounds there, and she divined her informant had seen a hound slip away from the kennel at the midnight hour. The legend has not yet outlived belief. The grass still grows in Okehampton Park, and promises to find the lady-hound in employment for many a year to come.

A SICILIAN STORY.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. LOVE!

I HAVE resided for many years in Sicily, and have become well acquainted with its inhabitants. I can therefore vouch for the truth of the following narrative.

Tommaso, or, as he was commonly called, Maso Mari, farmed a small bit of land in the neighbourhood of Mela, forty leagues seaward from Paterno, the ancient Hybla. On this land was a gloomy-looking tenement, half tower, half farm-house, called Torre Mela. The Mari had lived there for six hundred years. A Mari had always lived on the Torre Arsa lands, since the Lords of the Burnt Tower owned them. This is not unusual in Italy. For eight hundred years the Ricasoli name is connected with every page of Tuscan history, and on the lands belonging to the Ricasoli are families who have dwelt there as *contadini* (peasants) for eight hundred years.

The Mari were not, however, *contadini*. The land and the old house were their own.

Two sides of the old house were broken into irregular slits by a few narrow, unglazed, barred windows, the other two were close against the rock.

Maso Mari was a grave, tall, silent Sicilian, with an almost Spanish dignity of mien. He never used a word where a gesture might serve the purpose, nor a gesture if a look was likely to be understood. He had no reason, however, for being so serious and taciturn. He was the husband of the handsomest, the most industrious, the sweetest-tempered woman in Sicily, and the father of the prettiest girl in the whole district. He had four healthy younger children, and was universally respected. There was a gap of four years between Lucia the eldest girl, and Diomira the next; then came Menica and two boys. The youngest of these was a laughing, rosy-cheeked morsel, not a twelvemonth old.

It is difficult to explain why one child is preferred before another, but whatever might be the cause, Lucia was Maso's darling. He absolutely doted on her. Perhaps it was because she had a certain fawn-like, delicate beauty, quite different from her robuster, more healthily developed brothers and sisters.

Rosa, Maso's wife, was fair (the golden fairness of southern climes), her hair was a bright auburn, and her figure was grandly proportioned and ample. Her face wore the calm serenity, and her eyes had the loving depth which seem ever to belong to our ideal of maternity. Lucia was pale as a primrose, with timid dusky eyes of changing colour, and a fragile, graceful figure slight as the tendril of a vine. Lucia was sixteen, and when mother and daughter were seen together, they might have been mistaken for Ceres and Proserpine, treading once more the enchanted fields of Sicily.

The most indulgent fathers are, however, invariably harsh on one subject. A daughter's lover is always a *bête noire* to her father. Beside all the natural fears common to both parents, in such a case, there surges in a father's heart a doubt, born of the knowledge which man has of man, whether the masculine creature to whom his girl is about to give herself is worthy of the boon.

"Rosa," said Maso one sultry Sunday evening, as he smoked his pipe under the vine-adorned porch of their home, while she was busy with her household duties within, "did you notice the man who offered holy water to Lucia at the door of our chapel this morning?"

"No; who was it?" and Rosa came out and stood beside him for a moment, quite surprised at so long an address from her usually silent husband.

But Maso had relapsed into his habitual taciturnity, and after a pause, finding he said no more, Rosa returned to her work.

But the unanswered question remained like a sting in Maso's mind, and as he went to his work on Monday morning (Maso was a wood-carver as well as farmer) it returned again and again to him. Lucia had blushed as her fingers touched those of the man who had offered her the holy water and the man was Antonio Voghera.

Antonio, or Tonino, as he was usually called, was a profligate, idle fellow, with no ostensible means of livelihood. His uncle was a silk-weaver at Messina, who had property at Torre Mela, and came to receive his rents and make purchases in raw silk twice a year. Tonino was always absent during these visits, and rumours were afloat that he had twice joined a band of brigands, but though feared and suspected, no actual proofs had been brought against him.

In person he was sleek, handsome, and powerful. His eyes were dark and fine, with at times a velvety softness in their expression, which made him irresistible to the maidens of Torre Mela.

Maso had never spoken to him in his life, and it was a marvel to the tender father how his darling could have become acquainted with the rascal.

He thought of all this on the Monday morning as he went to his work. At this time he was employed in repairing the screen of the old village church of Torre Mela. The village consisted of one street, long and steep, and sloping upwards to the church. In a large open loggia (balcony) on the right hand of the street, Maso saw a group of girls laughing, and talking, and working. It was the house of the village dressmaker, and these girls were her pupils and apprentices. Among those assembled this morning in the loggia, was Lucia. She smiled when she saw her father, and made the usual Italian gesture of salute. This salute consists in raising the hand, with the palm turned inwards and bending all the fingers several times with a quick motion towards it. Maso nodded to her and passed on. In a minute or two he looked back. What dark head was that which had just raised itself from a stooping posture in the window of the next house to Gemma's (the dressmaker's), a window which

looked right on the loggia? He remembered, with a sudden flash of memory, that that house belonged to the elder Voghera, and that Tonino lived in it in his uncle's absence.

Maso understood it all now. For the last few weeks Lucia had risen to go to her work with unusual alacrity, and had often returned home late. And this was the reason! He ground his teeth. His own little darling, his Lucia, had listened to the rascal. He must be very firm with her, and forbid her even to look at Tonino again. He would forfeit the money he had paid to Gemma for her teaching, and would keep her at home with her mother.

As he walked on, he gave another glance; all the bright heads of braided hair were bent over their work, but beneath the great terra-cotta vases of balsam flowers he saw a masculine figure still standing at an open window, and talking earnestly. Maso could not suppress an exclamation which was very like a curse.

What was to be done? Maso was a slow man. Thought and action were separated by a wide interval with him, and he could not make up his mind at once.

At the summit of the village street was a flight of steps, which led to a grassy platform, on which the church was raised still higher, by a break-neck stone staircase.

By the time Maso entered the church he made up his mind to speak to Rosa that very night, and to insist that Lucia should remain at home for the next few weeks at least. He crossed himself as he passed in front of the high altar, and putting down his basket of tools, commenced his work.

But the fine olive-wood carving he was repairing was too complicated and artistic a work to be executed mechanically, and the screen did not progress this morning. He had to rouse himself several times from a kind of waking dream, and relapsed again to sit open-eyed and motionless, his thoughts busy with Lucia.

How inexorable was time. It seemed but yesterday she was a toddling child, smiling at her mother's breast, or springing from her arms to his, and now she was a girl, with all a girl's loveliness. All that world of emotions and desires which separate a child from a parent was now at work in her heart. He ground his teeth again and almost called out, so sharp was the sting.

While he was thus sitting idle and absorbed in thought, a shadow fell on the basement of the church, and the village

priest, who had been watching him for a minute or two from the door of the sacristy, came forward and spoke to him.

"Well, Maso, what are you frowning at, this summer morning?"

"Oh! reverendissimo, pardon me, I did not see you."

"I have only come in this moment."

"What a sultry day."

"Yes, it is unusually hot."

"Scirocco worse than ever this year; vine disease; grain knocked to pieces by wind and rain; a bad year, a bad year," muttered Maso.

"Maso!" and the good-humoured-looking priest stared at him in unfeigned astonishment.

"What will become of us? heavier taxes, poorer harvests; conscription; the country is cursed."

"Yes, the old state of things was better if you all had had the good sense to believe us—"

"I wish——" and here Maso gave a groan, and stopped short.

"Yet you were one of the most forward at the time to put up the tricolour flag and cry Viva Garibaldi—more's the pity; well, grumbling only makes one thirsty, and these new-fangled constitutions and governments will not do much to alter the Regno in my time. Two steps forward and one and a half backwards, like Lilla's mule; and what with the brigands and the deserters, who will not be made soldiers against their will, and those who will not pay taxes on all they eat and drink, and are clothed with . . . ah, ah! there is trouble enough before them to make them wish a thousand times a day they had never touched this prickly pear of a Sicily."

The garrulous old man paused to draw breath, and became aware that his auditor was inattentive.

"What ails you, Maso mio; you have something on your mind—are not the children well?"

"Yes, please your reverence."

"Rosa? Lucia?"

The start Maso gave at the last name told the priest that the cause of Maso's clouded brow was Lucia.

"Is not Lucia well?—she is always very delicate."

"She is quite well, at least I hope so," and Maso crossed himself. The Sicilian or Neapolitan has always a superstitious fear that to pronounce any one well, is flying in the face of Providence, and will immediately bring down some misfortune

on the person who has been presumptuously declared "well."

"Well, she's a pretty ragazzina. I always feared she would slip through your fingers, she looks so fragile, and Rosa told me, the German medico at Messina, to whom you took her when she was twelve years old, said that there was something wrong about her lungs, or the formation of her heart; that any grief would kill her at once, like a flower beaten down by the wind. I am glad she is stronger now. Ohimè! that was four years ago—how time passes; how these young things shoot up like the stalks of the Gran Turco, to-day so high, to-morrow as tall as one's shoulder. Have you any sposo for her?"

Maso looked blankly at the priest at first, and then turned from him. This acceptance by another of the fact that Lucia had attained the age in which love and lovers and marriage were recognised as inevitable, was galling in the extreme to him.

"For my part," continued the priest, somewhat jocularly, "I have had my eyes open lately, and I think that scamp Tonino is——"

This was too much, Maso started up with an oath, and the delicate annunciation lily he was carving broke off and fell at his feet. Alas! was it an omen? He remembered it afterwards.

"Tell me, Don Luigi," he exclaimed, "tell me, if you know anything about it. Tonino is a miscreant, a blackguard, and I would kill him rather than he should even think of Lucia."

"Pet, pet, my son, not so fast or so loud; think where you are; he is all you say, but he has a way girls like. Lucia is not the first—they like his soft words and bright eyes."

"He has no mestiere, no occupation, not a grano he can call his own; besides it is said he belongs to Crocchio's band——"

"Be quiet, Maso; a loud voice and an oath never did any good yet. I will help you to prevent this. It would be a scandal if the gentlest lamb in my flock should be the portion of that black-hearted vagabond"—he crossed himself. "It is not becoming, however, to the habit I wear to speak thus. One word from me to the syndic would settle his business."

"I do not wish him to be denounced," said Maso, gravely.

"A word to Tonino from me or from you, just a hint that the soldiers are on his track, would send him away for months, during which your pretty Lucia would find a better husband."

Maso shook his head, and took up his work. The priest took another long pinch of snuff, and Maso ruminated in his bovine way. He was suffering like an animal suffers, without the least notion how to better his condition, but impatient, desperately impatient, against it.

The two methods the priest spoke of were equally objectionable to him. All lay-Italians have a rooted horror of justice and tribunals, and all the paraphernalia of law. The old hatred against spies and informers, which prevailed under despotic governments, is as fierce and unreasoning as ever in their hearts.

"Well, my son, shall I warn him to go, or shall I speak to the syndic? His appearances and disappearances, the accurate information which the bands of Crocchio and of Satanichio possess of all the doings of the possedenti of Torre Mela, have aroused great suspicion against him—a word would be enough."

"He must go, but do not denounce him."

As he uttered the last two words "denounce him," the leather curtain which hung before the door of the chapel moved, and a face looked in.

The priest and Maso faced the altar and did not see the intruder. It was Tonino. He dropped the curtain again, and his face was livid as he uttered the words, "Will he dare to denounce me when he hears Lucia loves me?"

CHAPTER II. DEATH.

MASO went home at sunset. He avoided the street where he had been hurt by the sight of Lucia and Tonino, and made a detour by the fields. He wished to see Rosa before he spoke to Lucia. In all the business of life she was his oracle. He would touch his forehead and say, "My wife has the brains. I always do as she tells me: she knows all about it. I take pensiero about nothing but the fields and orchard, and my carpenter's work. Women cannot understand those." He adjusted the scale of masculine superiority by this proviso, but in all else he was implicitly obedient to Rosa. It was a burning breathless evening, and the motionless corn stood in long yellow curves down the slope from the village to his house. The vines were as usual festooned from tree to tree, but the leaves looked wilted and discoloured, and the grapes were diseased, the bees were silent, the cicale dumb, and as he walked along, there seemed in outward nature a presage of coming storm which

added unconsciously to his own gloom. He knew how destructively fatal to the harvest were those south-west storms so common to Italy at this season, and he had a feeling that the doomed landscape before him bore a resemblance to his own impending fate.

He made haste, for he was impatient to get to Rosa. Two words would tell her what he suspected; what he feared. She understood him thoroughly, she comprehended his very silences, and above all she would not be afraid to speak to Lucia, as he acknowledged to himself he was. He knew his own weakness. He would be too yielding or too angry. As he walked on his attention was roused by a voice singing the end of that favourite song of the south, Santa Lucia! He looked, and some way in advance, but considerably below the height on which he stood, he saw the lithe form of Tonino Voghera. Beside him was Lucia!

They must have entered the road by a by-path from the village.

The lovers—ah! could he doubt it now—walked on in advance. Lucia's head was drooping, and her step was very slow. Tonino bent fondly over her as he walked. He was evidently triumphant. Sometimes he whistled, sometimes he sang.

Maso gazed at them for a minute or two in a dazed, speechless way, and then he trod down the path and soon overtook the loitering pair.

"Lucia!"

Lucia turned round at the voice. She saw her father close to her, with a face convulsed with anger. She gave a faint cry. He took her hand with an impetuous grasp as if he was snatching her from the fire.

"Come home to your mother."

Tonino was startled for one moment, but only for one.

"Is it you, Maso? You are early—but as you are here let us all walk together."

"Which is your way?"

"I was going to see you."

"You need not." He set him aside and placed himself between Tonino and his daughter. Lucia trembled from head to foot, and shrank away from her father. Tonino paused.

"Go!" said Maso in a thundering voice, and he moved on rapidly, still clutching his daughter.

Tonino strode after him. "What do you mean?" he said with an oath. "Who are you, to bid me go or stay? If it were not that I loved Lucia, you should repent your insolence."

"Go!"

"I shall not go, I tell you."

The veins stood out on Maso's forehead like cords. His lips were pale with rage. He looked as dangerous as an infuriated bull goaded by the arrows of the picadores.

"Why should I not walk with your daughter? Why should I not love her?" And he folded his arms and made a step forward, and passing in front of them, stood in the path.

With a cry of terror Lucia fell on her knees.

"Were it not that I love her, and that she is your child, I would kill you where you stand, traitor and spy that you are"—he drew a knife from his belt—"you who plot with priests, damn them, to denounce better men than yourself."

A torrent of abuse fell from Tonino's lips. He was fluent and foul-mouthed, whereas Maso's indignation well-nigh choked him. He was habitually silent, but excess of rage made him absolutely dumb.

"Go," he repeated with convulsed lips and a choking voice.

Suddenly, partly from impudent bravado, partly from the irresistible force of her attraction for him, Tonino turned to Lucia.

"Choose between us," he said. "I love you, I ask you to be my wife—and your father insults me, reviles me, as if I were a malefactor, a thief, a brigand."

"No, no," sobbed Lucia.

"Brigand," gasped Maso, "you have said it. I need not denounce you, for you are suspected already; the soldiers are on your track."

At the word "soldiers," Tonino started and turned pale. He stepped aside and stammered, "Liar, you slander me, because before her my hands are tied. Addio, Lucia, anima mia, we shall meet again." And before Maso could prevent him, he pressed her passionately to his heart, and then, before another word was spoken, he struck into a foot-path which skirted the road in a direction opposite the village, and was out of sight in a moment.

Maso stared after him. He had used the words at random, in his frenzy of rage, but Tonino's prompt retreat had justified his worst suspicions.

He raised Lucia to her feet. She was crying convulsively. He put her hand in his tenderly and they walked on in silence. When they reached the house, Rosa was standing a little in advance of the threshold, looking out for them, shading her eyes with one hand while she held on the other arm her baby, a strong, healthy,

brown, half-naked infant, with busy fingers and chubby fists, playing with his mother's hair. The other boy, a child about two years, was dragging at her skirt.

So she stood waiting for Maso and Lucia, as she had stood hundreds of times before, but as, alas! she was never to stand again!

Something in the step of both, and in the attitude of Lucia, seemed to strike her with surprise. She made a step forward as if to meet them, and then retreated, and turning into the kitchen began preparing the simple meal. Something was wrong she was sure, and she could hear bad news better on her own hearth.

When they entered, she saw that Lucia's cheeks were stained and her eyes swelled with tears.

"What is it, my soul? Maso, what is the matter?"

Maso looked very unhappy, and as Lucia felt her mother's cool cheek pressed to hers, and her tender arms round her, she sobbed afresh.

"There, there," said Rosa, soothingly, "you are tired. Lucia, go and cool those hot cheeks, my child." She released the girl from her embrace and began busying herself with the other children; Lucia went up to her own little room. Maso sat down at the table, leaning his head on his hand, while Rosa, taking the baby again in her arms, gave him his soup and attended to him.

Lucia did not return, but her mother waited patiently to hear what had happened, till her loved ones chose to tell her. Whatever it was, they were with her. It could not therefore be any unendurable misfortune.

She put the children to bed. The little boys slept with her; the little girls who were older, slept in a windowless closet opening out of her room.

A tiny chamber on the landing-place was Lucia's. It was used partly as a store-room; strings of yellow maize hung from the rafters; a barrel of oil stood up in a corner, and on it were paper trays of figs cut open and left to dry. A vine grew outside the window, and almost masked the narrow aperture, for it was nothing more. It had neither panes nor blinds nor shutters. The green luxuriance of the vine shaded it in summer, and in winter the sun streamed into it without stint or hindrance. Beside it, near enough for Lucia's own hands to deck it daily with fresh flowers, and to light the taper which hung before it, was a shrine, with a rudely carved Madonna and child.

On the narrow pallet-bed in this room Lucia was stretched in a heavy sleep. The moonlight came in patches through the vine-leaves outside. Rosa, after she had left her other darlings, went to look after Lucia. She was pleased that the girl had so soon forgotten her grief, whatever it was. She went to the window. The little shrine had no light before it. She groped her way back to the bed; Lucia's face was in shadow. Her mother touched the hand that looked like a white flower in the moonlight. It was burning. Her breathing was very fast and somewhat oppressed. Rosa sighed, and left her without disturbing her.

"Maso, tell me what has happened?"

"Where is Lucia?"

"Asleep."

He looked relieved. "Rosa, that villain Tonino loves Lucia."

"Tonino Voghera?"

"Yes."

"Santissima! Is he not suspected of having joined Crocchio?"

"Yes."

"Twice he was missing at the time of the conscription; each time he went to the mountains."

"Yes."

"I heard from Mencia that his name is on the suspected list at the prefettura?"

"Yes."

"And Lucia——"

"God forgive her! I think she is not averse to him. She walked home with him." And Maso put his hands to his head in despair.

"Poor Maso," said Rosa, putting her arm round his neck, "you must not be so wretched. Lucia is so obedient, she will not listen to him if we tell her not to do so."

"Who knows?"

"I know my girl," said Rosa, with gentle dignity; "but you were not angry with her, poor lamb, were you?"

"No."

"She is so delicate, you know. I always remember what the medico, to whom we took her after she had that fever, said: he told me she must never be agitated, for there was something wrong about her heart."

"My God, Rosa, I did not say one harsh word to her, but I tell you I would rather see her in her grave than his wife."

"Madonna santissima! I should think so."

"You said she was asleep," said Maso, rising.

"Yes, you had better not disturb her."

"I must see her."

"Do not wake her, only just look in."

They went together to Lucia's room. Rosa held the light while Maso entered softly, and bending towards the bed listened to Lucia's breathing. She had not moved. The moonlight fell on the outlines of the soft girlish form; one pretty shoulder gleamed bare and white in the moonbeams, but the face was in deep shadow. Who but parents can sound the depths of fond parental feeling with which these two murmured blessings on their darling before they turned to leave her.

Maso did not close his eyes that night. Rosa slept quietly beside him. The child that slept on her bosom gave one or two inarticulate cries, and the mother's hand hushed it mechanically. Once Maso sat up in bed, for he fancied he heard a flutter as if a bird had passed through the room, and between his half-closed eyelids he could have sworn he had seen a light flash through, but, as he started up and roused himself, the room was quite dark, for the moon had set.

The first twitter of the birds awoke the baby, and as the daylight dawned, both husband and wife were up.

"Go and see Lucia," said Rosa. "Tell her if she is tired she need not go to Gemma's this morning."

She went on attending to the baby, and was hugging it and pressing its chubby little cheeks against her own, when a terrible cry resounded through the stillness of the morning air.

"Lucia, Lucia!" called out a voice, so harsh and hollow that her blood seemed to freeze in her veins at the sound, it was so unearthly and so awful. As soon as her trembling limbs could support her, for she had been as if paralysed with terror at the moment, she followed the sound.

The golden dawn was shining in Lucia's room. Maso was thrown across the bed senseless. On the pillow was a white still face, with sweet half-open eyes, but those eyes would wake no more! Lucia was dead.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER VIII. MR. BYGRAVE.

PURRINGTON opinion was unfavourable to the plan that had been adopted for my education. It was viewed as absurd and even somewhat presumptuous. It was certainly unprecedented. "What be neighbour Orme thinking about?" Mr. Jobling, of the Home Farm, had been heard to inquire. "Is he going to make a passon of his neevy? Where be the good of hiring Passon Bygrave to stuff his head wi' Latton and Greek and such like? He'll ruin the boy. Better by half take and send an out to scare the craws or learn to do summut useful. No good won't come on't. I'd learned to plough a straight furrow, and to handle a prong like e'er a man on my farm, long avore I was his age. Besides, who wants a passon coming in and out of a farm-house day arter day, like an old woman? It's quite ridic'lous. I'm surprised at neighbour Orme. But, there, 'tis no use talking about it, I suppose. He seems main bent on it. But I'm none so terrible fond of passons myself; except on Sundays of course."

Sentiments of this kind were so generally expressed that I could not help hearing them. And I, too, was inclined to think that the education Mr. Bygrave was engaged to impart was in the nature of a vain and valueless thing. Why should I be taught so much more than my neighbours? It seemed to me rather foolish, and, what was even worse, feminine, to be instructed in accomplishments they had never felt the lack of. It was like learning to sew or to hem; useful arts in their way, no doubt, but unworthy of a male creature's

acquiring. Happily, Mr. Bygrave did his duty, so far as he could, as my instructor.

To the young child education is much as medicine; even if he believe in the draught's power to benefit him, yet he knows that its taste is disagreeable. Or if he begins to quaff it eagerly, his appetite soon fails. He does not yet appreciate the pleasures of duty; wisdom is weariness, and ignorance still blissful to him. He finds it hard to love the preceptor, who plucks him from idle delights, tethers him to school-books, and expects him to enjoy the change.

I fear I did not do Mr. Bygrave justice. Decidedly I did not love him. There was, indeed, a certain lack of sympathy between us. He was not, I think, intentionally unkind or impatient, but he was unable to take account of my childishness. He seemed to fancy that my small weak legs could keep pace with his long strides, as we trod together the highways of wisdom. He knew so much himself that he could not credit the ignorance of others. He often taxed me with trying to be stupid, which certainly would have been a supererogatory effort on my part. And my boyish inability to value duly the treasures of classical literature, he estimated as something amazing in its grossness and inanity.

If the authors of the remote past were to me but unappetising food, they were as meat and drink to Mr. Bygrave. The very thought of them always seemed to bring him new support and enjoyment. He lingered fondly over long quotations from them, smacking his lips after his utterances, as though the flavour of fine old wine had rejoiced his palate. He could deliver prodigious speeches from Greek plays, as easily as I could pour out beer. He was, indeed, in love with the dead, and especially with the dead languages, and appeared to have

no heart or hope for the living world of to-day. I remember the almost painful astonishment it occasioned me when I once, by mere chance, discovered that he—so wise a man—had never read the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and was entirely uninformed as to the works of Smollett. He plainly intimated that he despised such productions. It often occurred to me, after this, that Mr. Bygrave had been born some two thousand years too late. How he would have enjoyed, I thought, the society of the ancient poets and historians! As to the opinion they would have entertained of him I could never quite make up my mind. I decided, however, that he would not have looked well in a toga.

He was a tall, gaunt, long-necked, narrow-chested man, with round shoulders, and thin, unstable legs. He had a habit of yawning frequently, stretching his limbs until his muscles cracked noisily like dry branches in a gale of wind, and opening wide his large mouth to close it again with a crash. He wore always a hungry look, insomuch that my mother was wont to insist that he suffered from insufficiency of food; and invariably provided him with substantial refreshment on his visits to the Down Farm House. His health did not appear to be infirm, although his complexion was pallid and his frame attenuated; he had a loud harsh voice and a barking method of speech. I often likened myself to one of Reube's lambs driven into classical folds or pastures by the barking of my tutor—acting as a sheep-dog for the occasion.

Mr. Bygrave was respected at Purrington, because, time out of mind, it had been the way at Purrington to respect the clergy. It was true that he only filled our pulpit and reading-desk in consequence of the extreme incapacity of our rector, old Mr. Gascoigne; and that he did not reside at the parsonage, but occupied apartments over the wheelwright's, "up-street," Purrington—it being, by the way, a firm conviction of my mother's that the wheelwright's premises were quite unworthy of Mr. Bygrave's tenancy, and that Mrs. Munday, the wheelwright's wife, in the way of providing and cooking for a gentleman, and generally in looking after his comfort, was but "a poor creature." Still, by reason of his officiating in Mr. Gascoigne's place, and of his being in his own right a clergyman, Mr. Bygrave was generally viewed with deference and regard throughout the parish; it being always understood, however, that he was not to be likened to the rector,

but was altogether a priest of inferior rank, if not, indeed, of a distinct species. In his younger days Mr. Gascoigne had been noted for his skill in field-sports, and famed as a huntsman and a shot. He farmed his own glebe, and his bowling was a thing of which elderly cricketers of the Purrington Club—an institution he had originated, and for some time mainly supported—still spoke with enthusiasm. Mr. Bygrave was wholly without gifts of this kind; he knew nothing of farming; he could neither ride nor shoot; and although he had upon request kept the score during the annual cricket match between Purrington and Bulborough, he had not been intrusted with that office a second time; his inefficiency was too glaring. That he was competent, however, to perform indispensable clerical duties in the way of marrying, christening, and burying the parishioners, could not be disputed; nor was much fault found with the sermons he was accustomed to deliver on Sunday afternoons throughout the year. Purrington did not criticise sermons; viewing them as wholesome performances which were rather to be endured, like surgical operations, than enjoyed, or indeed understood. It was thought, however, that they did good upon the whole; although this estimation of them regarded them somewhat in the light of the incantations of a wizard of good character. It must be said that Mr. Bygrave's discourses were not perhaps very well calculated for a rural congregation. One special effort of his, however, in the course of which he ventured upon certain Hebrew quotations of considerable length, won particular favour from his auditors. It was freely observed in the churchyard after service that Mr. Battersby, the vicar of Bulborough, the adjoining parish, could never have come up to that achievement. And that Mr. Bygrave, although a much younger man, possessed "a zight more learning."

Mr. Bygrave's position was not perhaps a very happy one. His means were very limited, and he was wholly without anything like congenial companionship. In such society as Purrington could furnish, he was certainly not seen to advantage. Not that he was shy or apparently ill at ease; but he was without power of speech upon matters that did not interest him, and was unable to sympathise, or to affect sympathy with the subjects that formed the staple of Purrington converse. What were to him the condition of the crops, the prices of barley, of sheep, or

of wool? Even the state of the weather was as nothing to him. He never seemed to know if the sun were shining or not, the wind blowing, or the rain falling. I had seen him on most bitter days, leisurely crossing the down, studying as he went the pocket Horace he always carried with him. Yet he was not perhaps to be pitied. He was happy after his own way. His studies were very dear to him, if they brought little tangible profit to him or to any one else. And he performed his duty fairly to the parishioners; although he *was* charged with reading from the Greek Testament, in lieu of the authorised version, to old Betty Heck, the shepherd's mother, during her long confinement to her bed with rheumatism, asthma, and other complaints. Still Betty had alleged that Mr. Bygrave's reading had done her "a power of good," although as a matter of choice she admitted her preference for the visits of old Mr. Gascoigne.

To Mr. Bygrave I feel that I owe much, and that acknowledgment of my obligations has been too long delayed. He compelled my acquaintance with a course of literature, concerning which I should have remained without information but for his labour and painstaking. It was no fault of his that I was but an idle and indifferent pupil, even though something might be said regarding his defects as a preceptor of extreme youth. But I am sure that he did his best; I wish I could think the same of my own endeavours.

Our lessons concluded, I often walked back with Mr. Bygrave part of the way to the village. Not that my society was any boon to him. But I was charged to carry certain little gifts of farm produce bestowed upon him by my mother—strong in her faith that the curate incurred the perils of starvation from the reckless incapacity and improvidence of his landlady, the wheelwright's wife. She had been in times long past, it appeared, a servant at the Down Farm, and had undergone summary dismissal for outrageous neglect of duty.

There was not usually much conversation between Mr. Bygrave and myself during these walks of ours. His notion of a pleasant topic would have related to the conjugation of some Greek verb of a distressingly irregular pattern, existing only for the confusion and torture of youthful students. But I held that such matters were quite unsuited to discussion out of school hours. For some time I walked

silent beside him, carrying a basket of eggs with rather a boyish longing to upset them, or to ascertain how far the basket could be tilted without danger to its contents. Presently I addressed him upon a subject that still much occupied me.

"Mr. Bygrave," I said, "did you ever see Lord Overbury?"

It was some time before he seemed to understand me. He had to descend, as it were, from lofty regions of thought to my lowly level.

"Overbury, Overbury," he murmured; "I seem to have heard the name."

Of course he had heard the name. Why, nearly the whole of Purrington parish belonged to Lord Overbury. Surely everybody had heard the name.

"Overbury, Overbury? Ah, I remember. No, I never saw him. It was before my time, some years. But I heard of it at the university. It was a disgraceful affair, I believe. But I never knew the particulars, nor wished to know them. He only avoided expulsion by taking his name off the books. So ended his academical career—unhappy man!"

What was I to make of this? Of what was he talking?

"I mean Lord Overbury," I explained.

"I mean Lord Overbury," he said. "No, I never saw him. Nor should I care to see him."

"He's gone to the great house—the hall."

"Has he? I don't know that his movements need concern you or me."

And he favoured me with a Latin quotation, which I did not quite follow.

Thereupon we parted, for we had arrived near the wheelwright's. I handed over the eggs, none of them broken, and turned towards home again.

Then I bethought me that I was no great distance from the Dark Tower. What if I were to steal up the gloomy avenue once more, and look about me? Surely no great harm would be done.

I had no plan in view. I was only moved by a vague and idle curiosity. I did not look for another adventure, nor to see the satyr again. I rather hoped not to see him; or I should not so much have minded seeing him provided he did not see me. I could not count upon his mood being so favourable as when we had met before. And he might reasonably object to my visiting him again so soon. It bore a prying look, as I felt.

I crept furtively up the avenue, startling

a cluster of rabbits that I came upon suddenly; but hardly startling them more than they startled me. All was wonderfully still otherwise.

Soon I was close to the great house. I left the path and hid myself in the shrubbery, peering through a tangle of branches.

The Dark Tower was dead again. The window of the room I had previously entered was now like all the other windows; the shutters were fast closed. It was as though my adventure had never been. The house had resumed its old aspect of emptiness, neglect, dreariness, death.

I turned to depart, for there was nothing to induce me to stay, when I heard a footstep close beside me on the moss-coated gravel walk. Old Thacker confronted me.

I knew old Thacker of course, and rather feared him. He was rough of speech and manner, and his temper was sometimes violent. I had learned to estimate his condition of mind by the colour of his nose, which hoisted, as it were, storm signals when there was peril in approaching him. A crimson hue proclaimed some cheerfulness of disposition; but when his nose was of a deep purple, then he was certainly to be dreaded; at such times he was capable of anything. At least that was my conviction. In the present instance his most prominent feature wore a rosy glow that bespoke the dawn of intoxication. It was, so to speak, in the sunset of ebriety that the deeper tones lowered upon his face and manifested his descent into wrathful gloom. He might safely be addressed, therefore.

"I hope you're well, Mr. Thacker," I said in my politest way.

"Thankee, I be tarblish middlin'," he answered; meaning me to understand that his health was in a tolerable state. As he spoke he rattled the contents of a flower-pot he carried under his arm, and furnished a sort of castanet accompaniment to his speech. The flower-pot was full of snails. I had never before seen any evidence of his industry as a gardener. "Where bist ga-ing?" he demanded.

"His lordship said I might fish in the lake."

"Fish? There's narra fish there, but an old jack as big as me a'most. He's eat up all the rest. He'd eat you if you was to fall in. He'd eat hisself I do think if a' could only catch hold of a's tail. Tain't no morsel of use fishing there, lad. So you caught sight of 's lordship, eh?"

"Yes," I said, "I saw him."

"Well, he be gone agen, now."

"Gone?"

"Ees; what a' come vor, there, I dunno; nor why a's gone, nor where. 'Tis no use asking, nor thinking. Tain't no bisness of mine, I suppose. Nor no one's else's, most like. A' comes and a' goes just when a's a mind to."

"You've known him a many years, Mr. Thacker?"

"Ever since a' was a clytenish (pale) chit of a child. And I knew a's vather avore un. Times was different then. But 'tis no use talking. If Farmer Orme's got a few taters he could spare me, there, I'd be grateful. Mine be uncommon poorish, somehows, to be sure. We be all in a caddle. The old ooman's bad with a cough. She took a chill and it pitched, I'm thinking. I be getting these snails for her."

"Snails?"

"Ees; bile 'em in barley water, drink 'em up hot, and they'll cure most any mortal thing."

With this I left old Thacker. I had rarely found him in so amiable and communicative a mood.

CHAPTER IX. A STRANGER.

It seemed clear that I had seen the last of Lord Overbury, and that my adventures at the Dark Tower had come to a somewhat tame and prosaic conclusion. It was disappointing, certainly.

As, returned home, I entered the kitchen, I was surprised by the spectacle of a strange figure seated comfortably beside the fire. Faces one had not seen many times before were rare at Purrington, rarer still at the Down Farm, and in such wise to be considered with fixed attention, even with a measure of awe. And the face and figure before me were not only new to me, but presented characteristics that verged on eccentricity.

I turned to Kem for an explanation. I did not speak, but I was conscious that my open eyes and mouth and startled attitude had all the effect of intense interrogation.

"An accident," said Kem. "The——" she hesitated, I know, as to how she should describe the stranger; "gentleman" seemed not wholly appropriate; she hit upon a pleasant compromise: "The good man has hurt himself."

"That sounds suicidal," he interposed. "Rather I have been hurt by a ploughshare, I am told, left upon the down. I had missed my way. Night had fallen. Your roads here are somewhat indistinct. Sheep tracks they might almost be called. Not being a sheep I was unfamiliar with them, and their nature. I have heard a

phrase as to the cutting of sticks applied to the movements of man's lower limbs. I did not think how literally it might refer to my own legs; let me be correct—to one of them. I was cut on the shin—a tender part as you may be aware—by what, I am given to understand, was a plough-share."

"It was that gawney Josh Hedges as left un there, I'll warnd (warrant)," said Kem.

"Anyhow it wounded my shin; not severely, perhaps, but sufficiently," continued the stranger. "I fell. I think I fainted. I remained upon the down throughout the night. In point of fact my lodging was upon the cold ground; I will add, and damp. I have known snigger and less draughty abodes. The bosom of Mother Earth is a trifle deficient in natural warmth. I was found by some labouring folks—tillers of the soil? happy peasantry? just so. They brought me here. I have received kindly attention and succour. Such is my brief story. You will, I am sure, under all the peculiar circumstances of the case, excuse my rising."

I then perceived that his left foot was bare, resting upon the kitchen fender. He had been bathing his wound, which looked rather an ugly one.

"Your mother," he said, half inquiringly, but he did not wait for an answer; "just so, I had judged as much—has kindly gone in search of some further medicaments—what is called 'poor man's plaster,' I understand. A very appropriate remedy. For I hate disguise; I am not rich, far from it. Thus aided, I don't doubt that I shall do very well." He bowed to me as he lifted to his lips a tumbler of hot brandy-and-water.

There was a certain oddness about his air and speech that struck me much. He was perfectly grave, and yet there was a suspicion of comicality underlying all he said and did. Upon my entrance he seemed to have discerned in me a sympathetic auditor, and had addressed to me all his observations, and kept his eyes fixed upon me. He had a deep fruity kind of voice, and spoke with a deliberation that was almost laboured, as though he prided himself upon the distinctness of his articulation. And as he spoke he moved his eyebrows actively, and waved his hand to and fro in the air. He seemed to gather from my looks replies to his inquiries, nodding his head approvingly, and at intervals permitting a dignified smile to flit across his lips. He had a large, round, fleshy face without

whiskers; his hair, dark, curly, and profuse, was piled up high above his head, falling upon his brow like a plume. As I noted this he made a circular movement with his arm and passed his fingers through his locks, carelessly lifting them to a greater elevation. He smiled at me as he did this, and, I think intentionally, displayed a ring he wore upon his little finger. If the stone set in the ring was genuine, I judged that it must have been, from its exceeding size, of enormous value; but I knew little of jewellery; such opinions as I entertained upon the subject were derived mainly from the histories of Aladdin and Sinbad.

I fear that I stared at the stranger with rude persistency; his aspect somehow fascinated me; I found a difficulty in averting my eyes from him. Not that this seemed in the least to annoy or offend him. I decided, indeed, that he was rather gratified than not by my gaze. He expanded his chest, and leant back majestically in his chair with an air of exhibiting his proportions to the utmost advantage, and justifying my admiration of him, or at least my curiosity concerning him. Suddenly it struck me that he resembled portraits I had seen somewhere—probably on market-days in Steepleborough shop-windows—of King George the Fourth, attired in the clothes of private life.

He was scarcely so large in the girth, however, as his majesty—judging from his effigies—although he was of full habit, and even corpulent; nor was his costume comparable in point of quality and fashion to the dress of the king. His fluffy white beaver hat, bent and battered about the rim, and disfigured by many weather stains and creases, stood beside him upon the kitchen-table. He wore a blue dress-coat of swallow-tail pattern, rather white about the seams, and buttoning with some difficulty, owing to its being a trifle too small for him; some of its bright buttons had evidently yielded to the severe tension they had been subjected to, and altogether disappeared; here and there, especially high up on his chest, their places had been supplied by pins. A rusty black silk kerchief was wound round his neck. His legs were cased in nankeen pantaloons, tight at the ankle, but bulging freely, from long use, at the knees. A soiled green ribbon with a copper seal and watch-key—at least, I was convinced that they were not gold—depended from his fob. Dingy stockings and very thin shoes—that had not recently undergone blacking, and certainly needed repair—completed his attire. Beneath his

chair there rested a small bundle tied up in a faded cotton handkerchief knotted at the corners, and attached to a rough walking-stick, which looked as though it had been drawn from a hurdle.

I felt that I had been staring at the stranger quite long enough; still I could not depart from his presence. I had never before seen such a man, or such a method of dress. But I now changed my position, and for awhile studied the movements of Kem and the condition of the kitchen fire. Every now and then, however, I indulged in a furtive glance at the stranger. When I did so, I found him still looking at me. Our eyes met. It was certainly awkward. And then my curiosity was newly stimulated. He had produced from his pocket a pair of scissors and a scrap of paper. And, while still looking at me, he was snipping at this paper, holding it up to the light, then snipping it again, after further gaze at me. He was a most extraordinary man. He had already been too much for Kem. She was stricken dumb, and, as she wildly pared potatoes, her face wore almost an insane expression.

"I call that a fair portrait," said the stranger, and he held up a black shade of myself, placed against a white card for its better exhibition. He had been cutting out my silhouette. Kem was roused from apathy, and as soon as her amazement permitted her speech, she pronounced the portrait perfect, said she should have known it anywhere, and evidently formed forthwith a more favourable opinion of our visitor than she had previously entertained. I felt that the black shade resembled me, though I was but indifferently acquainted with the conformation of my own profile. Still it exhibited a boy with a blunt nose, a sharp chin, a mass of thick untidy hair, and a patch of white to represent my collar. It was clearly my likeness.

"You're an artist, sir," I said, diffidently. "I may call myself an artist," he answered, with a grand yet not unkindly air. "I really think I may. Not that this trifling is really to be called art. You like the trifle?—keep it, my young friend. Keep it, my friend, in memory of me. A touch of gum or paste will make it adhere to the card. Stick it up over your mantelshelf. Tell your friends, should they inquire, that it is the work and the gift of Fane Mauleverer. A trifle, yet of worth in its way. I've known worse portraits executed by artists of greater pretence. But I am in the habit of speaking modestly—if at all—of my own merits."

I was deeply gratified; I tendered him warm if incoherent thanks, which he received with bland and smiling deprecation. I was even emboldened, boy-like, to intrude further upon his generosity, and begged further demonstration of his artistic endowments.

"Now do Kem's likeness; please, do," I pleaded. His kindness had banished my timidity.

"I'm ashamed of you, Master Duke," said Kem, the natural crimson of her face deepening greatly. She objected to being portrayed. She had even some superstitious apprehension, I think, that evil would come of it. She covered her face with her apron.

But the stranger—Mr. Fane Mauleverer as he had announced his name—with an amused expression, snipped a fresh scrap of paper, and not in the least deterred by her movements and objection, achieved a silhouette of Kem. I thought it wonderfully like—much better than my own, indeed, of which, perhaps, I was not so good a judge. Her cap strings and frills were beyond praise.

"By special desire," said Mr. Mauleverer, exhibiting his work, "of the young gentleman whose name I gather to be Duke, a portrait of the exemplary lady whom I have heard designated Kem—a curious appellation; but no matter. Here is Fane Mauleverer's tribute to the personal advantages of Mistress Kem."

My mother entered the kitchen. She was much distressed at the mischance that had befallen Mr. Mauleverer. She was about to apply her healing arts to his wound; the matrons of her time were practised in domestic medicine, and she had long been consulted upon all accidents happening upon the farm. But Mr. Mauleverer, with exceeding politeness, declined her aid. He could not permit, he said, that she should attend upon him. And he called her "My dear madam." His manner struck me as quite courtly.

"No, no," he said, "I am not the Chevalier Bayard." It occurred to me that he did not resemble greatly my idea of that chivalric personage. "And my wound is but slight, and not received in combat, but ignobly, by wandering from my path, and tumbling over a useful, if graceless, agricultural appliance. A strip or two of plaster—so"—as he spoke he warmed the plaster at the fire, and then applied it to his hurt—"and then, I am myself again. I may limp for a day or two. But what matter? I can yet proceed upon my way."

"You were going to——"

"To Lockport. I had left Dripford in the morning. My trunks, I may mention," here Mr. Mauleverer looked very grave and cleared his throat, "have been sent on before me. I was told that Lockport was a walk of some twelve miles."

"Across the down."

"True. Across the down. But a stranger to these parts—I was never before, indeed, in this delightfully open country—I missed my road. It was not surprising, perhaps. Nor could I obtain directions. One meets but few people hereabouts; habitations are scarce, and sign-posts are not frequent when once the highway has been quitted. But now, rested and refreshed—thanks to your kind hospitality—and my trifling injury seen to, I think I may safely proceed.

He rose, and took his fluffy white hat from the table.

"It were best for you to remain," said my mother. "A night's rest, Mr.——" she paused.

"Mauleverer—Fane Mauleverer," he said, bowing over his hat which he pressed against his chest.

"We have a room at your service, Mr. Mauleverer. All shall be done for your comfort. It is not right that you should set forth so soon—night will soon come on—and your hurt is too serious for you to think of walking so great a distance."

"Madam, you overpower me. But—let me disclose myself. You may entertain mistaken notions in regard to me. I am an actor, madam. Nothing more. A poor player on my way to Lockport, having an engagement there during the race-week. I have trod the boards of Covent Garden. But I am now, at your service, a strolling player—that is the world's description of me. I am content to accept it as sufficiently accurate."

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE FIFTH FOOT ("THE FIGHTING FIFTH.")

THERE is an old military tradition that the Fifth won from the French the feathers which they now wear, and that they dyed their tops red by dipping them in the blood of their enemies. The true story, however, is this. The "Old Bold Fifth" had the distinction of wearing a white plume in the cap, when the similar ornament in the other regiments of the service was a red and white tuft. This honourable distinction was given to them for their conduct at Morne Fortune, in the island of St. Lucia, where they took from

the French grenadiers white feathers in sufficient numbers to equip every man in the regiment. This distinction was subsequently confirmed by authority, and continued as a distinctive decoration until 1829, when a general order caused the white feather to be worn by the whole army. By a letter from Sir H. Taylor, adjutant-general, dated July, 1829, the commander-in-chief, referring to the newly-issued order, by which the special distinction was lost to the regiment, states that, "As an equivalent, the Fifth shall in future wear a feather half red and half white, the red uppermost, instead of the plain white feather worn by the rest of the army, as a peculiar mark of honour."

The Fifth Regiment of Foot (or Northumberland Fusiliers) originated in a body of disbanded Irish soldiers, who, on the peace with Holland, in 1674, were allowed to enter the Dutch service. It had been intended to raise ten thousand men, and place them under the chief command of the Prince of Orange. Sir Walter Vane was to have been their leader, but he being killed at the battle of Seneffe, the command was handed over to Sir William Ballandyne, who was shot the same year at the siege of Grave, in North Brabant. Colonel John Fenwick then took up the dead man's sword, and led on the "Irish" regiment to many Dutch victories. At the great but unsuccessful siege of Maastricht, which was defended by Monsieur Calvo, a brave Catalanian, and eight thousand men, the English brigade distinguished themselves by repelling several hot sallies, and capturing, after two bloody assaults, the Dauphin Bastion, for which the Prince of Orange complimented the Irish corps, and rewarded the men with a special present of a fat ox and six sheep to each regiment. In this siege, raised at last by Marshal Schomberg and a French army, the English brigade had nearly half its officers and men killed or wounded.

At the defeat of the Prince of Orange at Mont-Cassel in 1677, the Irish brigade behaved with its usual indomitable spirit. In 1678, under the command of the Earl of Ossory, the regiment fought in the Netherlands, and is particularly mentioned on one occasion as encamping near Waterloo; while at the battle of St. Denis, the British brigade was chosen to lead the attack on the French. The regiment lost on this occasion about a dozen officers, eighty men killed, and one hundred wounded. The peace of Nimeguen

soon followed, and for a time the brave brigade hung up their ponderous muskets.

On the accession of James the Second, the rebellions in Scotland and England compelled the return of the English and Irish regiments. They arrived too late to be useful at Sedgemoor, and sailed back at once to Holland, from whence, in 1687, they refused again to return at the king's command. The prince then bestowed the colonelcy of the subsequent Fifth on Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Tollemache. Captain Bernardi, of this regiment, was afterwards implicated in a plot to assassinate King William; and, though never tried, was cruelly detained in prison by that usually just king for thirty years.

When the Prince of Orange started for the English throne in 1688, Tollemache's regiment was the flower of the five thousand five hundred men who left Holland, and it at once obtained rank as Fifth Regiment of Foot in the British line. They were soon busy in Ireland, fought at the Boyne and the siege of Athlone, and cut to pieces many troublesome packs of Rapparees. At Athlone the grenadier company of the Fifth, under Major-General Mackay, waded breast high through the Shannon, the reserve following by planks laid over the broken arches of a stone bridge. The regiment afterwards joined actively in the siege of Limerick, and the conquest of that place terminated the war in Ireland.

It is a noteworthy fact that in 1694, during William's wars in Flanders, the Fifth were again encamped near Waterloo, and they also helped to protect Ghent and Bruges, in 1696, from the French. In Queen Anne's wars they also had hard work cut out for them. In the war of the Spanish succession they fought a good deal in Portugal; and at Campo Mayor, when the Portuguese cavalry fled, and three of our regiments, advancing too far unsupported, were surrounded and taken prisoners, the Fifth and two other regiments made a stubborn stand, killing nearly a thousand Spaniards and effecting a brave and glorious retreat with a loss of only one hundred and fifty men killed and wounded. After this Portuguese campaign, the Fifth (five hundred strong) went to garrison Gibraltar, and remained there fifteen years. In 1726, they helped vigorously to defend the tough old rock against the Spaniards.

In 1728, the Fifth proceeded to Ireland, where it remained, with but a short interval, for more than twenty years. In 1755 it left Ireland, and in 1758 was sent to effect a landing on the coast of France, when it

helped to burn the shipping and magazines at St. Malo. In August of the same year it helped to destroy the fort of Cherbourg, and to capture and destroy one hundred and eighty-five cannon, and, the month after, it was sent to land in Brittany and destroy batteries.

In 1760, the Fifth fought under the Duke of Brunswick in Hesse Cassel. In 1761, as part of the Marquis of Granby's corps, the Fifth defended the heights of Kirch-Denkern, and helped to take prisoners the whole Rouge regiment, with its cannon and colours. When Prince Frederick surprised the French camp at Groebenstein, the Fifth attacked Starville, who had thrown his division into the woods of Wilhelmsthal, to cover the French retreat. The Fifth wormed through the woods, firing from tree to tree, while the Marquis of Granby attacked the French rear to prevent the retreat. The Fifth took more than twice its own number prisoners, and finally helped to capture the whole French division, except two battalions. An officer of the Fifth, who went up to take the French colours from the standard-bearer, was shot dead by a French sergeant, who stood near; but the man was instantly killed, and the colours quickly seized. The Fifth earned so much credit for this dashing exploit, that the men were allowed for the future to wear French fusilier caps, instead of the hat then used by the regiments of the line; and in 1836, William the Fourth allowed the regiment to bear the word "Wilhelmsthal" on their colours and appointments.

From 1764 to 1774 the regiment remained in Ireland, where, from the cleanliness and trimness of the men, the soldiers of the Fighting Fifth became known as "the Shiners." Early in 1767, orders of merit were instituted in this regiment with great success, as they served to insure good non-commissioned officers, and to rouse the ambition of the privates. The first (seven years' good conduct) earned a gilt medal, bearing on one side the badge of the regiment, "Saint George and the Dragon," with the regimental motto, "Quo Fata vocant," and on the reverse, "Vth Foot, merit;" the second medal (fourteen years' merit) was of silver; the third, also silver (twenty-one years), bore the name of the wearer. Those who gained the twenty-one years' medal had an oval badge of the colour of the facings (green) on the right breast, surrounded with gold and silver wreaths, and inscribed in the centre with the word "merit," in gold letters.

The Fifth, in 1771 and 1772, served in Ireland against the wild bands of Whiteboys, Hearts of Steel, and Hearts of Oak, and in 1774 went to put down the so-called rebellion in America. They fired the first shot of the unfortunate war at Lexington, where they came on some armed American militiamen, and were nearly surrounded at Concord, where they had destroyed some military stores collected there by the so-called rebels. In the attack on Bunker's Hill, near Boston, the Fifth had hot work for a June day. With three days' provision on their back, cartouch-box, &c., weighing one hundred and twenty-five pounds, they toiled through grass reaching to their knees, between walls and fences, in the face of a hot fire, and eventually got possession of the enemy's works on the hill near Charlestown. The Fifth also joined in the reduction of Long Island, the battle of White Plains, the capture of Fort Washington, the reduction of New Jersey, and a fight at Germantown, where they rescued the Fortieth regiment from an American brigade.

In the expedition against the French West Indian Islands in 1778, the Fifth took part. It was at St. Lucia, as we have already seen, that the regiment won its white plumes, helping to repulse three determined rushes of seven thousand French sent to save the island. The French lost four hundred killed, and eleven hundred wounded, while the English lost only eighteen men, and one hundred and thirty wounded—a disparity that seems almost incredible.

In 1787, the regiment embarked for Canada, and in 1796 was employed against the insurgent Canadians at Point Levi, and crossed the St. Lawrence on the ice. In 1797, the officers and sergeants returned to England, and re-formed the regiment by recruiting in Lincolnshire. A kindly feeling was from that time established between the Fifth and Lincolnshire people, that still brings many recruits annually to the regiment from that county.

After serving in the Duke of York's remarkable campaign in Holland in 1799, the Fifth went for two years to Gibraltar, returning at the peace of Amiens. In 1806, the regiment had its share of the mortifying defeat at Buenos Ayres—a defeat which the Fifth did its best to prevent. After entering the treacherous town our soldiers found themselves in a hive of riflemen.

"However, cheered by hope," writes one of the Fifth, "we assembled in a yard, where our brave major proposed an attack

on a place of no less importance than the market-square, but which, by the assiduity of the enemy, had been transformed into a species of citadel. Our gallant and high-spirited officers fully coincided with the major's views. We had a sergeant with us, George Golland, who, I verily believe, would have sabred the first man showing symptoms of what he never felt—fear. Such was our enthusiastic confidence in our leader, that when, sword in hand, he exclaimed, 'Now, my brave fellows, death or victory,' onward we went, and on turning the first angle to the left, found ourselves in the street leading to the market-place. Here we were exposed to a galling fire, which, though it thinned the numbers of our little band, did not impede our progress nor damp our ardour till we came to the square at the end of the street. Here a close, compact, and well-connected fire, wounding several of our officers and men, among whom was our noble major, compelled us to retreat; and it was fortunate that we were able to effect it. . . . We, however, managed to bring our wounded to a church, converted into a hospital, where they were put under the care of medical officers, protected by a sergeant's guard, of whom, by turn of duty, I made one. Sergeant Prior, of Captain Clarke's company, and Corporal Byron, were the non-commissioned officers. Soon after the regiment was gone, some of the twelve men left on guard went into a wine store close by, and two of them, from want of food and excitement, soon became intoxicated, and on attempting to cross the street to return to us were shot dead. To prevent a similar disaster the sergeant directed a sentry to be placed at the door of the wine house; and he, too, soon shared the fate of his comrades from the fire of a concealed enemy. The sergeant then took his station there; in a few seconds he also was a corpse. Night approaching, Byron and the rest of us began to think that our post was not tenable. We shuddered at the idea of leaving the wounded, and came to the resolution that one of us should endeavour to find the regiment and procure assistance. It was a dangerous adventure; we cast lots; and the chance fell upon me. With piece loaded and bayonet fixed I ventured down the street, cleared it, and with but one interruption succeeded in making my way until 'Who comes there' announced that immediate danger was over. I found Colonel Davie, with whom were Majors King and Watt, and most of the officers, and explained to them my

mission. The colonel replied, 'It is too late; the guard is disposed of; join your company.' I did so, and to my utter astonishment learned the issue of the day's adventure, namely, that the light brigade, with Colonel Crawford, were prisoners; this included our light, or Captain G. B. Way's company; Captain Hamilton had lost a leg."

The uniform of the regiment in 1804, was a long-tailed coat, white pantaloons, and Hessian boots; with hair tied and powdered, and a cocked hat. This was the dress of the officers, to which that of the staff-sergeants bore an affinity in the hat and silver-laced coats. The dress of the men when on fatigue was perfectly white, except their stocks, queues, and shoes; but when they were dressed for parade, their coats were frog-laced, with facings of gosling green, white breeches with gaiters, the hair being tied, and well whitened with flour!

In the summer of 1808, the first battalion, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Mackenzie, sailed for Portugal to join the army of Lieutenant-General Wellesley. It climbed the rocks of Roleia, gallantly fought at Vimiera, and shared in the disastrous retreat of Corunna. A sergeant of the Fifth, who was present at Roleia, has left a pleasant picture of the gallant clamber up to the French. "Our staff officers," he says, "soon discovered certain chasms or openings made, it should seem, by the rains, up which we were led. As soon as we began the ascent, Colonel Mackenzie, who was riding on a noble grey, dismounted, turned the animal adrift, and, sword in hand, conducted us onwards until we gained the summit of the first hill, the enemy playing upon us all the time. Having gained the crest, we rushed on them in a charge; whoever opposed us fell by the ball or bayonet. We then proceeded towards another hill, where the enemy had formed again; but as our route lay through vineyards, we were annoyed by a destructive fire."

At Vimiera a curious artifice was resorted to by the Fifth to get into the battle. "Our situation," says one of the Fifth, "was on the slope of an eminence; we saw our people promptly advance against the enemy's masses, which were formed in column, and with which they boldly attempted to break the British lines. The attempt was vain, although they were ably assisted by their ordnance and howitzers, from the latter of which we saw the balls rise high in the air, and after describing

many segments of a circle, generally fall between our people who were advancing and ourselves. Dense smoke soon after enveloped the belligerents. It was then we found our situation irksome, many of our officers, too high-spirited to be thus shut out of the glowing scene, actually left us, and ran into the battle. Those who remained contrived a scheme for the chance of following them. We heard our bugles sound the charge; we heard, or fancied we heard, the enemy's fire growing stronger, when from the right of us idlers arose the cry, "The colonel is shot!" His lady hearing this rushed through every restraint down the hill, which was an excuse for many of our men to follow in protection. A few pieces pointed at them from our pickets, frustrated this ruse de guerre, for happily it was only a ruse to get into the mêlée, the colonel not being even wounded. Towards the end of the day, the scene of action having receded, we were directed to advance, when, coming up with the regiment, we had the pleasure of seeing the enemy in full and unequivocal retreat."

An eye-witness of the bravery of the Fifth at Salamanca says, "The light brigade—the light infantry companies of each division—were soon entering into a defile in our front, at about a mile distant. These were followed by some cavalry. Firing soon commenced. The troops stood to their arms; they advanced; we were soon within range, when each particular regiment, as its flank became uncovered, deployed into line, and advanced to the attack. A few minutes before this, Sergeants Taylor, Stock, Benson, Bernard, Green, Watson, and myself, were ordered to the centre, where we found Ensign James B. Hamilton and another, who bore the colours. The shock of the onset had passed over, the men expeditiously firing, and gradually gaining ground. We were going up an ascent on whose crest masses of the enemy were stationed; their fire seemed capable of sweeping everything before it; still we advanced; the fire became stronger—there was a pause—a hesitation. Here I blush; but I should blush more if I were guilty of a falsehood. Truth compels me to say, therefore, that we retired before this overwhelming fire, but slowly, in good order, not far; not a hundred paces. Sergeants Stock and Taylor were already killed, when General Pakenham approached, and very good-naturedly said, 'Re-form,' and in about a moment 'Advance,' adding, 'There they are, my lads,

just let them feel the temper of your bayonets.' We advanced, every one making up his mind for mischief. Proceeding rather slowly at first, the regiment of dragoons, which had retired with us, again accompanying us, at last we brought our pieces to the trail, the fire still as brisk as before, when the bugles along the line sounded the charge. Forward we rushed; the scene was soon closed, and awful was the retribution we exacted for our former repulse. . . Just after, Ensign Hamilton was wounded; we had lost Sergeant Watson and another; so to prevent the colours falling, the officers being wounded at nearly the same instant, Sergeant Green and myself had the honour of bearing both colours for upwards of an hour, a circumstance which served as a pretext for throwing away my pike, a useless piece of military furniture. We continued to gain ground on the enemy until we arrived at the crest of a hill crowned by our own artillery, which was acting against that of the enemy on an opposite ridge, a valley being between them. On arriving with the artillery we paused for breath, when we were commanded to clear the hill on which the enemy's guns were planted. This required celerity of movement; we ran down our hill exposed to the enemy's fire, as well as for part of the distance to that of our own. Complete success crowned our efforts; the enemy, routed, left their guns, when the line, an extensive one, composed of several regiments, halted. Night advancing, little more than a desultory fire was maintained, and soon after, it being known that some of the commissariat had arrived close in the rear, I was ordered to take a sergeant of the company, and draw spirits for the regiment. I went, the adjutant accompanying me, when, having staved in the head, I was so completely overpowered with thirst, that I drank very nearly a pint of rum without feeling its strength. Returning to my station in the centre, I learnt the result of this well-fought battle."

In the Indian campaign, the Fifth fully earned the blazon of "Lucknow" that still adorns their flag. In the full heat of an Indian summer they faced the matchlock fire of the white-capped Sepoys, and the sabres of the rebel sowars; and many a blood-stained "budmash" fell by their fierce bayonets. The records of the Victoria Cross contain the names of several heroes of the Fifth, as the following extracts prove:

"Fifth Regiment. — Sergeant Robert

Grant. For conspicuous devotion at Alumbagh, on the 24th of September, 1857, in proceeding under a heavy and galling fire to save the life of Private E. Deveney, whose leg had been shot away, and eventually carrying him safe into camp with the assistance of the late Lieutenant Browne and some comrades. — Private Peter M'Manus. A party, on the 26th of September, 1857, was shut up and besieged in a house in the city of Lucknow by the rebel Sepoys. Private M'Manus kept outside the house till he himself was wounded, and, under cover of a pillar, kept firing at the Sepoys, and prevented their rushing on the house. He also, in conjunction with Private John Ryan, rushed into the street and took Captain Arnold, of the First Madras Fusiliers, out of a dhooly, and brought him into the house in spite of a heavy fire, in which that officer was again wounded. — Private Patrick M'Hale. For conspicuous bravery at Lucknow on the 2nd of October, 1857, when he was the first man at the capture of one of the guns at the Cawnpore battery; and again, on the 22nd of December, 1857, when, by a bold rush, he was the first to take possession of one of the enemy's guns, which had sent several rounds through his company, which was skirmishing up to it. On every occasion of attack, Private M'Hale was the first to meet the foe, amongst whom he caused such consternation by the boldness of his rush, as to leave little work for those who followed in his support. By his habitual coolness and daring, and sustained bravery in action, his name became a household word for gallantry among his comrades."

Most true English soldiers are ready to go where the trumpet calls, "Quo Fata vocant;" but the Fates, as we have pretty clearly shown, have called few regiments to hotter places than the Fifth, and few regiments have obeyed the call with more joyous alacrity.

REMEMBERED.

ONLY a great green meadow, with an old oak-tree in the hedge,
Where the brambles were first to ripen, the sparrow
was first to fledge;
Only a broad brown river that swept between willow
ranks,
Where the tansy tangled the bindweed fair that graced
the sandy banks.
Just the meadow, and the river, and a lane that joined
the two,
And a marsh where marigold glistened, by forget-me-
nots' virgin blue,

With the purple hills for a background, and a lark that
always sang.
Till the bright keen air around it with the melody
trilled and rang.

It is thirty weary years ago. Through many a lovely
scene,

Through many a fair and storied haunt my tired steps
have been,

Yet, whenever from life and its lessons I turn, a sup-
pliant guest,
To the land where memory shrines for us beauty and
joy and rest.

I know the scent of the tansy, crushed 'neath an eager
tread,

I know the note of the skylark as it soared from its
lowly bed,

I see the oak-tree's mighty boughs, I hear the willows
shiver,

I see the blue forget-me-nots that grew by the northern
river.

Fancies have failed and hopes have fled, and the prize
but mocks the strife,

Death and Sorrow with busy hands have altered the
course of life,

But as fair and fresh as when down its path the fearless
footstep sprung,

Is the meadow beside the broad brown stream I loved
when all was young.

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

A ROMAN HAMPSTEAD.

HILLS, donkeys, plenty to eat and drink,
and a whole Sunday to enjoy them in!
Here be materials for a cockney holiday,
or I have never been within sound of Bow
bells! But—there are hills and hills,
donkeys and donkeys, food and food; one
must discriminate.

Dear old Hampstead, I am not going to
say a word against thee. Let those who
have no eyes to see, and no soul to enjoy
the wonderful view from Hampstead Hill
when the summer sun is setting; and who
have no fibre of sympathy with the holiday-
making toilers and moilers who trudge out,
men, women, and children, to gratify their
intensely English longing for a glimpse of
rurality—let such fine folks, I say, turn up
their honourable noses at the humble enjoy-
ments of the Londoner's familiar 'Amstead
'Eath, and search in their foreign guide-
books for leave to admire "by authority."
Not of such am I, nor would I be. Far
be it from me to disparage thee, oh, thou
donkey-traversed Arabia Felix of my child-
hood! But still, as I began by observing,
there are hills and hills, and one must dis-
criminate.

The holiday resort which we are to visit
on this bright Sunday at the end of March,
is a little townlet on a spur of the Alban
Mountains, and the great city which it looks
at from its terraces and windows, is called
Rome.

To begin at the beginning—which is "a

good plain way," as the old-fashioned
cookery-books say—we start from the
Roman railway station close by the huge
pile of ruins known as the Baths of Diocle-
tian, at half-past seven o'clock on a de-
licious spring morning.

Our fellow-travellers are not very nu-
merous. The hour is too early for
the majority of citizen holiday-makers.
There are several parties of sportsmen
armed with guns for the slaughter of small
birds, and attended by a dog in a leash,
usually of a currish aspect. There are five
or six shop-boys in a chattering group,
dressed like the wax figures in a cheap
clothier's window, and assuming great airs
of fashion and dandyism. There are a few
officers in uniform, a priest or two, and
some peasant women with empty baskets.
These latter have, doubtless, been selling
garden produce in the capital, and are re-
turning to their homes to pass the festa
day.

In Rome most things have a character
of their own. We live and move on a mere
crust of nineteenth century, but imme-
diately beneath it lies the solid foundation
of some two thousand and odd years ago.
And one has but to scratch the soil a very
little, to scrape away every vestige of "to-
day," and come to the abiding traces of the
ancient Latins. Nay, in many places their
works still tower by the head and shoulders
above the soil; although Time toils cease-
lessly to heap the earth over them, and
bury them where they stand. The steam-
horse puffs and clatters along through a
breach in the city wall, past the ruins of a
great temple, said to have been dedicated
to Minerva Medica (or as a modern Roman
might style the divinity, Madonna della
Salute, Our Lady of Healing), past the
tall arches of hoary aqueducts, past mounds
of immemorial antiquity, and crumbling
tombs, which have survived for so many
centuries the memory of their builders and
occupants. The grass is brightly green
with the fresh life of the early year.
White daisies cluster, by thousands and
hundreds of thousands, over the meadows of
the Campagna. Sheep are grazing peace-
fully, and do not turn their gentle, silly
heads as the train whirls noisily past them.
Some great huge-horned oxen lie resting
with their dove-coloured sides half buried
in the herbage, and their jaws moving
with slow and regular motion as they chew
the cud and stare at us contemplatively.
Birds are twittering and piping cheerfully,
restless and swift of wing. Out yonder in

the distance rise the shadowy blue mountains, whither we are speeding along the iron way.

A journey of little over half an hour brings us to the station of Frascati, which is about a mile from the town, and three or four hundred feet below it. All around us are dusky olives, and young vines, and peach-trees in full bloom. How exquisitely the vivid delicate colour of the peach-blossom contrasts with the chocolate-brown of the ploughed earth, the purplish tint of the still leafless branches, and the green-grey of the olives! But there is no time now to stop and contemplate the beauties of nature. A crowd of men and boys driving a great variety of vehicles, and saddled donkeys, make competing offers for the honour of conveying us to Frascati. We jump into a high gig drawn by a short, fat, black pony; the driver perches himself partly on our knees, and partly on the outer edge of the little vehicle, and off we jingle up the paved road among the olive plantations.

Frascati has a large open piazza, and an ugly big cathedral—built at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and a good specimen of the tastelessness of the period—an inn, a fountain, some tolerable private houses, and a labyrinth of evil-smelling back slums. And of course there is the indispensable café with tables and benches in front of the door, and spindly oleanders in tubs. The piazza is full. Men stand, and lounge, and smoke, and chat, or remain with their hands in their pockets, simply enjoying its literal significance the *dolce far niente*. The church is full, chiefly of women and children; the trattoria (eating-house) is full; worst of all, the inn is full.

"Beds? Nossignore! not a bed vacant in the house! But we will find you quarters in a private dwelling, and you can eat in the hotel. Non dubiti, don't be afraid, you'll do very well."

We do find an apartment in the house of the hairdresser (I apologise to the other capillary artists, if there be any other in Frascati, but truly I believe our host was *the* hairdresser), where we deposit our travelling-bags, and then proceed to bargain for donkeys and a guide to convoy us to the sights in the immediate neighbourhood. Villas there are to be seen, and a great Jesuit monastery and school, and above all, Tusculum! Tusculum the ancient, ruined, fortress-city, and the villa, so-called, of Cicero, scene of the Tusculan disputations.

This is a cockney excursion, and we are not going to be learned, and instructive, and guide-bookish. But let us be never so humdrum, and of the city citified, the fact remains that we are treading on classic ground, and cannot make a step without arousing some echoes of the wonderful and mighty past.

Nevertheless, our Roman Hampstead has its banalités and vulgarities. You are told to visit this villa, and that villa, and to admire their painted ceilings, and water-works, and marbles, and views. These latter are, in truth, superb; being unspoilable by any combination of money and bad taste. But of the rest, the less said the better. The Aldobrandini Villa, the most celebrated of these, is finely situated, and has some noble trees in its grounds, and an abundance of clear delicious water. The beauty of the water is, however, greatly marred by the hideous artificial cascade down which it is made to pour, in the centre of what the guide-books call "a fine hemicycle with two wings." The "hemicycle" is a crescent-shaped stone arcade, of about as much architectural beauty as the arcade cycled of Lowther in the Strand. Once upon a time the water was made to turn an organ, and perform other fantastic tricks; but fortunately the works have fallen out of repair, and we are spared having to waste our time on that spectacle. This it is, though, and such as this, that our guide chiefly insists on our admiring; after the manner of guides everywhere, indeed.

But I beg you particularly not to run away with the idea suggested by that last phrase, that our guide was an ordinary guide. In some respects, no doubt, he shared the usual characteristics of his tribe; but his grand speciality and charm consisted in an amount of jealous and defiant self-sufficiency which I have never seen equalled. There are several categories of persons who are popularly supposed to be specially autocratic, and whose ipse dixit assumes an air of infallible authority; of such are French cooks, Scotch gardeners, and schoolmasters generally. But compared with our Frascatian cicerone—pooh, pooh, these all dwindle into modest insignificance. Our man's conceit reaches the border-land of sanity.

"Ou la vanité va-t-elle se nicher?" Look at the poor old fellow. He is miserably clad, not too abundantly fed, ignorant with the dense and stolid ignorance of a Roman peasant born within view of St. Peter's

more than half a century ago. And yet his faith in his own wisdom and acquirements is evidently all-sufficing to him. He has got himself up for Sunday in a singular manner. He has treated himself as if he were a fragment of ancient statuary, and consisted entirely of torso, his head and extremities being ignored altogether. His face would be almost the dirtiest object I have ever seen, were it not that his hat is dirtier. But around his throat is a white shirt-collar, a glimpse of clean linen is afforded by his widely open waistcoat, and his coat has been brushed on the shoulders, and down to a little below the waist. Beyond these points no effort at embellishment has been made, either in an upward or downward direction. His boots look as if they were constructed of sun-dried mud, like an Irish cabin; and his hands appear to have been recently used as spades in the cultivation of some rich soil.

Early in the proceedings his wrathful suspicions are excited by the production from the pocket of one of our party of the well-known red guide-book so familiar in the hands of travelling Englishmen. Our cicerone eyes it askance. He evidently considers Murray as his natural enemy. "H'm," he grunts out, with his bright black eyes fixed scornfully on the red volume, "Ah, ecco! The guide-book. Well, I have told you what there is to see here, haven't I? Ha! The book. Yes; oh yes. To be sure. I know it." Then with a sudden change of manner, raising his voice to a tragic pitch, "I know more than the book! I know more than the travellers!! I know more than anybody!!! What, I have been cicerone here for forty years—more than forty years—and I don't know better than the book? Che! There is the Campagna, there is Rome, there is the Villa Ruffinella, Mondragone, Camaldoli, Mont' Oreste, the railway, Tivoli, Monte Porzio," rattling out the names in a breathless jumble, and turning round as on a pivot, with outstretched arm, and pointing finger, "don't I know them? Are they in the book? Well, didn't I tell you beforehand? Che! I know better than the book. I know better than anybody!"

Throughout the excursion we have to be on the watch lest his susceptibilities should take alarm at our appearing to know anything before he tells it to us. On his first introduction to us by his master, the owner of the donkeys, he slapped his breast, and announced that he spoke "all languages."

"Inglese, francese, italiano—tutte le lingue!"

"Ah!" exclaimed one of our party, of a sceptical turn of mind, addressing him in Italian, "not much English I fancy, eh?"

"I speak English, yes; but"—with a cunning twinkle in his eyes as he rapidly "took stock" of us to assure himself of our nationality, lest he should tumble into the pitfall of vaunting his knowledge of French to French people—"but—French I speak excellently—excellently! Già, tutte le lingue!"

Notwithstanding our friend's unlimited lingual acquirements, we find it most convenient to carry on our communications with him in Italian: which language, he informs us condescendingly, he will talk with us since we speak it well. The inference, of course, being that had our Italian been a shade or two more barbarous, he would have declined to allow us to converse in it, but would have made use of one or other of "all the other languages" which he knows.

On we go at a gentle pace, mounting the hill, between sweet-smelling hedges of thickly-blossomed laurel, cyclamen, and "May" just bursting into leaf. Wild flowers of many kinds cluster in the grass beneath the hedge-rows, and the violets embalm the air with their delicious odour. Owing to the number of evergreens—laurel, bay, olive, ilex, and stone-pine—the landscape is not leafless, although the deciduous trees are only budding as yet. Presently we pass the iron gate leading to a convent of Franciscan friars, and we meet a Capuchin in his brown serge garb coming down the hill. He is a handsome, middle-aged man, with a black beard and a bright eye. He gives us pleasant greeting, but observes smilingly on seeing that one of our number is on foot, "Aha! You want yet another little donkey. Yes; there is a somarello too few!" I explain that our friend walks well, and prefers to walk. "Aha!" cries the friar again, this time with a puzzled, incredulous look. "He prefers to walk, does he?" And goes on his way down toward Frascati, doubtless adding one more eccentric and incomprehensible Englishman to the list of those whom he has seen pass his convent gates on their way to Tusculum. To walk when one might ride! The thing is not conceivable by an Italian mind of that class.

Our guide avails himself of this oppor-

tunity to display his knowledge. "Un cappuccino," says he in an explanatory manner looking after the friar's retreating figure. "A monk. They are Franciscans in that convent. Oh, I know the monks! I know everything. Ha! There were pictures there——"

"Yes, a sketch by Guido," puts in the sceptic, imprudently interrupting.

The guide pours out the rest of his sentence in a rush, and gives a defiant snort at the end of it.

"Un Guido, un Giulio Romano, un Paolo Brilli" (Paul Brill); "they've all been carried away, away to Rome. Nothing to see there now. I know better than the book. H'mph!"

Prince Lucien Buonaparte at one time occupied the Villa Ruffinella, which lies on our way, and has left there a cockney reminiscence of his taste, the mention of which ought not to be omitted from this sketch of a cockney holiday. There is in the grounds of the villa a gentle slope which the prince christened Parnassus, and on which—to show that it was Parnassus—he planted in box the names of various celebrated authors, ancient and modern. Our old man stops the donkeys at this point, throws himself into an attitude, and exclaims in a sonorous voice, "Ecco il Parnaso!" Which delicious paraphrase of "il Parnasso" would have been somewhat mystifying to us, had we not gleaned some information about it beforehand from the pages of the despised Murray. A little beyond "Il Parnaso" stands by the wayside a weather-beaten, black-nosed, plaster cast on a cracked pedestal. To this work of art the cicerone calls our attention in passing, with the announcement, "Apollo Belvedere!" And adds after an instant, with a sort of careless candour, "Copia!" (a copy). Lest we should be misled into thinking that we saw before us the veritable world-renowned antique:

——the lord of the unerring bow,
The god of life, and poesy, and light.

Now we emerge on to a high, open down, covered with fragrant turf. There is a flock of sheep on one hand, and on the other—where the ground breaks away rather precipitously—some goats are scrambling among fragments of rock, and grazing on the young shoots of the bushes. A little further and we come upon massive sub-structures, huge ruined walls of brickwork, and vaulted chambers half buried in the earth. This is the so-called Villa of Cicero.

Let us not vex our souls with debating learned pros and cons as to the date and history of these venerable foundations. It is enough to know that the great Roman once dwelt upon this spot, and that his eyes looked out upon the self-same scene which lies beneath our own. And what a scene to contemplate from the study windows of "learned leisure!"

It is even better seen, however, from the superior height of the citadel of Tusculum above it. The Campagna, stretching away with purple shadows and pale green lights, until it is bounded yonder by the silver line of sea flashing beneath the sunshine; Rome in the midst, with the great dome of St. Peter's looming black and shadow-like above her roofs and streets. On either hand the delicately undulating line of hills, every peak of which has an historic name, and in whose dimpled valleys nestle towns, that had had centuries of fame in song and story whilst yet the mighty Anglo-Saxon race was not. At our feet Frascati among her velvet-tufted pine groves. Nearer at hand the remains of a classic theatre, with its rows of semicircular seats for the spectators still perfect, and a green carpet, not of baize, but of grass, upon its stage. Above all a pile of massive hewn stones, sole remnants of the once strong fortress of Tusculum, surmounted by a cross of iron that looks across the vast plain towards its brother on St. Peter's dome, and dominates the heathen ruins as that dominates Rome living and dead. At the base of the pile a colony of triply odorous violets flourishes amidst the spring herbage. So that the violets be but sheltered from the fierceness of the sun, the shape of the shadow that falls on them matters nothing. It is a wondrous scene, and we gaze and gaze in a dream of delight, and awake almost with a start to turn away reluctantly and pursue a downward course towards the plain.

But before we quit Tusculum, let us record the culminating point, the highest height of absurdity—or sublimity, there is but a step, you know, from the one to the other—which our cicerone that day achieved.

There was a lady in our party. She had hitherto been basking in the favour of the Erudite one, partly because she understood Italian well, and partly because, with the williness of her sex, she feigned an abject ignorance which his words alone had power to dissipate. But she was doomed to experience a check. The great creature who

acted as our guide knew no paltering weakness, and spared neither sex nor age in his wrath. Said the lady, looking pleasantly upon the patient and sagacious beast that had carried her so well, and had stopped with curious accuracy at all the regulation points of view—said the lady, "How well the donkey knows his way!"

"Non l'avesse mai detto!" as the Italian hath it. Would that she had never uttered those imprudent words. For, with a stern, nay, almost ferocious countenance, the Erudite turned upon her, and exclaimed in a tone of bitter derision, "He know his way? No, I—'tis I who know the way! I know better than he does. He knows nothing. I know better than the book, better than the donkey, better than anybody!"

If the reader be incredulous of the literal accuracy of the above, let him go to Frascati some fine Sunday, take the Erudite one as his guide, and praise the donkey. He will see.

On returning to the little town, we found a throng of holiday-makers in full force. A later train from Rome had brought out a number of the townfolk and their families. There were foreigners, too, of the non-fine classes; artists dwelling within the territory of Bohemia, tradespeople, humble tourists. There were many Germans who ate and drank with surprising energy, and talked at the full pitch of their not very dulcet voices with an energy more surprising still, filling the inn and the café with what a disdainful old Roman near me called "Una batteria di ja!" A battery of ja's!

We enjoyed our black coffee and cigars after dinner in company with two native gentlemen who were engrossed in a game of draughts. They played on the board belonging to the café, which was so dirty and worn as to render it literally very difficult to discern the white checkers from the black. But the players were intent on their game, and were surrounded by a group of interested spectators. As I watched them bending over the board, their handsome, classic faces—not too clean, but that did not affect the outline—and their heads shaped like hundreds of those of the antique Roman busts, falling away at the back, that is, and making an almost straight line from the nape of the crown, I could not help thinking that the substitution of a little drapery for their stiff modern coats would convert the whole

group into one which might figure on a bas-relief of the best classic period without any apparent anachronism.

And the adjuncts of the scene were not exclusively nineteenth century. By this time the bulk of visitors whom one might denominate generically (pace Cowper) as *il Signor Giovanni Gilpino e famiglia*, had returned citywards. The stars were twinkling overhead. The same mountains which Virgil and Augustus looked at were keeping solemn watch and ward upon the horizon. The café with its open unglazed windows, and marble tables and rude benches, and its pots of the Oriental-looking oleander by the door, presented nothing out of harmony with the bygone Latin world. Nothing, at least, which was visible by the soft, dim starlight mixed with pale rays from an oil-lamp, which alone illumined the space of paved piazza where we sat. It was yet early when we went to bed, having to rise betimes the next morning. But the night was far advanced before we slept. Every Italian city of any note has a distinctive epithet attached to it. There is *Genova la Superba*, *Venezia la Bella*, *Firenze la Gentile*, *Padova la Dotta*, and so forth. If a stranger and a barbarian from beyond the Alps might presume to offer a special affix to the name of the Roman Hampstead, he would suggest that it be henceforth known as *Frascati the Flea-bitten!*

EPISTOLARY COURTESIES.

THE courtesies of letter-writing in the various countries of Europe differ almost as much as their languages. Buffon it was who first said that the style is the man. He might have added that the style proclaimed the nation. Perhaps of all the nations of Europe the English are the stiffest and most formal in their correspondence, more especially with those to whom they are personally unknown, and who are their inferiors in rank or social position. If a gentleman or lady, when absent from home, has occasion to write a letter of instructions to a male or female servant, the style is studiously dry and laconic as a telegram; and contains no word of compliment or courtesy. When Jones writes to Brown, whom he has never seen, he addresses him as "Sir," and subscribes himself "Your obedient humble servant;" though he is neither obedient nor humble, and would be offended if you really considered him

to be so. When Brown writes to Robinson, with whom he is on more or less friendly terms, the word "Sir" is too stiff for intimacy, and he addresses him as "Dear sir," or "My dear sir," or "Dear Robinson," or "My dear Robinson;" and subscribes himself "Yours very truly," or "Yours very sincerely," or "Yours faithfully," or "Yours very faithfully." When love-letters are in question the style warms, and the "dears," and the "darlings," and the "devotedlies," and the "affectionateties," come into play. With these I shall not presume to meddle. They are of the tender follies of the best period of human life, and not to be turned into ridicule either by the hard head or the hard heart, unless in a law court in a case of breach of promise. It is with the ordinary style of address only that I presume to treat, than which nothing more formal and unmeaning can well be imagined. Take for instance the title of esquire, which means a shield-bearer. There are no shields in our days except in the theatres, consequently, there are no shield-bearers. The title, even when it was a reality, and signified a true thing, meant no more than a neophyte in the profession of arms, and a servant to a superior, who was called a chevalier, a knight, a rider, or a horseman. Everybody with a decent coat upon his back among the Anglo-Saxon, or more properly the Celto-Saxon races in Great Britain, and America, considers himself entitled to be called a shield-bearer, and should the highly respectable John Brown (esquire) be addressed as Mr. John Brown, he comes to the conclusion before he opens the peccant epistle that it was either despatched by somebody who meant to insult him, or by a plagny attorney dunning him for a debt.

In this respect the French are more sensible. They have no esquires at all, and Monsieur is as high a title as they usually bestow. The eldest son of the old kings of the Bourbon line was Monsieur par excellence—the Monsieur who took precedence over all other Messieurs whatsoever. They have, however, a far greater variety of epistolary phraseology than the English, and subscribe their letters after a fashion, which to an Englishman seems remarkably roundabout, cumbrous, and affected. If they begin with the "Dear sir"—"Cher monsieur"—they end with the lumbering phrase, "Recevez, monsieur, l'assurance de la haute consideration avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très

humble et très obéissant serviteur." "Receive, sir, the assurance of the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, your very obedient humble servant." The term of human life ought to extend to at least a hundred and fifty years, if people who write many letters are to append such perorations as this, or others equally wire-drawn, which the French delight to employ. The Germans are even more punctilious, and it requires long study of their language and long acquaintance with the people to be able to decide whether a man is simply to be called "Mein Herr" (sir) or "Hochgeboren er Herr" (high-born sir), or "Hoch und wohl geboren er Herr" (high and well-born sir), or "Edelgeboren er Herr" (nobly-born sir), or "Hoch wohl und Edelgeboren er Herr" (or high, well, and nobly-born sir), or, worse or best of all, "Durchlauchtigste!" (most serene). And as in English parlance the strictly grammatical and poetical "thou," the proper pronoun to be employed when addressing a single individual, has been superseded by the plural "you," which means several individuals, so in German the "thou" and the "you" have both been superseded, and a single person is designated "they," as in the phrase "Wie befinden sie sich?" "How do they find themselves?" instead of "How do you do?" The courteous Italians designate every equal and superior as "Your grace" or "Your excellency," and speak to every one as "she" or "her." "I will visit you," is rendered "I will visit her," the feminine pronoun doing duty for the feminine nouns, Grace and Excellency, which are always understood, though not always expressed.

In business letters the Italians never use the words *Caro signore*, or *Dear sir*, as the English do, but address their correspondent as "Pregiatissimo signore," or "Stimatissimo signore," Most esteemed sir, varying the style of address by such epithets as "Honourable," "Illustrious," "Most gentle," "Most noble." If you addressed your tailor or bootmaker by letter, neither would be surprised, or offended, or suspicious of a joke, if you wrote on the envelope "Illustrissimo signore," Most illustrious sir, and signed yourself "Vostro devotissimo," Your most devoted. These are the usual forms employed by the bulk of the people, by tradesmen, artisans, clerks, milliners, servants, and others, and a servant-girl would not think well of any lover who did not address her as "Illustrissima

signora." The following letter, translated verbatim, was addressed, after a quarrel at a drinking bout, by one angry disputant to another, whom he challenged to a duel :

MOST ESTEEMED SIR,—Permit me to inform you that you are a pig. Yes, my beloved one. It is my intention in a short time to spoil your beauty, either by sword or pistol. The choice shall be left to you, as both weapons are to me quite indifferent. Hoping soon to have the pleasure of a cherished answer, I declare myself to be, honourable sir,

Yours most devotedly,
CARLAVERO.

The stately Spaniards, in addressing a letter of business to a commercial firm, instead of the "Sir" or "Gentlemen" of the English, or the "Monsieur" or "Messieurs" of the French, write "Muy señor mio" or "Muy señores nuestros," or "My very sir," or "Our very sirs," and subscribe themselves "Your very attentive," or "Your very obedient servants."

It seems to me that in this busy age the letter-writers of all the world would do well to amend their style of address, and revert to the simple phraseology employed by the ancient Romans. How truly courteous was the Roman method. If Lucius Verus wished to write to Scipio Africanus, he did not begin "My dear Scipio," and end with "Yours very truly," but went straight to the point, and said, "Lucius Verus to Scipio Africanus, greeting;" after which, without further palaver, he would proceed to business. Would it not be a saving of time if we were to imitate this excellent old fashion? And why should not Smith minimise trouble by addressing Brown after the classical method: "Smith to Brown, greeting. Send me ten tons of your best coals—lowest price;" or "Jones to Robinson, greeting. Will you dine with me next Thursday at the Megatherium at six precisely?" The one word "greeting" includes all that is necessary in the way either of friendship or politeness, and would answer every purpose in the ordinary intercourse of life. But it would never do for love-letters. These always did, and always will, stand apart as a literature by themselves, governed by their own laws, by their own impulses. Had a Roman lover simply sent a "greeting" to his Lesbia or his Aspasia, Lesbia or Aspasia, if able to read, which in all probability she was

not, would have had fair cause to complain of his coldness. So I except the love-letters.

A SICILIAN STORY.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III. FAREWELL!

MASO was inconsolable. He blamed himself for his violence at one moment, at another he cursed Tonino. The priest, the doctor, the wise women who came in to help at all the births and deaths of the village, hastened to offer their assistance to the bereaved family, but they all were agreed that the poor girl had always been too delicate to live. The woman at whose house she worked, the girls who worked with her, all testified to the same extreme fragility of health. She had once or twice fainted over her work, but every one had hoped she would be better when the summer was over. The doctor declared that in his opinion the heart was diseased from her birth. Maso would listen to nothing. Lucia was alive yesterday! She was dead to-day! He could take in no other idea.

Lucia was borne to her grave by six of her young companions. The bier was a bed of flowers. The fairest though frailest blossom was the still pure face of the dead girl.

In a week all went on apparently as usual in the old house of Torre Mela, but in reality there was a dreary change. Rosa mourned over her living husband as much as over her dead child.

Maso had been industrious, he was now idle; he had been sweet-tempered, he was now feverishly irritable. Before, he had been taciturn, now he was morose. He rarely went to the village, and never spoke at home. Weeks, months, two years passed—Maso was incurable. Diomira was tall, and growing the very image of Lucia. Rosa would try to draw her husband's attention to the girl, hoping she might, in time, replace the lost one. It was in vain; he would caress her, take her head between his hands, and gaze fixedly at her, and then, after putting her lips to his forehead, would turn away with a groan, and murmur "Lucia!"

The fortunes of the family suffered from this change in Maso. While they possessed Torre Mela, they could not absolutely starve, but money, that is coin, became rarer and rarer. The death of Lucia seemed to have opened the way to a whole

series of misfortunes. The vine disease became more and more virulent. An earthquake caused a landslip, and what had been once their most productive field, became a confused mass of stones, and sand, slanting earth-mounds, and uprooted trees.

Maso was imperturbable through all. No deeper shade was on his brow than that which settled there the morning he had found his favourite child a corpse, but that shadow had never passed away. Don Luigi, the priest, advised change of air and total change of scene as the one remaining chance to cure him of the helpless stupor into which he had fallen.

Fortunately, at this juncture, an uncle of Rosa's, who lived at Leonforte, a village sixty miles north-west of Torre Mela, wrote to his niece, complaining that she had never made him acquainted with her husband or her children, that he was old and infirm, and alone, and needed some of his relatives to come to him. Why did not his niece or her husband, or some of the children, visit their old uncle, who was going to leave them all he had in the world?

"You should go, Maso," said the priest, who had read the letter to the family; "you can be spared now the winter is coming on; it is right for you to go."

Some of the restlessness which belongs to great unhappiness induced Maso to consent to this proposition.

The evening before he left, he and Rosa sat on the low wall of the yard of the house which looked seawards over their ruined fields, and, after a long and profound silence, he began to speak of his departure.

"I have been helpless, like a man in a bad dream, these two years, Rosa; but after this journey I shall be better; if I return, I shall work as before."

"Why do you say if, Maso; why should you not return?"

"Life is so uncertain, Rosa mia; do we not know it too well? And then in this wretched country there are brigands, who are more active than ever this year."

"Brigands do not seek poor men."

"True, but they might seize me, knowing your uncle is rich, though poor old Meo would not pay ransom for me, I think."

"I would, though; I would sell everything, my vizzo (necklace), our house, our fields. They might take every barrel of oil, every sack of flour, if they would give you back to me."

Rosa clasped her hands with the energy with which she spoke.

"Do you remember Checco?" said Maso, gloomily.

"He whose family had refused the sum for his ransom, and they brought him under the very windows of his home, and obliged him, with the knife at his throat, to call on his wife to open the door."

"He called, she opened to him, they rushed into the house, murdered every one in it, and stripped it."

"And poor Checco cut his throat when he saw what he had done."

Rosa shuddered as she spoke.

"Checco was a coward," went on Maso. "They might have tortured me to death, before they got a word from me. With my living lips I would never call on you. If you were ever to hear a voice at such a moment, believe it is my spirit and not I."

"Do not frighten me, Maso, with such chances. I feel we shall not be any more 'tribolati;' return soon, whatever happens; but I am sure brighter days will begin, now you are more like yourself."

And Rosa, who was not the least imaginative, and who was pleased to hear Maso speaking a little more like himself, shook all fears from her mind, and held her little boy up to be kissed by his father. It was the old yet ever new Homeric scene. The father took off his heavy, slouching cap, and, bareheaded, clasped his child in his arms, and invoked blessings on him and on his mother.

The two little girls joined them. They had been cutting the grass for the cattle. They carried the bundles on their heads. Their slender girlish figures were almost hidden beneath the fragrant loads, while through the curling tendrils and sprays, the poppies and corn-flowers, the black eyes and glowing cheeks of Menica, and the fairer paler face of Diomira (who had sweet soft eyes like Lucia's), peeped out as the faces of wood-nymphs might have peeped out in pagan times from their woods and sylvan retreats.

"The children have been quick," said Rosa; "now let us go to supper. Is not Diomira like——"

"Hush!" said Maso, putting his hand on her mouth. "Do not say anything which will make me mad again."

They went in and had supper. Maso was calmer and more composed than he had been since Lucia's death.

He was to leave the next morning, and his simple preparations were soon made. They retired to rest.

Rosa, tired with the day's labour, and the emotions of the impending parting, was soon asleep; Maso, on the contrary, was excited. He could not close his eyes. Towards morning he raised himself on his elbow, and bending over, looked at his wife long and intently. He seemed to explore her countenance as if he would imprint every feature indelibly on his heart.

It was a placid, beautiful face, with the dome-like forehead, the oval cheek, the straight well-cut nose, which are peculiar to handsome Italians. The full eyelids and long lashes gave great softness to it, and round the mouth was the slight mournfulness which all adult faces wear in sleep. Speechless blessings rose to the poor man's dumb lips as he looked on the faithful, tender, true companion of his life, "the heart of his heart," as he sometimes called her. He was dimly conscious that he had added to her late grief by the violence of his own, and he felt how good, and brave, and uncomplaining she had been.

He gazed and gazed, and then without waking her, rose, dressed himself, and went out of the room. He paused for a moment at the threshold of the room (Lucia's formerly), where the two girls now slept. He sighed heavily. He had never passed through the entrance of that room since that fatal morning Lucia had been borne from it, and he shuddered as he turned away. And then, stick in hand and bundle on shoulder, he passed out.

As he strode up the village street in the faint morning light, he met the priest coming down to see some sick person. The good man was often sent for as a healer of bodies as well as of souls. He stopped for a moment to speak to Maso. He was unfeignedly pleased that Maso had made up his mind to leave Torre Mela for awhile.

"When do you return, Maso?"

"Perhaps in three months; but your reverence knows that one may be delayed on such a journey."

They stood talking just opposite the house which belonged to the elder Voghera. The same thought arose in the minds of the two, but Maso only frowned and bit his lip.

"He has never been seen here since that day," said the priest. "He is in the mountains, I believe. There is a band making the most daring depredations, and committing acts of the most atrocious cruelty under a chief called Satanello, in the direction of Leonforte, and some of us

think it is Tonino. I shall pray, my son, that you do not meet him."

"If I did," said Maso, fiercely, "I would string him up like a dog."

"My son, forgive, as you would be forgiven."

Maso stared at him as if he did not understand him.

"I do not ask to be forgiven if that is the price of forgiveness," he murmured, and went on his way.

CHAPTER IV. GONE.

THREE, four, five months passed away, and nothing was heard of Maso. Direct communication between Leonforte and Torre Mela was impossible. The post came, *viâ* Messina, at irregular intervals, and Rosa had never expected Maso to write. But she longed for the time of the vintage to come, when unemployed peasants at Torre Mela would go to Leonforte to assist in the vintage, and return late in the autumn. Meanwhile she had little time for indulging speculative fears. She drudged all day, and worked her fingers to the bone to support her family. Her daughters helped her, but Diomira resembled Lucia in delicacy of constitution, as well as in personal beauty, and could do little.

The vintage time came, and had all but passed away, and no tidings of Maso had yet been brought to Torre Mela. Rosa would stand of an evening, by the low wall which bounded her possessions, and watch the labourers as they returned in groups of twos and threes from their labours. For many weeks it was in vain; at last one evening she observed some stragglers advancing directly towards her house, instead of turning off at the angle which led to the village. She clasped her hands, and her breath came short. They had news for her, she was sure. She hastened down, as fast as her agitation would permit her, to meet them.

The first approached her, and said:

"The priest of Leonforte sends you this letter. Your uncle is dead, and has left you everything. House, orchards, and gold in the bank, and money in the house. You are a rich woman, Siora Rosa."

Rosa uttered but one word in reply to this harangue—"Maso?" They shook their heads in silence. She looked wildly from one to the other. "Have you not seen him?"

"Sanguè della Madonna, he has never been to Leonforte; here is your letter."

She could not read it, but she held it

tight, and flew to the priest with it. He was smoking outside his door.

"What is it, Rosa mia?"

"Read," she said, as she held him up the letter.

He opened it, and there found, expressed with all the circumlocution, the four-syllabled words, the cumbrous courtesies of an Italian professional scribe's letter, the news.

It was true; the whole property, the farm, cattle, and podere, were all hers, and a sum of money besides. It distinctly stated, however, that the old man had died without having seen one of his relatives.

Rosa clasped her hands tight over her head and burst into tears. The one reality to her, in these tidings, was the fact that Maso had never reached Leonforte. The rest was shadowy and intangible. She rocked herself to and fro, she shivered as she thought of the weary months of absence which she had passed, and of the long barren years which she would have to pass, alone and bereaved. Maso was dead, or he would have returned to her, or proceeded to her uncle. There was no doubt of it. Her children were fatherless. She was a widow.

The priest touched her arm, and made her look at him. He tried to rouse her by speaking on the subject of her inheritance, but it was too early. She listened vaguely. Her brain refused to take in a thought which, for the present, had no meaning for her. At last he accompanied her home. He thought the sight of her children would rouse her.

As they passed down the street there was a little crowd gathered outside. Some wished to congratulate, some wished to condole, but all were curious to see her, and hands were held out to her, and words of condolence and congratulation were murmured, but she shook her head and passed on. Some of the ill-natured ones declared her good fortune had made her proud. But the fact was, the shyness which often accompanies a shock of fate benumbed her. She felt that a great grief of bereavement divided her now from all her old familiar gossips and acquaintances.

"You have no father now, my darlings," said the poor mother, sitting on her hearth with her little flock around her, and then her own words stabbed her with the conviction that no possible doubt remained now she had uttered the dreadful fact herself, and then she sobbed afresh.

All night, after the children had gone to

bed, she sat up, trying to realise what had happened. How? when? where? His last gloomy forebodings returned to her. Had he been taken by the brigands, or had there been some private vendetta? If so, Tonino was the assassin. Oh God, what a fate! And then, with an effort at self-control, she thought of the other event, the wealth she had inherited, which, while it added to her anxieties and responsibilities on the one hand, diminished, on the other, many of her most painful fears. The children would now be saved from the privation and the toil which for the last two years had been their portion. And she must not cloud over their young lives with the sadness which, with her, would increase with every turn of the road she had now to tread.

A month later Rosa arrived at Leonforte.

Leonforte is a small town encircled by hills. These hills slope upwards, and join that chain of mountains which runs from Messina right across Sicily. The largest house in Leonforte was old Meo's (Rosa's uncle). It was called Torre del Campanello, or Belfry Tower, from a machicolated (fourteenth century) turret crowning it, in which was a huge bell. This bell communicated with a room below in the turret, where the old man had slept, and his bed was so placed that he could easily pull the rope attached to this large bell, and ring an alarum, which would rouse the whole village, if he needed assistance. The house was like a miniature fortress. It stood on higher ground than Leonforte, and a steep road led from the front door to the village. At the back of the house was a small semi-circular platform, thickly studded with bushes; beyond the platform was what seemed a sheer precipice. The rocky ravine below was called by the peasantry the Valle Nera, and was bounded by a bare wall of stone called Rocca Nera, which rose abruptly on the other side, and barred all access to the valley, except by a narrow footpath which skirted it, and, by many a wind and zigzag, sloped into it at the other end.

Leonforte had of late acquired a most guilty notoriety, from some unusually bloody outrages committed by brigands in its neighbourhood during the last few months.

Continual communication was going on on this subject between Catania and Messina and Leonforte, and as there was much political reaction mixed up with the desire

for unlawful greed, a high price was set on the head of Satanello, the man who was known to be the chief of the brigands in that district, and who was also suspected to be in the pay of the Bourbon. The most urgent orders for his arrest were sent to the syndic, but hitherto Satanello had escaped.

Like most villagers who make their home on the slopes of Vesuvius, the inhabitants of Leonforte had been so hardened by a constant menace of peril that they had ceased to fear it.

Meo had been, however, an exception. To be sure his house was more isolated than any other, and he was the wealthiest man in Leonforte.

The neighbours magnified his wealth in proportion to his anxieties and suspicions. It was said that in stray corners and cupboards little hoards of money were deposited, and besides the money in the bank and in the "cassa di risparmio" (savings bank), it was commonly reported in the village that if certain bricks were raised in the kitchen or in the old man's bedroom, bags of piastres would have been discovered.

"It would never have surprised me if I had heard that Satanello had tried to sack the place," said one of her neighbours to Rosa the night of her arrival in Leonforte (they had all assembled to greet her). "I believe the house, as it stands, is worth more than twenty thousand lire."

"The old fellow must have been very rich to make such a fortification of his house; look at that door, there is more iron than wood in it; it is clamped all over with nails not an inch apart; and look at the bars and the 'inferiate' outside."

"I am glad," said Rosa, dejectedly, "for I am all alone. My boys are young, and my girls——"

"How old is that pretty fair one holding her brother's hand?"

"Diomira? She is nearly sixteen."

"How delicate she looks!"

"Yes." Rosa sighed. Diomira did indeed look fragile, as fragile as Lucia.

"Shall you occupy your uncle's room?"

"Yes, Diomira and I, and Menica and the boys in the next."

"If anything should occur call us; there is the campanellone; only touch that and the whole of the 'borgo' will be roused. Do you hear, pretty one?" said one of the women to Diomira. "If you are frightened just pull that thick rope, and we will come to you in a mezzo minuto."

Diomira nodded. Rosa felt satisfied now they were not quite unprotected, and was less anxious than at first at the sight of the manifold evidences of wealth around her. The handles of the knives and the forks and spoons were all of solid silver; so were the luerne (the Italian household lamp), and the lattice work of the unglazed cupboards was silver-gilt.

Rosa did not intend to remain in the Belfry Tower. She resolved to let the house and lands till her eldest son was old enough to take the management of it himself. It was necessary, therefore, to select and pack, and make lists of all the house contained.

The ordinary course of business is always slow in Italy, and especially so in Sicily, and the months were passing on and stretching themselves into a year, and still Rosa was not at the end of her labours.

It was now nearly two years since Maso had left her, four years and a half since Lucia's death. Rosa was changed. The two years might have been twenty from their effect on her, bodily and mentally. Her beauty was almost gone, and her placid sweetness had become a nervous, reticent, and anxious sadness. She had confided her sorrows to no one. Nothing was known of her but that she was a widow.

The gossips little knew how her blood ran cold at the tales they used to recount to her of the violence and cruelty of the brigands. The demoniacal outrages, the barbarous mutilations, the cold-blooded murders she heard of froze the blood in her veins, and haunted her slumbers with a sad prophetic significance.

None of these tales, however, were of recent date, until one evening, about a year after her arrival, as she sat sewing in the court-yard in front of the house, first one, then another, and finally several of the neighbours rushed up to her in the greatest agitation.

"Have you heard the news, Siora Rosa?"

"No."

"Paquale has been taken."

"Paquale, the sacristan's brother?"

"Yes; he is a tailor, you know, and he went to Priola to take home some work, and to be paid for it. That was four days ago. To-day, the day he ought to have returned, his brother has received a packet with a letter from" (he lowered his voice and looked round) "Satanello!"

"Madonna mia."

"Yes, left it in the most mysterious way, but addressed to him. In it was a finger."

"A finger!"

"Yes, a finger; Pasquale's."

"Dio buono!"

"The letter was written as clearly and as straight as if our own village scribe had written it, and said that if one thousand lire were not paid in a fortnight from to-day the hand should be cut off, and if fifteen hundred were not paid at the end of another fortnight the other hand, and so on."

"Good God, look at the poor woman!"

"She has fainted."

"She looks like one dead—oh! what a good heart she has."

Poor Rosa! it had, indeed, been too terrible a tale for her to listen to calmly. She had a sudden, awful intuition that such might have been, nay, that such had been, Maso's fate. Maso, who would die a thousand deaths rather than let his captors know from whence he came, that there might be no negotiations for a ransom possible.

The neighbours, seeing she was too agitated to listen to them any more, left her, but, as may be supposed, her violent emotion did not pass uncommented on by them.

"What could it be?" they whispered among themselves; "had her husband met his end in the same way?—had there been no possibility of his paying ransom?—or was it" (and her melancholy was more than natural, who had ever seen so rich a widow so inconsolable?) "that poor Siora Rosa's husband, had, or was——" And here significant gestures of having gone to the mountains were made, and words and hints were dropped, until, with the rapidly accumulating force of village gossip, it was finally universally believed that Rosa's dead husband must have been a brigand himself.

Verysoon these murmurs and innuendoes reached the ears of the syndic himself, Don Vincenzo Maderna.

Maderna was a fiery, pig-headed, little Neapolitan, with an exaggerated sense of his own responsibility, and two ambitions, which equally consumed him, and wore the flesh off his bones. One was to gain a terno and be a winner to a large amount in the lottery. Winning a terno is when three of the five numbers one chooses is drawn out. The other ambition was to capture Satanello.

The despatches on this last matter, which

he constantly received from the prefect at Messina, considerably aggrieved him.

"That fine gentleman," he would say, "little knows the state of things about here, or he would write with more 'reguardi' to a man who has become grey in the public service. Half the people here are the 'manutengoli' (agents) of the brigands; the other half pay them black mail, I know, and if one of the contributions required was my head, I do not think they would hesitate long enough to let me say a paternoster. He is an ass, is the prefect."

This capture of Pasquale was a blow to the syndic. He was the friend of both brothers. The sacristan and the tailor were two excellent men. He wished to ransom Pasquale, but where was the money to come from? If he could secure Satanello, he would get the money which had been set on his head, and so pay himself if he advanced it; but the question was, how could he advance it? and, besides, how was he to capture Satanello?

He bit his fingers, walked up and down his office, opened his money-drawer with a jerk, and shut it with a slam, but no violence of gesture or motion could bring the required sum into that receptacle.

Days passed, and only three remained of the fortnight's grace, when, as the syndic was sitting alone, "blaspheming," as he afterwards shamelessly confessed, in his office-room, he was told a "sposa" wanted to see him.

"Passi, passi," said the little man, courteously.

The woman entered; it was Rosa.

"What can I do for you, Siora Rosa?" said the bellicose little syndic in his softest voice; and he wondered if there could be any truth in the gossip about her.

She looked so sad and so agitated. She carried a casket in her hand.

"I have come, Signor Sindaco——" she said, eagerly, and then stopped.

"Cara sci," said the syndic (I must add he was an unmarried man), "what is the matter? Do you find the cares of your inheritance too much for you; women, I know, can spend money, but always find taking care of it irksome; what is it?"

"I wanted to ask you to take these thousand lire."

"Dio la benedica."

"And send them as ransom for Pasquale."

"Impossible! How do you expect Pasquale will ever pay you; he will want two

lives, not one, to do so. It is horrible to think of, but no one can save him; the government cannot. Think what a fine game it would be for the brigands if the state ransomed their victims, and who else can help him?"

"I will."

"What will your children say when they are old enough to know what you have done; this is half the sum in the savings bank. I know old Meo's affairs well."

"He must be saved."

"What would your poor husband say if he were alive?"

Rosa started, as if he had touched her with a hot iron; but she controlled herself. "Think of Pasquale's wife and children!"

She looked so imploring, that the syndic was overcome at last, and took the money and gave her a receipt for it.

"How do you send?"

"Oh, it is all arranged in his infernal letter. The man I send with the money is to go to the Osteria del Pellicano, two miles on the Villa d'Oro road. He will find there a man who will show him a receipt. They will leave the osteria together, and at a certain distance, my man will give the money and Pasquale will be given to him."

"Could I go with the man you send?" asked Rosa, timidly. All her reflections after she had heard of Pasquale's fate had convinced her that Satanello was Tonino, and that he, and he alone, knew the secret of Maso's disappearance. She thought it probable he would fetch the money himself, and she, if she were permitted to accompany the syndic's messenger, would implore him, for the sake of his former love for her dead child, to tell her what he had done with Maso.

The syndic, on hearing her proposal, started up like a jack-in-the-box.

"You?"

"I want to ask one single question of the man who takes the money."

"Bah!" he stifled the oath that rose to his lips; "you must cross-examine Pasquale himself, if you want news of the brigands;" he spoke with a rougher accent than he had used hitherto; "if the devils saw you, there would be an end of the business; they would murder the man I send and Pasquale too, and carry you off; what sort of a ransom would they ask for a rich hand-

some woman like you, do you think?" The syndic wondered whether Rosa wished to warn her husband, for he now felt convinced that he was connected with the brigands, was perhaps, indeed, the chief himself. "Good Heaven!" he muttered, and the little parched pea of a man was nearly crossing himself at the idea as he looked at Rosa's pale sad face, "what utter fools women are."

"Here is your receipt," he said out loud; "but I take the money on the condition that you will not carry out your intention."

Rosa hung her head.

"Let no one know you have advanced the money, or we shall have half the village carried off. They will work on your soft heart as people dig in a mine."

"If I could but learn——" began Rosa, but she checked herself, her sorrows had made her so reticent.

"Pst, pst, you must find out all you want from Pasquale."

When he was alone Don Vincenzo drew his heavy black eyebrows together, and thought and thought, and smoked several cigars, and finally made up his plans.

With the aptitude we all have of thinking ill rather than well of our fellow-creatures, the syndic firmly believed that Satanello himself was the husband of the handsome melancholy widow of the Belfry Tower.

He called up a gendarme, gave him the ransom, told him where to go, and bade him, on his life, open his eyes and ears, so as to obtain on the road every possible information which might eventually be of use. He then wrote in cipher to Messina and informed the prefect he had found a clue by which he believed he should trace and finally capture Satanello himself. He asked for more soldiers, but as he did not wish to excite suspicion, they must drop in by twos and threes dressed as ordinary peasants. He was convinced that he should win the distinction he had so long thirsted for, and if he did, would not the hour and the number of the day of the week, and of the day of the month, be lucky numbers for the lottery! The Belfry Tower should be watched night and day, and as soon as a sufficient number of men had arrived they should be placed so as to surround the house and guard it. The fair widow should not warn her husband, if it were in his power to prevent it.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER X. OUR GUEST.

"You've a fine barn here," observed Mr. Mauleverer. "Why you might play King John in such a barn as that; and do it well, too. And a nice farm-yard, very nice indeed; with oxen, sheep, horses, pigs, poultry, and all complete. I like a farm-yard; not that I know much about such things. I'm a Londoner; I'm not ashamed of it; London born. The birthplace of Milton and Byron is good enough for Fane Mauleverer. Somehow I always associate a farm-yard with a pantomime. I expect to hear the music strike up and to see Joey run on, and all the properties change to something else. I can see there's a good deal to be done with a farm-yard that's never been thought of yet. Great sheep-breeding county this, I observe. I know sheep best in the form of mutton; but even in that form not always so intimately as I could wish. Touchstone, I remember, has some interesting remarks upon sheep-breeding. I played Touchstone once, for my benefit; at Stoke Moggley, I think it was. It was successful altogether. I did not lose more than fifteen and six. Very fair for so undramatic a neighbourhood. Now *there's* a fine pig; if he could only come on squeaking like that, under a clown's arm, what applause he'd get. But I suppose he'll be made into pork or bacon as the case may be, and never know the pleasures of public life. A pig 'born to blush unseen and waste his sweetness'—no, that's not quite the right word. 'And smelt so? Pah!' says Hamlet, and throws down the skull. But with all his faults I feel I could love that pig if he came before me in the form of

ham. Like many human beings, a pig is more dear to us when dead than when alive. For this pig, however—he'll die obscurely, though not without noise perhaps, and be eaten by bumpkins. I beg your pardon, I meant nothing personal by my mention of bumpkins. They make a very good audience, when you can't get a better. You're fond of the play? Youth, like the butterfly, loves the lamps, usually."

I told him that I had never seen a play.

"Never!" he repeated, with a look of pitiful surprise. "But how should you? You're off our line of march here. And the villages are so scattered we could hardly hope for a paying house. But all things must have a beginning. You've seen a player, at any rate, and you might see a worse one, although I'll own, for I'm modest, you might see a better, possibly."

Our visitor had remained a day or two at the Down Farm. His hurt had somewhat inflamed, and he had been urged to postpone his journey. He was not loth to stay, I think. But he perhaps suffered more than he cared to confess. He had a light-hearted jesting way with him, and was inclined to make light of his troubles. No doubt, in such wise, he succeeded in rendering them more endurable. He was in truth an actor, always acting; but his faculty of investing his circumstances and situation with an unreal air had its advantages.

"I shall miss my engagement at Lockport," he said. "But that's no great matter, perhaps. There's never much done at Lockport. A race-week audience. Pit full of jockeys and horse-dealers. Betting men in the boxes. A rabble in the gallery. And very likely, after all, the ghost wouldn't have walked."

"Were they going to play Hamlet?" I asked.

He laughed.

"You've read your Shakespeare, I see. Good boy. But I did not refer to 'buried Denmark.' I meant a ghost of another kind, that should be more material but often is not. It's a way we have of saying that there is 'no treasury;' that our salaries will not be paid to us. Yes, they might play Hamlet," he mused, "even without me. They are capable of it. But I pity Shakespeare! 'Twill be the murder of Gonzago, indeed, with a vengeance!"

He limped about the garden and the farm-yard, leaning upon his stick or upon my shoulder. I found him most amusing, though I failed to understand all he said.

"You make a good audience," he observed sometimes with a laugh. "I should play all the better if I could see you in the pit. It's wonderful how a friendly face helps one on."

And then, as he walked with difficulty—and perhaps in his manner of doing this there was something theatrical—he likened himself now to Belisarius, and now to King Lear. In the latter case I assumed that he had cast me for the part of the Fool. It was all wonderfully new to me. I certainly thought him the most entertaining and attractive person I had ever known.

Kem underrated him: was jealous, I believe, of my preferring his society to hers: and she was quite ill-natured in her observations upon a certain paucity of body linen that characterised his wardrobe. She accused him of wearing a false-front—what was then called a "dicky," and contemptuously viewed as an article of apparel. Mr. Mauleverer made no further allusion to the trunks which he had previously said had been sent on to Lockport before him. I have since come to the conclusion that the trunks had no real existence, and that such property as he possessed he carried with him tied up in the cotton handkerchief. During his stay at the Down Farm he was supplied with linen, carefully aired, from my uncle's store.

Still I found Kem anxious to listen to all our visitor said, never tired of contemplating him, and altogether much entertained by him, though she tried not to seem so. She still cherished doubts as to his social status, and disapproved his admission to the parlour and his reception as a guest. To Reube Mr. Mauleverer was so impentrateable a mystery, that the shepherd, apparently in despair, withdrew his mind, after

awhile, from all consideration of the subject, and sought his sheep as preferable society, on the score of their superior intelligibility. Indeed, by the farm servants generally the actor was pronounced "a queer quist," and there, as they expressed it, "let bide."

By my uncle and my mother Mr. Mauleverer had been besought to stay in simple kindness and good faith. It was sufficient for them that he was hurt and needed rest.

There had been no question of withholding hospitality from Mr. Mauleverer by reason of his profession. The Down Farm was almost without prejudice on the subject of plays and players. Our district was too secluded, and its inhabitants too dispersed, for strolling companies ever to visit us, even on their way to more profitable neighbourhoods. Some vague belief that acting was an "idle calling," no doubt we held—but not very firmly, on account of our want of absolute knowledge and experience on the subject. Probably had choice been possible, my mother and my uncle would both have preferred their guest's following some other profession; but scarcely for a better reason than that in such wise he would have been a more comprehensible person to them. My uncle in times long past had once or twice visited London, and had seen a play or two acted; but of these exhibitions he preserved but faint memories. So, altogether, Mr. Mauleverer's position was somewhat that of a mariner wrecked upon an island of friendly and innocent natives. He was to them as a creature from another planet. They were quite content to bind his wounds, help and welcome him to the utmost of their power, and to persist in hospitable offices so long as he made them no ungenerous return. He was very strange, perplexing, and amazing to them; yet he interested and amused them, in spite of themselves, and so, while he abode with them, was assured of handsome treatment.

To do Mr. Mauleverer justice, he strove his best, I may say he acted his best, to commend himself to the favour of his hosts. He assumed a marvellous polish of manner, as though he were playing a noble lord in some old comedy. He called my mother "Madam," and bowed reverently whenever he addressed her. He listened to her every remark with profound attention. He took a pinch of snuff from my uncle's round box with extraordinary grace; a certain distinction even attended him in the fit of sneezing with which he was subsequently afflicted, not being accustomed, I think, to

real snuff. And then, how different he was to Mr. Bygrave! What a flow of conversation he possessed! The swiftness of its current swept us all along with it. He could talk upon any subject and display interest in everything. Now he was chatting to my mother about her knitting—she was making a warm petticoat for Jim Truckle's wife, to be ready for her by next winter—now he was deep in agricultural mysteries, subsoiling and the rotation of crops, with my uncle. What did it matter that he knew nothing whatever about one subject or the other? It was wonderfully pleasant all the same. And what a fund of anecdote he was master of! He had acquaintance with all the topics of the day, many of them so new, or so recently become old, that we had never even heard of them. He had been in London within the last month, and it was clear he knew that great city intimately. And what a choiceness of diction, a richness of voice, and above all what a play of features he possessed! The way in which he sometimes winked at me, in the midst of his most solemn speeches, was quite convulsing, it was so humorous.

It was curious, I have often thought since, how quickly he appreciated the fact that he was dealing with simple but serious people, to whom levity was distasteful and jesting unpleasant, if not unintelligible. He maintained in the parlour a polished gravity of demeanour, smiling occasionally in a dignified, composed way, but never laughing or attempting to provoke laughter. Yet he promptly discerned in me mirthful inclinations, and as we paced the garden or the farm-yard, did not hesitate to appeal frequently to my sense of the comical: strove, indeed, in a very pronounced way to stir my laughter, and certainly succeeded.

And then he read Shakespeare to us; not being specifically invited to undertake that task, nor deliberately proposing it himself, but drifting towards it by mere accident. Some doubt had occurred to him, he said, as to a passage in Hamlet, and did we happen to have a Shakespeare in the house? I produced the volume. He read aloud a few lines, closed the book; reopened it; read from it again; and at last by a gradual process he arrived at favouring us with systematic recitations from the poet. We were all gratified, I think. I was delighted, I know. And I could hear that Kem was listening at the keyhole. Indeed, I opened the door suddenly and discovered her on the door-mat, with the

larger portion of her apron crowded into her mouth, as though by such a proceeding her sense of hearing was somehow intensified. I thought his efforts quite triumphant. Of course, Mr. Bygrave, whether in reading-desk or pulpit, was not to be mentioned in the same breath with him. He was pompous perhaps; his facial movements might have been called grinning by ill-natured critics; and there was something ventriloquial about his strange and rapid diversity of intonation. Still it was very interesting. He made me start, and my skin change suddenly to "goose-flesh" all over, with a sense of an icicle being slipped down my back, when he introduced the ghost! How sepulchral was his speech! A rush of cold dank air as from a newly opened tomb seemed to fill the room.

I was distressed that my mother and my uncle were not more enthusiastic in their recognition of Mr. Mauleverer's exertions. But they were not given at any time to much fervour of expression. The reader seemed content, and smiled with self-approval, as he dabbed his moist forehead in the pauses of his performance. And certainly by their stillness and their air of attention and surprise, they rendered him a degree of homage; though I remembered that once my uncle had, with much the same expression of face, contemplated a dancing dog exhibiting in Steepleborough market-place. But Mr. Mauleverer seemed satisfied with the effect he had produced. He had possibly suffered now and then, in the course of his career, from listless and unsympathetic auditors.

He continued to cut black shades. My mother thought my uncle's portrait unmistakable. He held hers to be decidedly faithful. Each forbore to discuss the merits of his or her own silhouette, I noticed. And then Mr. Mauleverer gave me my first lessons in drawing.

CHAPTER XI. A TENDER PARTING.

SOME taste or disposition for art I was already conscious of possessing; but it had scarcely found outlet or expression, save in certain rude drawings executed with a lump of our native chalk upon a tarred barn-door, or in dim designs scratched upon blotting-paper to beguile the tedium of Latin exercises. Now I obtained a measure of methodical instruction from Mr. Mauleverer, and what was perhaps even more precious, encouragement and applause. He was unused to teaching, he stated; yet he had skill as a master: instructing by

example, which is perhaps the best system of instruction.

I was loud in my admiration of his manifold abilities.

"Yes," he said, complacently, "I can do a good many things. That I am much the better for it I'll not venture to assert. It's no use making a number of small bids for success. The thing's knocked down to the highest bidder, who may make perhaps but one offer. Yes, young gentleman, I can act—fairly; I can paint—decently: portraits, landscapes, history, anything, including scenery. That's what I've been doing lately, thereby having a few more shillings—owed to me. Still upon the whole Fortune has not smiled upon Fane Mauleverer, or smiling, she has slid her rewards into other palms than his, and less deserving perhaps. So you would hint. I am obliged to you. I'll not contradict you. I like to hear hand-claps greet me, even though they may proceed from the village idiot on the back bench of the gallery. Not that I am associating you, my young friend, even in thought, with that unfortunate. Far from it. I count you among the box audience—the front row, if you will. I would only hint my appreciation of applause let it come from what quarter it may. I don't despise the copper coinage because of the existence of silver and gold. Halfpence are of use; so I have found. One can buy many things with them—bread for instance. I have known adversity; I admit it; and found its uses less sweet than they might have been, or than the poet has affirmed them to be. Still I have not despaired. I am not of a desponding nature. I persuade myself that luck may be in store for me, must be, indeed—put out at compound interest as it were. That there is a vast amount of it standing to my credit somewhere, I am fully satisfied. When it becomes due and payable I shall be a sort of millionaire. Meantime my position is much less enviable. 'While the grass grows—the proverb is somewhat musty.' But the world shall hear of Fane Mauleverer yet."

I thought it hard that so clever a man should have undergone misfortune; and I said as much. He patted me on the shoulder, and smiled a gracious recognition of my sympathy.

"The artist must suffer; it is his destiny." I noted that by describing himself as an artist the idea of suffering became almost pleasant to him. "It is the price he pays for his endowments."

He remained with us over one Sunday, I remember, although, on account of his lame limb, he was excused that journey to church over the down, which was invariably accomplished on that day by the household of the farm. I was sorry for his absence from the service for two reasons. I desired his opinion upon the elocutionary efforts of Mr. Bygrave; and I wanted to know what he thought, as an artist, of the white-washed fresco in Purrington Church.

He assumed much gravity and staidness of demeanour on the Sunday, as though anxious to bring himself into harmony with the feelings of his hosts. His talk was of the clergy; and he even referred by name to a bishop. I think he said that he had taught elocution to that spiritual peer. Nothing could have been more exemplary than his speech and bearing.

In the evening, at his own instance, he read aloud a sermon by Blair. His delivery was so spirited that the discourse in question acquired extraordinary animation. Looking over it for myself afterwards, I found it even somewhat dull. Yet from his lips it sounded quite stirring. My mother and uncle, I think, were afflicted by doubts as to whether a sermon ought to be made to seem so lively; whether there was not something unnatural and heterodox in so transforming it. In their experience, perhaps, sermons had been always more or less soporific. But upon this occasion Blair had been most awakening.

I openly expressed regret that our guest did not perennially occupy our pulpit instead of Mr. Bygrave. Mr. Mauleverer deprecated this view of him, and yet was clearly gratified by it.

"The church?" he mused. "As an opportunity for oratory there is much to be said for it. I could have shone, I think, as a preacher. I could have worn lawn sleeves, with credit to myself and to the spectators—I should rather have said, perhaps, my congregation, my flock. Yes, I could have done much more than has ever yet been done, I think, with the part of a bishop. Still, I will own a certain unfitness on my part for the assumption. Nolo episcopari. I am opposed to monotony. I love change: change of life, of dress, of scene, of character. You see, I am an actor, an artist. There is a leaven of the vagabond in me. I own to something of the gipsy in my nature. I am now this; now that. Here to-day; there to-morrow. A bishop for a week—and I should weary of the task. My dignity would fall from me

like a worn-out garment; I should be capable of conduct most unworthy of the bench. It is better as it is perhaps; although the present moment does not display my fortunes at their best. No, not the bench for me; but rather the boards. I am at home there; with scope for my versatility. I can paint scenes and exhibit before them in a wide range of characters. My tragedy has been admired, and I have known audiences quite enthusiastic about my comedy. My physical gifts are seen to advantage on the stage; I am usually hailed with applause immediately upon my first appearance—before I have spoken a word. No wonder. You have observed my head of hair?" he asked, suddenly running his fingers through his locks and raising a great crest above his brow—rather as though he were making a hay-cock. "Prodigious is it not? Many have taken it for a wig. A genuine compliment to Nature; who can be more bountiful than art, however, when she tries her best. I am grateful for the boon she has conferred upon me. She has saved me much outlay. I have no need of a wig-box. A comb, pomatum-pot, powder-puff, and curling irons, and I am fitted for any character; in five minutes my head can be made ready for Hamlet or Caleb Quotem. A trifle of powder and I am iron-grey—a stern father, a wealthy banker, or a distinguished nobleman; more powder and a little frizzing with the tongs, and I'm Sir Peter Teazle or Doctor Pangloss; a varnish of pomatum simply, and I'm Romeo, or one of the curled darlings who make love to the heroines of comedy. The feats I have accomplished with my head of hair are unknown, save only to myself and my barber."

There was but one failing that could be charged against Mr. Mauleverer, and even that partook of the nature of a compliment to our hospitality. His admiration for the strong beer of the farm-house was excessive. Often did I note him in the kitchen amazing Kem with his volubility and theatrical manner, and persuading her to fill yet another jug of ale for his private consumption, to beguile the time, as he said, between his meals. He never seemed to be much the worse for his frequent draughts, however; always stopped at a certain stage on this side of intoxication, although he had travelled some way on the road to it. His utterance was always distinct if it became more rapid; and his gestures maintained their gracefulness if they waxed more and more redundant. A rich glow spread over

his fleshy face, and a sort of hectic sparkle illumined his eyes. In the morning I noticed he looked somewhat dull and sodden, and his animation, although still remarkable, was perhaps rather the result of effort.

We kept later hours than usual at the farm during his stay. Often after I had been compelled to retire to rest, I could hear his rich voice still exercised in the parlour. He must have enjoyed a kind of monologue. I often wondered what he could find to say to my uncle.

"He is not a sympathetic auditor," Mr. Mauleverer confessed to me. "I've played to farmers and won their favour. But Mr. Orme is not easily moved. He would perhaps have succeeded as a dramatic critic. He misses all my best points. So long as I can talk mangel-wurzel to him I'm all right. Unfortunately I'm not up in mangel-wurzel. Still I managed to come out rather strong on wool and sheep-washing last night. I was not perfect, I admit; but I contrived to fill it out, very creditably altogether."

Mr. Bygrave met the actor, without, however, being strongly impressed by him. The only result was a dissertation with which he favoured me upon the theatre of the ancients. He was of opinion that there had not been much good acting since the time of Thespis. He held the modern stage very cheaply indeed. Why don't they play *Æschylus*? he demanded. I was unable to answer him.

Mr. Mauleverer did not outstay his welcome. There was no inclination to hurry his departure. At least if such a feeling existed there was no manifestation of it. He was the first to speak of leaving the farm, mentioning his intention of journeying back to Dripford, for it availed not now, he said, for him to proceed to Lockport. The race-week was over, and he judged his engagement to be at an end.

"I must hark back to London," he observed, "and start afresh."

I besought him to stay yet a few days longer. But he shook his head.

"I must jog on," he said. "The rolling or the strolling stone must fulfil its mission. I may not gather moss, but at least I shall not get rusty. I must jog on. I must stand on the pavement once more with the lamp-posts about me. Then I know where I am. Besides, I may not remain idly here; I must be up and about. The stage is my farm; I must cultivate it. May it yield me an abundant harvest."

"You are not happy here?" I asked.

"I am grateful," he said. "Happiness is never where we stand; but always in the distance—on the horizon. We may not reach it; but we needs must travel towards it. And then, the country is pleasant, picturesque, salubrious, I don't doubt it, and its victualling arrangements are most ample; but it sends me to sleep, it numbs me. I gain too much flesh here—I have increased a stone's weight, my waistcoat 'plims,' as your local word has it. I have already a corpulent inclining that may unfit me for the slimmer heroes. It must be checked, by toil, possibly even by privation. Your strong beer offers potent charms; yet must I part from it. Besides, I must put money in my purse. I shall need it; indeed, I have always needed it. Genius is but gold in the ore; one must display and manipulate it to obtain coin and small change for it."

Then I put in execution a plan I had secretly conceived.

"Let me help you, Mr. Mauleverer," I said. I produced my three sovereigns, the gift of Lord Overbury.

"Bless the boy," he exclaimed with a more natural air than was usual with him. "Why how did you come by so much money?" He weighed the coins in his palm and examined them. "Genuine gold as I'm alive." Then he asked suddenly: "You've never stolen them? Pardon me. I am sure you have not. But the sight of so much money is disturbing."

"It's my own—all my own," I said, my face burning as I spoke. And I told him very briefly my adventure at the Dark Tower.

"I would I had been there," he observed. "Lord Overbury?"

"You know him?"

"No. But I have heard his name, in connexion with—I scarce know what at this moment. And he gave you these?"

"Yes, but it's a secret. No one knows it except Kem, and she'll never tell. Kem's always true to me. Please take them. I don't want them, indeed I don't. I'd so much rather that you took them."

"Generous boy!" he said, musingly, looking now at me and now at the money. "How old are you?"

I told him.

"And you've no father living?"

"No."

He covered his face with his hand. I thought that he was lost in thought, until I detected that he was still observing me

through his fingers. His nose, I recollect, looked rather red from contrast with his diamond ring which was touching it. In the same way the jewel gained new brilliance.

"No," he said at length, throwing back his head and waving his arms in the air. "I'll not rob the young and the orphan. Perish the thought. Tempt me not, Duke. Take back the money, my brave boy."

And he turned from me. I implored him anew; assured him that the money was my own to do what I would with, that he was not robbing me—that it was a cruel word to use. But he would not listen to me. I felt sadly disappointed.

He took leave of my uncle and my mother in the most polite way. In graceful terms he thanked them again and again for the hospitality they had extended to him; entreated my mother to charge him with any commission she might desire to have executed in London, then or at any future time; letters, he said, addressed to him at the Red Bull Tavern, Vinegar-yard, Drury-lane, almost invariably reached him. He promised that he would certainly call to pay his respects should chance ever again bring him into the neighbourhood of Purrington—that if he was ever, indeed, within twenty miles of the Down Farm, he would most certainly visit it, and renew one of the most pleasant friendships—if he might presume to employ the term—he might? he was charmed indeed—that he had ever formed in the whole course of his life.

Then, with his little bundle of clothes tied up in the coloured cotton handkerchief, which Kem had washed and ironed for him—not before it needed that process—and shouldering his rough, knotted walking-stick, he quitted the farm-house, pausing a moment to smile final adieux, and wave his battered white hat to my mother, who stood at the window watching his departure.

"A gratifying exit, skilfully executed," he said with a self-approving smile and a toss of his head as he strode across the elastic down in his thin shoes.

It had been arranged that I should accompany him as far as the high-road to Dripford, so that there might be no danger of his again departing from his path. I confess that I was anxious to see as much of my friend as I possibly could, and was loth to part from him.

"We shall meet again, my young friend, never fear," he said to cheer me, for indeed my depression was very evident. "I know

that we shall—I feel that we shall. The world's but a small place after all; we're for ever running against those we never expected to see again, sometimes, indeed, those we hoped never to see again. I have even encountered, in Lambeth, a landlady I had left in Cornwall. I owed her money, she said. It was possibly true. I do owe money, now and then—often indeed. Trifles that I leave undischarged, now from pure forgetfulness; now, and perhaps more often, from lack of means. We shall meet again. My circumstances may have changed. I may have risen to fame and prosperity. But to you I shall be ever the same. I am without false pride. I shall always remember the friends who showed kindness to me in my hour of need. Here we part. No, not a step further, my young friend; I remember your lady mother's instructions. Here is the high-road stretching out plain and clear before me. Good-bye, and God bless you. Go on with your books. Study assiduously under the exemplary Bygrave. Be a good nephew to your uncle, a son worthy of your mother. And so again: good-bye, and God bless you."

He dabbed his eyes with his handkerchief; but I do not feel sure that he was crying. I know I was.

The white high-road parted us as though it had been a gulf. I began to retrace my steps. By chance I turned to look after him. He had stopped; he was waving his hand to me—beckoning—he had forgotten something; had yet more last words to speak to me. Eagerly I ran to him.

"I have just remembered," he said, "that the coach fare to London from Dripford is of considerable amount; beyond, indeed, the sum I carry with me. A draft upon my bankers in town would probably not be accepted by the coachman. You spoke to me but a little while back of pecuniary assistance. Three sovereigns I think were distinctly mentioned. I declined them, not rudely, I trust, but still decisively. In these cases, however, second thoughts are often best. If you happen now to have about you——"

Delighted I thrust the money into his hand.

"A thousand thanks. I shall never forget your kindness. You will not mention the matter, I am sure? No, of course not. Still some acknowledgment is due to you. Nay, I insist upon it. Take this, my young friend, and once more, bless you and good-bye." And he hurried on his way.

He had given me a crumpled scrap of

paper taken from a greasy pocket-book he carried in the breast of his coat. I scarcely looked at it until he was out of sight. Then I found that upon it was written in rather faded characters, "Mr. Fane Mauleverer's Benefit. Admit —— and party to a Private Box." No date was specified; nor was the name of any theatre mentioned. It was not a document of much worth.

As I re-entered the kitchen Kem said to me: "Old Mrs. Hullock's been over here from Bulborough. She tells me she once lost a main heap of things when the players went through the village, years ago. So I've been counting the tea-spoons. They're all right. Please God the linen may prove the same. But I had a terrible lot of washing out drying on the fuz bushes."

I was much disgusted by her suspicions of my friend Mr. Mauleverer. I vouched for his honesty.

"Maybe," said Kem. "But he was terrible short of shirts."

THE SPOTS ON THE SUN.

If the Sun were a living Sphynx, who amused himself by proposing enigmas, perplexing the learned while the unlearned give them up in despair, he could not succeed better than he has done of late.* The last few years have been crowded with solar enigmas.

Spectral analysis has shown that the Sun, though composed of materials in the main part identical with those possessed both by the fixed stars and the Earth, has, nevertheless, something else in him, some unknown substance which we cannot identify. What is this substance which we don't know as yet? Whereabouts are the metallic vapours, of whose existence in him we are assured? Why is he wrapped and swathed in swaddling-clothes of almost pure hydrogen? Why do flames of hydrogen mount with marvellous rapidity to incredible heights all round about him? Are they eruptions of gas from the central mass? Are they dissipated in space? or do they return to the interior to undergo a second expulsion? And the Spots on the Sun—what are they?

Previous to the seventeenth century, astronomers knew nothing about the Spots, and would have rejected any suspicion of their existence as the craziest of heresies.

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ix. p. 520.

They liked an easy time of it, and, with a few exceptions, they had it. What good was there in disturbing established ideas? Within the memory of man, from the most traditional antiquity, has the Sun ever altered his behaviour? Has he not punctually warmed and illumined the world in the very same mode and measure? The variations of the seasons are a different affair; but they, too, are regular in their occurrence, and are explicable by celestial geometry. What would we have more?

On the other hand, earthly flames and fires also light and warm us; but not in the same way as the Sun. Unfortunately, we are obliged to feed those fires and flames. A strike of Welsh miners or London gasmen soon reminds us of our dependence, and of the ephemeral nature of all earthly furnaces; whereas the sun, invariable, inextinguishable, receives no visible fuel from without. He shines, therefore, it was concluded, of himself, in virtue of his own proper essence, which differs completely from that of the objects around us. And as the case is the same with the stars, which shone on Mr. Darwin's early progenitors as they shine on us, it was inferred that they are all, together with the Sun, formed of a special element, far superior to the four vulgar elements with which we are familiarised on earth.

It always requires considerable courage to avow a belief differing from that of one's contemporaries. Sir Thomas Browne piteously pleads, "We shall not, I hope, disparage the resurrection of our Redeemer if we say that the Sun doth not dance on Easter Day. And though we would willingly assent unto any sympathetic exultation, yet cannot conceive therein any more than a tropical expression." It is easy for us, now, to take the "fifth element" and its immutability to be no more than "a tropical expression" for an unknown quantity of unknown conditions; but two hundred and fifty years ago, even the dons of science were obliged to be cautious. The doctrine of an unchangeable firmament was so strong that not even the appearance of a new star in the constellation Serpentarius could shake it. The first serious blow was given by the discovery, about 1611, of Spots on the Sun, through the agency of a revolutionary instrument, the perspicillum Batavum, which modern men name telescope.

The study of the Spots by Fabricius, Galileo, and Scheiner, enabled those astronomers to lay the first foundation-stone of

a theory. But their advance was slow; observations of the Sun were dangerous to eyesight. In vain did Kepler contract the opening of his telescope to the size of a pin's head, and place coloured glass between the eye-glass and his eye; even a rapid peep at the solar disc caused a painful dimness of vision which did not immediately pass away. Besides which, the instruments of that day were too weak to allow observers to do more than follow the motions of the spots. But it was soon seen that those spots were part of the Sun himself, turning with him, on an axis, in five or six and twenty days, absolutely as mountains and lakes form part of the Earth, turning with it in four and twenty hours.

The Sun, then, is not immovable. He has a movement of rotation from West to East. He is neither more nor less than a material globe, like our own, brought to, and maintained in, an incandescent state by unknown causes.

Galileo, who did not study long (for very good reasons) the newly-discovered spots on the Sun, believed that they all moved (revolving with the Sun) with exactly the same velocity; and thence concluded that they lie upon, or belong to, the actual surface of the Sun. Scheiner, on the contrary—and this is important to note—maintained that their progress across the Sun's disc is not equal, and therefore that they are not attached or adherent to the Sun itself. In 1613, Kepler wrote, "The spots not only do not move parallel to the ecliptic, but they have not exactly the same velocity. Consequently, they do not belong to the surface of the Sun, although they are not separated from it by a distance perceptible to our vision. For these reasons, and because the spots sometimes appear and sometimes disappear, because they open wider and contract here and there with striking changes of shape, it is manifest that they must be something analogous to the clouds of our Earth, which clouds have a movement of their own, differing more or less from the Earth's rotation."

Modern astronomers had long disagreed respecting the time of the Sun's revolution on his axis. In 1841, the late Monsieur Langier, of the Paris Bureau des Longitudes, undertook a long series of observations of the solar spots. Instead of confining himself to one or two spots of long duration, he determined to observe a great number of spots selected in regions of both the hemispheres as far removed from each other as possible. The idea turned out a happy one. What

struck Langier the most in the course of his researches, was the proof of a fact, more than suspected, as we have seen, by Scheiner, but completely neglected for more than two centuries. The spots have not the same velocity of rotation. Each spot, according to its position, gives a different time of revolution. They have also other proper movements of their own, by which they approach, or recede from, each other. It is, as Langier told his friends, as if each zone of the Sun's photosphere had a special movement of its own.

Now, results like these cannot be explained by inaccuracies of observation. The rotations of the different zones observed by Langier vary from twenty-four to twenty-six days, making a difference of two whole days, whilst the errors to be expected from isolated results furnished by each spot taken singly, scarcely exceed three or four hours. But at that time, Sir W. Herschell's hypothesis of a set of different atmospheres overlying the Sun still retained firm hold of the scientific mind. It was everywhere received and taught as a doctrine about whose truth there could be no question. Langier, doubtless through deference to opinions universally adopted, did not publish his Memoir, but merely gave the principal results.

Nevertheless, these were enough to show that the question of sun-spots contained a mine of unexplored phenomena; as well as that, to obtain possession of novel facts, a great number of spots, selected in the most opposite regions of the solar globe, must be submitted to strict observation. Mr. Carrington did so, day by day, noting their variations of shape, their mode of grouping, and their geographical—or rather their heliographical—distribution. Finally, he desired to continue this patient study during a whole sun-spot period; that is, for eleven years. It sometimes takes a good slice out of the life of a man to advance astronomical knowledge only half a step. But he completely established the close connexion between the proper movements of the spots in longitude (from West to East) and their situation with respect to the Sun's equator. It may be thus enounced: The rotation of the spots is slower in proportion as their latitude is greater; in other words, the further the spots are from the Sun's equator, and, consequently, the nearer they are to his poles, the slower do they revolve round the axis of the Sun.

Monsieur Faye—whose masterly Notice

is our text-book—renders ample justice to Mr. Carrington's Observations of Solar Spots, London, 1863, remarking the author's complete independence of any preconceived idea. It is a pure and simple adherence to facts and observations, united with a scrupulous care to put the reader in the way of following out any researches of his own. It gives a complete history of the solar spots during seven years, thereby marking an epoch in science, and serving as a model for all who wish to labour in this direction. Of theories Mr. Carrington is sparing. He seems, however, inclined to adhere to two hypotheses then in vogue—Sir John Herschell's and Dr. Mayer's.

Dr. Mayer's Meteoric Theory of the Sun has already been propounded in these pages.* Tyndall received it, if not with complete acceptance, at least with great favour. Its upshot is, that the heat of the Sun is maintained by the constant falling into it of meteoric bodies, not through the fuel they supply to combustion, but from the heat developed by the shock—or rather their stoppage—by the conversion of their velocity into heat. The theory is beautifully and ingeniously philosophical, if it were true. Monsieur Faye meets it with the fatal objection that the swarms of meteors which might thus feed the fire, do not fall into it (unless very rarely), but revolve round it, like the comets, escaping after their perihelia, although they may go near enough to singe their wings.

Mayer's theory elbowed its way to the front all the more easily in consequence of the ignorance or indifference of his predecessors, who, very curious to make out, or rather guess, the nature of the Sun's spots, scarcely troubled themselves about the mode of production of his light and heat. Nobody cudgelled his brains to find out the cause of the Sun's mysterious constancy, which had struck all antiquity as a supernatural fact. Speculations on this subject were so rare and barren, that men were content with Wilson's and Herschell's conception of a cold and habitable nucleus capped and surrounded with a thin and shallow photosphere, in which was concentrated the immense and incessant production of light and heat. Mayer's hypothesis had at least the merit of being less repugnant to possibility and common sense.

By measuring the parallax of a few fixed stars, in cases where it has been possible to do so, astronomers have obtained a toler-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xiii., p. 636

rably precise idea of their enormous distance. By studying the motions of double stars, they have ascertained that those movements are governed by attraction. And, thirdly, by combining those two notions, they have made an approximate estimate of the mass of the stars so wedded together. Now, those masses have always been found comparable in magnitude to that of the Sun; which is a new and certain confirmation of the familiar belief that our Sun is only a star like the others, and that the stars are suns.

But the stars or the suns, whichever we please to call them, are the only heavenly bodies which shine with their own proper light. Planets or satellites, whose mass is imperceptible in comparison with their corresponding sun (in our system at least), do not emit either light or heat of their own in any appreciable quantity. Is there no connexion between these two qualities which are special to suns; namely, the faculty of shining, and the possession of a considerable mass?

On Earth, a small quantity of light and heat is developed by the fall of aerolites, bolides, and shooting-stars into our atmosphere. Those bodies, in the course of their travels in space, meet our globe with a velocity of several miles per second. Their impact produces luminous heat. Not long since, the Times newspaper, under the heading of Stunned by a Meteor, described balls of fire, like large stars, falling into the sea like splendid fireworks. It appeared, the men said, as if something were passing swiftly, and met with the obstruction of the vessel and burst. The decks of the ship were covered with cinders, which crushed under the sailors' feet as they walked.

Why should not the same thing happen to the Sun and the stars? In virtue of their superior mass, they would draw towards them all the loose materials dispersed within their sphere of attraction. The velocity of meteors so falling on them would be enormous, and the light and heat developed would correspond. These latter are calculable, and a sufficient supply of aerolites would suffice to supply the solar radiation.

The idea is excellent. But a theory, said Fontenelle, is like a mouse. It wriggles itself through one hole, and then through another. But if it comes to a hole too small for it, it can get no further, and is caught at once. So may a hypothesis pass the ordeal of several tests; but if one tight fact comes and contradicts it, the hypothesis's progress is hopelessly stopped.

Such seems to be the fate of Mayer's production of light and heat by hammering the Sun with aerolites. As already remarked, his machinery does not in fact come into play. Shooting-stars revolve round the Sun, instead of falling into it. We now know a hundred swarms of meteors which the Earth encounters in her orbit; thousands of them doubtless exist without ever crossing our annual path. But nothing proves that they ever reach the Sun. Nevertheless, whatever becomes of Mayer's solar theory, his views on the dispersion of energy in the universe remain a great acquisition to science.

The question of the solar spots may be briefly stated thus: Since Scheiner's and Galileo's days, plenty of theories have been put forth; but respecting the capital point—whether the spots belong to the photosphere or not—the same uncertainty and contradiction existed in 1865 as in 1613, some affirming that the spots are cavities, others that they are clouds. The only point on which they agreed was the existence, around the Sun, of an enormous atmosphere like our own.

It is now established, if only by a careful examination of Mr. Carrington's observations, that the spots are not clouds, but holes, and holes of no trifling depth, being (although not absolutely invariable) about two thousand two hundred and fifty miles deep. It further comes out that the atmosphere attributed to the Sun has no existence; for, if it did exist, it would refract light to a sensible degree. Father Secchi, one of the warmest partisans of the solar refraction, on attempting to verify it, found it imperceptible. The Sun has no atmosphere, in the accepted meaning of the word. But spectral analysis has told us what really exists instead of it. We now know, and can observe, the somewhat thin stratum of incandescent hydrogen which overlies the photosphere. It resembles anything but an atmosphere, being a confused assemblage of protuberances, or rather flames, darting in all directions with incredible velocity, and assuming forms of a capriciousness which defies all comparison.

Amongst the difficulties attached to the spots, are the slight movements by which they approach or recede from the Sun's equator. On the cloud hypothesis, they did not fail to be attributed to the action of trade-winds. Here, again, the study of facts destroyed the pretended analogy. Those movements are simple oscillations, occurring slowly between very narrow

limits, and not continually progressive movements. Moreover, the movements are not common to all the spots of one and the same zone. So far from that, it often happens that one out of two neighbouring spots will recede slightly from the equator, while the other is approaching it.

Another peculiarity of the spots is as curious as unexpected. It often happens that a spot breaks up, and so gives birth to a group or rather a file of spots. The photosphere, or the inner edge of the penumbra, seems to shoot out a luminous bridge across the spot, and to cut it in two. Soon, the two spots so formed separate from each other and become independent. Now, Mr. Carrington's drawings and measurements show that it is usually the first segment, that which lies most in advance in the direction of the solar rotation, which detaches itself from the other in virtue of a very decided movement. By-and-bye that movement ceases, leaving the new spot to follow the usual behaviour of all the others.

This apparently inexplicable phenomenon is owing to a very simple cause. From Mr. Carrington's valuable series of observations, persevered in for seven long years, we learn that there are transitory spots and durable spots. The one show themselves month after month, when the hemisphere on which they occur presents itself to us; the others last for a few days, and then vanish. Nor are they indifferently situated on the Sun. The durable spots scarcely show themselves elsewhere than between eight and thirty-five degrees of latitude. Those of the equatorial region, and those beyond thirty-five degrees of latitude, never last long. The first give the time of the Sun's rotation with great exactitude, whilst the second would furnish only uncertain results if we were not able to account for the apparent irregularities. But the grand fact is, that the velocity of each spot depends exclusively on its latitude; so much so, that if a spot moves from its mean position, by an oscillation perpendicular to the equator, it instantly acquires the velocity corresponding to the zone which it happens to have entered.

Another important point established by these observations is, that there exists no general movement from the equator to the poles, nor from the poles to the equator; which completely excludes any hypothesis analogous to the oceanic circulation on our globe or to that of our atmosphere. The spots, to which astronomers had assigned a primary importance, are a purely accidental, or at least a secondary phenomenon. They

are something much more simple than Wilson or Sir W. Herschell had imagined. To account for them, we have only to consider the mode of rotation of the photosphere, whose successive and contiguous zones have different velocities, decreasing in proportion as they are further distant from the equator. This difference of velocity gives birth, here and there in the photosphere, to vertical vortexes or whirlpools, exactly similar to those so easily produced in currents of water, particularly where streams of unequal rapidity combine. The cyclones so frequent in our atmosphere have no other origin. Some are of short duration; others last for six or eight terrestrial revolutions, or days, absolutely as on the Sun.

The whirlpools of the photosphere absorb into their funnel the luminous clouds of the brilliant surface. They thus suck in the cooler matters of the outer region, whose lower temperature naturally causes the comparative darkness of the middle of the spots. For, be it well remembered, the blackness of the spots is only relative. Isolated from the photosphere, its brightness is far superior to that of our gas-flames, being perhaps comparable to the dazzling Drummond light. The division of the spots finds its counterpart in the multiplication of little whirlpools or dimples in an eddy of water. The rarity of spots at the equator is explained by the slight difference of velocity in the contiguous zones of that region.

SUMMER AND LOVE.

WHEN to my heart the air seems full of song,
And all the earth is gay with bright-hued flowers
And sweet with perfumes—in those bounteous hours
When life is rapture, and my soul is strong,
As with God's wine of gladness, it is long
Ere with clear eyes and mind I can discern
The glory mid the glories, and can learn
The one surpassing sweetness in the throng.
But soon I know full well; for when the bliss
That came and blinded stays with clearer sight
I see one joy which gone all joys would miss
Their heart of joyousness: there is one light
Which lightens all things. Let me with a kiss
Help thee to guess what makes my world so bright.

DUBLIN LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

I.

THE most graphic newspaper article is tame, compared with the plain word-of-mouth narrative of one who has been an eye-witness of the event in question. The greatest historical masterpiece of painting is comparatively uninteresting, when set side by side with the rudest sketch taken on the spot. And if we wish to really under-

stand history, we must be content to undertake the task, not of the reader of history, but of the historian, and to rummage, as Scott and Macaulay did, among the dusty, yellow, worm-eaten contemporaneous records of the age, and of the country with which we would be acquainted. Few periods in history have been more talked of, more misrepresented both by friends and foes, and less understood, than the last forty years of the Irish history of the past century. The witty, joyous, hospitable, and chivalrous character of all classes of the people, from the highest to the lowest; the pomp and luxury of the aristocracy and gentry; the pluck and spirit with which the Volunteer Association wrenched its political requirements from the powerful and hostile government of England; and the unsullied patriotism, the transcendent eloquence of men like Grattan, Curran, and Plunkett, dazzle the imagination. But, on the other hand, the vices and follies of the country squires and squireens; the abject misery and contemptible knavishness too common among the rural population; the scandalous condition of the metropolis, in which shameful want sat cheek-by-jowl with shameful prodigality; and the unparalleled dishonesty and venality of the main body of politicians, are enough to make every honest thinking man bless himself that these much-vaunted years are over.

Let us play the part of valet to the Irishman of the days of our grandfathers. Let us spend a few hours in the fine libraries of the Dublin King's Inns, or of Trinity College, studying the Irish newspapers from 1763 (when the Freeman's Journal was started) to 1800.

Dublin, at this period, was deservedly famous for its printers and publishers. The Edict of Nantes Huguenots had established a splendid business in typography and engraving, many of the best illustrated editions of Addison, Swift, &c., emanating from Dublin presses. As might be expected, the daily journals (Faulkner's, the Saunders's, and the Freeman, the two latter of which still survive) are very creditable. Previous to the stamp being imposed, they sold at one penny a number, were the size of ordinary modern newspapers, and were distinctly and correctly printed, with good ink, on good and thick paper. They contained admirable summaries of home and foreign news, and frequently gave the reader telling leading articles, and sensible correspondence.

The first thing that strikes the reader is the extraordinary talent the Irishman of that day had for getting hurt and for hurting himself. The amount of accidental injury he meets with is perfectly astounding. The London list of casualties is, even at the present day, long enough, and scandalous enough, but it pales before the similar details in the Dublin of the eighteenth century. In the first place the Irish aristocracy seem to have had a great fancy for driving two, four, or even six unbroke horses through the narrow streets of Dublin. These equipages were also, as many a correspondent bitterly complains, attended by large and savage dogs, so that if the pedestrian escaped being run over or kicked by the equine quadrupeds, there was a very good chance that their canine comrades would either bite him, or overset him by running between his legs. That noble animal, the pig, was very much abroad also, and frequently overthrew his natural friend, the Irishman. And as sure as horse, dog, or pig overturned a man, the sufferer was dangerously hurt, if not killed.

The streets of the city were blocked with snow in the winter for weeks together. "Several ladies of distinction have broken their limbs during the late frost by attempting to get over the heaps of frozen snow in our leading thoroughfares," says the Hibernian journalist, who generally disdains names, and likes to lump the victims of accidents in columns. A thaw comes, and a mounted trooper gets drowned in the mud while trying to get across Church-street—incredible as this last fact appears, it is stated in black and white, and does not appear to have been subsequently contradicted. The best streets are full of large holes. An unfortunate porter, with a cleve of bottles on his back, falls, an involuntary Curtius, into one of these pitfalls in Suffolk-street, a main thoroughfare between the College and the Parliament House. A passer-by hearing his cries, attempts to rescue him, and falls in too, and we can well believe the reporter when he says that the two wretches, when at length extricated, presented a "spectacle too horrible for words, covered with cuts from the broken glass, and writhing with anguish."

But Paddy's pet accident was to fall into the Liffey. One might almost suppose that he looked upon his picturesque but evil-smelling river as the Hindoo looks on the sacred Ganges, and believed that everlasting happiness was to be procured by immolating himself in its waters. Does a

trooper or a dragoon go down to the river to water his horse? He falls in, and is drowned. Does a merchant go to the quay to see a brig unloaded? Does a sailor go down to Ringsend in a boat? Does a girl take some clothes to the riverside to wash? "Drowned! Drowned!" Shakespeare's exclamation was never so applicable. And if anybody falls in, an impetuous but unreflecting bystander generally jumps in after him or her, apparently forgetting that he himself is not much of a swimmer, and both are, as a matter of course, drowned forthwith. In one case a good-natured gentleman, seeing a girl lamenting that the tide had carried away some sheets she was washing, goes in after them, but, having over-estimated his powers of natation, the man goes the way of the clothes, and is lost for ever. Another gentleman's hat is blown off (no light matter in the days of gold-laced head-coverings); in he goes after it into the fatal waters, and soon exchanges Liffey for Styx. Persons of "disordered minds" (of whom there would seem to be quite a little army going about), are very fond of trying to cool their heated brains in these "waters of Eblana." But the vast majority of the deaths from drowning are dismissed with the contemptuous pleonasm that the deceased was "intoxicated with liquor" at the time. By the way, there is a powerful aroma of whisky about this period in the annals of the Green Isle. Two successive viceroys, my Lords Northington and Rutland, are freely spoken of as notorious sots; indeed, Rutland is well known to have drunk himself to death while still a comparatively young man. And so on, down through every class. Lord Northington gives a fancy ball at the Castle. He being very unpopular at the time, the people, with rare temperance, refuse to drink the barrels of ale set running for them by the lord-lieutenant, which are left to the soldiers, so that the whole guard, horse and foot, were, as "our own correspondent" curtly observes, "when we left, helplessly drunk." A favourite mode of shuffling off this mortal coil is to drink an enormous quantity (sometimes specified as pints, five half-pints, &c.) of spirits, the not unnatural consequence of which is very speedy death. Illicit stills are so numerous and active, that in a year of famine it is bitterly complained that the scarcity of corn is aggravated by the enormous quantity used in private distillation. The volunteers, to their great honour, of

their own accord, undertake the dangerous and invidious task of "still-hunting," and, as they boast, with pardonable pride, seize more illicit whisky in the north of Ireland alone, in one year, than the English government, backed by an army of twelve thousand men, had been able to do in ten years.

If the above sketch should appear exaggerated, I am prepared to assert that among the innumerable papers I have looked over, there is a death by drowning, a murder, and a fatal accident, for every day in the year.

II.

It has unfortunately always been necessary to keep a large armed force in Ireland. At present the regular military establishment is reinforced by some three thousand constabulary, metropolitan and rural. The police, who look after the order and safety of the capital, are a fine set of men, armed at night with swords, and patrolling the streets in twos. The constabulary are armed with rifles and sword-bayonets; drilled and dressed like riflemen. If, as Mr. Bright complains, this semi-civil army is much more expensive than ordinary troops, it must be remembered that the men are a very superior class to the ordinary material from which soldiers are formed; they must have characters and be men of some education, and any riotous or disorderly conduct on the part of either the city or county police is a thing unheard of.

But in the last century the soldiers had to do the duty, not only of the present garrison, but of the present police establishment as well. When lawlessness reached an intolerable point, even in Dublin, the only resource was to send for the soldiers. The British army was perhaps never in a more discreditable condition than in the interval between Culloden and the rise of Wellington. Hogarth's *March to Finchley* shows us the style of discipline kept up in the ranks, Swift and Fielding present very pretty pictures of the sort of officers who too often during the last century disgraced the British uniform. Junius indignantly declares that a whole army had been allowed to go to ruin in Ireland, and General Cornwallis, so late as 1798, complains that the army under his care was more dangerous to friends than to enemies.

Let us choose from a monotonously shameful list of military scandals, ranging from petty but galling insults to serious crimes, a couple of signal ones.

February the 23rd, 1784 (Monday). "On

Saturday last a soldier of this (Dublin) garrison, in daylight, was secured in an attempt to commit a robbery at Island Bridge. When the report reached the barracks, about five hundred men from the different regiments, horse and foot, on duty there, mustered and proceeded with hatchets, crowes, pickaxes, &c., to rescue the prisoner. Not content with giving him his liberty, they commenced a joint attack on the inhabitants of that quarter. In a very short time they wounded four people, so that their lives are despaired of, tore fourteen houses almost to the ground, and plundered the people of whatever property was in their possession."

August the 4th, 1784. "On Monday night a number of field officers, Lord Harrington, Colonel St. George, Colonel St. Leger, Colonel White, Colonel Cradock, Mr. Freemantle, and two others, in a state of drunken insanity, went into a shop on the quay belonging to a Mr. Flattery, a volunteer, and proceeded to grossly insult his wife. She boxed one of the officer's ears. He knocked her down. Flattery came out, and the officers, all seven, set upon him. A Mr. Moffat, who was passing by, came to his assistance. Colonel St. Leger fired a loaded pistol at him, but without effect. Flattery went for his musket, but was persuaded, on a parley, to give it up. The officers immediately broke it and flung it into the river. All seven then set on him with drawn swords. The guard at the National Bank, hearing of this scuffle, hurried down, headed by their subalterns. Lord Harrington, when they arrived, ordered them to charge the crowd, which had by this time assembled, with fixed bayonets, which, however, was not done. Mr. Sheriff Smith, who had by this time hastened to the spot, ran up to the main-guard for a force to suppress the riot. The officer on duty there told him that the guard had already gone, without a magistrate's order, to rescue their officers. At length the sheriff collected all the soldiers he could get, four or five in number, and on going back met the main-guard with drawn swords, headed by an officer who was extremely drunk. He stopped them. The two gentlemen with him were violently struck. He would have been so also, but that a cry was raised that he was the sheriff. A party of volunteers, who were supping in a neighbouring tavern, on hearing what had happened, hurried down, and on the way were joined by great numbers of their comrades. Fortunately when they arrived the soldiers

were withdrawing from the ground. The officers lost two swords and a laced hat, which are in the possession of Sheriff Smith."

Before the night is over the mob seize Mr. Freemantle, and are with difficulty prevented from throwing him into the Liffey.

Next day affidavits are sworn against all seven officers, three of whom obtain bail.

Some papers in the interest of the Castle bring forward, in palliation of the whole affair, two not over-respectable pleas: first, that the gentlemen were all excessively drunk; and, secondly, that Flattery's house was one of no very high character.

The Duke of Rutland (lord-lieutenant) then sends his compliments to Flattery, and hopes that he will come to the Castle to talk the matter over, as he (Flattery) suggested in his letter. But Flattery quietly writes back to say that he never wrote any such letter, and declines to be interviewed at all.

The end of the matter is, that after the form of a military inquiry, the officers, to prevent the matter coming before a jury, pay Mrs. Flattery five hundred pounds, her husband three hundred and fifty, Moffat one hundred pounds, and a "penny boy," whatever sort of an official that may be, fifty pounds, making one thousand pounds in all.

The above-mentioned sacking of the houses at Island Bridge is followed by a horrible form of reprisal, namely, the houghing or ham-stringing of soldiers by the people, generally by the butchers (ham-stringing we may mention, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is a process which deprives the man on whom it is inflicted of the power of using his legs for the rest of his life). General Luttrell brings a bill into the Irish Parliament to grant a pension of twenty pounds a year to every soldier houghed, the money to be levied on the district where the crime was committed. He complains with much indignation that many of his best men had been disabled for life by this hideous process, and mentions that one officer had told his regiment that he would flog every man in it the next time one of their comrades was houghed, if they did not the next day bring him (the colonel) the head of a butcher!

On the part of the civilians the astounding assertion is made that the military were in the habit of houghing themselves, so that they should be either apparently or actually disabled, and so entitled to the pension. It appears that two men at least had this strange offence brought home to them; one

received six hundred lashes for it as soon as he got out of hospital. Another (whose exact punishment is not mentioned) is detected by the acuteness of his sergeant, who finds the man's own mess-knife within twenty yards of the spot where he was taken up maimed and bleeding. These stories are almost incredible, but seem perfectly well authenticated, and severe self-mutilation, such as the cutting off of the fingers on one hand, or putting one eye out, to avoid service, has in all ages been a not unfrequent military offence. An officer, now living, told the present writer that he was with his regiment, early in the present century, when they were marching from Cork to Cove, now Queenstown, to embark for the West Indies. One of the finest young men in the ranks suddenly stepped aside to where an axe was lying, which had been used for chopping wood by the roadside. He deliberately cut off three of his fingers, to escape a few years' service abroad. That the crime exists among soldiers is undeniable, though complete self-disabling for life for the sake of twenty pounds a year does seem a very motiveless act. But in our old Dublin records, houghed many soldiers are, whether by themselves or by the butchers. The officers of the garrison give a performance at the theatre to which an eccentric gentleman of the name of Handy Pemberton, famous for writing inflammatory letters to the Dublin papers, repairs. His object, as he tells us himself, was to "contribute his mite for the relief of men who had been for life rendered incapable of injuring him or any of his fellow-citizens." In this mixed spirit of triumph and charity he harangues the guard which he finds at the theatre door, informing them that they were sent there to murder the people, that if they would mutiny or desert, the people would aid them, but if they did not, the popular spirit against them was such that they must never expect the practice of houghing to cease. Pemberton seems much surprised and not a little aggrieved to find that the result of this truly conciliatory speech is a refusal to permit him to enter. The soldiers, however, do not appear to have offered him any violence. Pemberton, having to appear in court afterwards for some incendiary letter, is contemptuously told by Lord Earlsfort (afterwards first Earl of Clonmel) that he is insane, and it certainly looks rather like it. Be that as it may, he writes tremendous letters to the Volunteers' Journal at least once a week, and that his

presence is very undesirable when any disturbance is to be apprehended is shown by the following circumstance. The Smock-alley Theatre had been closed for some time, so long indeed that the papers sarcastically surmise that the Duke of Rutland pays the manager three hundred pounds a night to keep it shut, as were it open he would be expected to go there, and knew that his appearance would be the signal for an outburst of popular indignation. It is opened at length, and sure enough when his excellency steps into the viceregal box there is a terrific row, and the military immediately seize Handy Pemberton, Esquire, who is sitting in a box near the lord-lieutenant (quiet indeed as yet, but doubtless meditating a slight "harangue" presently), and bundle him out.

This has not been a cheerful chapter. As a relief after these details of ruffianism, we will give the reader the following smart little song, in which the style of Magin has been happily anticipated by some reader of the Volunteers' Journal, in an hour not devoted to politics :

Come, jocund friends, a bottle bring,
And push about the jorum;
We'll talk, and laugh, and quaff, and sing,
Nunc savium amorum.

Whilst we are in a merry mood,
Come sit down ad bibendum,
And if dull care should dare intrude,
We'll to the devil send him.

A moping elf I can't endure,
While I have ready rhino;
And all life's pleasures centre sure
In venere ac vino.

Be merry, then, my friends, I pray,
And pass your time in joco,
For it is pleasant, as they say,
Desipere in loco.

He that loves not a young lass
Is sure an arrant stultus,
And he that will not take a glass
Deserves to be sepultus.

Pleasure, music, love, and wine,
Res valde sunt jucundæ,
And pretty maidens look divine,
Provided ut sunt mundæ.

I hate a snarling, surly fool,
Qui latrat sicut canis,
Who mopes and ever lives by rule,
Drinks water and eats panis.

Give me the man that's always free,
Qui finit molli mero,
The cares of life, whate'er they be,
Whose motto still is Spero.

Death will turn us soon from hence,
Nigerrimas ad sedes,
And all our lands, and all our pence,
Ditabant tunc heredes.

Why should we, then, forbear to sport?
Dum vivimus vivamus,
And when the Fates shall cut us short,
Contenti abeamus.

III.

WHEN we find that there were during the last century more men executed in England and Ireland (not including Scotland) in one year than in the whole of the rest of Europe in four; when we find that by no means the smaller portion of these victims to justice was contributed by Ireland, we are not surprised to find even Irish papers admitting that, for murder and robbery, "our little kingdom exceeds any country in Europe." Among the causes of this terrible state of things may be mentioned the extreme misery of the people; the reckless and improvident habits of the young men of the day, which often drove the son of a squire, or even a squire, to take to the road; and the facilities which the better dressed class of thieves had for introducing themselves into private houses as the favoured lovers of the servant maids. To all these must be added not only the inefficiency, but the connivance and even assistance of the watchmen, who, it was stated by more than one robber on the scaffold, often not only stood by inactive while burglaries were being committed, but even lent the robbers the candles from their lanterns. The plundered not unfrequently, from a mistaken spirit of lenity, let robbers escape, or declined to prosecute them when taken. Nor can we wonder at a kind-hearted man taking this course, when we reflect what earthly hells the Irish prisons were, and at the monstrous state of the law, which virtually provided no punishment between that for an ordinary petty larceny and the gallows.

This last national institution was employed in a way that clearly showed that the authorities were of opinion that "a row of gentlemen suspended would illuminate mankind." The papers lament that "no more excruciating punishment can be devised than death." And certainly the grim monarch seemed to have well-nigh lost all his terrors for the Irish criminal. Spenser tells us that the nation were "very great scorners of death." He meant the glorious death of the battle-field. It appears to have been equally true of the ignominious death of the scaffold.

A young gentleman of the name of Ennis murders his father, and attempts to do the same to his mother, only succeeding, however, in mutilating her frightfully. How does he prepare himself for a sentence which he surely can have had no hope of evading? The young villain, when brought up for trial, is so drunk that he cannot

stand upright in the dock! His execution, for he was, one is glad to think, duly delivered up to the executioner—is the scene of another tragedy. An elevation, on which a number of spectators are stationed, gives way, and many of them are seriously injured, some fatally.

Another time a boy—almost a child—is hanged for robbery. The Irish press informs us, that though a yet younger boy was once executed in England for murder, this is the youngest that ever suffered in any of the three kingdoms for robbery.

Again, we find a father, mother, son, and daughter, all hanged together in Dublin, in 1785, for robbing a bleaching-ground at Kilmainham. The Freeman says this is an unexampled case. Let us hope so.

One great cause of the insecurity of the capital was the want of light at night; even in the most central thoroughfares four or five lamps were considered sufficient to illuminate a long street. And such lamps! The wick, we are told, was ingeniously contracted into the smallest possible space, in order to save oil, which economical object was also furthered by only putting in enough oil to burn till two in the morning, or even sometimes only till eleven at night. "The glimmer of the oil only shows to more advantage the dirt on the glass."

All this "darkness visible" was of course due to jobbery. For we are not to suppose that because the citizens of Dublin did not enjoy the advantages of police or lighting, that they also enjoyed immunity from taxes for police and lighting. By no means; the rates levied for both purposes were enormous.

This economy of light extended even to the Parliament. From the ceiling of the great chamber of the Irish House of Commons hung a splendid chandelier, now to be seen suspended in the Examination Hall of Trinity College. This was of course supposed to be always kept lighted during debates and business. And we have unanimous testimony that the effect of the chamber so lighted was fine in the extreme. But there were very few opportunities afforded of witnessing this effect. As a general rule, we are assured by the Freeman (then a government organ), a couple of candles at the clerk's table, and one at the entrance of each of the corridors, was considered, on ordinary occasions, sufficient illumination.

Talking of light. Did the reader ever hear of "philosophic tapers?" Most likely not. Yet the name is only a sounding title for an early form of lucifer match. "Philo-

sophic tapers are for affording light on all occasions without flint and steel. Twelve of them may conveniently be carried in a tooth-pick case, being in glass tubes hermetically sealed, so that they will last for any period." In fact, they were some preparation of phosphorus—probably like the machines for producing "instantaneous light," described years afterwards by Theodore Hook, with which you generally "burnt your fingers, spoiled all your clothes, and set fire to the whole apparatus, without producing the light you required."

While the prevalence of robbery, murder, &c., in England was commonly attributed to the recent disbanding of regiments in that country, the Freeman calls attention to the fact that, in spite of all complaints about the military in Ireland, only one soldier had been capitally convicted there for a considerable time past. I shall take leave of the reader for the present with two incidents, in both of which I think his sympathy will be with the soldier.

First: A soldier is brought in with his tongue cut out. Though he expressed by signs that he knew who had done the crime, and the motive of it, being unable to write he cannot communicate his knowledge to those about him.

Again: "A poor soldier the other day walking quietly down Dorset-street with his bayonet under his arm, it was snatched from him by a villain who made off. The soldier pursued him, but the robber outran him. On seeing this the soldier sat down and began to cry. On being reproached for his weakness he shook his head and said, 'Oh! there is cause for tears in five hundred lashes.'"

It was undoubtedly rather a "spoony" thing of the soldier to let his weapon be snatched from him. By the way, what was he doing with his bayonet "under his arm"? But who can help pitying the poor wretch, possibly a mere lad, crying with utter horror at the hideous punishment in store for him when he got back to barracks? What short of absolute starvation can have ever induced a man to enlist in those days, when the soldier was, in Henry Fielding's words, "The only slave in a free country; liable to frightful punishments for crimes which no civil tribunal recognises?"

IV.

CAN any of our readers give any information as to either of the under-mentioned antiquarian discoveries?

"Cashel, October 4th, 1783.

"Some time ago a man dreamt that if

he would go to such a part of the Rock of Cashel he would find a treasure. Accordingly, as directed by his vision, he went, and after digging with a crow, for a considerable time, a stone gave way and showed a little cave, neatly plastered about with stucco-work. In the midst of the cave was a small white marble pedestal, and on it a copper box of curious workmanship, locked, on the corner of which lay a key. The man, expecting immense riches, opened the box, which only contained a book covered with copper, and riveted over with five small rivets, which they were obliged to file off in order to open the book; it was found to be written in the year 491, which was plainly engraved on the corner. The leaves are vellum, the writing neat and plain, but such uncommon characters as no person can make out. They are neither Hebrew, Dutch, Greek, Irish, nor shorthand, nor anything intelligible. In the midst of two pages of this wonderful book was written, quite plain, 1767. At the latter part of the book there seemed to be verses. The sentences seemed correctly stopped and ended, and the catch words at the end of each page. We understand the book is to be presented to the library of Trinity College, Dublin."

The episode of the prophetic vision is obviously only put in by way of rider, but one would like to know what became of the mysterious volume.

Again:

Dublin Freeman, January the 12th, 1784. (Copied from the St. James's Chronicle.) Colonel Simeon Thomson, County Kerry (Ireland), to Mr. George Barry Douglas, late of Fowey, in Cornwall, but now of London:

"Last Friday I ordered two men to go to the bottom of a well, which I was sinking at a little shooting-place I call 'Do-as-you-please.' It was dug about sixty feet, but no water appeared. I was resolved, however, to go on as far as I could penetrate, until a spring was found. We dug accordingly forty-eight feet further, when something like vapour coming up, we drew up the men and desisted about an hour. When the smoke ceased the two men again descended and penetrated about three feet more. They found on the north-east a hollow way, covered over in a very curious manner with sticks and clay. They had the courage to enter, for there was room sufficient for a man to walk almost upright. They proceeded for about ten yards when they heard a noise, something like the chattering of a flock of jays. This frightened

them so much that they returned, and we drew them up. I then descended with my brother Stephen, and we went through this subterranean passage into a large space. We found a most curious stone coffin, of an enormous size. With some difficulty we got off the lid, and saw a human form, twelve feet eleven inches and three quarters long, all but the head and neck tightly swathed in a pitched skin of a large animal. On touching this with my finger it fell into a kind of whitish ashes, and separated near the sternum. The rest remained firm. We returned in amazement, got up in the bucket, and sent the men down. The entrance was widened, so as to admit seven people, and thus, by the assistance of pulleys, &c., raised the coffin and got it up. The skin in which it was wrapped became by degrees from a black to a white colour. We opened it, and the body and arms of a woman appeared quite perfect and sound. On the thumb of the right hand was a very curious cornelian in the form of a ring, and on it, as well as on the lid of the coffin, were these ciphers, o.o.o.l.o.x.x.x. We then put the body in spirits of wine, and intend to send it to Dublin as a present to the University. We could never discover, nor can we form any conjecture, from what cause the noise which the men heard arose, except it was what their fears created. There are many traditional stories of giants in this part of Ireland. This discovery makes them all facts among the common people, who are ascending and descending the well from sunrise to sunset every day."

FUNERAL RITES IN CHINA.

THE funeral ceremonies of the Flowery Land differ so materially from our own, and are so little understood in this country, that the following description of the manner in which they are conducted may prove acceptable to the reader.

It may be well to mention that white, not black, is the mourning colour in China, and that mourners wear white clothes, white girdles, white shoes, and even braid white cotton into their queues or pigtails.

The Chinese coffin is generally very solid in its construction, and is broader and deeper at the head than at the foot, sloping straight from one end to the other; the lid is not flat, but raised all down the centre; the seams are always well caulked, and the whole is carefully oiled several times, and finally covered with a black

varnish. Well-to-do people repeat these processes once a week for a long period. A common price to pay for a good, ordinarily strong coffin is from two to three pounds, but the price varies according to the nature of the material employed and its ornamentation, and we have heard of fifty and even a hundred times as much as this sum having been paid for a single coffin. Of course, among the very poor classes a much cheaper and slighter one is used, though even they do their utmost to bury their dead in such coffins as we have described. The charitable societies for rescuing life, which exist at nearly all towns on the sea coast and on the large rivers, provide coffins gratis, when their boats bring in dead bodies, but they are made very slightly, and of the commonest wood.

On the death of a father, slips of mourning (that is, white) paper are affixed to each side of the door of the house, and in the higher ranks a board is exhibited there, giving the name, age, dignities, &c., of the departed one. Notice of the death is at once sent to the descendants of the deceased, who all forthwith assemble at the house, and range themselves on the floor round the body, weeping and wailing, and attired in funeral garb; the immediate relatives, too, come and condole with the afflicted family. In some parts it is customary for the friends and intimate acquaintances of the deceased, who have been notified of his death, to bring pieces of white cloth or silk to place over the dead body. We ourselves once received a notification of this nature from the general in command of the Tartar troops at the port where we were residing in Central China, but as his mother died at Moukden, in Manchuria, we were unable to take any part in her funeral obsequies.

If the family be settled in any part away from the neighbourhood of their ancestral burying place, it becomes necessary for them to seek out a lucky spot for the burial of their deceased relative. In many cases the coffin is kept for years in the room where the ancestral tablets are, and sometimes it is temporarily laid in a sort of dead-house, hired or constructed for the occasion, until it can be transported to the original sepulchre of the family, or until a lucky spot can be discovered. The Chinese are very superstitious on this point, and even in times of epidemic will often insist on retaining coffins in their houses, and, as far as we are aware, there is no sanitary or other authority to interfere

and protect the health of the community. Many will, doubtless, say that all danger on this score is sufficiently obviated by the care with which most coffins are prepared; but the evidence of our senses, in a cholera season at Peking, has taught us that the contrary is frequently the case. Families at the very bottom of the social scale, for economy's sake, often inter their deceased relations within a few days of their death, but this practice is much looked down upon, and is considered a proof of the parties being sunk in the lowest depths of penury, as well as wanting in due respect to the departed. Professors of the art of Fêng-shui (literally wind and water), or geomancy, are consulted on the subject of a lucky place for sepulture. In Central and Southern China the summits and sloping sides of uncultivated hills are the most favourite spots, especially if near water, and with a south aspect. Coffins are also buried in fields, more particularly in the north, and, if our memory serves us, we have seen more than one large cemetery filled with low graves, and surrounded by dwarf mud fences, in the flat country outside the walls of Peking. Again to the west of Chinkiang—once a flourishing city on the bank of the river Yang-tze, at the entrance to the southern portion of the Grand Canal—we have rambled over hills, where the graves are as thick as they well can be; many of these, in shape very much like a horse-shoe, are even now still well kept, and carefully tended by pious relatives of the departed, although the town itself is sadly fallen from the position it enjoyed before the rebels held it, and levelled its prosperous suburbs with the ground. Rich families often spend large sums of money over their burjal-places, adorning them with life-size figures of various animals in marble, but the remains of friendless and poor strangers are deposited in any waste and vacant piece of ground with merely a slip of wood to mark the spot. All classes in the country, however, do their very best to have as showy a place of sepulture for their dead as they possibly can, and to obtain this end they are willing to make great sacrifices.

Soon after the death, the eldest son of the deceased, supported by friends, proceeds with two copper "cash,"* and an earthenware bowl or vessel to the city moat or a neighbouring stream or well to "buy water" (mai shui) to wash the corpse with. In "buying the water" the coins are simply

* "Cash" is the name given by foreigners to the only native coin in use in China.

thrown into the well or stream, and this ceremony can only be properly performed by the eldest son, or, in default of his presence at the obsequies, by his son, rather than by a younger son of the deceased; if there be no children or grandchildren, then the duty devolves on cousins, who succeed to all property. When the face and body have been washed, the corpse is dressed in the best clothes the family can procure, often in four or five suits, and put into its coffin, which is commonly placed on trestles. It now lies in state for a time, and a wooden tablet is set up bearing the name of the deceased, and his descendants prostrate themselves before it every day during the first seven days of mourning. A similar inscription to that on this tablet is afterwards erected at the grave, and is generally carved on stone, though the poor use wood.

In the case of poor families the sons frequently go round to their relatives and friends to collect money to defray the expenses attending a funeral, and they are generally successful, as the superstitious Chinese are much afraid of incurring the ill-will of the spirit of the departed.

On the day of interment, usually three weeks after the death, a meal is set out near the coffin, for the deceased's spirit to partake of. Then the mourners, first the men, and afterwards the women, holding sticks of incense in their hands, kneel down before the corpse, and bow their heads to the ground. They are all clothed in mourning attire, and wear white bandages round their heads. After this the funeral procession takes place, and the order is somewhat as follows. First come lanterns and musicians, occasionally playing a funeral dirge, then the ancestral tablet of the deceased, carried in a sedan-chair, next a man scattering "paper or mock money" to propitiate the spirits of the invisible world, behind him are relations and friends, then the coffin, followed by the sons and grandsons, weeping and attired in mourning, and in their rear come the women of the family in sedan-chairs, wailing and crying piteously. Last of all are persons bearing the oblations that have to be made at the grave. If the deceased has held any official position, other tablets, besides the one above mentioned, are to be seen carried in the procession, setting forth his titles and dignities.

When all have arrived at the grave, which is deep, if the nature of the ground will admit of it, the coffin is consigned to its last resting-place, crackers are let off, and prayers offered up; next pieces of

paper, supposed to represent clothes, money, and other things which the deceased's spirit may require in the world of shadows, are solemnly burned. At the time of burial, when the coffin is lowered into the grave, the sons, or whoever may be the chief mourners, at once sprinkle some earth over it, and the grave is filled up. The coffin of a father is deposited on the left side of the grave, being the place of honour, and the space on the right side is left for the mother. The ancestral tablet is brought home from the funeral in the sedan-chair, and various articles of food are placed before it; those present again make prostrations, and by strict custom the same ceremonies ought to be repeated for seven weeks. At the conclusion of the funeral rites, it is usual for the mourners to partake, of an entertainment, from which it is reasonable for us to suppose that their grief is commonly of such a nature as to be easily comforted, and that the donning of the "garb of woe" is as much (if not more) a matter of form and usage with the children of the Flowery Land as it frequently is with us "Outside Barbarians."

The full term of mourning for parents is nominally three years, but practically twenty-seven months, and for the first month after their decease the mourners are not allowed to shave their heads; they consequently soon assume a wild and unkempt appearance. The very strict place offerings of food, &c., twice a year at their parents' graves, but our own experience goes to show that the customs of the Chinese in this respect are, occasionally at any rate, more exact in theory than in practice. Some five or six years ago we knew an educated Chinaman, who would discourse at great length on filial piety and such-like virtues, but who nevertheless confessed to us that he had not been to visit his mother's grave for ten years, although she was buried at a place only fifteen miles distant from where he had been living for a long period.

Etiquette requires that a widow should mourn the death of her husband for three whole years, and even after that period she is somewhat restricted in her choice of colours, red being forbidden her. Should a widow marry again, which is not very frequently the case, for the practice is looked down upon, she, of course, divests herself of all marks and symbols of woe and mourning. Men, however, are not expected to be quite so self-denying and particular in mourning the death of their wives, for they sometimes marry again be-

fore they have been widowers for a full year. Should a man's wife be unlucky enough to present him with a "pledge of affection" during the term of mourning for his parent, it is looked upon as highly improper and disrespectful to the deceased.

When an emperor dies all officials go into mourning, and remove the buttons and tassels from their hats; they are also required to perform certain ceremonies in the temples; and they cease, for the time being, to use vermilion paste for their seals of office, employing blue instead. Proclamations are issued by the local authorities all over the empire, by which the common people are called upon to let their hair grow for a hundred days; marriages are not allowed to take place, but practically they are winked at, if shorn of all the usual pomp and ceremony. The theatres, too, are closed for a long period, at any rate in Peking and its vicinity, though after a time this order is not insisted on at a distance from the capital.

A SICILIAN STORY.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V. RANSOMED.

It was the afternoon of the day fixed for Pasquale's deliverance. The glaring sun poured into the Osteria del Pellicano so fiercely that it seemed as if it would burn a hole wherever it shone. The osteria was filled with the usual company of peasants, buffalo-drivers, and stone-cutters, who assemble in such places for their mid-day meal and the siesta after it. It had the low ceiling common to such localities, and the usual foul atmosphere impregnated with stale tobacco, sour wine, and greasy soup.

Outside, stretched lazily on the ground, a group of boys who had already dined were playing at their national game, "morra." Their brown faces were all a-glow, and their black eyes gleamed, and their white teeth flashed as they called out the numbers, "uno," "quattro," "tre," "cinque," with hands held out, fingers thrown up, jerking out their words with a dissonant regularity.

Into this osteria entered, about five o'clock, a man rather better dressed than the other guests, and looking infinitely better fed. He called for some macaroni, and looked about him. Two of the men already present, and who were seated in the darkest corner of the room, nudged each other, and then one of them lounged up to the table occupied by the new comer. He looked up.

"Scusi," said the other with more courtesy than could have been expected from his ragamuffin exterior, and leaning over the table, with his back to the rest of the persons assembled, he raised his hand. In it was a paper. The man at the table tapped the breast-pocket of his coat. Then the other touched his belt and muttered:

"Fac et spera." The sign of the cross was made in reply. After that the man who had left his seat returned to his companion; they paid for what they had eaten and walked out of the osteria. The boys stopped their game for a moment, and looking after them, muttered most unflattering epithets, and made the sign by which Italians think they avert the evil eye.

About a quarter of an hour afterwards the last comer rose, paid his bill, and went out in the same direction as the others. The boys again stopped their game and looked after him with that half-pitying, half-contemptuous expression with which a fat fly is seen blundering into a hungry spider's web. They shrugged their shoulders and looked as if they washed their hands of all responsibility in the business, and then went on with their amusement.

About a quarter of a mile from the osteria, on the road towards Palmo, the three men met and spoke. The words were few, but pregnant with meaning.

"You have the ransom?"

"Yes."

"Here is the receipt."

They went on a few steps, passed some bushes which were massed together, below a bank which jutted out from the wall of hills to their right; there was a whistle, and then a scramble.

"Here is your man," and Pasquale was pushed towards the well-dressed stranger.

"Where am I?" said Pasquale, pulling down a bandage.

"Free!" said his deliverer, giving him his hand; "free, thanks to the good Siora Rosa of the Belfry Tower."

So much for the syndic's secret. The imprudence of divulging it was apparent at once. At the sound of that name, some unseen witness of the scene made an exclamation, which might have been surprise, joy, malignant triumph, or a mixture of both.

"Oh, Gasparo!" called out poor Pasquale, "is it true, am I actually free? really out of the power of those—gentlemen?"

Poor Pasquale looked a pitiable object. His teeth chattered, his white lips quivered,

"Make haste—it is late."

"And dark—oh Heavens!"

As they spoke, a shot was fired above their heads, and high upon the hill they could hear a fine tenor voice singing gleefully Santa Lucia.

When the syndic had got Pasquale into his own room, he began to question him. Pasquale's usual garrulity had been terrified into silence. His mutilated hand had been the very least of his sufferings. He had been seized on his way home from Priola. He was knocked down, stunned, robbed of his earnings, and nearly stripped, then dragged along in an opposite direction from whence he came. At night he was thrust, bound head and foot, into a cave or covered ditch. He was starved, beaten, made to march, pricked on by bayonets; at night the refuse of their food was thrown to him. "Oh, they were wretches, more cruel than Turks and heathens, and yet said their aves and paternosters with the same regularity as good Christians." One day they told him they were going to send for his ransom, and cut off his finger. He expostulated with them when he heard the sum asked for him, a poor artisan, but they silenced him with blows, and told him they knew what they were about.

"Did you see any other prisoners?" asked the syndic.

"Yes, but I never slept two nights in the same place, so that I am rather confused about them. Once, for a few hours, I was thrown into a cave, where I found a poor fellow, with long grey beard and grey hair, chained to the ground."

"Who was he?"

"He would not tell me. He could not say how long he had been a prisoner, for days were like years in that hell, and with those devils. Agony and rage had brought on a brain fever, and he had been delirious mad for months. They had tortured him to reveal where his family was, but he had balked them of their wicked will; and swore he would continue to do so. He spoke of an 'infame,' who was their captain, and that morning, when they had last thrust him his filthy food, they had jeered at him, and told him his turn was coming."

"Who is leader of the band, and did you see him?"

"Satanello; and on the last day of all, a handsome, richly-dressed fellow began to ask me questions as to the inhabitants here. I mentioned the rich widow of the Belfry Tower, and said she came from Torre Mela, upon which he started and

"This becomes interesting," thought the syndic, and he cleared his throat with exultation. Pasquale saw that the syndic was deeply interested, and with the quick instinct of his countrymen, waxed eloquent, and gave a great many dramatic touches to his dialogue with the handsome brigand.

"He asked about the children, and if the girls were pretty; he had heard, he said, one Lucia was pretty; he had something strange and husky in his voice when he spoke. I told him I did not know them well, but I believe there was a pretty biondina among them, who was very, very delicate. He looked at me and then left me; God knows I could think of little else but myself, and cared little about his questions; I was thinking how I could kill myself before I was cut to pieces, when I was called before them and told my ransom was paid. Madonna! I reeled with joy; they blindfolded me, and tramp, tramp, tramp, dragged me up and down, till we came to an osteria; they thrust me into a cantina, and there I waited hours, and then more tramping. I was then told to stand still, and not to pull off my bandage for ten minutes. 'If you attempt to move it before the time agreed, you shall be stabbed to the heart.' They are men of their word," added Pasquale, with grim humour, "and so I obeyed. I suddenly heard a cry like a civetta (owl), I pulled down my bandage, and, to my amazement, Gasparo stood before me."

"So far well," said the syndic, "but now, figlio mio, you have to do with me. Listen to me: if you utter one syllable of what you have just said to me, save in confession, I will send you back to Satanello."

"Santissima!"

"Above all, to Siora Rosa; you had best not see her."

"But I must thank her."

"Let me look at your finger, Pasquale," said the syndic, in a most irrelevant manner; "if that finger does not soon fester and inflame, I am a fool."

"Then my hand must be cut off. Dio buono!"

"Your hand, ass, your arm; perhaps even your life will not be saved."

Pasquale turned livid.

"Take my advice, go to bed, stay there for a week's riposo, my Teresa shall take you soup, and your wife must put linseed on your hand every two hours. Drink no wine and eat no meat, and you will pull through."

Pasquale was dismissed. The syndic

closed the door after him, and clapped his hands.

CHAPTER VI. LUCIA.

PASQUALE implicitly obeyed the syndic's orders. Rosa went to see him, but his wife told Rosa it was impossible to disturb him. He was feverish, and it would excite him too much to see his benefactress. The villagers knew now that it was Rosa's money which had liberated Pasquale, and the comments on her generosity were endless. "It was well to do it." "It was wrong to do it." "Where would it all end?" "The brigands would be down on her," &c.

The syndic had made up his plans. He was certain the handsome brigand was Rosa's husband. The soldiers he had sent for were daily arriving in twos and threes, disguised as vintagers. He gave orders that the belfry-house should be watched day and night. Ten days passed. Poor unconscious Rosa was vainly endeavouring to see Pasquale, and hastening her arrangements for departure. She had sold most of the furniture, but had reserved the plate. That and a good deal of money in actual coin were in the house, placed, according to the primitive custom of Italians, in sacks under her bed. The syndic had promised her an escort whenever she chose to go. He would have promised her a band of elephants if she had asked for them. He was so docile to her least wish, that she thought him as kind as her friend the priest at Torre Mela.

The syndic was rather glad her preparations for departure were known throughout Leonforte, as by that means the news would reach the ears he hoped would listen to them. He anticipated that the husband would be sure to seek the wife before she left. His men were all placed. Once or twice during these ten days Rosa had been roused in her unquiet sleep by the sound of a stealthy step among the bushes towards Valle Nera. She would jump up and look out, but nothing could be seen.

One evening, as she stood on the platform looking down the Valle Nera, her eye noticed something glittering on the ground. With a perfect spasm of the heart she recognised, as she picked it up, a medal of Lucia's. Maso had taken it off her neck after her death and worn it round his own. Rosa looked and looked, but there were certain little marks on it which identified it. Each brought a memory and a pang. This little notch had been made by the darling's tiny teeth, when she had

bitten it in a paroxysm of infantine anger; this was from a fall when she first tried her tottering little feet; this by Rosa's knitting needle, as the child had sprung from her father's knee to hers. Each little event was registered in the calendar of a mother's love. How had it fallen there? It was unaccountable.

That night Rosa could not sleep. Diomira was beside her. She looked at her. The girl was the very image of Lucia, and round the slender neck was a medal, the fac-simile of the one Rosa held in her hand, Lucia's. Rosa shuddered. Was Maso alive and near her? or was he dead? and had his murderers dropped it as a warning or threat?

While these thoughts kept her awake, she heard a sound outside. She listened, after an interval it was repeated. She rose noiselessly and looked out. All was still. The moon was bright, and the white splendour of the milky-way gave a soft lucidity to the sky. As she looked out from the back window towards Rocca Nera, she thought she heard a gasp or groan. She waited, heard nothing more, and returned to bed. Her heart beat as if it would suffocate her, and she was conscious of an inexplicable but terrible sense of expectation. The agitation in her mind seemed to penetrate through Diomira's, for in a few minutes she too was awake.

"What is the matter, Diomira?"

"I have been dreaming; I am so frightened. I thought I heard father's voice. It is so warm to-night. I must get up. I must breathe the air."

She rose, lit the lamp, went to the window and looked out. She had nothing on but her white night-dress; her long, fair hair hung round her throat and veiled her shoulders. She looked pale in the moonlight as she bent over; she must have been distinctly visible below.

Rosa had risen with her, and stood beside her.

"Now, darling, go back to bed, it is so late—ah! again——"

As she spoke something like a hoarse scream was heard from Valle Nera, then rapidly ascending steps, and a voice shouted out with an oath, "Call her." Suddenly a torch flared up, and threw its light on two men in a mortal struggle, while sharp, abrupt, cleaving the silent night, like a cry from another world, a terrible voice called out, "Lucia, Lucia!" It was the echo of that never-forgotten cry which was heard by Rosa at Torre Mela on the morning of Lucia's death.

It was answered by a discharge of guns. "My God!" sobbed Rosa, as she sank on her knees; "it is his voice—it is his spirit."

The next moment the great bell of the tower rung out like a tocsin. The terrified Diomira had flown to it, and was pulling it wildly. It overpowered every other sound. Then came shots, terrible imprecations, oaths, threats, and the platform, but now so solitary beneath the moonlight, was swarming with men in mortal combat. Soldiers were pursuing, and brigands flying down the rocks. Every now and then was heard a thud as a shot toppled a man over into the precipice. The bell still sounded on, and torches and lights were coming from the village. But they were too late. The syndic's ambuscade had been most successful. The brigands were flying, the soldiers victorious. He had won his prize!

The door of the house was burst open, and the syndic, followed by a score of villagers, entered. They rushed up-stairs. The children were all clinging to their mother, but she was still on her knees. She had never stirred since that awful voice called Lucia!

Daylight had dawned. The throng increased every minute.

"What was it?"

"The house had been attacked by brigands."

"Had they entered?"

"No, the spirit of Rosa's husband had appeared and given the alarm."

"The house had been alarmed and all were saved?"

"No," said the syndic, strutting about; "I was prepared for them. My men have watched this house ten days. Whoever captures Satanello, dead or alive—and I know he was among them"—glancing at Rosa—"will gain a thousand crowns. What is the day of the month?"

Ten minutes afterwards some soldiers were seen scrambling up towards the house, carrying what seemed a corpse. They laid their burden on the kitchen floor and went up-stairs to make their report to the syndic. He turned to Rosa.

"Go down," he said to her; "they want wine for the man; he is dying."

He followed her as she tottered down-stairs.

"Rosa!"

In a moment she was on her knees beside him.

The wasted features, the long grey hair, the emaciated form, could not disguise

from her who it was lying all but senseless at her feet. Yes, thanks to Heaven! once more, once more united, though in the very jaws of death, she and Maso were together!

"My love, my love, my love!" She could only ejaculate these words as she held him to her breast with a rocking motion, as if she held a child there.

"Who is that man?" asked Don Vincenzo Maderno.

"My husband!"

"Satanello! who would have thought," muttered the syndic, "that that excellent woman could so love a bandit, even if he is her husband."

"Satanello is Tonino Voghera," feebly murmured the dying man. "He took me prisoner on my way here; he has kept me and tortured me ever since, because I would not—I would not——" his voice broke and his eyes closed.

"Maso, why did you not send for me?"

"No, no!" The negatives rose almost to a shriek as they were uttered with the passion of a dying man.

"But why did you not call me now?—you called Lucia; I thought it was your spirit; if I had thought it was you, I would have appeared. Tonino might have had all, if he had left me you."

"Lucia," he murmured, with tremulous lips. "I would have died rather than call you, as he wished me to do. I told you, I would never call you."

"Come, children, kiss him, my darlings, he is your father."

The boys crept up to him and then hid their faces on her shoulder. Diomira and Menica bent over him. The fast glazing eyes opened, once more Maso's face flushed a little as he looked at Diomira. A smile of almost womanly sweetness passed over the rugged features. "I called you, Lucia," he murmured, and with that loved name on his lips, he passed away, and Rosa held what had been, but was no longer, Maso, to her breast. She seemed transfigured. She closed the dear eyes herself. She smoothed the grey hair, she composed the attenuated limbs; she was again, as by a miracle, her calm placid self. The doubts, the hopes, the fears were over. He was dead; but she had seen him once more, and the ineffable grace of reunion had robbed Death of his sting.

"But Satanello!" said the syndic. He could wait no longer, he tried to descend

the ravine after his men. The shots were getting fainter and fainter. Presently they ceased and a horn was sounded. After a pause the soldiers were seen returning with a prisoner. It was Satanello, alias Tonino. Short shrift was given him. He was shot before noon. He confessed before his death that he had captured Maso two days after he had left Torre Mela. Maso's rage had brought on brain fever, which had ended in temporary insanity. Tonino had then left the band on business connected with a Bourbon reactionary plot, and had only returned after Pasquale had been taken. When he heard that Rosa was at the Belfry Tower, he resolved on taking it by a coup de main. He had never heard of Lucia's death, for Maso had maintained, in spite of barbarous tortures, absolute silence. He resolved at last to take Maso with him to the Belfry Tower, so that the sight of the home which held his wife and children might vanquish him, and that in his yearning weakness he would call upon Rosa to open to him; but Maso was not to be betrayed. The resemblance of Diomira to Lucia only forced out that terrible cry from his lips, and Rosa had been effectually deceived.

It was Tonino who had thrown down the medal. He had torn it off Maso's neck. He knew it was Lucia's, and thought Maso wore it as a charm. If Lucia found it, he felt she would understand he was near, and perhaps she would herself open to him.

The syndic received the money for Satanello's capture. He paid Pasquale's debt to Rosa with part of it. He put into the next lottery, chose the number of the day of the month, that of Tonino's age and birth, and the mystic numbers which correspond to sudden death—and he lost his stake!

Rosa left the Belfry Tower and returned to Torre Mela. She never forgave the syndic his ambushade. If the soldiers had not been there, Maso might have escaped. Alas! does not all human hope depend on an "if." She recovered her beauty. Her white hair—it was white as snow from the day Maso died—made an argent aureole to a face which sorrow, nobly borne, had sublimed into saintliness. She had many offers of marriage, but refused them all. Her dead Maso was her first, her last love. Had he not died to save her and her children from plunder and death?

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBBON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XII. I ADVANCE TOWARDS MAN'S ESTATE.

AFTER the departure of Mr. Fane Maulverer, life at the Down Farm seemed to sink back and settle again into its old somewhat monotonous routine. If I sought more adventures I found them not, either at the Dark Tower or elsewhere. Time passed, and we went on in our "usual way," as it is called; changing imperceptibly nevertheless, and the sum of change mounting up considerably as the years lapsed. We grew older for one thing. My uncle stooped more as he walked, and his shoulders owned a rounder outward curve; he complained of a slight deafness on one side, and was much troubled as to the proper position of the candlestick when he tried to read the newspaper in the evening. There was a look as of a further fall of snow upon my mother's braided hair, and I noted even upon Kem's rotund, rubicund face, especially in the neighbourhood of the temples, wrinkles and lines, like the starring of a cracked window-pane. For my part I had much increased in stature; from a stunted boy I was becoming a youth of fair proportions, thin and bony, with exposed wrists and ankles, owing to my limbs lengthening without regard to the limits of my clothes.

The neighbourhood had, I think, become reconciled to the fact of my existence, there being no longer occasion for concern as to the state of my health. For I was now really well and strong. But my "goings on," as my manner of life was termed, still furnished materials for local criticism. It was still commonly said about Purrington that "Mrs. Nightingale's boy would be all

the better for having some of his nonsense knocked out of him." Which, very likely, was true enough.

But at Purrington very small deviations from conventional ways were sufficient to establish a repute for oddness, and therefore to be condemned as nonsensical. For in our district the new and the strange were viewed with distrust and objection. The farmers' sons about us were usually brought up pretty much as plough-boys; they laboured in the ranks for a considerable time before promotion came to them. As I have already stated, my education, under the care of Mr. Bygrave, had been the subject of some comment. A like proceeding had been until then unheard of in those parts; and the wonder as to what Farmer Orme could be thinking about to permit of such a thing, had known little abatement. A disposition prevailed, however, to attribute to my mother's unwise intervention the peculiar system that had been adopted in my regard. Farmer Jobling was severely satirical as to the absurdities "a hen with one chick" was capable of, and spoke slightly of the wisdom of women when applied otherwise than to the affairs of the nursery, the laundry, and the kitchen. It was well-known, however, that the farmer, for all his freedom of speech, was despotically ruled at home by the good dame his wife.

And presently I was the occasion of a still further outrage upon our public opinion. Some extraordinarily high wave of misfortune had flung upon our shores, so far inland as Steepleborough, an elderly Frenchman who called himself Monsieur Isidore Dubois, but who permitted it to be understood that such was not in truth his name, but had been assumed by him by reason of certain political complications of which he

had been the victim. Monsieur Dubois one morning astonished the readers of our local paper by advertising in its columns his desire to instruct pupils in his native tongue, in drawing, fencing, music, and other accomplishments. This seemed to me quite a providential opportunity for improving myself in art. I had, with Mr. Manleverer's aid, and with perseverance on my own part, overcome many rudimentary difficulties. I had even arrived at the point of appreciating how little I really knew, how deficient were all my endeavours. It was a genuine step on the road of education. I longed for further qualified assistance. I besought my mother that I might become Monsieur Dubois's pupil.

"Let me see your drawings, Duke," she said calmly, and something sadly, I thought. I produced a pile of sketches of all kinds, attempts at portraiture (one of Reube, sitting on the down with his crook in his hand, and his sheep-dog beside him, I thought decidedly successful), studies of landscape and still life, and designs in great part drawn from memory or imagination.

My mother examined these performances of mine most attentively, and made many inquiries concerning them. I had never known her to be so much interested before in the subject.

She remained silent for some time after she had completed her examination of the drawings. It was plain to me that she was no longer thinking about them. She roused herself at length with an effort, and said, as she softly pressed my hand, "I have not the skill to judge, Duke. But it shall be as you wish."

My uncle, who had been standing by, silently scrutinising a sketch now and then through his double glasses, turned away and busied himself with his circular snuff-box. Whatever he may have thought of my project, he did not oppose it, my mother's sanction having been secured.

So I became Monsieur Dubois's pupil, visiting him twice a week at his humble lodging at the back of the town-hall, Steepleborough. On market-days I went in and came out with my uncle in his chaise. At other times I generally walked, getting a lift now and then upon one of the carts of the Down Farm, or of neighbours, conveying "produce" to the town.

Monsieur Dubois was a little lean old gentleman, swarthy-complexioned, bright-eyed, and heavy-browed, wearing hair-powder, and even cherishing a diminu-

tive queue, which seemed to frisk about the collar of his coat like the tail of a gambolling lamb in sunny weather. His manners boasted an old-fashioned redundancy of elegance, and were sometimes so excessive in their laborious grace, as, from the point of view of an English boy, to verge a little upon the ludicrous. Indeed, the Frenchman was commonly voted "monkeyfied" by his neighbours in the town of Steepleborough. Farmer Jobling could with difficulty restrain his laughter whenever chance brought him into the presence of Monsieur Dubois. "He minds me allays of one of those dressed up baboons I've seen in wild beast shows at fair time," said the farmer. "But they mounseers, I take it, are mostly like that. It's no wonder from what I can see that we've allays licked 'em. He's no better than a hudmedud (scarecrow)." To the farmer I traced a rumour current at this period to the effect that I was about to become a dancing-master. Mr. Jobling was indeed more critical upon my receiving instruction from Monsieur Dubois, than he had been in the case of my studying under Mr. Bygrave.

Monsieur Dubois was really a most accomplished gentleman, however, if he had undertaken the duties of tuition rather late in life. He was very poor, and might perhaps have paid stricter attention to personal cleanliness. His wardrobe was in a decayed condition, and his supply of body linen was insufficient. But those were times when soap and water and brushing and combing were less valued by the world than in later days. He found English ways of life very trying, I suspect, and had a difficulty in providing himself with the kind of food suited to his foreign constitution. The rough fare of Steepleborough was to him abominable. He seemed to me to subsist chiefly upon pinches of scented snuff contained in a ragged twist of paper.

He spoke English execrably, and his deficiency in this respect was perhaps an advantage to me. It compelled me to acquire his language as rapidly as I could; otherwise there seemed little chance of our ever being able to understand each other. Such knowledge of French, therefore, as I can now boast I owe entirely to Monsieur Dubois. He also introduced me to the masters of French literature, and laboured to impart to me his enthusiastic sense of their merits. He succeeded fairly in this respect, though I have lived to find his taste impeached and his judgments pro-

nounced narrow and obsolete. Even then I was unable to regard Racine and Corneille as superior to Shakespeare; an opinion he often proclaimed. But then I discovered that he really knew little or nothing of the English poet he was denouncing, in pursuance of the example of his admired Voltaire, as uncouth, barbaric, and even ridiculous.

I also learnt fencing from Monsieur Dubois. I confess I have not found the accomplishment particularly useful. Still I enjoyed acquiring it. I had not yet completely outgrown my early chivalresque fancies, and Childe Roland seemed still a character I might possibly be called on to resume at some period of my career. I must own, however, that I could no longer view Overbury Hall as my Dark Tower. That delusion was exhausted.

But it was in the matter of artistic instruction that I derived most benefit from Monsieur Dubois. He was himself but an amateur, as he admitted, still his taste and skill were indisputable. His teaching was rather that of the school of David, of whom, if I rightly recollect, he stated that he had been for some brief period a pupil. He laid stress upon classicality of design, even to frigid attitudinising; disdained the charms of colour, and was inclined to limit the scope of art by restricting its choice of subject and method of treatment. In short, he advocated academic views that have now considerably fallen in general estimation. But his insistence upon correctness of drawing as the very essence of art, was much to the purpose, and of real worth.

It must be understood that I was after all but an immature student, proceeding under serious disadvantages from lack of appliances, deficiency of space in our studio—Monsieur Dubois's little parlour—and from the difficulty of obtaining models and works of art to imitate. Then my lessons were comparatively few and of brief duration. Still I made progress and won the applause of my master.

I may not linger more over these early years of mine, nor descant at length upon such boyish events as my first introduction to sport—my killing my first partridge, my first riding to hounds. Yet these pleasures were not denied to me, and for awhile I enjoyed them very fully. Ours was a sporting country, and horses, dogs, and guns were as necessaries of life to us. Even my uncle, though age had now somewhat tamed his zeal, and use had cloyed his appetite,

had been a keen sportsman in his youth. He was now content with a little hunting in the season when the hounds met anywhere near Purrington, and, mounted on his old grey horse, was usually to be seen holding his place very fairly in the chase. In his character of landowner he subscribed, not profusely but sufficiently, to the funds of the hunt, and was always most anxious that a fox should be found in what was known as Orme's Plantation—a thick belt of firs and gorse that skirted his farm in the direction of Steepleborough; and he shot hares and partridges in his own coverts, if with some abatement of his earlier enthusiasm: his sporting tastes having come under the control, perhaps, of his sense of the needs of his larder. As time went on he grew more and more devoted to the affairs of his farm, and his unwillingness to be drawn beyond the boundaries of his own land, even for sporting purposes, certainly increased. At the same time he maintained his interest in the doings of the county hunt, took note of its more famous runs, and was fond of comparing these with past achievements in which he had shared. He took much pains to instruct me in the arts and pleasures of sport. I was a reasonably apt pupil. In this portion of my education, I noted, my mother took little interest.

So I advanced towards man's estate.

CHAPTER XIII. DRIFTFORD FAIR.

I WAS soon to lose the benefit of Mr. Bygrave's services as my tutor. Old Mr. Gascoigne died, and a new rector came in his stead to Purrington. The church was hung with black, and genuine grief prevailed throughout the parish for the loss of its veteran minister. It was true that he had not for some years, owing to his manifold infirmities, been able to fulfil the duties of his office; still his demise was to us like the removal of some ancient landmark, or some long familiar and cherished object in our landscape. The new rector plainly stated that he did not need, that he could not afford, the aid of a curate. So Mr. Bygrave prepared to depart from Purrington.

He gave me his pocket Horace—it was crowded with manuscript annotations in his cramped, minute, scarcely decipherable handwriting, and was in his eyes his most precious possession—as a farewell gift. In his stiff, silent, ungainly way he manifested much distress at leaving us. For my part I own to feeling more grief upon the occasion than I could at one time have be-

lieved possible. I was conscious perhaps that I had insufficiently valued him. He had dragged me, as a ship might trail its anchor after it, through expansive seas of classical lore. I had but hindered and clogged his progress, while from my position beneath the surface I had been powerless to share or even to comprehend his pleasures. Yet sometimes I had been, as it were, hoisted from below, and, thanks to his strenuous exertions on my behalf, enabled, almost forced, to see, and to learn something. I often think now of the opportunities I wasted. More I might certainly have done if I had not weighed so heavily upon his strength, hardening my heart and deafening my ears to his teaching. But a man's judgment and taste are not to be looked for in a schoolboy. In the matter of teaching, children are much like parrots. Their preceptors can but labour to strengthen their memories; their minds are unimpressible and out of reach, if they are to be called minds at all. Mr. Bygrave left me, after all his efforts, imperfectly educated; yet it is due to him to say that I had acquired some measure of learning, of the kind he most approved. That I had advanced far beyond all the youth of my neighbourhood in this respect, need not count for much. The educational standard about us in those days was decidedly low.

It was soon after the departure of Mr. Bygrave—he had undertaken temporary work as a curate in an adjoining county—that I also lost the help of Monsieur Dubois, and my lessons in art came to an end. He stated, what was indeed evident enough, that he could barely subsist in Steepleborough, his means were so scanty, and his pupils so few. He had determined upon moving to London.

There was then an end of my education, except as a farmer. For my profession was selected for me. Under the circumstances there could be little choice in the matter. It seemed unavoidable that I should follow my uncle's calling. Purrington found room or opportunities for scarcely any other.

Whatever may be the modern method, no one then learnt farming from books. It was picked up somehow from observation and practice. One constantly walked over a farm, looking about, until knowledge came, if it came at all, almost of its own accord. At least I received no other instruction in the matter than I could in such wise obtain.

I accompanied my uncle on his morning

and evening progress over his land, watching the performances of his labourers, and striving to note the why and the wherefore of everything. But my success was not remarkable. It seemed a simple business; often taken altogether out of the agriculturist's hands by the fickleness of the elements, or governed absolutely by a traditional routine. *This* was done because it was the custom of the country; *that* in pursuance of the prescriptions of the Orme family handed down from father to son since remote times. And each season had its assigned duties and employments. The processes of ploughing, sowing, and reaping followed each other in regular succession, and sheep-breeding, the chief occupation of our farmers, had, of course, its established rules. Yet I felt that I did not gain very satisfactory mastery over the matter.

My uncle was a thoroughly practical farmer. He had been reared to the business upon rough but complete principles. As the custom had been in his time, he had as a youth shared the rude toils, the hard habits of life, almost the frugal fare of the farm servants. Even now, advancing in years as he was, he could plough as straight a furrow as any man in his employ; or he could take from the hand of a labourer a scythe, a reaping-hook, or a pitchfork, and show him by sound example how to wield such implements to the best advantage. *This* was not possible to me. It was not so much that I was above learning or trying to learn these rudimentary arts, but my mother had, I think, interfered to prevent employment of this kind being thrust upon me. In such wise my authority over the labourers was of little force. They viewed me always in the light of an amateur, and I was visited with the contempt usually bestowed upon the unqualified by skilled professors.

And certainly I did not affect the business. I could appreciate its pleasures. I loved the fresh morning air, exhilarating as wine, and scented with a thousand newborn flowers; the broad rays of the rising sun sweeping over the open down; the diamond glisten of the dew upon the turf; the rich tints of the honey-laden heather; the musical hum of insect life; the undulating horizon blending its faint purple with the saffron tints of the vernal sky—all this was delightful to me. My heart seemed to leap within me from joyous and redundant vitality as, at break of day, I galloped my pony hither and thither about the elastic down, charged with some trifling

errand to Reube at the sheepfold in the distance. There was no occasion for so much haste; still less was there need to deviate from my path in order to leap a hurdle, or to give chase to a hare suddenly startled from its form and scampering to the covert skirting the farm. Yet it was my humour to do thus much, and many other things that brought derision upon me in that they were inconsistent with reasonable and practical considerations. Listening to the lark soaring high above me, and like a sort of musical rocket showering down sparks of song; or plunging into the long rank grass of the plantation to note the cooing of the wind through the swaying entangled boughs, and scent the fresh resinous odours of the firs; or pausing to watch the flying clouds patch with shadows the wide-stretching landscape; all this was pleasant indeed—but it was not farming. As my uncle was careful to explain to me, I had been better employed in helping spread manure, or feed the pigs.

It was as a part of my agricultural education that I was despatched one autumn on a mission to Dripford Fair to sell a flock of lambs. Reube accompanied me, and though I was nominally in charge of the expedition, I was conscious that its real governance rested with him.

Dripford Fair was the great event of our sheep-breeding district. It was attended by all the flock-masters of the county. For some days before the fair, clouds of sheep might be seen crossing the down from all parts, slowly making their way towards Dripford. The country was alive with the voices of shepherds, the barking of dogs, and the bleating of sheep. And here and there upon the open landscape large white puffs of dust blurred the view, and marked where the travelling flocks had quitted the turf, and struck the chalky highways leading to the market town.

Reube, in tawny orange gaiters or "vamplets," a gleaming white smock-frock, a scarlet neckerchief, and a blue-ribboned straw-hat, his best "donnings," as he described his attire, looked an imposing figure. He was attended by a group of boys and dogs, and carried his crook, his wand of office, most majestically. I felt at once that though mounted upon my pony and clad in the smart suit of a young farmer, I was a far inferior person. Reube was impressed with a sense of his importance, and was conscious of his responsibilities. For he at once relieved me of any fanciful airs of authority I might

have assumed, and took upon himself the supreme control of the mission. He was complacent enough, however, and did not manifest too markedly the cheap terms upon which he held me. He was fairly content with his flock, and it appeared was especially gratified by some scandalous story relating to his old enemy Garge, alleged to have been found lying in the gutter, "up street" Purrington, on the previous night, "terrible drunk to be sure," as Reube related with chuckling joy, "for all a's a church-goer!"

I congratulated Reube on the condition of his lambs, which had been so washed and trimmed and ruddled for the fair that they were seen to the utmost advantage. They were of genuine Down breed, with black noses and feet, and the whitest and fleeciest of wool, long and broad in the back, rotund of body, and yet most nimble of movement. Each bore upon its flank a freshly imprinted black O, denoting that it came from Mr. Orme's farm.

"Eez, they be a tidy lot of lambs," said Reube, "though they might be more for-rard. There's a lame un or two among un, but they mouster featish. I've zeen was and I've zeen better. Yonder's just about a nice sprack-looking lamb now. I knows un all by zight as though they was my own childer; better mebbe. 'Tis use does it, Maester Duke. I zits by un all day long, and I thinks of un all the night through. Please God they brings the maester a tidy zum at Dripford. But I dunno. There'll be a zight of flocks there. No, I beant aveard of Garge. He's got, this turn, just about the poorest lot of lambs that ever I did see. Why they was nigh starved dree months gone, and he'd narra a turmut to gie un. But there, that Garge is nation dummel; muggle-headed most allays. 'Tis no business o' mine; but what's maester can zee in un to keep un so long, or to let un go on ruinun the sheep, there, I dunno. But there's volks as seems to trusts them as bellocks aboot the moust. And Garge is a main hand at bellocking and maundering aboot. 'Tis bloomy hot along this dowsty road—brings the het drops on my vorehead, and makes I main virsty, I know. But there's a rare drop of strong beer to be got at the Ram at Dripford, thank God. I wish I had a quart on un now, I know."

We halted now and then on the road to rest the flock, and to enable Reube to refresh himself with his "nummet," or noon-meat, as he termed his luncheon. He consumed with great relish his thick slices of

bread, with a wedge of strong smelling cheese prisoned between them.

Dripford was a dull country town, that once in every year gave way to exceeding delirium. On its fair day it went stark mad, delivering over itself absolutely to sheep—and drink. Sheep poured over it and swarmed about it like an Egyptian plague of an amiable sort. Its every avenue was choked with flocks. You could not move for being wedged in with sheep—thigh deep in sheep. It was as though the skies had opened and rained sheep; as though the earth had gaped and vomited sheep. They overflowed the closely packed pens in the market-place; they surged up the steps of the church in a dense army as though about to carry that sacred edifice by assault; they charged at the town-hall and took possession of every pass in the precinct, occupying shops, doorways, areas, every possible position, in the strongest force. Now and then a light division of lambs was to be seen hurrying along a side street, afflicted by a stampede or bent upon some obscure errand, making for the suburbs or the open country. The noise was deafening. The thwacking of sticks upon fat fleecy backs, the pitching of hurdles, the hoarse shouts of shepherds, the barking of dogs as they circled and leapt about, now bringing in deserters by the ear, now springing into the throng to scatter mutineers or bring the listless to attention, made up a bewildering and ceaseless turmoil. All means were tried to reduce the unwieldy armies of timid and perturbed recruits to discipline, and convert them to something like close order. The shepherds were untiring in their efforts to accomplish this, and at last succeeded in their task fairly enough. But their exertions were very great, and the language they employed, by way of fortifying their authority, was desperately bad. A prodigious consumption of strong beer from the taps of the Ram and other Dripford inns, followed upon these proceedings.

But the sheep and the shepherds did not have it all to themselves. The streets were thronged to excess with farmers, flock-masters, dealers, country gentlemen, visitors and sightseers of all kinds. The inns were all choke-full. The stalls were crowded with cattle: useful cobs, that had brought their agricultural owners from far and near, serviceable hacks, clever ponies, and sturdy hunters. The inn yards were full of vehicles of every description, from the yeoman's cart to the phaetons of the more dashing

"squire" farmers. The air was heavy and opaque with dust, the smell of sheep and cattle, the fumes of liquor and tobacco. Throngs of buyers and sellers—red of face, broad of back, and great of girth—jostled each other and argued and haggled and wrangled: now growing fiercely angry, now noisily jocose as they struck bargains and agreed upon terms, and then proceeded to celebrate the concluded negotiation in brimming glasses at the nearest tavern. All transactions were followed by prompt payment in cash, and bundles of greasy notes quickly changed hands and were transferred from bulky pocket-books, like small port-manteaus, to similar receptacles, or from one breeches-pocket of vast capacity to another of like dimensions. And in addition to the uproar of the main business of the fair was the supernumerary Babel usually generated by such occasions; the shouting swarm of pedlars, cheap-jacks, showmen, mountebanks, and itinerant traders and performers of every description.

It was to me a most amazing scene. I had seen nothing like it before. I had scarcely believed that there were so many people in all the world as I now found congregated in Dripford.

After much difficulty and delay I had succeeded in stabling my pony at the King's Head Inn, opposite the market-cross. I had lost sight of Reube and the flock, but I counted upon rejoining him presently. But it was not so easy to accomplish this as I had fancied. If the sheep were much alike to one who was not their shepherd, it was certain that a strong family resemblance prevailed also among the shepherds. It seemed safer to look out for the black O stamped upon the flanks of our lambs. But I could discover this nowhere. It was like searching for a particular wave in an ever-shifting ocean.

I grew bewildered, and at last from the pressure of the crowd found myself standing still, helplessly and despondently, in front of the King's Head Inn. Suddenly a hand, rather a grimy hand, clutched my forearm. I turned and found myself face to face with my satyr, Lord Overbury!

I recognised him immediately. His hair was greyer, and his dress was perhaps more untidy and crumpled; otherwise he was little changed.

"I know you, my lad. I've seen you somewhere," he said, and he fixed his protuding, bloodshot eyes upon me, and stared into my face. "But I can't think of your name," he continued with an oath.

"I'm Duke Nightingale, my lord."

Still he stared at me.

"From the Down Farm, Purrington?" he said after a pause, as though he had been trying to collect his thoughts. "To be sure; I remember now, of course. You came to see me at the hall once. How you've grown! Yet I should have known you anywhere. You've a strange look of your mother. Something about the eyes, I think. But you're not a patch upon her for good looks. Twenty years ago there wasn't a handsomer girl in this county than Mildred Orme. And to think that you're her son! Time flies! Come and have something to drink."

He drew me into the King's Head, pushing his way through the thronged passage in the most unceremonious fashion.

AN AUTHOR'S PETS.

DUMAS the Elder, as an earnest worker, was fond (at proper times) of solitude—but not of a solitary solitude. His terrestrial paradise and his work-rooms must have a goodly company of birds and beasts; for he adored animals. Servants, being part of one's own individuality, hardly count as society; his negro lad, Alexis, spoiled and lazy, might be taken as belonging to either one or the other.

Dumas's animals came into his possession in all sorts of ways, the which to relate would be too long. Like Adam, he fitted them all with names. He had three monkeys; one called after a celebrated translator, the other after an illustrious novelist; the third, a female ape, represented an actress then at the zenith of her popularity. French jurists hold that "la vie privée doit être murée," private life ought to be enclosed with a wall; the exact sobriquets cannot therefore be given, being founded either on personal resemblance or the details of personal history. We will call the translator Potich, the novelist the Last of the Laidmanoirs, and the lady ape Mademoiselle Desgarcins.

All journeys, long or short, are certain to afford two pleasures—the pleasure of starting, and the pleasure of getting home again. The pleasure of the journey itself is much more precarious.

Dumas had returned from a fatiguing journey. His old friends, the furniture, gave him a welcome which he repaid with smiles. But an easy-chair, close to the fireplace, displayed an unwonted occupant.

The seat was filled with a large white muff, whose purring announced it to be a cat.

"Madame Lamarque!"—she was cook—"Madame Lamarque!"

"I was aware that monsieur had arrived," she said, "but I was in the middle of a white sauce; and monsieur, who is a cook himself, knows how easily these blanquettes turn. I ought also to introduce our little foundling, I was sure monsieur would consent to adopt him."

"And where did you find the foundling, Madame Lamarque?"

"In the cellar, crying 'Miaou, miaou!' exactly like a deserted child. What name will monsieur please to give him?"

"Mysouff the Second, if that suits you. Only, Madame Lamarque, pray take good care that he don't eat my Java sparrows, my widow-birds, and my turtle-doves, and all the rest."

"No fear of that; he's as innocent as a lamb, a vegetarian, in fact, preferring bread and milk to cat's-meat. But with monsieur's leave, what does Mysouff mean? Is it a cat's name, like Puss or Minet?"

"Certainly; to make Mysouff the Second, there must have been a Mysouff the First." And Dumas fell into a fit of musing which Madame Lamarque did not choose to disturb.

The mention of that name Mysouff had carried his thoughts back full fifteen years. His mother was at that time living. He had still the happiness to be scolded, now and then, by a mother. He filled a clerk's place, under the Duc d'Orleans (Louis Philippe) which brought him in fifteen hundred francs a year, and occupied his time from ten till five. They lived in the Rue de l'Ouest, and they had a cat, called Mysouff, which ought to have been a dog.

Every morning, Dumas left home at half-past nine—it was half an hour's walk from the Rue de l'Ouest to the office in the Rue St. Honoré, No. 216—and every afternoon he returned home at half-past five. Every morning Mysouff accompanied his master as far as the Rue de Vaugirard; and every afternoon he went and waited for him at the Rue de Vaugirard. Those were his limits; he never went an inch further. As soon as he caught sight of his master, he swept the pavement with his tail; at his nearer approach, he rose on all-fours, with arching back and tail erect. When Dumas set foot in the Rue de l'Ouest, the cat jumped to his knees as a dog would have done; then, turning round every ten paces, he led the way to the house. At twenty

paces from the house, he set off at a gallop, and two seconds afterwards, the expectant mother appeared at the door.

The most curious circumstance was, that whenever by chance any temptation caused Dumas to neglect his mother's dinner hour, it was useless for her to open the door; Mysouff would not stir from his cushion. But on the days when Dumas was a punctual good boy, if she forgot to open the door, Mysouff scratched it till she let him out. Consequently, she called Mysouff her barometer; it was Set Fair when Dumas came home to dinner, Rain or Wind when he was absent.

There was a garden party of four or five intimates, comprising Maquet the romance-writer, Giraud the painter, and Alexandre Dumas the son. Alexis, the spoiled and lazy African, had condescended to bring a tray with three or four glasses, a bottle of Chablis, and a bottle of soda-water.

"Tiens," said Alexandre, "I have an idea."

"What may it be?"

"To make Mademoiselle Desgarcins uncork the soda-water."

And, without waiting for leave to be given, he laid the bottle on the floor of the monkey's cage, in the position of a cannon resting on its carriage. "Curious as an ape," the saying goes. No sooner was the cage-door shut, than its three occupants, headed by the lady, sat in committee on the bottle. She immediately comprehended that the clue to the secret lay in the four strings that crossed the cork. She tugged at them with her fingers. Fingers failing, she tried her teeth, and in a few minutes had bitten through the two uppermost strings. To get at the other two, Potich and the Last of the Laidmanoirs adroitly turned the bottle half round. The third string cut, she attacked the fourth. As the operation advanced, its interest increased. The spectators watched the approaching dénouement quite as attentively as the actors.

At last came the terrible detonation. Mademoiselle Desgarcins was knocked heels-over-head and drenched with effervescent water, whilst Potich and the Last of the Laidmanoirs bounded to the ceiling and clung to it with piercing screams. The tragicomic parody of human emotions was too laughable to be believed without being seen.

"I give up my share of soda-water," cried Alexandre, "to let Mademoiselle Desgarcins open a second bottle."

Mademoiselle picked herself up, shook herself, and joined her companions aloft, where they hung by their tails like chandeliers, sending forth unearthly sounds.

"The dear boy fancies he'll catch them again!" said Giraud.

"Ma foi!" said Maquet; "I shouldn't be surprised. Curiosity, with them, is still stronger than fear."

"They!" chimed in Michel the gardener, who considered Dumas's collection of animals as kept for his (Michel's) own private amusement. "They! They are as obstinate as mules, and will uncork as many bottles of soda-water as you like to give them. Monsieur knows how they are caught in their own country?"

"No, Michel."

"Monsieur doesn't know that!" exclaimed Michel, pitying his master's ignorance. "At least, monsieur knows they are very fond of maize. Well, the negroes put maize into a bottle whose neck is just large enough to admit a monkey's empty hand. The monkey clutches a handful of maize, and, sooner than drop it, lets itself be caught."

"It is a consolation, Michel, that if our monkeys escape, you know how to catch them."

"Monsieur may make himself easy as to that. Alexis, another soda-water."

Truth compels the avowal that a second and even a third experiment were tried, with exactly the same results, to Michel's glorification. Alexandre wanted to continue it further, but Dumas observed that poor Mademoiselle Desgarcins had a swollen nose, bleeding gums, and eyes starting out of her head.

"It isn't that," said Alexandre. "You are thinking of your soda-water. I assure you, messieurs, that my father, whom everybody takes for a prodigal, is the most miserly man existing on earth."

After having done pen-work till three in the morning, Dumas was still in bed at eight. The door opened, and Michel's head entered, in a visible state of agitation.

"Here's a mess, monsieur!" he abruptly exclaimed. "I don't know how they managed it, but the monkeys have made a hole in their cage big enough to let them out."

"Very well, Michel; the remedy is easy. You have only to buy a little maize, and put it into narrow-necked bottles."

"Ah! Yes; monsieur may laugh, but he won't laugh when he hears the rest."

"Mon Dieu, Michel! what has happened?"

"They have opened the aviary——"

"And the birds have flown away. All the better for them."

"What has happened, monsieur, is, that your six pairs of doves, your fourteen quails, all your rice-birds, Java sparrows, widow-birds, Virginian nightingales, all—all are killed or eaten."

"But, Michel, monkeys don't eat birds."

"No; but they fetched a companion who did—Mysouff. It is a veritable massacre. Only come and see."

It was a sight indeed. Potich dangling gracefully from the branch of a maple; the last of the Laidmanoirs practising gymnastics on the greenhouse door; Mademoiselle Desgarcins, still in the aviary, bounding from east to west, and from north to south. The trio were recaptured without employing maize-bottles, but not without considerable and spiteful resistance.

Mysouff was easily caught. They had only to shut the aviary-door, and the culprit was in the hands of justice. What should be his punishment? Michel, incensed at the loss of his pets, was for shooting the murderer on the spot; Dumas opposed the summary execution, deferring sentence till the following Sunday, when his usual visitors would form a jury. The criminal would be left meanwhile on the theatre of crime, on bread and water, under lock and key. On Sunday his feline avicide monomania being admitted as an attenuating circumstance, he was condemned to the mitigated penalty of five years' imprisonment (without hard labour) in monkey's company. Political events, however, came to his relief.

The Revolution of February broke out—the fifteenth or sixteenth change of government which Dumas the Elder had lived to witness. During revolutions money comes slowly in, and slips quickly out. Instead of working at literature, Dumas started a journal, *Le Mois*, and wrote for another, *La Liberté*. The two brought him in thirty-one francs per day, but by his *Théâtre Historique* he was daily out of pocket one, two, and sometimes five hundred francs. His only chance was that the partisans of Barbès, Blanqui, and Ledru-Rollin, whom he attacked without mercy in his papers, would, by the application of stick or stone, at once put an end to his writings and his wants.

Meanwhile he must reform his establishment. His three horses and his two car-

riages were sold—as always happens in troubled times—for the quarter of what they had cost him. Mysouff was treated like a political prisoner, that is, simply set at liberty, and turned adrift to seek his fortune. Mademoiselle Desgarcins and Company were presented to the *Jardin des Plantes*. Dumas lost a home, but his apes gained a palace. After revolutions it sometimes happens that monkeys are lodged like princes, while princes have to take up with monkeys' lodgings—unless the princes have frightened all Europe, in which case they are lodged like lions.

For the life and adventures of the cunning dog Pritchard, the ferocious brute Mouton, the vulture Diogenes, and how the grateful blackamoor, clad in the pick of his patron's wardrobe, discovered that revolutions abolished servants, see *Histoire de Mes Bêtes*, which might bear translation, as well as embellishment by spirited woodcuts.

CLAN TARTANS AND PLAIDS.

WHEN we read about the Scots Fusilier Guards, the four or five Highland regiments in the infantry of the Line, and the London Scottish Volunteer Rifles, we in South Britain have a somewhat confused notion of the dress of the men composing these trusty corps. We picture to ourselves kilts, plaids, and tartans; not quite knowing whether a kilt is a tartan, nor whether a plaid is a pattern or a garment. The truth is, there has been very little popular treatment of this subject. Books, such as Logan's and Sobieski Stuart's, full of engravings representing the shapes, colours, and patterns of real Highland garments, are so bulky and costly, that few save wealthy persons ever get a sight of them; while an English tourist, taking his autumnal peep at the lochs and braes, innocently imagines that he knows a good deal about plaids and tartans, and brings his innocence home with him.

The first error to dismiss is, that a plaid is a tartan, a tartan a plaid. We might as well say that a velvet is the same thing as a mantle, or a chintz as a gown, or a silk plush as a hat. A plaid is a garment; whereas a tartan is a pattern or distribution of colours. No Scottish clan has any particular shape of plaid, by which it can always be distinguished from others; whereas every clan has its tartan, the colours and patterns of which it carefully preserves, and the history of which is bound up with

traditions of the old days of clan strife and heroism.

These tartans are remarkable in themselves, irrespective of their history and traditions. They show how multitudinous are the patterns that may be produced by two or three colours, when arranged in stripes and cross-bars. Artists of acknowledged taste have frankly expressed their admiration of some of these patterns, for the well-balanced proportions of two or three colours, and of two shades or depths of one colour—despite the fact that there can be no “curves of beauty” in a pattern of stripes and checks. Red and green are the two colours chiefly adopted; and it is generally observable that the brighter of two colours or tints, or the brightest of three, occupies a larger space than the darker, and gives a characteristic tone to the whole. No reason is assignable for the choice of pattern in the first instance; but when once recognised by a particular clan, an *esprit de corps* throws a halo around it.

How many of these clans there may be, does not seem to be definitively settled. Stuart names a much larger number than Logan; including many Lowland and Border families. And herein may possibly be the main cause of difference; for many of the Lowlanders and the Borderers, separated from England only by the Cheviot Hills, laid aside their characteristic garb much earlier than the veritable Highlanders. Generally speaking, there is something in the look of the name which denotes to which class a clan belongs. All the Macs are Highland, or at any rate spring from the Gaelic stock. How many varieties there are of them we need not tell; for as Scots very much like to come to London, we shall find all the clans represented in the Post Office Directory. But the original Gaelic has been a good deal knocked about in putting it into English form. For instance, *Mhic Dhughail* looks far more clan-like than *Macdougall*, *Mhic Donnill nan Eillean* than *Macdonald of the Isles*, *Mhic Dhubbich* than *Macduff*, *Mhic Griogaraich* than *Macgregor*, *Mhic Labhrainn* than *Maclaren*. Many names without the prefix *Mac*, *M'*, or *M'*, are, however, quite as Gaelic as the rest, such as *Matheson*, *Murray*, *Chisholm*, *Farquharson*, *Sinclair*, *Ross*, *Gordon*, *Fraser*, *Grant*, *Cumins* or *Cummings*, *Stuart* or *Stewart*, &c. Altogether, *Sobieski Stuart* gives the names, and beautifully represents the coloured tartans, of forty-two Highland clans and thirty-nine Lowland and Border clans. He knew his subject well; he claimed to be (and

his claim was admitted to have some validity) the lineal descendant of the royal Stuarts of Scotland; and he wrote admiringly of the old days up in the north.

Much curious discussion has taken place concerning the origin of tartan, the name and the thing. The best authorities agree that, in the first instance, the name denoted neither a garment nor a pattern, but a material, a twilled stuff alike on both sides. There were two kinds: the one hard and dull like shalloon, the other soft and elastic. The harder kind was used for kilts, jackets, and light summer mantles; the softer for winter plaids, hose, and trows. In the Lowlands, *caddis* is one of the names for the softer variety of tartan. There are two names for tartan in Gaelic—the one simply denoting diced or checkered; the other signifying battle-colour or battle-pattern. These two names throw light on the real meaning; seeing that they reveal at once the cross-bar nature of the woven pattern, and the clannish feeling which was associated with it. There is abundant evidence, moreover, that irrespective of clanship, the word tartan, or an equivalent to it, was known in other countries besides Scotland. *Tartane*, *tartian*, *teartane*, *tyreten*, *tyretane*—all are to be met with in old English, French, and German books; and etymologists have amused themselves with speculating on the possible derivation either from *Tyre* or from *Tartary*. Many facts support the view above stated, that tartan originally denoted rather the textile material itself, than any particular pattern or colour given to it in the loom. In a manuscript about three centuries and a half old, an English inventory of household furniture speaks of two altar curtains “of changeable tartan.” Stuart supposes that “changeable” here means the same thing as ladies now denote by the name “shot;” the cross-threads or weft of a shot silk are of a different colour from the long threads or warp; and the play of tints resulting from the appearance of the material from different points of view may not unsuitably be called changeable. The textile material said to have been changeable, the tartan or tartian, is supposed to have been (in one variety at any rate) a kind of serge, shalloon, or linsey-wolsey, varying considerably in fineness, but always more resembling a stuff than a napped cloth. A modern Scotch tartan bears a closer resemblance to shalloon than to any other familiar English material; but it might still be a tartan, if much finer and richer in material. The *caddis*, the soft variety of tartan (etymo-

logists ask, is this from Cadiz?) was much used in England in the Middle Ages in silk and other rich materials.

Striped and checked patterns, such as characterise all clan tartans, are in favour in many widely-separated regions. The Don Cossacks and the Circassians know them well. A foreign ambassador, familiar with the tribes of south-eastern Europe, was once at the Caledonian Ball in London, and was struck with the resemblance between the tartans worn by the guests and those to be met with in some of the Russian and Turkish provinces. Tartan was the material, and parti-coloured checks and stripes were the pattern, in the clannish days of Scotland; but it cannot be determined whether or when they were directly borrowed from any other country. Stuart has succeeded in identifying the fashion as a Scottish one for eleven hundred years; seeing that he finds the Gaelic name for a parti-coloured tartan plaid or mantle in a Gaelic manuscript of the eighth century.

The ladies of the clans, in early days, are believed to have devised the patterns; and samples of these patterns were carefully preserved, to be lent to the webster or weaver when a supply of tartan cloth was needed. The special clan tartan was insisted on only on ceremonial and warlike occasions; in the ordinary avocations of daily life the humbler retainers wore pretty much what they liked. In the *Vestiarium Scoticum*, a manuscript three or four centuries old, minute instructions are given concerning the distribution of the stripes, checkers, and colours. The lighter of the two colours is to be "fresche and brigcht as may be, y^e so the twa sall scheme the mair openlye, and be y^e better kennit afar off and in battayl and ither arrayes; ilk manne or companie to be weil and clearly knawen of hys freindis or hys athuersaryes of quhat partie or house he apperteinethe."

A terrible blow to clan tartans, and to the Highland costume generally, was given after the rebellion of 'forty-five. In these more sober days of the nineteenth century the costume is still admired by those who know it best. Logan enthusiastically says: "In the various modes of its arrangement this is undeniably the most picturesque and original costume in Europe, partaking of the graceful flow of Oriental drapery with more than the advantage of European attire, and which can be used in great plainness, but is susceptible of being carried to the highest enrichment. It is, indeed, more usually considered as a military uniform than a civil costume, and its admirable

adaptation for the fatigues and hardships of war is incontrovertibly admitted; while it is certainly the best adapted for the country and the laborious avocations of the inhabitants." It was against this costume, so thoroughly nationalised, that an Act of Parliament was hurled in 1746. The English government, desirous of crushing out the last remains of the rebellion, determined to attack the clan costume which had helped to keep alive the enthusiasm of the Highlanders. The statute ordained that, from and after a particular day, "No man or boy within that part of Great Britain called Scotland, other than such as shall be employed as officers and soldiers in his majesty's forces, shall, on any pretence whatever, wear or put on the clothes commonly called Highland; that is to say, the plaid, philibeg, kilt, trows, shoulder belts, or any part whatsoever of what peculiarly belong to the Highland garb; and that no tartan or parti-coloured plaid or stuff shall be used for great-coats or for upper coats." The penalty for breaking this law was six months' imprisonment for a first offence, seven years' transportation for a second. Years rolled on, but the Scotch never reconciled themselves to this unworthy interference with their national habits. More than thirty years later Professor Forbes, of Culloden, remonstrated against it, and assigned as one of the reasons that the dress enabled the Scotch to bear the inclemency of the weather. Southrons are apt to regard the Highland costume as a cold one; not so Forbes: "The statistics of our armies afford abundant proof of the truth of this assertion. They show that in the intense cold during campaigns in Holland the Highlanders suffered incomparably less than others; and the kilt being bound tightly round the loins, advantages in a rapid and protracted march have been witnessed in the retreat of Corunna and elsewhere." He went on to argue: "A great advantage of this dress is its lightness, the limbs being left at perfect freedom: thus enabling the inhabitant of a mountainous region to pursue with facility his laborious avocations, ascend the mountains, traverse the glens, and bound over the bogs with agility. In the army, this national uniform keeps alive, in surprising degree, the esprit de corps; and the tartan being, as it were, a Highlander's coat armour, he is especially careful that it shall in no wise be dishonoured." The obnoxious statute was repealed in 1782, on the motion of the Duke of Montrose.

Through a curious train of circumstances,

however, the real Highland tartan did not recover from the discouragement which the statute had inflicted on it; the small pattern grey check took its place to a very large extent. The grey plaid, in fact; and herein we see the origin of the mistake so often made in England, of confounding a plaid with a tartan. A plaid is really a broad, unformed, unsewn, and unhemmed piece of cloth, equivalent to what in many countries would be called a rug or blanket. In former times a Scotch plaid had nearly always a tartan pattern, which was retained by the clan in the same way as the pattern of some other parts of the dress. Its colour was denoted by that of its ground or principal portion. Thus there were the Mackenzie and Macdonald green plaids, the Macgregor and the Fraser red plaids, the Cluny and the Buchanan white plaids, and so on. An entry in an old Scotch household book, concerning "women's white plaids," related to women's plaids or wrappers having a tartan pattern with a white ground. After the passing of the Act of 1746, the Scotch peasants did not well know what to wear; so they adopted the grey maud, wrapper, or plaid, which was customarily worn by the shepherds of the Border. It was cheap and durable, and more like their old favourite tartan than any plain cloth could be. Once established, it has never since gone out of fashion. "When the prohibition against tartan was removed," says Stuart, "the elements for its restoration no longer remained; poverty and disuse had extinguished the national manufacture, quenched the spirit of the people, and changed their habits and their recollections. The public looms (as distinguished from those kept by home weavers), where alone the tartan was fabricated, supplied only a fine, expensive, and undesirable material—unsuitable to labour, inadequate to defence, and inaccessible in price." Another consequence showed itself in a singular way. When Lowland and English sportsmen began to make their annual visits to the Highlands, they soon adopted the shepherd's grey plaid—"some for economy; some because they observed that its aerial tint indulged their indolence and incapacity in stalking, by enabling them to approach deer with less danger of discovery, when too idle to walk round a hill, or too delicate to wade in a burn; and many because in their ignorance they believed the grey check of the shepherds to be an original Highland garment, and that in wearing it they displayed

a national spirit, and maintained a characteristic of the clans." A very fair hit this, coming from a Highlander to the Borderers and the English.

Thus it is, then. A plaid and a tartan have very different meanings. The one is the name of a garment, without reference to the material or colour of the cloth; the other is the name of a parti-coloured pattern, without much reference to the kind of cloth, and with none at all to the shape of the garment. When a lady talks about her plaid silk, or a servant-girl about her plaid ribbon, she unconsciously uses the wrong word—an error due, just in the same degree, to shopkeepers who announce their splendid stock of plaid silks at (of course) unprecedentedly low prices. A tartan silk or ribbon would have a meaning; a plaid silk or ribbon has none. When the Border maud superseded the clan mantle, it was a change in shape of garment; but when, at the same time and from the same reason, the grey check superseded the parti-coloured tartan, it was a change of colour and pattern.

All the clan tartans—Highland, Lowland, and Border—are still kept up; but their adoption is limited in extent. Meet an Argyll, a Sutherland, a Breadalbane, a Buccleuch in the ordinary intercourse of society, and you find him in plain English attire; but when, on ceremonial or festive occasions, the heads of the great Scottish houses wish to remember, and to impress upon the memory of others, that they are the living representatives of the clans Macgregor, Scott, Gordon, Lenox, Mackintosh, Cluny, Farquharson, Cameron, &c., then they know how to make a display of the tartans which were in old days as distinctive of the clans as armorial bearings were of the English barons. No real Scot need remain ignorant of the tartan of his clan, supposing his name to be in any sense of clannish origin; the pattern and colours have been faithfully depicted and printed by Scotsmen who knew what they were about.

AT THE JUNE-TIDE.

THE rose-lands gleam, with blooms of creamy-snow,
With scarlet, crimson, amber sovereignty,
Of Juno's flower; and from the river-meads,
The fragrant incense of the new-mown swathes,
Is borne upon the breeze. The sun-tanned maid,
Resting awhile upon her well-used rake,
Surveys us, as our oars all leisurely,
Impel our wherry by. Hist! from yon clump
Of hawthorns, and of leafy chestnut-trees,
There sounds the tocsin of the summer time,
The cuckoo's blithesome note.

Balmy the air,
 Cloudless the sky, save where in sea of blue,
 Some fleecy islet shows; soft ripples stir
 The face of silvery Thames, and from the cyots
 The murmurous willows droop their tresses down,
 To meet its glassy surface. The white swans
 Float listlessly, and from the distant wear,
 The soothing plash of falling water sounds
 Its dreamy music. As our wherry drifts,
 Laxly 'neath the hanging alder-boughs,
 With her trim-flannelled crew—now and again
 A peal of girlish laughter echoes forth,
 Answered by manlier tones, till on ahead
 The brawny lock-man hails our joyous band,
 And cars must be resumed. Ah! dreaming-time,
 Ah! happy, youthful, fleeting dreaming-time,
 Of love, of sunshine, and of roses—June!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS.

THIS regiment, one of the oldest in the service, has had its full share of hard knocks since the time that Cromwell formed it for General Monk in 1650, by drafting off five companies from Fenwick's regiment and five from that of Sir Arthur Haslerig, the leader of those celebrated iron-clads who bore down the Cavaliers at Edgehill. Monk's Puritan regiment of foot took its name from the Border town where the general of the Restoration fixed his headquarters.

It seems early to have acquired a name for bravery, good conduct, and discipline. Gumble, Monk's chaplain, says of it: "This town hath given title to a small company of men whom God made the instruments of great things, and, though poor, yet honest as ever corrupt nature produced into the world, by the no dishonourable name of Coldstreams." Bishop Burnet, speaking of the Coldstreams, remarks: "I remember well of these regiments coming to Aberdeen. There was an order and discipline, and a face of gravity and piety amongst them, that amazed all people." Monk's sober regiment led the attack at Dunbar against Tower's regiment, which would not give ground till one of the Coldstream sergeants had killed the Scottish colonel. With a shout of the "Lord of Hosts!" Cromwell then charged and broke up the too confident enemy—ten thousand prisoners were taken, with thirty guns and two hundred colours. While the "crowning mercy," Worcester, was being fought, Monk took Stirling and Dumbarton castles, and made all smooth in Scotland.

At the Restoration, mainly brought about by Monk, that general headed his regiment at the king's triumphal entry into London. When the disbanding of the old Crom-

wellian army came, Monk's regiment, at the request of Clarendon, was not broken up. The Coldstreams became guards of the king's person, and they seem to have fought against our stubborn enemies the Dutch in some of Monk's naval engagements. At a review in Hyde Park, May, 1669, the Coldstreams, or Second Regiment of Guards, are described as carrying a green standard, on which were six white balls and a red cross—the fourteen companies of eighty men wearing red jackets with green facings, the pikemen green jackets faced with red. At Monk's stately funeral in Westminster Abbey, 1670, the Coldstreams were prominent in the long procession that wound its slow length from Somerset House to the old church of the Confessor. In 1677, Charles increased the regiment by forty-eight men, and several battalions served in Flanders against the French. In 1680, the newspapers of the day tell us that the queen dowager left Somerset House, which had been her residence, "his majesty intending to quarter two regiments in Somerset House, and that place in the Savoy, where one regiment is now quartered, is to be turned into an hospital for lame and sick soldiers, and his majesty's house at Greenwich is to be converted to the same use. His majesty, in pursuance of the late Act of Parliament, whereby the subjects of this kingdom are not to be charged with the quartering of soldiers, has lately ordered the fitting up the Savoy in the Strand for a regiment of foot soldiers; and it is designed that stables shall be built for the horse in Leicester Fields and Hyde Park upon that account." The regiment soon afterwards occupied the Mews (the site of the National Gallery).

At the end of this reign, the regiment wore red coats lined with green, red stockings, red breeches, and white sashes fringed with green, the grenadiers having high conical caps lined and tasselled with green; on their flag was a St. George's cross bordered with white in a blue field. The captains had gold-coloured corselets, the lieutenants black studded with gold, the ensigns corselets of silver. At James's coronation, the private soldiers wore black hats turned up with gold galloon and tufted with red ribbons; the pikemen white worsted sashes fringed with red. A battalion of the Coldstreams did good work at Sedgemoor soon after, and helped to mow down the rough Mendip miners who had joined Monmouth in his

rash rebellion. Our dragoons had carried bayonets since 1672; but it is not till 1686 that we find bayonets issued to the Coldstreams. The regiment then seem to have worn red coats lined with blue, blue breeches, and white stockings.

When the Prince of Orange and his Dutch troopers arrived in London, he issued orders for all James's forces to march out, except the Coldstreams—Lord Craven's regiment. That fine old soldier, Craven, who in early life had fought for Gustavus Adolphus, would not at first give up his post at Whitehall to the Dutch Guards, saying he would rather be cut to pieces than yield to them; but James persuaded him to comply, as the Dutch began to handle their muskets. When the Coldstreams, not long after, received orders in Moorfields to march to Rochester, they were mutinous, and many of them threw down their arms.

The Coldstreams had their work soon cut out for them in Flanders, where so many of our brave Uncle Tobys and Corporal Trims left their bones to whiten. The wars of William of Orange with the ambitious Louis Quatorze supplied ample work to their resolute bayonets. That staunch old veteran, Lord Craven, was now deprived of the colonelcy (a disgrace that nearly broke the old man's heart), and the regiment was handed over to one of the Talmashes. In 1688, the Coldstreams helped to save Walcourt from the French, two thousand of whom were killed and wounded, their Guards being almost annihilated. In 1691, on the eve of an expected battle, the lieutenants of the Coldstream Guards were given the rank of captains, the captains from King James's time having always ranked as lieutenant-colonels. In the battle of Steenkirk (1692), after William's unsuccessful attempt to save Namur and surprise Mons, a battalion of the Coldstreams was engaged. The battle, in which there was a good deal of hard fighting and some furious charges to repulse, ended with one of William's sullen and successful retreats. It has been supposed that pikes were laid aside by our foot regiments after this battle, but Colonel Mackinnon, in his history of the Coldstream Guards, has shown by an official letter, dated Whitehall, 1702, that pikes were in use up to that date. Matchlocks were discontinued by the Coldstreams in 1683. Bayonets became general (they were first used by the grenadier companies only) during the Spanish war in 1706.

At the battle of Landen, 1693, King William led the Coldstreams to hot places, where they certainly had their share of French bullets. The fight was first for the village of Neerwinden, then for the village of Neerlanden. The French, some thirty thousand stronger than the English, eventually broke through our long line of breastworks, and carried Neerwinden, the Elector of Bavaria retreating across the river Geete. The artillery got jammed in the passes, and many soldiers were drowned. "However," says D'Auvergne, chaplain of the Third Regiment of Guards, "the French did not come in upon easy terms; their first troop of Life Guards, of which Luxembourg was colonel, lost their standard, which was taken by a soldier of the Coldstream Guards (Talmash's). The Fusiliers suffered very much in this action." "The King of England," says one of his biographers, "in the day of danger showed himself, as he had always done, a brave and gallant man, and it was only the wonderful providence of God that preserved one who exposed himself so much." "The king," says D'Auvergne, "narrowly missed threemusketshots; one through his periwig, which made him deaf for awhile; another through the sleeve of his coat, which did no harm; the third carried off the knot of his scarf, and left a small contusion on his side." This victory, however, crippled the French, who lost fifteen thousand to our ten thousand. Two Coldstream officers were killed in this tough fight, and many were wounded by both sword and bullet. In 1694, Lieutenant-General Talmash died at Plymouth of wounds he had received when effecting a descent at Camaret Bay, on the French coast, in 1691.

In 1695, the Coldstreams suffered severely at the siege of Namur, and especially in attacking the lines and covered ways which the French had constructed to cover their works near the hill of Bouge, and they joined in the great attack when the brave Cutts was wounded, and a lodgment, a mile long, was made along the covered way at the sacrifice of fourteen hundred killed and wounded.

In 1702, Queen Anne being still determined to lower the pride and clip the claws of our old enemy Louis Quatorze, and to carry on the war both in Spain and Holland, six companies of Coldstreams were sent over to Spain with the Duke of Ormond in Sir George Rooke's squadron. The expedition blew up forts at Cadiz, and took nine men-of-war (French and Spanish), and five

galleons full of gold, vanilla, and cochineal in the harbour of Vigo, where we forced the boom, and then helped to raise the siege of Gibraltar. The Coldstreams also helped Swift's friend, the chivalrous Lord Peterborough, to take Barcelona. The English troops were kept so short of money by the king, whom they had all but restored to the throne, that the soldiers for many weeks subsisted on eighteenpence a week, and the officers were obliged to pawn their scarves and accoutrements. Barcelona was soon afterwards again besieged by the French. In the capture of the fort of Monjuich, Lord Donegall was shot through the heart, after having cut down five of his assailants. On the arrival of the English and Dutch fleets, the French retreated, leaving behind them two hundred brass cannon. In the march from Valencia to Madrid, as described by Captain Carleton, whose memoirs Swift edited, a curious instance of Spanish cruelty is related, which we give in the captain's own words:

"Captain Atkins of the Coldstream Guards (August, 1706), marching in order to join the battalion of the Guards then under the command of General Wyndham, with some of his soldiers that had been in the hospital, took up his quarters in that little villa. But on his marching out of it that morning, a shot in the back laid that officer dead on the spot, and, as it had been before concocted, the Spaniards of the place at the same time fell upon the poor weak soldiers, killing several, not even sparing their wives. This was but a prelude to their barbarity; their savage cruelty was only whetted not glutted. They took the surviving few, hurried and dragged them up a hill a little without the villa. On the top of this hill there was a hole or opening, somewhat like the mouth of one of our coal pits; down this they cast several, who, with hideous shrieks and cries, made more hideous by the echoes of the chasm, there lost their lives. This relation was thus made to the Earl of Peterborough at his quarters at Campilio, who immediately gave orders to sound to horse. At first we were all surprised; but were soon satisfied that it was to revenge, or rather to do justice on this barbarous action. As soon as we entered the villa, we found that most of the inhabitants, but especially the most guilty, had withdrawn themselves on our approach. We found, however, many of the dead soldiers' clothes, which had been conveyed into the church and there hid; and a strong accusa-

tion being laid against a person belonging to the church, and full proof made that he had been singularly industrious in the execution of that horrid piece of barbarity on the hill, his lordship commanded him to be hanged up at the knocker of the door. After this piece of military justice, we were led up to the fatal pit or hole, down which many had been cast headlong. There we found one poor soldier alive, who upon being thrown in had caught foothold of some impending bushes, and saved himself on a little jutty within the concavity. On hearing us talk English he cried out; and ropes being let down, in a little time he was drawn up; when he gave us an ample detail of the whole villany. Among other particulars, I remember he told me of a very narrow escape he had in that obscure recess. A poor woman, one of the wives of the soldiers who were thrown down after him, struggled and roared so much, that they could not, with all their force, throw her cleverly in the middle, by which means, falling near the side, in her fall she almost beat him from his place of security. Upon the conclusion of this tragical relation of the soldier thus saved, his lordship gave immediate orders for the firing of the villa, which was executed with due severity, after which his lordship marched back to his quarters at Campilio, from whence, two days after, we arrived at Valencia."

Cutts, generally called the "Salamanca," from his always being found in the centre of the fire, dying in 1707, General Charles Churchill was appointed colonel of the Coldstreams. The regiment suffered severely in the battle of Almaria, 1707, when the Portuguese fled and left the English and Dutch outflanked, and surrounded by the Duke of Berwick (the French general), who cut off and made prisoners thirteen battalions at one fell swoop.

In the more glorious Marlborough battles the Coldstreams' bayonets were ever foremost, especially at Oudenarde, when the great Marlborough and Prince Eugene defeated the Duke de Vendôme. In this battle two hundred and fifty colonels are said to have led their respective battalions into action. The French, outmanœuvred, wavered from the first, and darkness alone saved them from destruction. The Prince Elector of Hanover had a horse shot under him on this glorious day as he was charging with British cavalry, and he then led on the line on foot. No wonder that, long after, when dressing on great occasions, the vain

little man, George the First, always used to call out for his Oudenarde sword. At Malplaquet, again, the Coldstreams distinguished themselves. Before the battle the English celebrated divine service; while the French, eager to fight, shouted, "Vive le Marechal Villars" and "Vive le Roi," and flung away half their rations, though but scantily supplied. The French entrenchments, abattis, and palisades in the wood of Laniers, were carried by Marlborough himself. The great charge of Marshal Boufflers on the lines of the allies with the gendarmes, gardes de corps, mousquetaires, and horse grenadiers, shook, but did not break us much, and while our third line still held out, Eugene and his cavalry came thundering on the French flank, already shaken by the cross fire of our infantry. The French lost fifteen thousand men, five hundred and forty officers killed, and ten hundred and sixty-eight wounded.

In 1714, the Earl of Cadogan succeeded to the command of the Coldstreams. In 1720, the price of the commission of the lieutenant-colonel and captain of the Coldstreams was fixed at five thousand pounds, which was raised to six thousand seven hundred in 1766, and to seven thousand in 1821. The next laurels of the Coldstreams were won at Dettingen in the war in aid of the Queen of Hungary. George the Second led on the attack, flourishing his sword, and shouting to our infantry, "Now, my brave boys, now for the glory of England; advance boldly and fire." Our Horse Guards were twice repulsed by the French gendarmes, but at the last charge they drove back the French horse, and our infantry then made the French give way.

It was at Fontenoy (1745) that, it is said, the officers of the English guards took off their hats to the French guards, and requested them to fire first. "Gentlemen, we never fire first," replied the Count d'Auteroche, according to Voltaire; "you fire." The first discharge, our majors levelling their soldiers' musket barrels with their canes, we killed nineteen French officers and ninety-five soldiers; one hundred and ten privates of the Coldstreams fell in this unsatisfactory and ill-managed battle.

After that celebrated march from Finchley, which Hogarth represented so grotesquely in a picture that offended George the Second, the Coldstreams fought against the Pretender's Highlanders at Culloden.

In 1753, the Coldstreams joined in several ill-arranged landings on the coast of

France. They took Cherbourg, but failed in an attack on St. Maloes. Of this latter expedition Colonel Mackinnon tells us a touching anecdote. On this occasion, says Mackinnon, a French shepherd was compelled to act as a guide to the Coldstream Guards, by whom they were purposely misled. The late general, then Colonel Vernon, ordered him to be hanged. That officer used to say that he never witnessed a more affecting sight than the efforts made by the shepherd's dog to interrupt the men when they proceeded to put the rope round his master's neck. The executioner had no small difficulty in managing to keep the affectionate animal off, though assisted by two drummers, who enjoyed the reputation of having been practised dog-stealers in Westminster. "But," added the general, "John Bull is a poor creature when it comes to the pinch." I could not find it in my heart to put the stubborn fellow to death for his patriotism, and after well frightening him, and almost breaking his heart by threatening to have his dog destroyed, I let the fellow go, and the faithful creature with him."

We lost some fifteen hundred picked men in re-embarking. The young prince (afterwards Duke of York), who witnessed the slaughter from Lord Howe's ship, was maddened at the sight, and could with difficulty be prevented returning to succour the troops.

The Coldstreams fought in the war of 1761, and did some gallant things under the auspices of the Marquis of Granby, and at Gravenstein they helped to scathe the French infantry. They had a hand also in the American war. It is particularly recorded that in the battle at Freehold Court House, where Washington with difficulty saved his advanced corps, many of our men fell dead from the heat. The Coldstreams were eventually all taken prisoners with Cornwallis's unlucky army.

In 1784, Lord Waldegrave was succeeded in the command of the Coldstreams by the Duke of York. A duel was fought, in 1789, by the duke and Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox. The duke had foolishly said that Colonel Lennox had been addressed by some one at Daubigny's Club in a manner that no gentleman ought to permit. Upon this the colonel, on parade, demanded an explanation of the duke, but was ordered to his post. When in the orderly room the duke sent for Colonel Lennox and told him that he desired no protection from his rank, that when off duty he wore a brown coat,

and was as ready as any private person to give Colonel Lennox the satisfaction one gentleman required of another.

The following is the account given by the seconds of the affair: "His Royal Highness the Duke of York, attended by Lord Rawdon and Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, accompanied by the Earl of Winchelsea, met at Wimbledon Common. The ground was measured twelve paces, and both parties were to fire together. Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox's ball grazed his royal highness's curl, but the Duke of York did not fire. Lord Rawdon then interfered, and said 'he thought enough had been done;' when the colonel observed 'that his royal highness had not fired;' Lord Rawdon replied, 'it was not the intention of the Duke of York to fire; his royal highness entertained no animosity against Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, and had only come out on his invitation to give him satisfaction.' Colonel Lennox wished the duke to fire, which was declined with a repetition of the reason. Lord Winchelsea then expressed a hope that his royal highness would not object to say that he considered Colonel Lennox a man of courage and honour. His royal highness replied that he should say no such thing; he had come out with the intention of giving Colonel Lennox the satisfaction he demanded, but did not mean to fire at him. If Colonel Lennox was not satisfied, he might have another shot. Colonel Lennox declared that he could not possibly fire again, as his royal highness did not mean to return it. The seconds signed a paper stating that 'both parties behaved with the most perfect coolness and intrepidity.'" The Prince Regent afterwards refused to dance at a ball at which Colonel Lennox was present.

In 1793, the first battalion of the Coldstreams joined the Duke of York in Holland. At St. Amand they had the pleasant task of trying with six hundred rank and file to dislodge the French from some entrenchments in a wood, which five thousand Austrians had three times unsuccessfully attempted to clear. They lost seventy-seven men in a few minutes, and then retired, but held their second position the whole of the day. Darby, a sergeant-major, who was taken prisoner on this occasion, fought desperately and killed a French officer, although one of his arms was broken. A cannon-shot then broke his thigh and he fell. At Lincelles the Coldstreams took a redoubt at the charge. "The French," says Corporal Brown, "who had been accus-

tomed to the cold lifeless attacks of the Dutch, were amazed at the spirit and intrepidity of the British, and not much relishing the manner of our salute, immediately gave way, abandoning all that was in the place, and, in their flight, threw away both arms and accoutrements. We took one stand of colours, two pieces of cannon, with two pieces they had taken from the Dutch." The adjutant-general, in his despatch says: "The battalions were instantly formed, and advanced under a heavy fire, with an order and intrepidity for which no praise can be too high. After firing three or four rounds they rushed on with their bayonets." The Coldstreams lost Lieutenant-Colonel Bosville, and eight rank and file, while forty-nine were wounded. The enemy amounted to five thousand men, and lost eleven guns and about three hundred men. It is said that Lieutenant-Colonel Bosville's death was in consequence of his extraordinary height, he being six feet four inches high. He was shot in the forehead. Three hundred and forty-six rank and file of the Coldstreams were engaged on the 18th of August, 1793.

In 1808, the first battalion of the Coldstream Guards set sail for Portugal. At Talavera they suffered from their over-impetuosity, having three officers and fifty-three rank and file killed, and two hundred and forty-one rank and file wounded. They took part in Busaco, they drove back the French by an intrepid charge at Barrossa, they served in the trenches at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and they fought with the best at Salamanca.

But our space preventing our following the Coldstreams step by step in the Peninsular battles, we must make a quick march and pass on at once to narrate their great exploits at Waterloo, where they were told off to defend Hougoumont and face the very central brunt of the great battle. On the 16th of June the Coldstreams marched from Enghien to Quatre-Bras, and after this twenty-five miles' march were immediately deployed in support of the First Guards, who were trying to clear the Bois de Bossu of the French, and they repulsed several desperate charges of Kellerman's cavalry. About five p.m. on the 17th, the Coldstreams were sent to occupy Hougoumont.

The château of Hougoumont, says Mackinnon, faced the enemy without any external fence in its front. Behind it was the farm-yard, protected on the left and rear by a wall, and on the right by farm-buildings.

To the left of the house and yard was a garden, surrounded by a wall, and to the left of that, but adjoining, there was an orchard enclosed by a hedge and ditch. A large gate in the rear led into the yard, and through that supplies were received during the action; two other entrances to the yard were closed up. Outside of the buildings, on the right, there was a road and a high hedge. A wood in front, which stretched some distance to the right, covered this post.

The second brigade consisted of the second battalion of the Coldstreams, and the second battalion of the Third Guards under Major-General Byng. The two light companies of the first brigade under Lord Saltoun occupied the orchard; the light companies of the second brigade the wood. Loop-holes were at once made in the building and garden-wall; platforms were erected, and all gates but the one in the rear barricaded. Just before the battle broke out the duke rode through the wood of Hougoumont, saw Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonald, and told him "to defend the post to the last extremity." There were Nassau and Hanoverian Jägers placed in the woods and out-buildings. At twenty minutes past ten the French moved to the attack of the château, covered by a tremendous fire from two hundred guns. For an hour and a half Macdonald repulsed all attacks of the tirailleurs; but about one, just as a cart of ammunition had opportunely arrived, a tremendous attack was made and the gate was forced, but closed again by Macdonald and a brave sergeant. The eight hundred Nassau men never again rallied, and our two thousand Guards had to maintain the post alone against General Foy's thirty thousand men amid burning buildings and the incessant cross-fire of artillery. The second battalion of the Coldstreams lost at Waterloo fifty-five men, while two hundred and twenty-nine were wounded.

The rector of Framlingham, in Suffolk, soon after the battle, wrote to the Duke of Wellington, stating that, in his opinion, the non-commissioned officers of the British army had, by their valorous conduct on that day, entitled themselves to some distinct marks of their country's approbation, and, therefore, he felt disposed, for one, to offer his humble tribute to their merit. In order that this might be properly applied, he requested the favour of his grace to point out to him the non-commissioned officer whose heroic conduct appeared the most prominent, as he, the rector, meant to convey to him, in per-

petuity, a freehold farm. The duke set the inquiry immediately on foot, through all the commanding officers of the Line, and, in consequence, learnt that a sergeant of the Coldstreams, and a corporal of the First Regiment of Guards, had so distinguished themselves, that it was felt difficult to point out the most meritorious; but that there had been displayed by the sergeant an exploit arising out of fraternal affection, which he felt it a duty on this occasion to represent, namely, that near the close of the dreadful conflict, this distinguished sergeant impatiently solicited the officer commanding his company for permission to retire from the ranks for a few minutes; the latter having expressed some surprise at this request, the other said, "Your honour need not doubt of my immediate return." Permission being given him, he flew to an adjoining barn, to which the enemy, in their retreat, had set fire, and from thence bore on his shoulders his wounded brother, who, he knew, lay helpless in the midst of the flames. Having deposited him safely under a hedge, he returned to his post in time to share in the victorious pursuit of the routed enemy; we need scarcely add, that the superior merit of this gallant non-commissioned officer was thus established.

Years after the battle, the Reverend Mr. Norcross, the above-mentioned rector of Framlingham, willed the sum of five hundred pounds to the bravest man in England. The Duke of Wellington, applied to upon the subject by the executors, at first, from delicacy, declined to answer their question; but in a few days sent for them, when he stated that, upon considering their request, he had determined to afford them all the assistance in his power. The duke then said: "It is generally thought that the battle of Waterloo was one of the greatest battles ever fought; such is not my opinion, but I say nothing upon that head. The success of the battle of Waterloo turned upon the closing of the gates of Hougoumont. These gates were closed in the most courageous manner at the very nick of time by the effort of Sir James Macdonald. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that Sir James is the man to whom you should give the five hundred pounds."

Sir James Macdonald, when applied to, listened to the story of the executors, expressed his thanks to the great hero for the award, but said: "I cannot claim all the merit due to the closing of the gates of Hougoumont; for Sergeant John Graham, of the Coldstreams, who saw with me the

importance of the step, rushed forward, and together we shut the gates. What I should therefore propose is, that the sergeant and myself divide the legacy between us." The executors, delighted with the proposal, adopted it at once, and Sergeant Graham was rewarded with his share of the five hundred pounds.

Our space prevents us dealing in detail with the deeds of the Coldstreams at Alma and Inkermann. Our readers may be sure, however, that the "Nulli secundus" flag was born straight and proudly forward among the Russians, and that in the great grapple in the fight of Inkermann, the Coldstreams' bayonets were not inactive. The record of the wearers of the Victoria Cross specifies among the heroes of this regiment two men of the Coldstreams—Sergeant G. Haynes and Lance-Sergeant F. Files—who displayed signal courage in the Russian campaign.

"IT."

IN TWO PARTS. I. "THE HORNET."

It was still the breathing-time of day in the back parlour of Mrs. Lutestring's well-known mantua-making establishment in Walker-street, S.W. That is to say, the twelve young ladies, including a niece of the proprietress, who had partaken of the mid-day meal, sat calmly in their chairs, waiting till the clock gave signal for another simultaneous descent into the silk and satin sea.

One hour being allowed for dinner, there generally remained some ten to twenty minutes, which portion—styled by Mrs. Lutestring "recreation"—was devoted by that lady to the cultivation of the minds of her young friends, and the advancement of their knowledge and her own in politics, belles lettres, general society, and dress, through the medium of that comprehensive publication, the Daily Essence of Everything.

"Political," read Mrs. Lutestring. "It is broadly stated that the forthcoming budget will meet the alarming deficit in double hair-pins, by a moderate impost on back hair." (Murmurs.)

"Littery," resumed Mrs. Lutestring, who, though far from ill-informed, was not a brilliant scholar. "We understand that of the work just announced by the young German author who writes under the—hem—the ps—psu—pussydom of 'O-ya,' nearly fifteen thousand copies have been ordered by the trade."

"Having been favoured with a sight of

the new visiting-bonnet—a diadem of velvet headed by pleated lace, Catalan veil, a natural bird's wing——"

"Shop, 'm!" remarked one of the young ladies, timidly.

Mrs. Lutestring, though strict and somewhat stern in business hours, was of a kind and candid nature. With an indulgent smile, she admitted the impeachment, and passed on:

"It is whispered that, so meagre has been the take of pilchards, none can be spared for exportation."

"Why 'whispered?'" inquired somebody. "Why couldn't they say it out?"

"Not to wound their feelings, if fish has any," said Mrs. Lutestring, half jocularly.

"Not to alarm the herrings," suggested her niece, Susan, laughing merrily.

"The long-looked-for nuptials of the Lady Sigismunda Picklethwaite with Sir Derelict Dashwood were celebrated with extraordinary pomp on Wednesday. The bride's dress presented features of unusual interest. Over a rich white sat——"

"Shop! shop! shop! aunt!" exclaimed Susan, her pretty dark blue eyes swimming with mirth. They had beneath them faintly-pencilled shadows, and if a sister shade was perceptible on Susan's delicate upper lip no one would presume to call that which gave harmony and character to one of the prettiest faces in London a moustache.

"Highly-tighty!" said Mrs. Lutestring, as her eye lit upon another passage. "Well, this is a odd advertisement! Well, if ever! Seventy-five pounds a year! Nothing to do! And, gracious! just listen:

"Wanted.—A female attendant, to wait occasionally upon a complete recluse. Personal labour extremely small. Essential qualities: intelligence, cheerfulness, firmness, secrecy. And—well!" cried Mrs. Lutestring, sinking back in her chair, and bursting into hearty laughter, "what—what do you think?"

"What, 'm? Oh, please, 'm, what?" was the general cry.

Mrs. Lutestring, breathless, could not reply, and Susan, a spoiled favourite, caught the paper from her aunt's lap, found the place in a second, and proclaimed aloud:

"And dark blue eyes!"

"Seventy-five pounds!" said Fanny Sloper.

"For only looking through one's eyes!" added Susan Lutestring.

"What will she have to do?" asked another curious voice.

"Tend on the—hem!—the recluse," replied Mrs. Lutestring.

"Please, 'm, what is a recluse?" asked one of the younger girls.

"Ahem!" said the mistress.

Few knew better than the querist the ordinary meaning of "ahem." But this did not hit the point. She asked again.

Mrs. Lutestring paused, glanced at the clock, half hoping it would come to her rescue.

"Monk," prompted her niece, in an under-tone.

"Monkey," responded Mrs. Lutestring, intrepidly. "Peculiar specious, very rare, and mischievous."

"Two!" proclaimed the clock. And the circle broke up.

Susan Lutestring lingered.

"Aunt, dear."

"Well, child?"

"Dark blue eyes."

"What then?"

"Mine are dark blue."

"Is they?" said Mrs. Lutestring, indifferently. "That reminds me," she added, sharply; "you're not to 'tend to Her Highness the Princess Brenhilde von Mustikoff next time. Let Fanny Sloper do it."

"Thank goodness," cried Susan, in a glow of gratitude. "But, aunt, why did my eyes put you in mind of her?"

"She don't like 'em," said Mrs. Lutestring.

"Hers are whity-brown," remarked Susan, meditatively.

"P'raps that's the reason," said her aunt. "Anyhow, she must have her way. She's worth twenty other customers. She don't like you, nor yet your eyes. So keep out of her way. Do you know, I'm thinking of having a nice spiral staircase run up through the back of the workroom express for her? She don't like being hustled."

"I'd hustle her," muttered Susan, under her breath. "Well, but, aunt, about that advertisement?"

"Well?"

"Seventy-five pounds! Aunty, who knows if—would you mind?"

"Mind what?"

"You tell me I am often lazy, and I know I'm a slow workwoman, and I'm—"

"A little too high and mighty for our sort of work, eh?" said her aunt, laughing. "But, nonsense, child; here's a fancy!"

"Dear aunt, let us at least answer the advertisement, and get particulars."

"Particulars of waiting on a ape!" ejaculated Mrs. Lutestring.

Susan deferred explanations to a less hurried moment, and, catching up the paper, read:

"Address, with carte de visite, Messrs. Straitup and Allbright—sols.—130, Lincoln's-inn-fields."

Mrs. Lutestring hesitated. She was herself not without curiosity on the subject.

"Well, well," she said, assentingly.

So Susan wrote.

The carte de visite must have been satisfactory. With singular promptitude, a reply was received from Lincoln's-inn-fields, making an appointment for the succeeding day, and, in due course, Susan found herself curtsying to Mr. Allbright, and being motioned to the comfortable chair, in which that gentleman's fairer clients usually ensconced themselves when a prolonged chat was toward.

Mr. Allbright was a handsome-featured man, of middle age, with grizzled hair, and a quick and searching eye, which, like an awl, seemed to make the hole into which his question was to be poured.

"You are firm, intelligent, cheerful, and discreet?" said Mr. Allbright, glancing at the advertisement, a slip of which lay on his desk. "As to the last, can you keep a secret?"

"If required, sir," replied Susan, demurely, thrilling with curiosity.

"I've none to tell you," said the lawyer. "In some points, we are as much in the dark as you are, and as you may, possibly for some time, remain. You are wanted, as I understand, rather to be at hand, and qualify yourself for the future charge of—of our client, than to undertake any immediate active duty. All I can add is that the party is neither an invalid nor a lunatic. It req—ahem—he requires but little attendance, at any time, and indeed the chief agent in that particular is the mother, a refined and rather delicate woman, for whom assistance may at any time become absolutely necessary. So, you see, there is little room for alarm."

Susan at once replied that she saw none at all.

"There is a certain amount of mystery," continued Mr. Allbright. "But that you will not mind, and I may mention, lastly, that should you, after the residence of a week or two, desire to withdraw from the engagement, you will be at liberty to do so, and all expenses will be liberally paid. But I do not think that will come to pass. We happen to know enough of Mrs. Lutestring to absolve us from the necessity of

appealing to any other reference, and are strongly of opinion that both parties will be gainers by this most satisfactory arrangement. If convenient you can go down to-morrow. Here is the address, and money for your journey."

Susan made her acknowledgments, and prepared to withdraw.

"As touching the qualification mentioned last in our advertisement," observed Mr. Allbright, glancing in his visitor's face, as he walked beside her to the door, "the whim may seem singular—you know we are not responsible for all the caprices of a client—but I think we have been fortunate enough to carry out our unusual instructions in a most efficient manner. Ha, ha! Good day, Miss Lutestring. Two steps if you please."

The card, handed her by Mr. Allbright, bore the address: "Mrs. Grahame Mountjoy. The Hornet, Grandchester."

As Susan hurried homeward, she mentally concocted a respectful announcement to the lady of the Hornet, intimating her intention to present herself at Grandchester on the next day but one.

The interval was spent in needful preparations, warmly promoted by her good-natured relative, who, relieved from the apprehension that Susan's duty was to attend upon a chimpanzee, was almost as curious as herself as to what the mysterious "it" would prove to be. Upon this point Susan pledged herself to forward the earliest and fullest explanation that should be consistent with the discretion required of her, and with this understanding was sped upon her way.

Grandchester, some hours' railway travel from London, is a fine old cathedral town, which, lying a little aloof from the great highways of commerce, has been somewhat left behind in the general march of improvement; but finds comfort in the preservation of many a time-honoured structure, many a venerable historical relic, which might have been called upon to succumb to the inexorable demands of modern taste and modern ideas of the apt and convenient. Not to mention its cathedral, Grandchester possesses a cross—the most ancient in England—a ruined castle, a Saxon church, and a museum overflowing with local antiquities. The Romans, there was no doubt, were partial to the ancient city, and, at their final departure, left behind, with more than their accustomed liberality, pots, pans, old sword-hilts, and pieces of small money, to an un-

On arriving at the station, Miss Lutestring deemed it wisest to charter one of the attendant vehicles, the driver of which, at the mention of the Hornet, dashed away with an alacrity that proved him to be entirely familiar with the name.

Susan, who had rather expected a suburban drive, and to be ultimately deposited in some sequestered precinct, adapted to the taste of a recluse, found herself rattling merrily into the heart of the bustling, well-lighted town, and only relaxing in speed when, turning into the High-street, the number of carriages of different kinds, still on the move, compelled greater caution.

The High-street of Grandchester absolutely revels in eccentricities of structure. Besides its line of shops, broken by its corn-market and other public buildings, numerous mansions, of every size and form, standing back with dignity from the main thoroughfare, give importance as well as picturesqueness to this portion of the ancient city.

Suddenly, the carriage stopped. Susan saw that they were in front of a huge, gloomy pile, which, faced with a columned portico, and lighted by a single gas jet, had very much the appearance of a deserted palace, and caused in Susan's bosom a mis-giving thrill, as she thought, "Could this be the Hornet, her future home?"

A second glance reassured her. Iron wickets, in front of huge entrance-doors, showed that they were public rooms of some sort, now closed. The driver had got down to open a gate on the opposite side, and now, without reascending, led his horse up the carriage sweep, conducting to a large, cheerful-looking, modern mansion, and stopped, by Susan's direction, at a side-door leading to the kitchen offices.

Susan's summons was answered by a neat maid, who called a man to take her box, and led her straight to the housekeeper's room.

"Mrs. Martin," the girl remarked, "said you was to come here, and warm and rest yourself in her big chair, comfortable, till she can come down and give you your tea, and tell you all about it, you know!" Therewith, she bustled away.

Tell her all about it! So the mystery was to be at once explained. Meanwhile, Miss Lutestring warmed her toes, as directed, and looked about her. Mrs. Martin's room was a picture of neatness, ease, and comfort. It was even more. Everything seemed to glitter and smile. The very chairs—certain of which were of antique form—seemed to put out arms

clocks ticked merrily, cats purred, and a cricket, though, for reasons of his own, remaining invisible, evidently considered it incumbent on him to do the honours of the apartment, and keep up the spirits of the new arrival, until the mistress should appear.

Ten minutes had elapsed, when a cheery voice roused Susan from her pleasant reverie.

"So, here you are, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, hurrying in, and speaking almost before she saw the visitor, with whom she shook hands cordially, giving her a kind, motherly kiss. Mrs. Martin was a plump, not to say portly dame of middle age. There was something pleasant and wholesome in the touch of the good woman's warm cheek and hand. It was noted of Mrs. Martin that her hands, preserving their warmth in the coldest winter's day, never increased it in the height of summer. Her circulation, like her genial temper, never varied.

One other peculiarity we may mention, namely, that she believed every other created being to be at times, nay, at frequent times, below par, and consequently in need of a "fillip." It might not be too much to say that Mrs. Martin conceived the entire universe to be indebted for continued existence to the periodical administration of the remedy just mentioned.

"And how are you, my dear? Nice and warm? I'd have been down before," she continued, "but I had to toss up a little something for master, poor gentleman, that only I knows how to make."

"Is Mr. Mountjoy ill?" asked Susan.

"Ill? Eh, no—quite charming," responded the housekeeper, cheerfully. "But he's had a long practice to-day. And, oh, how his poor arms must have ached. He wanted a fillip, so I——"

"What does he practise, ma'am?" inquired Susan.

"Fiddle," said Mrs. Martin, briefly. "I put off my tea, my dear," she went on quickly, "that you and I might have it cosy together. This'll be your sittin' room 'long o' me. Your bedroom's near missis's. I'll show it you while the kettle's biling."

Following her guide up the back staircase, Susan found herself in a broad corridor, running, to all appearance, almost the entire length of the house. It was hung with family pictures, showed groups of sculpture in recesses lined with crimson velvet, and was carpeted with some rich material, so soft and yielding that Susan felt as if her feet would never reach the ground.

"Missis's room adjines Mr. Mountjoy's," Mrs. Martin continued, "and here," as they entered a small but pleasant chamber, "is yours. That's missis's bell in the corner. There's a deaf and dumb walet, and you won't have much to do, my dear, unless missis's sperrits should give way, sudden," concluded the good woman, with a sigh.

Susan noticed that her room was in front, and recognised the grim, forbidding walls of the assembly rooms, scowling at her from over the way.

"What is that building?" she inquired, with a sort of curiosity she would have found it difficult to explain to herself.

"Sembly and show rooms—Dwarf-finch's," was Mrs. Martin's reply. "They're dark and quiet just now, but they wakes up sometimes, I promise you."

"Dwarf-finch!" An odd name. Susan cast another glance through the window. That dreary, prison-like edifice seemed to exercise over her a gloomy fascination she could not in the least understand.

Very quickly the pair found themselves once more seated in Mrs. Martin's bright little room, enjoying their tea. Tea did I call it? What, with poached eggs on delicate ham? With hot cakes? With even one of those mysterious "somethings," the true secret of whose composition was locked in Mrs. Martin's breast, and ultimately (so I am assured) died with her unrevealed?

Hungry as she was, Susan's anxious curiosity to learn something of the future object of her care, somewhat damped her appetite, thereby awakening Mrs. Martin's ever-ready sympathy.

"You're below yourself, child, I see that," said the good lady, soothingly. "'Tis leaving home, and all that. Bless your heart, you only want a fillip. Now just you put aside that cold slop, and take what I'm going to give you."

So speaking, Mrs. Martin singled out a little key, and, bustling to a cellaret that listened in a sequestered nook of the apartment, instantly returned with a small glass, filled to the brim with some fluid resembling the purest molten gold.

"Drink that."

Susan obeyed. It was—though not weak—delicious.

"There. I don't give that to every one, I promise you," remarked Mrs. Martin, carefully wiping and putting away the glass.

It was true. And very rarely had the good woman bestowed any upon herself, for, though fond of nice things, she was

temperate in their use. Fillips might become expedient, but these delivered, there was an end of it.

"Will not the mistress see me to-night?" inquired Susan, presently.

"All in good time," was the reply. "She's coming down herself to speak to you."

"Coming down?"

"To be sure. Why not? She likes this little room. Bless your heart, many and many a chat missis and me has had in these two big chairs before she goes to bed!"

"And—and when do you think I shall see my master?" asked Susan, boldly.

"Ah, that's another pint," replied the housekeeper. "P'raps to-morrow. P'raps not for a year. I've been housekeeper nigh three years, and I've never seen him yet!"

"Never seen him?"

"Never seen him entire," said Mrs. Martin. "I've heard him often, so will you, 'specially when it walks."

"It!" ejaculated Susan.

"Ah!" said the housekeeper, quickly, "that's only my way of speaking. He walks sometimes for half the night, along the corridor, up and down stairs, anywhere, when he thinks everybody's abed, and 'tis so like a ghost's ways that we a'most think him one."

"Dear Mrs. Martin," burst out Susan, "won't you tell me more about this gentleman? Everything you know?"

"O' course I will," replied the good woman, who had been bursting with impatience to do so before her mistress should appear, and perhaps take part of the history out of her mouth.

The name, Mrs. Martin informed Susan, was not always Grahame Mountjoy, her mistress's late husband, Captain Fellowes, having assumed the former name on succeeding, somewhat unexpectedly, to a large family estate. This occurred about five years since; and Mountjoy, dying in the succeeding year; left to his wife, herself in delicate health, the sole charge of their only child, a youth then about sixteen, and an object of great solicitude.

It would appear that, previous to the accession of fortune just mentioned, the young gentleman had fallen passionately in love with the blue-eyed daughter of the postmaster of the quiet village in which, for economical reasons, the Fellowes' had for the moment fixed their residence. Now the difference of station, already sufficiently marked, became hopelessly augmented by

the freak of fortune that had transformed Captain Fellowes, with little more than his half-pay and a pension for wounds, into Mr. Grahame Mountjoy, with a landed estate worth twelve thousand a year. Fond almost to adoration, as both parents were, of their boy, nothing could reconcile them to such a connexion. They quitted the village, and all intercourse with its inhabitants was thenceforth peremptorily suspended.

If the parents considered that the attachments of a boy, not yet sixteen, deserved no gentler treatment than this, they were very soon and painfully undeceived. The youth became very ill. Without, it was said, displaying any positive ailment, he wasted gradually away, until, seriously alarmed, his parents resolved to sacrifice every scruple, and restore to him those hopes on which his life seemed really to depend. It was too late. The poor girl, whose home was at all times unhappy under the rule of a savage stepmother, in despair or indifference had accepted the first suitor who sought her hand, and left her home for ever.

From this period, which was further marked by the death of Captain Fellowes-Mountjoy, the poor young man had never, it was believed, been seen by human eyes, save by his mother, his physician, and one or two domestics in immediate attendance on him. To these alone was confided the secret of his mysterious ailment, and they kept it well. It was known that he was under no restraint, nor debarred, by causes other than his own will, from any amount of locomotion; that he ate, drank, slept, and fiddled (he was a fine violinist already), to use Mrs. Martin's homely phrase, "like a good un." He was heard to laugh merrily, to chat, and sing. It was, in short, abundantly evident that the young gentleman was not dying of a broken heart, nor of utter weariness of life. What could be wrong with him? Something was. He had been attended by four physicians, including one the most eminent of his day, who came at great cost from London; but these gentlemen shook their heads, were dismissed in turn, and Mr. Grahame Mountjoy remained unseen.

About three years since, their country residence was let. Mr. Mountjoy, recluse as he was, longed for the sound and movement of a town. The Hornet seemed to suit him exactly, and here they were.

Susan pondered on the romantic narrative.

"What do you think was the matter?" she asked.

Mrs. Martin shook her head, and declared, with evident truth, that she had no opinion to offer.

"Some think," she went on to say, "that his disapp'ntment, poor gentleman! settled in his legs, which grew tremenjious. That's not true, for I've seen his stockings. Others say that he'd turned bottle-green. But the doctor here (he's a merry man—Doctor Leech) laughed hearty, and said, 'Not half so green as them that believes so.' If I had an idea," continued the good lady, "it is that he suddenly changed to—that his stomach being affected by—that there came out a—hush! I think I hear missis's door."

"A—a what, dear Mrs. Martin?" asked her eager listener.

"Something that spoiled his good looks, poor gentleman!" said Mrs. Martin, hurriedly; "and very handsome 'tis said he was."

They rose as Mrs. Grahame Mountjoy, with a kind smile, entered the apartment.

She was a refined, gentle-mannered woman, hardly more than forty, with traces of much former beauty, and a wistful, careworn look in her large brown eyes, so noticeable as at once to enlist the sympathy of those who looked on her.

Greeting Susan kindly, she sank into one of the chairs, pressing her hand to her side, as she did so, with a sigh of weariness or pain.

"You've been and tired yourself out again, ma'am," remarked the housekeeper, with respectful reproach. "You wants a fillip at once. Be ruled by me, ma'am, and let me—"

"No, no, Susan," said her mistress, stopping her peremptorily. "You see," she continued, addressing the new-comer, smilingly, "I have a Susan already, though she is much too grand a person to be called so by any but me. Your dear master has been so merry! I have not seen him in such spirits for years; no, not since—" she checked herself, suddenly. "And the remembrance of what he was, or might have been, came on me, for a moment, too strongly. I am tired," she owned, "but I would not sleep till I had seen my new Susan, and set at rest any apprehensions she might entertain as to what will be demanded of her."

"It has pleased Heaven," she continued, "to visit my poor son with an affliction so extraordinary, and yet, to the unperceptive observer, so provocative of laughter, as to determine him, some time since, to seclude himself altogether from the world, save only myself and one or two chosen attendants, who can be relied upon to preserve his melancholy secret. Startling perhaps, but not revolting, his condition is one calculated to excite the strongest sympathy, without, however, reducing him to be especially dependent upon the good offices of any. He has many accomplishments, his intellect is bright and clear, and, indeed, the sole trace of any morbid influence shadowing his mind is noticeable in the advertismment which has brought you here. He insists that any one who, in the event of need, should divide with me the duties of reader and occasional companion, should be a woman with dark blue eyes. His ailment," concluded Mrs. Grahame Mountjoy, with a sad smile, "dates from an incident in his life in which such a feature had an active share, and we have not deemed it prudent to oppose his fancy. Such," she added, rising, "are all the particulars you need at present learn, for my son would defer seeing you until your attendance becomes necessary. Meanwhile I can instruct you a little as to his tastes and ways, and our good Mrs. Martin will do her best to make you as comfortable as circumstances permit." And with a kind good-night, Mrs. Mountjoy left the room.

"Well?" said Mrs. Martin, interrogatively.

"I shall like her very much," said Susan, absently. "An 'ailment! An 'affliction! Yet sane and merry—"

"Go to bed, and dream of it, my dear," interrupted the other, lighting her lamp.

They went up-stairs.

Passing one of the doors opening on the corridor, Susan observed a rich brocaded dressing-gown, hung upon a chair. There were slippers to match, lined, as Mrs. Martin whispered her to note, with the softest swan's-down.

"One of It's 'walking'-dresses," she added, with a hurried glance at the chamber, from which proceeded the sound of a pleasant, manly voice trolling an Italian canzonet.

"It!" repeated Susan, as she presently laid her head upon the pillow. "It!"

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XIV. HIS LORDSHIP AND I.

"WAITER!" cried Lord Overbury. "Bring more mutton-chops. And some hot brandy-and-water. And a bottle of champagne. This young gentleman lunches with me."

We were in the old-fashioned, low-ceilinged coffee-room of the King's Head Inn and Posting House. The walls were hung with coloured prints in ebony frames, representing sporting and coaching incidents, with portraits of famous race-horses. Above the small oblong mirror on the mantelpiece a stuffed jack of enormous dimensions glared fiercely in his glass-case, opening wide his formidable grinning jaws. The room had many occupants; but in one corner a table had been retained for his lordship. There was much confusion, and the waiters seemed so over-burdened with care and labour as to be verging on frenzy. In an adjoining chamber a farmer's ordinary was being held, and throughout the house the smell of hot food and liquors, and the noise of clattering cutlery and earthenware, jingling glasses and spoons, were rife; while there blew about great gusts of tobacco smoke, of turbulent talk, and stentorian laughter.

Upon his lordship's bidding I drew a horsehair-covered high-backed chair to the table and sat down. I was hungry, and enjoyed the hissing mutton-chops prodigiously, and for the first time in my life I tasted champagne. And I liked it.

My host ate little or nothing. His thirst seemed unquenchable, however. He quaffed goblets of champagne, alternating these with copious draughts of hot spirits and water. Suddenly he bade the waiter

bring toasted cheese and a tankard of old ale.

He was the same strange, abrupt, jocund satyr I had met years before in the course of my famous visit to the Dark Tower. Only, if possible, he drank more, and took more snuff and smoked more, and laughed more wildly, and fixed his bloodshot eyes upon me more persistently than ever. And his hooked nose was redder; his tusky teeth were yellower.

"And what are you doing at Dripford Fair, Master Duke?" he inquired at length.

I told him of my errand, adding that I had somehow missed Reube and the lambs, and that it behoved me now to try and find them. He laughed much at this.

"And so you're a farmer! To think of that now! Take some more champagne. A farmer! And you've lost your sheep like little Bo-peep, and don't know where to find them! Never mind, my lad; they're safe enough. Reube will see after that. Let him alone and he'll bring 'em home with all their tails behind them. Isn't that the old song? Or he'll bring home the money for 'em, which Farmer Orme will like better. How is old Orme, by the way? And your mother? She's well? That's well. But she gets to look old, I suppose?"

I did not care to be speaking about my mother to him; his manner was so strange and rude. Besides, what did he know of her? What was she to him? I had but very rarely indeed heard her even mention him in the most distant manner. Yet at some earlier time he had clearly had some acquaintance with her. He had spoken of her maiden name—Mildred Orme—and expressed admiration of the beauty she had once possessed.

Still it seemed idle to take offence at

anything he said or did. Not only because he was a nobleman, and I was his guest; but in that he was so eccentric altogether, that he was hardly to be held an accountable creature or judged by ordinary standards. Moreover, there was so much noise in the room that our conversation could scarcely be overheard. So I answered him simply that my mother was well, but certainly looked older than formerly, seeing that her hair was now almost white.

"Ah, yes," he said. "Women are all alike in that. They grow old. Beauty don't last; the bloom's soon off it. They fall like wall-fruit in a frost. Eyes go, and hair and teeth, and they wither away. Or they puff out, and make flesh, and get to look like Christmas cattle. Yet I should have thought Mildred Orme would have lasted better. The handsome girl that she was when I first saw her! Not but what she had always the sharpest of tongues, and a devil of a temper. And that ages a woman a good deal. Poor Mildred Orme!"

I felt hot and angry at hearing him talk like this. I rose indignantly, and begged him to remember to whom and of whom he was speaking. He looked at me in a puzzled way for a few moments, as though he failed to understand the drift of my speech. Then he broke into a noisy laugh.

"Sit down, my lad," he said. "There's no offence meant. You don't want to fight me, do you? A man old enough to be your father! Sit down. I don't forget you're Mildred Orme's son, and a farmer bringing lambs to sell at Dripford Fair." He laughed afresh as he said this. "But you're right to speak up for your mother—quite right, Duke, and I like you the better for it. I've never known, for my part, what it is to have a mother. Better for me if I had. But the poor soul died bringing me into the world. Yet if I caught a fellow saying a word against her, for all I never saw her face, or felt her touch, or heard her voice, by the Lord Harry, I'd wring his neck for him. Always stand by your mother, Duke. I'm sorry if I said anything you did not like. I'd forgotten you were here. I was thinking, my lad, of things that happened long ago. I didn't know I was talking, or what I said." He passed his silk handkerchief across his eyes. Whether the tears that had gathered there arose from excess of drink, of snuff, or of sentiment, I felt a difficulty in deciding.

"You'll have another bottle of champagne? You won't? Ah, you've had no

sorrows yet, or you'd know the pleasure of drowning them in the bowl—the flowing, flowing bowl!" Here he essayed to sing, but with little success. "Always drown your sorrows, Duke, like kittens, as soon as they're born. It's the only way to deal with 'em. I shouldn't be the man I am, if I hadn't made a point of drowning my sorrows in the bowl directly they came nigh me." This no doubt was true. "And the many sorrows I've had, and the many flowing bowls I've emptied!" he continued. "Whatever the world may say of me, and it's apt to say nasty things of me as of every one else, it can't call me a milkop. Thank Heaven for that!"

It struck me at the time that this was not so very much to thank Heaven for, after all.

"God bless you, Duke. May you prosper in all your undertakings. Amen. Tell Mildred Orme—tell your mother, I mean—Mrs. Nightingale—that's the name isn't it?—tell her I asked after her, and after your uncle. A wooden-headed, stiff-backed man, Orme, but most respectable; and I respect him accordingly. He's making a lot of money out of my land I don't doubt, and he's a richer man than I am, I dare say—he may easily be that; but he pays his way, and is sober and honest and straightforward in all his dealings, and I've a great respect for him. He knows nothing of the world or of life, and that's saved him a good deal of money. He's lived like an owl in an ivy bush, seeing and hearing and knowing nothing; still if he's been happy so much the better for him. That's not been my way, as all the world knows; it wouldn't have suited me, and I couldn't have stood it, not for a day, no, not for an hour. But one has to pay for knowing life and the world, a tidy sum, as I've found, to my cost. God bless you, my lad. Very pleased to have seen you grown so tall and looking so spruce; altogether a smart, active young fellow. I was just such another at your age. Take a pinch of snuff. No? Well, then, shake hands."

His dingy, hairy hand was burning hot. He shook mine up and down as though reluctant to let it go.

He had seemed to be rather overcome by his potations, which had certainly been recklessly liberal. I thought that he was falling from a maudlin condition of intoxication into a heavy drunken sleep. His speech was thick, his eyes were dim, and he had lost control over his facial muscles. I was prepared to depart, leaving him slumberous and helpless in his chair; when suddenly he started, sprang to his feet,

shook himself like a wet dog, and by a violent effort appeared to regain command over his faculties, and to overcome the torpor that had been stealing upon him.

"Come out and see the fun of the fair," he cried, as he slipped his arm through mine and drew me towards the street.

He was far from a reputable-looking companion. His curly-rimmed, black beaver hat was stuck on the back of his head; his waistcoat was unbuttoned; his crumpled neckcloth was twisted round until the bow rested under his right ear. He had lighted a long clay pipe, and he puffed clouds of smoke as he went along. The streets were still very crowded, and locomotion was difficult. His lordship proceeded upon a very simple plan. He made way for himself and for me by sheer force, now plunging heavily against this obstacle and overthrowing it; now seizing that (if it happened to be a man) by the coat-collar, and hurling it out of his path. All the while he shouted at the top of his voice wild hunting cries and uncouth utterances of various kinds, well interlarded with oaths. His pipe soon fell from his grasp and was shattered upon the roadway. Every moment I feared that some conflict with the outraged crowd must result from my companion's violence. But he seemed to be generally recognised, and his strange humours met with extraordinary indulgence. It was understood, I suppose, that there was no malevolence in his rude doings; that he was rather to be laughed at, or even applauded, than censured or attacked in return. The "Corinthian" nobleman was not an unpopular character in those days.

I longed to escape from him, for although inflamed with the wine he had plied me with, I was yet conscious that my position was most unseemly, and that my first appearance in public as a farmer was becoming very discreditable. But Lord Overbury retained a firm hold of my arm; and, moreover, I persuaded myself that there would be something cowardly in abandoning him, and that I was now in some measure bound to him, let his proceedings be never so wild and mischievous. I was very young; and had tasted champagne for the first time. And there was a comical air about his lordship and his doings which I found irresistible. At the same time a remorseful reflection haunted me as to what my uncle, what my mother, would think and say of me, could either know how I was discharging my mission to Dripford Fair!

"Out of the way!" roared Lord Overbury, as he ran full tilt against a burly, bulky figure that obstructed our progress. The figure yielded but slightly, then turned round angrily to confront us. It was Farmer Jobling. What would he now think of the "goings on" of Mrs. Nightingale's son? He said nothing, but with open eyes and mouth made way for us, as he touched his broad-brimmed hat and bowed to his lordship.

"Jobling, wasn't it?" asked Lord Overbury of me. "I thought so; one of my tenants—farms the Home lands. Very good fellow, but a prodigious fool—hen-pecked they tell me; but he used to ride well to hounds when he was a younger man. I've a great respect for Jobling. He's an ass, but he farms in a steady, old-fashioned way, and deals honestly by the land. And he had a tidy breed of sheep at one time."

I was thankful when he turned out of the market-place up a less crowded side street. I had looked round for Renbe, but could see nothing of him.

We walked towards the outskirts of the town, pausing for a moment to regain breath, and for my companion to steady himself somewhat, refresh himself with a plentiful pinch of snuff, and re-arrange his disordered dress; especially to dispose of the protruding shirt-sleeves which had issued between his waistcoat and his coat, from the latter garment having been torn nearly off his back in the various encounters he had undergone.

We now approached a piece of waste land, upon which were pitched various booths and tents. Here ginger-bread nuts were vended, with various ginger-bread constructions adorned with Dutch metal; peep-shows were being exhibited, with caravans of wild beasts and natural phenomena of all kinds, feats of contortion and conjuring. Whirligigs went round, and swings sawed and rushed to and fro through the air. Still even this portion of the fair had its business element. Not only was the cheap-jack present disposing of earthen and hardware at unnaturally low prices, and seasoning all his transactions with a superabundance of facetious sallies, but horses and ponies, their manes decked with ribbons and their tails carefully tied up with straw, were also on sale, after being raced through the crowd to an accompaniment of shrill cries and drummed hats. Agricultural implements of a simple sort were displayed to possible purchasers; sporting dogs were to

be bought upon reasonable terms; while in a special corner groups of farm servants were in attendance to be hired for a year's engagement.

Lord Overbury invaded the booths one after the other, I following him. His manner was still extremely rude and boisterous. "'Tis his lordship," the people said. "A's nation vuddled, but a' means no harm. And a'll go about jest where a's a mind to." He paid liberally for his entertainment, however, scattering his money right and left. But he refused to be bound by the regulations of the establishments he patronised. He pushed past money-takers and attendants, and intruded upon the most sacred mysteries of the caravans. He pinched the famous Fat Lady until she screamed again; he trod upon the toes of the Giant; insulted the Dwarf by grasping the nether portion of his attire and holding him suspended in the air; and he grievously hurt the feelings of the Savage who eat raw meat by accusing him of imposition. Our progress through the fair was indeed desperately riotous.

At one of the larger booths the performances seemed for a time to have terminated. It was called "Jecker's Royal Travelling Theatre," and an inscription above the platform announced that it was "the favourite establishment of royalty, and the nobility and gentry throughout the globe." Lord Overbury forced his way in at a side entrance, which had been reserved, as it seemed to me, for the performers.

It was the first theatre of any kind that I had ever entered.

It was simply a spacious canvas erection supported by poles and interlacing ropes. But there was a stage at one end with a proscenium, curtain, and footlights. Benches rising one above another provided accommodation for three or four hundred spectators. The lamps on the stage only were lighted, but wooden hoops with candles attached hung from the roof, and evidenced that performances were exhibited in the evening.

Lord Overbury's abrupt, resolute method of entering appeared to disarm opposition. We were not questioned as to our object in invading the theatre. It was, I suppose, assumed that we had some right to be there. We stood among a group of the performers, who still wore their professional costumes, although they had partially covered these by assuming rough overcoats of various colours—drab being the favourite.

A tight-rope fixed upon the stage stretched midway into the theatre. It was as thick as a man's arm, and whitened with chalk. A hand-organ was being played, and discoursed a lively jig-like tune. A girl was dancing on the rope.

"I call her a real good-looking un," said his lordship with an oath.

I thought her simply the most beautiful creature I had ever seen.

CHAPTER XV. THE "TIGHT-JEFF."

COMPARED with the bright daylight outside, the interior of the tent seemed somewhat dark; its atmosphere was close, and redolent of smoking oil-lamps and orange-peel. And, perhaps, the mists of wine and general excitement may have disturbed and confused my vision. Yet still I knew on the instant for an absolute certainty that she was beautiful—wonderfully beautiful. I could see that her dress was tawdry and shabby. Unskilled in theatrical illusions as I was, I could not be tricked into admiration of the paltry, almost squalid finery she wore. I could note her soiled and creased muslin skirt that had once been white and was now a lustreless yellow; her frayed silk stockings, much darned at the knees and ankles; her smeared rusty bodice of green cotton velvet, sprinkled with tarnished spangles; the faded, tattered wreath of artificial flowers, the crumpled ribbons, and strings of glass beads twisted among the rich cables of her auburn hair. I could perceive the coarse dabs of raw vermilion upon her cheeks, outraging so cruelly the delicate harmony of pearls and roses in her transparent complexion. But any creature so perfectly lovely it seemed to me that I had never seen before—not even in my dreams.

She was dancing on the rope to the music of the hand-organ, balancing herself with a long whitened pole. Her every movement and pose struck me as singularly graceful. She was little more than my own age, I judged; a slim, lithe girl, of symmetrical figure, with shapely features, well-defined brows, and brilliant hazel eyes. When her red lips parted it could be seen that her teeth were exquisitely white and regular. She had smiled as we entered, her brows arching, and her eyes emitting, as I fancied, visible rays, as though they had been diamonds. The light from above, filtered through the weather-stained canvas, poured upon her with a tawny warmth of colouring, save where a rent in the roofing allowed a shaft of blue grey

to fall through, and gleam with cold brightness upon her tinsel-trimmed dress. And now and then her satin arms and shoulders caught glowing reflections from the dim red lamps upon the little stage at the end of the booth. She had smiled but for a moment; gratified, I fancy, at the fact that her performance had its public of unprofessional witnesses. She could not, of course, that Lord Overbury and myself were intruders in the theatre, having no interest in its concerns. But presently an expression of pain crossed her face. Her eyes half closed, and there came a dint upon her forehead. She was panting for breath; her bosom heaving with extreme rapidity. It was plain that she was becoming exhausted with her severe exertions. At last she paused for a moment, planting her pole in the ground and resting upon the cross beams of wood to which the end of the rope was attached. She pressed her hand upon her heart and appeared to be nearly fainting.

"Go on!" shouted roughly one of our group, a coarse-looking man with swollen features and greasy hair curved into a roll at the back of his head. He wore a white hat and a pilot-coat, half concealing a spangled, tight-fitting, cotton suit of a nankeen colour.

"Who is she?" I asked of some one standing near me. I did not turn to look at him. I was unable to avert my eyes from the beautiful rope-dancer.

"Who is she? We call her Mademoiselle Rosetta, from the Imperial Cirque of St. Petersburg. That's all I know—except that she's a pupil of Herr Diavolo's. That's Herr Diavolo, in the white hat. And Herr Diavolo's a Tartar. And Herr Diavolo's been drinking. And Herr Diavolo's in a particularly unpleasant mood just now. And I wouldn't be Herr Diavolo's pupil, if I could help it, not for untold gold—I wouldn't. Yes, Rosetta's Diavolo's pupil, and she's catching it. And she's likely to catch it further and worse before he's done with her. Unfortunate Miss Rosetta!"

Something in the tone of the speaker's voice seemed familiar to me. I glanced at him for a moment. But it was plain that I was mistaken; I could never have seen him before. His face was thickly coated with white paint, with here and there odd blotches of red and black upon it. His hair was brushed out and tied into three bunches, one at the top and one on either side of his head. And he wore an odd dress of parti-coloured stripes and stars upon a

white cotton ground. Wondering what character he could possibly represent in even the most fantastic kind of stage play, I turned again to look at the dancer.

"Go on!"

"Shame," said some one, but not very loudly.

The man pointed out to me as Herr Diavolo glared fiercely round. I thought him a most ruffianly looking fellow. He stood in a straddling attitude, smoking a short black pipe, and thrashing the protuberant calves of his massive bowed legs with a cheap cane. He was rather corpulent, and I noted ridges of fat circling his bare bull's neck. But it was clear that he was possessed of great strength. The bulging muscles of his thick arms could be traced even through the thick cloth of his overcoat. His scowling face seemed sodden and spotted from intemperance. His brother players were clearly afraid of him. Indeed, he looked capable of anything.

"Go on; and keep on going on; and don't stop going on till I tell you, Miss. You've been wanting a lesson this long time, and now you've got it." And he ground his teeth and swore at his pupil, slashing the air till it screamed again with his cheap cane.

I could not resist reverting to the performer in the strange dress who had previously given me information, and then it dawned upon me that all the time I had been looking fixedly at the dancer this performer had been looking fixedly at me.

"She's Diavolo's pupil, as I said. And she broke down this morning—missed her tip, as we call it; that is, made a mistake on the tight-jeff. What you call the tight-rope. She fell, indeed; but she did not hurt herself. And he's punishing her. That's Diavolo's way. He's great at punishing his pupils. And if they'd only combine and hang him with his own rope, they'd be doing a good turn for themselves and society generally. Diavolo would perish universally unlamented, I should say."

And still he looked at me intently, and appeared to be watching the effect upon my face of all he said. I had scarcely time to note this, I was so occupied with the lovely rope-dancer. Yet somehow I did contrive to note it.

Presently he touched me on the shoulder.

"Who's that?" he asked in a whisper, pointing to my companion, who had advanced some few paces in front of me, and stood taking snuff furiously, yet not less interested than I was in the performance.

"Hush! It's Lord Overbury."

"Lord Overbury! I thought he was a flash bagman. I wonder whether he'd take tickets for my bespeak." And then he slapped his palms together with an air of sudden discovery, or perhaps merely to arrest my attention, and he struck an attitude, tilting back his head, curving his arms, and hollowing his back. A vague reminiscence of portraits of King George the Fourth visited me, and then—I knew him! He was Mr. Fane Mauleverer!

"Hush," he said in a hissing whisper. "Don't breathe my name—not for worlds! I am now Signor Leverini; but for a time, a very short time. Solely to oblige the management. I have always been obliging, too obliging. It's been my ruin. I know it. But a man cannot master his nature. An appeal was made to me. Mrs. Jecker was in tears—there's no Jecker now—he's been dead this many a year. We keep up the name, but we're *her* company. She was in tears, kneeling to me. You know my supreme tenderness of heart. Could I bear to see lovely woman in distress? No, she's not lovely; that's a figure of speech; still she's a woman. I could not bear it. Business has been frightful. In this district we're no match for the horse-riders. The neighbourhood's horsey. They haven't minds enough for the stage; but they know a circus when they see one. Things were becoming desperate. The band struck, and vanished like a spark in a tinder-box. There was nothing for it but to fall back upon a hand-organ. We had to throw over the legitimate and engage extraneous talent to compete with the riders. The tight-jeff, Diavolo and his pupils—that kind of thing. But a clown to the rope, to cackle, to fill up the rests, to chalk shoes, was indispensable. Diavolo—he's not an amiable man, and he will not make allowances—refused to appear without a clown to the rope. It was offered, beseechingly, to this one, to that, to the other. They hadn't the will, or say they hadn't the talent. Could I break Mrs. Jecker's heart? I couldn't. I'm versatile. I'm obliging, as I said. So I wear motley; not sinking to its level, but lifting it up to mine. I was really great as clown to the rope this morning. You should have heard the applause. Diavolo's jealous, and is taking it out of his pupils, as you see. Still I have my feelings. I have played Hamlet and Ranger. I am humiliated. This is my own hair you observe; no clown's scalp for me; my own hair frizzed out, pomatumed, and tied; an entirely new

reading of the part. There's not another man in the profession could do it as I have done it. But it's not fair to me; I was born for better things. And to think that you should see me thus! Not a word to your excellent uncle, to your lady mother. I told you we should meet again, Master Duke. My presentiments are unerring. Still, I didn't think that you would find me clowning amongst the boothers. I said that you would find your way to a theatre. Right, you observe. Though I did not count upon Jecker's being the place precisely. I talked of Covent Garden, I think. Well, well, that may be yet. And Kem is well? and the farm thrives? and the pigs? and the poultry? and the old ale is as rich an amber, as potent a drink as ever? How you've grown! and what a country russet glows upon your face! With a trifle of padding you might go on for Romeo. Hallo!"

Our attention was recalled to the ropedancer.

Her looks were very angry. She was now white, now red, quivering in every limb with excitement and exhaustion.

"I'll dance no more," she said, hoarsely, with flashing eyes.

"Go on," roared Diavolo, as he beat his calves with his cane quite fiercely.

She jerked her chin in the air with looks and gestures of superb defiance. Then she flung down her balancing-pole, hung with her hands from the rope for a moment, and dropped lightly on to the ground.

"I won't go on, beast," she said, and she confronted her master.

There was the sound of the cheap cane slashing through the air, and then a feminine shriek of pain.

I was horrified. For a moment a blood-red curtain obscured my sight, sparks danced before my eyes, and my heart was leaping to my mouth. I staggered, then plunged forward to do—I know not what. If I could have found my hands clutching Diavolo's throat, how happy I should have been! But before I was fully conscious of what had happened I found myself pulled back by some one. Diavolo was prostrate with a bleeding face. Lord Overbury, his hat and coat flung far from him, with clenched fists, was hovering near him, almost dancing round him.

"Pick him up!" screamed his lordship, with a furious oath. "Put him on his feet again. The cur! The coward! Stand back, all. I know what I'm about. To strike the child! Come on! Ah, would you!"

Diavolo had slowly risen, and now made

a heavy rush at his foe. But he was stopped suddenly, and struck to earth in a moment, bleeding afresh and senseless.

"His lordship knows how to put in his left," whispered Mauleverer. "I call that very pretty practice."

HOW TO DRESS ON FIFTEEN POUNDS A YEAR.*

We wonder how many people have read this book, honestly and earnestly through, as we have. We wonder, especially, how many anxious and conscientious "ladies," embarrassed by scanty incomes and an imperative necessity to keep within them, have sought its pages; ladies longing to see where their heaviness could be lightened; where they could be shown the best way to cease the old cry, "Nothing to wear," and to please "dear John," or "dear Harry," by putting on clothes fitting for a lady, that should yet be at the moderate cost, yearly, of the sum stated. One thing is certain: ladies do want to know how to dress themselves at little price. Ladies, also, do want to know how to dress themselves to fit their station, and becomingly, and with taste. Ladies, it is equally certain, do not, as a rule, wish to involve their paymasters in scoldings and money difficulties, for the sake of new flounces and finery that soon enough will be only filling up the rag-bag. Besides, women, in the mass, have an inherent love of economy. Women have this so strongly, that most men, at the moments when they are the monsters they can be, call it meanness; and this economy leads women always to get as much as they can for as little, and to be very careful to prevent waste. The reason is clear. Women are always dealing with small sums; always parcelling out these small sums into sums still smaller; and they acquire a knack of economising trifles, very difficult to be understood by the sterner sex accustomed to see sovereigns cast about in bankers' shovels, and to be in contact with loans, and promises, and purchases, representing "thousands." As this is so, we may be sure any rules laid down by a lady, on how to dress as a lady for fifteen pounds a year, would meet with hosts of eager and interested readers; and, indeed, the question is one well meriting attention.

* How to Dress on Fifteen Pounds a Year, as a Lady. By a Lady. London: Frederick Warne and Co. Warne's Useful Works. Price One Shilling.

We wish we could say that one knot could be untied, one painful problem solved, by the most laborious study of the disappointing volume under criticism. What does it teach? What does it prove? Where does it in any way give assistance? The writer, it must be remembered, takes her own sum, and her own position. She says fifteen pounds; and she professes to show how it will dress "a lady." In the first place, how many English ladies are there who must dress, and who do dress, at a considerably less price than this, and yet who manage, in some skillful way, to pass muster, and never to have their hard poverty suspected? Yet this sister of the pen seems to proclaim that her sum is the lowest ever invented; that ladies will not be able to make it "do," unless they have the wisdom to seek her instruction. It may be so. It depends doubtless, in a great measure, on what a lady may wear; and on what, in the writer's opinion, a lady's necessities are. We, for example, had always entertained the belief that a lady ought to have a pocket-handkerchief. It would have been no surprise to us, in fact, to find that she possessed a dozen, or more; all neatly hemmed and marked for use, in a natty box, or envelope, upon her dressing-table. We have been accustomed, also, to see ladies with collars round their throats; with these collars tastefully fastened with a brooch or a bow. It has been agreeable to us, too, to see ladies' hands look all the whiter and more alluring for cuffs, or wristbands, round them; to see the hands thus ornamented occasionally resting in little pockets on coquettish aprons worn to keep the dresses underneath from too rough using. A few other articles, as well as these, would have seemed to us compulsory, if we had been consulted as to a lady's outfit. We have heard the garment flannel petticoat hinted at; so a white cambric body (or, we believe, technically, a camisole); so also a flannel or marino vest for the delicate; and a combing-gown to cover the shoulders whilst the hair is receiving proper dressing, and a night-cap to tie over it when it is tucked up and "done." Occasional peeps, too, into lists, headed "trousseaux," "layettes," or "babies' berceannettes," sent copiously through the post as advertisements, render us more aware than we wish to be of the existence of veils, neckties, dress-improvers (hum?) pins, pads, bags, boxes, combs, brushes, and a sacred etcetera; all needful certainly, in some form

or texture, for feminine accoutrement, or they would no more have had space given to them for enumeration than would false moustaches or shilling razors. But does our lady teacher mention any one of these articles among the items requisite for a lady as a lady tells? We can find no allusion to them. This lady has been performing a new Gulliver's Travels, perhaps, and has come across a race of other ladies, minus that distinguishing feature, a nose; hence the absence of pocket-handkerchiefs. She has come across another England in the tropics, where flannel, in any form, is not needed; hence no woollen mystery in her catalogue. She has furnished a world of her own with strong-minded women who please no eye with dainty edges of lace or muslin, but put on a dress "any-how," and think a ribbon, band, or bow, imbecility; hence no margin for the little ruff that makes a woollen gown as becoming as a silk one, and that pleasant women know how to put on so effectively. Assuredly, unless the writer's views of a lady are very different to our own, she has no idea of how to dress one, and she fails in what she undertakes, sadly.

As we read further we find that we have done our writer a wrong; a very little one; but we wish to make her due apologies. She does give a lady a pocket-handkerchief, after all. Nay, she gives six. In Table C, which we may suppose, at the earliest, stands for the second year, she suddenly recollects herself, and puts down half a dozen handkerchiefs, to cost six and sixpence; but it is not until the second year that the civilisation of the typical "lady" advances far enough to make a mouchoir necessary to her. We trust our author will see the full measure of this rectification we give her. We trust, besides, she will not cavil at our refusal to put all the flannel petticoats, flannel vests, calico and cambric bodices, veils, combing-gown, and so on, missing from her list, into her one "line" of sundries. The exact sum she devotes to sundries, for one year, is sixteen shillings and sevenpence; eight shillings and threepence-halfpenny for six months' call upon petty cash: four shillings and a penny three-farthings for what would be wanted in a quarter, a fraction less than fourpence for the expenses of a week. The figures are so eloquent, we put them down and leave them. And we will now show what our author does order to be bought in her first year for her regulation sixteen and sevenpence. All

the items are down in her text as indispensable; they are over and above the articles enumerated and priced in Table B (covering the same period and amounting to the fifteen pounds).

A little braid or trimming for a petticoat.

A chemisette of tulle or muslin.

A bow for the neck.

Dyeing a tweed dress.

A black French merino polonaise.

Another of stout brown holland or linen.

The price of cleaning an old hat.

A few yards of extra steel for a crinoline.

A calico cover for this, nine inches deep.

A beaver or Irish frieze out-door jacket for winter.

And (over this our author is sweetly practical) "enough of coarse brown linen to make a couple of aprons; for if you live in the country and are given to poultry-tending, or any rough dirty occupations of that sort, they will save your dresses wonderfully, and soon repay their cost in the reduction of your washing-bill, besides rescuing them from many a rent and tear."

And all for sixteen shillings and seven pennies!

The whole plan, indeed, of our writer is as illogical as this specimen. If we could be so ungallant or so ungenerous as to suppose that all women were like her, there could not be a better proof than this book of their utter unfitness for Business, Arts, Votes, Seats in Parliament, or any other Rights of which we hear so much. Indeed, did not our writer give us pain to think of the serious difficulties she will get all ladies into who are unwise enough to follow her, we should be able to laugh at her little volume as a piece of fun. How may it be supposed she proposes to limit annual dress-money to fifteen pounds? By concluding that the lady has, before beginning to spend, ten dresses by her; two bonnets and a hat; two shawls; two jackets; a black silk cape; a waterproof cloak; eight outside petticoats; two crinolines; a pair of stays; thirteen pairs of stockings, including some of open-work thread, and a pair each of black and white silk; six pairs of boots and shoes; besides a sufficient stock of miscellaneous garments.

And now let us have a word about these ten dresses already in the wardrobe. Or, rather, let the writer herself have her own word. It will show her manner.

"On looking over your summer dresses

... we find a cambric, new the latter part of the summer, and, therefore, tolerably fresh and clean; next, a thick white muslin in the same condition; a well-washed cotton of the year before; a very shabby garden-dress; two half-worn common evening dresses of some sort; an old silk that will bear cleaning; for evening wear ... a between-season material, such as a camel, new in the early spring, which you are now (in October) wearing; a tidy black silk, bought this time last year; and a dark linsey which you had new the latter part of the winter before last."

Might not a lady of ordinary intelligence, with only the smaller sum of ten pounds a year to spend, think she was well provisioned with dresses, having all these? But a lady with fifteen pounds is not to have so much prudence. She is at once to set to work and get five dresses more. She is to buy a washing silk for two pounds five shillings; a cambric for six shillings and sixpence; a thick white muslin for eight shillings; an evening alpaca or "material" for ten shillings; and enough tweed to make dress, jacket, and waterproof, to come to four pounds ten shillings. We leave experts to decide whether these figures are real. They do not agree with certain items that have come under our notice; but we have been unlucky, perhaps; not so shrewd as "a lady" might be; and we pass them by. The real point is whether "a lady of limited means" is justified in buying tweed for a waterproof cloak when she already has such a garment; in getting a new evening dress when three, and so on, are in her possession. The real point is, also, whether a counsellor who tells her she ought to do so, and takes credit for wisdom and foresight in the telling, is doing her a service.

Well, these five dresses come to a total of seven pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence. The remaining seven sovereigns and sixpence, to make up the fifteen pounds, have to be accounted for. Thirty shillings are to go for the material for three bonnets; it is fair. Twelve shillings and sixpence are to be spent on a hat and the trimmings for it; it is fair, too—except that, as the spender already owns two bonnets and a hat, it is evident the other lady who advises "goes in" for head-gear strongly, to the exclusion of collarettes, sleeves, tuckers, aprons, and the other many things the omission of which we have noted. A pair of thick boots are bought for fourteen shillings; a thin pair

for six shillings and sixpence; a house pair for three shillings and sixpence; and a pair of shoes for half a crown. Moderate and reasonable, all; albeit it brings us very nearly to the end of our tether. Small as our remaining capital is, though, a whole sovereign of it, save tenpence, is to go in gloves. This is terrible. On reflection, though, the lady had no gloves by her in the Imaginary Wardrobe (as the chapter is headed) our author gave her to start with; it is femininely natural, therefore, she should wish at once for a plentiful and expensive supply. She is to get six pairs at two shillings and sixpence (one pair being double sewn), and she is to get a pair of garden gauntlets for one shilling and eightpence. Two pairs of coloured stockings are to take away four more of her few shillings; she is to buy a black silk sash for a crown, and a coloured one for another; and, though the author has already kindly imagined two crinolines for her (one expressly stated as new), she is to buy a third, and is to part with five shillings and ninepence for the purpose. Very little of the fifteen sovereigns now remains. But two "lines." One is the sixteen shillings and sevenpence for the very comprehensive sundries, the other a stated ten shillings for under-linen. Now, in mentioning the under-linen in the imaginary wardrobe a lady has to start with, our author has been particular to a scruple. She confines herself to three kinds of garments, it is true (whilst we should have thought a lady much more complexly composed); but she says of these that one kind is good, the second "so, so," and the third so worn out, "you will have to get some new at once." Very good. Then must there not be an immediate purchase of calico, buttons, and so on, for the pressing need, with a prospect of a second outlay speedily, to renew the stock of the garments that are only "so, so"? A masculine mind would have reasoned in this manner. A lady advising another lady argues differently. She is comfortable under the persuasion that ten shillings, which would, perhaps, buy fifteen yards of "long-cloth," would meet the whole difficulty. In addition to which serene fallacy, she executes a little arithmetical somersault, in her confidential way, that she thinks, no doubt, improves her position vastly. "You will see," she says (page 34), "that a pound is set aside for under-linen, stays, &c., which, taking an average, with management, you will find sufficient." So that besides calling the appropriated ten shillings a pound,

stays are to be bought with it as well as an ominous etcetera, and yet the buyer is to be dressed "as a lady"! How of the "management" required, too? We might have thought that ought to have been manifested. It might have been considered, indeed, the object of the book. There is no word of it, however. We are left to conclude it is seeing everything double, like the half-sovereign, and then passing to the next subject with the sweetest suavity and satisfaction.

Our author gives a few general rules. Buy the "Cora" washing-silk, she says, not the Tussore. This is cabalistic to us; it may be wisdom, it may be the flimsiest folly; we mention it because of the innocent admission that one piece of Cora will not make a dress, and so "the best plan is to persuade a friend to join with you in the purchase of three pieces," when the two can divide the three between them. What is to be done supposing the friend is not forthcoming, our author has omitted to mention. Have a brown holland dress for sea-side use, she says; or else "blue ticking, such as is sold for working men's shirts." Get twelve yards of either. Pay about a shilling a yard for the former; about sevenpence for the latter. Trim with braid; or "dispense with trimming altogether, merely wearing a dark-blue cambric sash." Yet in only one out of the three tables given is such a garment mentioned, and then it is put down decisively as ticking, and at the bare cost of the material, seven shillings. Another mild financial delusion is to recommend real lace for trimming bonnets. "It is as cheap as, if not cheaper (in the long run) than imitation," declares our author, "and you can generally buy it for half a crown or three shillings a yard." We will once more confess our entire inability to give judgment on these figures, in relation to the goods to be purchased, or on the taste that prefers one species to the other; we are only stubborn in our certainty as to how many yards of anything at three shillings a yard can be bought for ten shillings (the price notified for the materials for a bonnet), and in our wonder as to how this limited quantity can perform the requisite duty, especially as the next sentence tells us a good flower "to make the bonnet very complete, costs from three to five shillings." It convinces us our wonder has something in it. "To be sure," the writer adds, "a spray can be bought in one of the large City shops for even as low as sevenpence;"

but she says it is only "sometimes," and it is evident that such a rare combination of falls in stocks and shares, and foreign bonds, must be wanting to bring about the circumstance, that it is not worth while to take it into consideration. Further innocent impracticability is exhibited over the imaginary wardrobe. The writer hopes the lady's winter jacket is a sealskin! Considering that the cost of a sealskin jacket would be about as much as a whole year's expenditure, it is a little too much to make a merit of spending only fifteen pounds a year when the spender has such a splendid stock to begin with.

Naturally, our lady has a lady-like unconsciousness of the errors she is committing. Naturally, too, she insists with feminine vehemence on the propriety of every one of her statements. "I have been accused" (in one matter, head-gear) she says, "of dire extravagance; a grave accusation to make against one professing to dress, and, moreover, teaching others that it is possible to dress on fifteen pounds a year . . . but without either altering my practice or opinion a whit . . . I assure any of my readers inclined to cavil at the items in the various tables, that not a single figure has been given at random or on hearsay; the whole is the result of personal experience; for I need hardly say that, had it been otherwise, I should not thus have taken upon myself to advise others." This is firm enough. Nevertheless—with the recollection that there is not a penny put down in these tables for dress-making, or millinery-making at all; that every lady is expected to be clever enough to make, and turn, and trim her own hats, and bonnets, and dresses—we repeat our protest, and we adhere to it. That it is possible, but not pleasant for a lady to dress on fifteen pounds a year is certain; that we have not been shown how to do it in this volume is every bit as certain also.

A LITTLE ETYMOLOGY.

Nor all ladies may be aware how much of history, geography, biography, and miscellaneous anecdote is illustrated in their wardrobes, in their drawing-rooms, in the fabrics that line and warm their bed-chambers. Nearly all things worn or woven have a topical, traditional, or personal reference attached to them—generally justifiable, often merely conjectural, sometimes only daringly ingenious, and

imagined in what Niebuhr denounces as "an unspeakable spirit of absurdity." Suppose we take the etymologists in hand where they treat of the work done by the loom and its auxiliaries, and discover a little useful knowledge, and a little amusing speculation in dress, and in the softer furniture of our abodes, from the diaper on the table to the hangings at our windows.

There are many words, indicating particular fabrics, which have so passed into familiar language that they no longer necessarily suggest any special significance, except as a trade-mark of quality. But the etymology of the subject is, nevertheless, interesting. Most persons giving a thought to the matter at all, would instantly recognise the meaning of Mechlin, Alençon, Brussels, and Chantilly lace; why one shawl is called a Paisley, and another a Cashmere; that Holland was originally manufactured by the Dutch; and that a Fez cap carries with it a local significance. The materials known in commerce as Circassian, Cyprus, Coburg, and Damask, equally explain themselves; and, though in a totally different manner, such fashions as those of Wellington and Blucher boots, Mackintosh and Chesterfield coats, and Spencers. But why is a shirt-front popularly called a dickey? Why are poplins so named? Why blanket, as the covering of a bed? Or silk, or shawl, or jerkin, or maud, or cravat? It is when we fall amid these shadows of learning that the etymologists enjoy their Walpurgis dance of guesses. Thus with blanket. There are said to have been three brothers of that name at Worcester, who invented the coverlet so called, and, in confirmation, it is pointed out that, not far off from the antique city, is still a locality known as the Blanquets. On the other hand, Bristol claims them among her mediæval citizens, though, for all that, they may have been Worcestershire men as well. The coarse woollens of their fabricating appear to have been eagerly adopted by the peasantry as a substitute for hempen cloth; then soldiers, sportsmen, and travellers found them useful; next they were laid on the stump bedsteads of the time, and a blue blanket became a Masonic banner. This may confidently be reckoned among things not quite universally known.

And now with respect to a dickey. Here the old result is reached, that the search only ends in nothing being found. Both the reason for the word, and the date of its origin, are as lost as the Livian books, though its Irish equivalent among the stu-

dents of Dublin University is still a Tommy, but not in honour of any Mr. Thomas; the scholars of that academy preferring to fix upon a Greek derivation, signifying a section. Into what wonder-lands of humour will not a little voyage among the shallows of the classics conduct the imaginative Irish genius!

Passing on to pantaloons—not the "lean and slippered," but the garments which, in America, are styled pants; they were once supposed to represent a part of male apparel, combining trousers and stockings in one, but the controversy on this point branches in many directions. Does the name of the article mean that which "involves," or "covers," or is it only an allusion to the heel? For all these theories have been insisted upon, besides another of prodigious boldness—that it was due to the tightly-arrayed standard-bearers of Venice, when the "Plant of Leon" was emblazoned on the banners of the republic, for so far have the fanciful etymologists gone. Or to a town? Or to a surname? Or simply to an Italian fashion in comedy? Much lore is yet hidden from mankind in respect of these questions.

As to poplin, it was invented in a papal territory, though by a Huguenot, and hence called papaline, which account we may as well credit, seeing that no other is at hand. Silk may be a Greek, a Persian, an Avalic, a Tartar, or a Chinese appellation, since the lexicographers and other eruditionists might be quoted in favour of each language; but concerning shawl there is only a single doubt, between a translation from a Persic word and the town of Shawl, in Beluchistan, whence it may possibly have been derived, and which was formerly famous for the manufacture. This must not be confounded with the celebrated shawl of Leybourne. A maud is a Scotch plaid, christened after a Scottish queen, daughter of Malcolm, and wife of Henry the First. Jerkin may be from the Anglo-Saxon cyrtellien—here we fall back upon the derivative doctor again—diminutive of cyrtel, a coat—a presumption, at any rate, more rational than that which traces it to the vulgarism Little Jerry, which is also claimed for jacket. But now we reach a formidable mystery. Whence came the name cravat? Was it first worn by a Croat cavalier? Because that is almost the sole suggestion of the learned. Concerning collars, there used to be a sort worn in Germany which were nick-named

Vater-mördern, or father-murderers, from the legend of a student who returned from the university with such a stiff pair that, on embracing his parent, they cut his throat. There are many testimonies to suicides—tight-lacing to wit—caused by vanity in dress; but we think this is the only case of assassination on record. In the general glossary, cardinals, capuchins, and mantillas tell their own story, though the old-fashioned Berthas do not, and the renowned chapeau-de-paille, which so harmonised with the beauty of the Churchills of the last century, would be equally explicit had it been a straw hat at all. There are many varieties of fabrics, besides those already mentioned, which indicate their own birthplaces, as the mohair known as Angola or Angora wool, shorn from the full-fleeced goats that feed far in the depths of Asia Minor; the mixture of hair and silk called, in commerce, Bengal; the long-cloths labelled Madapollams; the favourite Merino; the soft weavings of Paramatta, in New South Wales; the yellow cottons of Nankin, corrupted into nankeen; and the tapestries of Bergamo. Less familiar, however, are the silks named Ardessines, after the district producing them in Persia; the lamb's-wool hats—now disused—which were once identified with the Norman town of Caudebec; the figured linen made and designated after Dornoch, in Scotland; the thick-napped woollens called after Duffel, in Flanders; the cords of Genappes, in the same territory. When you hear of a cambric ruff you will naturally think of Cambray, in French Flanders. Behold a gingham umbrella, and Guingamp, in France, rises at once to the mind's eye; and so on with the coarse stuffs called Osnaburgs (Hanoverian manufacture); with their opposite, the delicate open lace-work tulle, which forms a fleecy foundation for so many bonnets, and dresses so many "breathing roses" of the ball-room in raiment light as air.

Once more, turning from cities and towns to persons and the signatures they have left behind them in the mercers', drapers', or upholsterers' shops, or among the chronicles of olden fashions, and we have the gallant Duc de Roquelaire making a monument to himself in the cloak he introduced; Baptiste inventing the batiste handkerchiefs, popular, principally, on the Continent—batiste dresses being fashionable in England now—and that colour known as Isabel, the traditional origin of

which, it may be supposed, everybody is aware of. One poetical personage has been credited with the name of a garment, a mantle of pale-grey cloth, trimmed with black velvet, called a Lalla Rookh, presumably because it bears not the remotest resemblance to anything which an Oriental princess ever wore or could wear. Leaving this Tussaud group, muslin perplexes all inquiry; whether the word is to be accounted for by the French mousse, or moss, because of its softness; whether this theory would be more tenable if to mousse were added lin or flax; whether the fabric was first wrought at Mosul, in Asiatic Turkey? Masulipatam may be left out of the question. Professors of derivation carry us back to Grecian ages to explain how the term dimity arose, declaring, on the authority of a whole gardenful of roots, that it signifies a fabric woven from double threads; but less learned pundits attribute it to the Egyptian Damietta. It is agreed that calico must be identified with Calicut, on the Malabar coast; gambroon with the Persian Gombroon, and, though less unanimously, marsella with Marseilles; but there is no such certainty about the connexion between gauze and the scriptural Gaza; or kersey with either Jersey or Cashmere, though the latitude of choice permitted is certainly a wide one. Jaconet was originally manufactured by a man of that name, who gave it its title in the market; so, in all likelihood, of jean; but how did a lady's riding-habit ever come to be called a Joseph? Tartans owe their designation, as we please, to the Latin, the French, or the Gaelic, the last having the word "tarstin," across, which seems near enough without going back to Tyre. Fustian, however? One school affirms it is Latin, another that it is Arabic, pointing triumphantly to the Egyptian town Fustât, where it is said to have originally come from the loom of a dusky weaver, nameless in history. Of course many of these derivations are remote and fantastic, and hang on the frailest threads of authority; being wholly unlike, in these respects, others so obvious as Arras, from the quaint old Franco-Flemish city; Gobelins, and balasore, woven from the bark of a tree in a district of the Bengal presidency; but we hesitate to deduce baize from the ruined Italian town of Baiæ. There is one word, dasey, concerning which the anecdote runs:
 *A Dublin physician, named Dasey, was in the habit of wearing a cloak to conceal his thefts from the houses he visited profes-

sionally. After he was hanged, for this or some other crime, cloaks were universally discarded in Ireland, and were generally called daseys." Thus, in the literature of Verba Nominalia, as an ingenious writer calls it, we may detect not a little of the merest guess work; but, on the other hand, may trace not a few of the allusions implied by familiar terms, which mingle with effect among the other lights and shadows of the past.

THE CLOUD.

A CLOUD came over a land of leaves
(O, hush, little leaves, lest it pass you by!)
How they had waited and watch'd for the rain,
Mountain and valley, and vineyard and plain,
With never a sign from the sky!
Day after day had the pitiless sun
Look'd down with a lidless eye.

But now! On a sudden a whisper went
Through the topmost twigs of the poplar-spire;
Out of the east a light wind blew
(All the leaves trembled, and murmur'd, and drew
Hope to the help of desire),
It stirred the faint pulse of the forest-tree
And breathed through the brake and the brier.

Slowly the cloud came: then the wind died,
Dumb lay the land in its hot suspense:
The thrush on the elm-bough suddenly stopped.
The weather-warn'd swallow in mid-flying dropped,
The linnet ceased song in the fence,
Mute the cloud moved, till it hung overhead,
Heavy, big-bosom'd, and dense.

Ah, the cool rush through the dry-tongued trees,
The patter and plash on the thirsty earth,
The eager bubbling of rannel and rill,
The hisping of leaves that have drunk their fill,
The freshness that follows the dearth!
New life for the woodland, the vineyard, the vale,
New life with the world's new birth!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE FIFTY-SECOND (OXFORDSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY).

PERHAPS no regiment in the British service has had its deeds better recorded than the Fifty-second—probably no regiment has won more glory. "A regiment never surpassed in arms since arms were first borne by men," Napier said of it, after the gallant fight at Nivelles. The sentence rings in one's ears like the bugle sounding "the advance," and that it is fully justified, the emblazoned words on the regimental colours of the Fifty-second, "Hindoostan, Vimiera, Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, Nivelles, Orthes, Toulouse, Waterloo, and Delhi," pretty amply prove.

The Fifty-second regiment was raised in 1755, on the breaking out of the war with France. The regiment was originally

numbered the Fifty-fourth, but two years afterwards received its present title. In 1768, by royal warrant, the regimental colour was ordered to be buff, with the number of the regiment worked in gold letters, within a wreath of roses and thistles. The facings were to be buff, the coat scarlet, the breeches and waistcoat buff, with black gaiters.

The regiment first distinguished itself in the American war of independence, 1775. While investing Boston an odd event occurred, which is thus described by Lieutenant Martin Hunter, in his amusing regimental journal:

"During the winter," he says, "plays were acted at Boston twice a week by the officers and some ladies. A farce, called the Blockade of Boston, written by General Burgoyne, was acted. The enemy knew the night it was to be performed, and made an attack on the mill at Charlestown at the very hour the farce began; they fired some shots and surprised and carried off a sergeant's guard. We immediately turned out and manned the works, and a shot being fired by one of our advanced sentries, firing commenced at the redoubt and could not be stopped for some time. An orderly sergeant, standing outside the playhouse door, who heard the firing, immediately running into the playhouse, got upon the stage, crying out, 'Turn out! turn out! They're hard at it, hammer and tongs!' The whole audience, supposing the sergeant was acting a part in the farce, loudly applauded, and there was such a noise he could not for some time make himself heard. When the applause was over he again cried out, 'What the devil are ye all about? If ye won't believe me, be Jabbers, you need only go to the door, and then ye'll hear and see both.' If the enemy intended to stop the farce they certainly succeeded, as the officers immediately left the playhouse and joined their regiments."

The Fifty-second fought at the battles of Brooklyn and White Plains, the reduction of Fort Washington, the taking of Rhode Island, and the battle of Brandywine. In 1777, they helped to surprise a force of fifteen hundred Americans under General Wayne in a wood, when three hundred of the enemy were bayoneted at their bivouacs.

The Fifty-second lost four captains in the American war; and on the death of Captain Powell in New Jersey, the drummer of his company was heard to exclaim: "Well, I wonder who they'll get to accept

our grenadier company now; I'll be hung if I would take it!"

In 1783, the Fifty-second sailed for Madras to take part in the war against Tippoo Sahib. The late General Hunter, who was at that time a captain in the regiment, and commanded it during a great part of the following campaign, states that "the regiment had two hundred men, women, and children on board the Kingston, Indiaman, which blew up off Madras. In spite of the active exertions of both officers and men, and of those of the officers and crews of the Vansittart and Pigot, sixty-three lives were lost. Captain Aubrey, a passenger, well known in the sporting world, was saved by getting on a hen-coop he had thrown overboard. A drummer-boy of ours got upon the coop with him, and was very much frightened when the sharks made their appearance, and on the boats coming up halloed out most manfully for them to 'save the captain.' Here was one word for Aubrey and two for himself. However, Aubrey desired that they should pick up those in greater distress, which the drummer did not at all approve."

Before the storming of Cannanore, on the Malabar coast, it was necessary to obtain soundings of the ditch of the principal fort. Before the battery opened, a man named Rowlandson Taylor, of the Fifty-second, who was an old American light infantryman, at once undertook the task, and executed it so coolly and well, that he not only ascertained the exact depth of the ditch, but observed that it was wet, except at the very point where we intended to breach it, and returned under a heavy fire of musketry without being touched. General M'Leod was so much pleased that he gave him fifty guineas. Lieutenant Robinson commanded the forlorn hope, consisting of a sergeant, corporal, and thirty volunteers from the battalion. At eleven o'clock the battalion paraded three companies in front; the men each carried a scaling ladder, the remainder of the brigade forming to fill up the ditch. They were supported by the battalion companies of the Sixth and Fifty-second regiments, and as one o'clock struck, they advanced in close column to the breach, which was most gallantly defended, and carried after an obstinate resistance. Lieutenant Robinson and the forlorn hope were nearly all killed or wounded, and the battalion altogether lost four officers and fifty-three men.

At the capture of Savendroog and

Outredroog the Fifty-second distinguished itself, as also at the first siege of Seringapatam in 1792. In Tippoo's night attack the regiment saved the life of Lord Cornwallis by a timely retreat over the Cauvery, when Captain Hunter had been wounded and carried into the sultan's redoubt.

"Lord Cornwallis," says Hunter, "had fallen back with his small body-guard, and sent orders to the Fifty-second to retreat, which orders were delivered to Captain (the late general) Conran, next in command of the regiment. At this time the men were under a galling fire from the enemy, and getting impatient, they called out in the hearing of Captain Conran, 'Had Captain Hunter been alive he would have ordered another charge at those black rascals!' Conran said, 'Well, my lads, though I have received orders to retreat, you shall have another dash at them!' This charge, in my opinion, was the saving of Lord Cornwallis and the few troops he had with him. Had not the Fifty-second recrossed the Cauvery, and by the greatest good luck fallen in with Lord Cornwallis, he must inevitably have been taken by Tippoo."

In January, 1803, the Fifty-second were made light infantry, and under their colonel, Major-General John Moore (the subsequent hero of Corunna), attained to a great efficiency at drill. At this period of threatened invasion it was found by experiment that the brigade could, on a sudden alarm, form in column with baggage packed and tents struck, ready to move on, in the hour.

The first battalion of this highly efficient regiment sailed for Portugal in 1808, and soon distinguished itself at Vimiera, where they broke the left flank of the French and saved an English regiment that had pressed forward too far. The Fifty-second were soon deep in the Peninsular war. At Corunna a company of the Fifty-second frequently formed the rear-guard of the divisions, as on the celebrated day, when the military chest was abandoned and coaks of dollars were thrown over the roadside precipices, the oxen being unable any longer to drag the carts. There was a scramble among the camp-followers when they arrived where the dollars were falling in silver cascades, and the wife of the regimental master-tailor, Malony, got her share in the scramble. Her foot slipped, however, as she stepped from the boat to the ship's side at Corunna, and down she went like a shot, with all her dollars.

Major-General Diggle of the Fifty-second, talking of this terrible retreat, describes how, when he was falling to the rear, foot-sore and fatigued, a worthy soldier's wife, named Sally Macan, whipped off her garters to tie on the soles of his boots, and thus saved him from the French sabres. "A year or two afterwards," says he, "I repaid Sally's kindness by giving her a lift on my horse the morning after she had given birth to a child in the bivouac." At the battle of Corunna the regiment lost five rank and file, while ninety men were missing. In the retreat they had lost one bugler, and ninety-two rank and file, and thirty men in one day perished in the hospital.

To join Sir Arthur, at Talavera, 1809, the Fifty-second, under Brigadier-General Craufurd, made the longest forced march we believe on record, fifty-two miles in twenty-six hours, in excessively hot weather, each man carrying nearly sixty pounds of arms and accoutrements. The three regiments (Fifty-second, Forty-third, and Ninety-fifth Rifles) lost in this march only seventeen stragglers.

At Busaco, when Simon's column advanced up the Sierra, and the Fifty-second advanced to the charge, Captain William Jones of the Fifty-second, a fiery Welshman, generally known as "Jack Jones," rushed at the French chef de bataillon, who was calling to his men, killed him on the spot with a blow of his sword, and immediately cut off a medal the chef wore, and fastened it on his own breast. Private Hopkins, of Robert Campbell's company, and Private Harris, captured the French General Simon; both brave men got pensions, the latter somewhat tardily.

When the Light Division assembled at Azrudra to follow Massena's retreat, a man of the Fifty-second, named Tobin (says Captain Moorsom in his excellent record of the regiment), in the company commanded by Lieutenant James Frederick Love, was found to be absent, and was about to be reported as a deserter. Lieutenant Love, who knew the man well, and was therefore convinced he was not a deserter, but must have been killed or taken prisoner, had him reported as missing. A few days afterwards, when the division was on the march, this man rejoined his company, and when asked where he had been, replied with a brogue, that he had been "on a visit to the French giniral." Lieutenant Love, not satisfied with this, ascertained from him, that between the

French and English out-pickets there was a wine-house and still, at which the patrols used to meet and take their grog; but one night, drinking more than he ought, he fell asleep and was taken by a patrol not acquainted with the arrangement, and the better to make his escape, he said he was a deserter. Some time before the battle of Fuentes, an Irish aide-de-camp of Massena, sent in with a flag of truce, asked to see Tobin, gave him a dollar, and then told the story of his visit to Massena. The soldier had answered with clearness the questions put to him, until asked what was the strength of the Light Division. Here the poor fellow was at fault, and not wishing that his division should be poorly thought of, he replied in an off-hand Irish way, "Tin thousand!" upon which, the marshal, irritated, exclaimed, "Take him away—the lying rascal!" Tobin, seeing that the general was angry, said with naive humour, "What's the matter with the giniral?" "I replied" (related the aide-de-camp) "he says you are telling lies—he knows the Light Division was very little above four thousand when it advanced, and as it has been engaged above four times since that, it must have lost at least four or five hundred men." "Och, thin, the gineral don't belave me!" said Tobin; "you till him to attack them the next time he meets them with tin thousand men, and if they don't lick him, I'm d—d." "When," said the aide-de-camp, "I explained this to the marshal, he offered at once to make Tobin a sergeant if he would take service; Tobin asked a day to consider, and having made friends with the cook, filled his haversack and took leave of us in the night; with twenty thousand such men the marshal had said he would undertake to beat any army in the world double the number."

At Sabugal, when the French cavalry dashed in upon the Fifty-second, who had captured a howitzer, Private Patrick Lowe, a heavy little stout man, not fond of running, was chased by a French sabreur, and not having time to get behind the vineyard wall with his comrades, he made for the stump of a tree, and there kneeling deliberately, covered the Frenchman, who in vain attempted by curvetting and curses to make him throw away his fire. Some of his comrades at the wall wished to bring down the dragoon, but were stopped by others, who called out that he was Pat's lawful game, and that he ought not to be taken from him. Pre-

sently the regiment advanced, and, to everybody's surprise, Pat allowed his friend to gallop off unharmed. The leading officer rated him well "for a fool not to shoot him;" but Pat Lowe replied with a grave face and a twinkle of one eye, "Is it shooting ye mane, sir? Sure, how could I shoot him when I wasn't loaded?"

At Ciudad Rodrigo, the storming party was headed by Lieutenant John Colborne (of the Fifty-second, afterwards Field Marshal Lord Seaton) and four companies of the Fifty-second, two of the Forty-third, two from the Ninety-fifth, and two from the Portuguese *Caçadore* battalions. At the storming of the Picurina outworks in Badajoz, the forlorn hope was led by Lieutenant Gurwood of the Fifty-second, and in the storming party were one hundred volunteers from the Fifty-second, under Captain Joseph Dobbs, who was killed. Lieutenant Gurwood took the French Governor, General Barrié, prisoner in the citadel. "Jack Jones" distinguished himself again after the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo. Finding Portuguese soldiers lighting bivouac fires in a church full of powder barrels and strewn powder, with his own hands he carried the powder kegs out of danger.

At Badajoz the Fifty-second joined actively in the storming. Even in the repulse from the breach, the stubborn men struck at the buglers who sounded the retreat.

At Nivelle the regiment was again hotly engaged, and tried hard to win a strong redoubt on the main ridge of the enemy's position.

"The hairbreadth escape of a fine fellow," says Captain Moorsom, "deserves to be recorded. Sergeant Mayne, who had volunteered into the Fifty-second regiment from the Antrim militia, was among the foremost to spring into the ditch of the redoubt. Unable to climb the ramparts, when his comrades fell back, he threw himself on his face. A Frenchman, rising on the parapet, reversed his musket and fired. Mayne had stuck the bill-hook of his section at the back of his knapsack. The tough iron flattened the ball, and, unhurt by the blow, he lived for many years to tell the remarkable tale. The precarious position of the Fifty-second was not of long duration. Colonel Colborne's coolness and ingenuity had not forsaken him. Making a bugler sound a parley, he hoisted his white pocket-handkerchief, and, rising, walked round to the gate of the redoubt. To his summons to surrender,

the old chief replied indignantly, 'What! I, with my battalion, surrender to you with yours!' 'Very well,' said Colborne, in French, 'the artillery will be up immediately, you cannot hold out, and you will then be given over to the Spaniards' (some of whom were appearing in the distance). The word Spaniard was all-powerful. Officers and men pressed round their commander till he gave his reluctant assent. In a few seconds the Fifty-second stood formed in a double line at the gate of the redoubt, to give to the fine old fellow his required satisfaction of marching out with the honours of war."

But we pass on at the double-quick to Waterloo. Between four and five A.M., Captain Diggle's company of the Fifty-second was sent with some of the Ninety-fifth into the enclosures of the village of Merte Braise. The night had been wet and disagreeable, says Captain Moorsom, as usual on the eve of Wellington's battles. At twenty minutes past eleven the first shot was fired, and Diggle, pulling out his watch, said to his subaltern, Gauler, "There it goes!" The ball had opened. Soon after some French shot, aimed at Wellington and his staff, killed the assistant-sergeant-major and a private of the Fifty-second, and wounded about fifteen of the men. About twelve o'clock the Fifty-second were some four hundred yards from Hougoumont. The cuirassiers threatened the regiment (now in two squares), which soon after repulsed the French Imperial Guards coming down the Charleroi road. They then attacked the Moyenne Guard led by Ney himself. The duke, Sir Colin Campbell, and Lord Uxbridge left the Fifty-second moving forward towards La Belle Alliance.

"A short time before," says Colonel Gauler, then a lieutenant commanding the right company of the Fifty-second, "I had seen our colonel (Colborne) twenty yards in front of the centre suddenly disappear, while his horse, mortally wounded, sank under him. After one or two rounds from the guns, he came striding down the front, with, 'These guns will destroy the regiment!' 'Shall I drive them in, sir?' 'Do.' 'Right section, left shoulders forward!' was the word at once. So close were we, that the guns only fired their loaded charges, and limbering up, went hastily to the rear. Reaching the spot on which they had stood, I was clear of the Imperial Guards' smoke, and saw three squares of the Old Guard within four hundred yards further on. They were stand-

ing in line of contiguous squares, with very short intervals, a small body of cuirassiers on their right, while the guns took post on their left. Convinced that the regiment, when it saw us, would come towards us, I continued my course, stopped with my section about two hundred yards of the centre square, and sat down. The French were standing in perfect order and steadiness, and I knew they would not disturb that steadiness to pick a quarrel with an insignificant section. I alternately looked at them, at the regiment, and up the hill to my right (rear), to see who was coming to help us. . . . The first event of interest was, that of getting among some French tumbrils, with the horses attached. Our colonel was seen upon one, shouting, 'Cut me out.' Then came some long shots from the Prussian guns far away on our left; still the square of the Imperial Guard was retreating in order, and within two hundred and fifty paces of my company. Then we came upon the hollow road beyond La Belle Alliance, filled with artillery and broken infantry. Here was instantly a wild mêlée; the infantry tried to escape as best they could, yet at the same time tried to turn to defend themselves; the artillery-drivers turned their horses to the left, and tried to scramble up the bank of the road, but the horses were immediately shot down; a young subaltern of the battery threw himself and his sword on the ground in the act of surrender; his commander, who wore the cross of the Legion of Honour, stood in defiance among his guns, and was bayoneted, and the subaltern, unwisely making a run for his liberty, was shot in the attempt. In the mêlée at this spot, we were placed amid such questionable companions, that no one at that moment could be sure whether a bayonet would be the next moment in his ribs or not. . . . The Prussian regiments, as they came up the road from Planchenoit and wheeled round into the great chaussée by Rossomme, moved in slow time, their bands playing our national anthem, in compliment to our success; and a mounted officer, at the head of them, embraced the Fifty-second regimental colour which had been carried that day by Ensign William Leeke. The king's colour was singularly lost, for a time, buried under the body of Ensign Nettles, who was killed on retiring from the square, near Hongoumont, about seven P.M. It was recovered on picking up the wounded."

At Waterloo this illustrious regiment lost thirty-eight rank and file, and one ensign; and had one major, two captains, five lieutenants, twenty sergeants, and one hundred and fifty rank and file wounded.

In 1853, the Fifty-second was ordered to India, being then eleven hundred and twenty-seven strong. After a long interval of peace the regiment earned great distinction during the Indian mutiny and at the siege of Delhi, being particularly active at the storming of the Cashmere Gate.

An eye-witness of this gallant attack thus describes it:

"Bayley," says the writer, "commanded the storming party of fifty of our men; Cross commanded the supports, consisting of fifty from each regiment. We were to go in through the Cashmere Gate, which was to be blown open by the engineers. It was broad daylight when we assaulted. The party of engineers, consisting of two officers and three sergeants, with Bugler Hawthorn, who was to sound the advance when the gate was all right, went on. Out of this number, one officer and the three sergeants were knocked over, and two of the sergeants killed dead. The officer, Salkeld, had his leg taken off, and was very nearly losing an arm besides. Home was the other officer, and was blown up, subsequently; he was in orders for the Victoria Cross, as also were Salkeld, the remaining sergeant, and Hawthorn. Our advanced parties then went on at a run, covered by two companies of the Sixtieth, to draw off the fire, and we lay down under the glacis of the bastion, waiting for the bugle. We were pretty well covered on that side, the glacis being at that spot a sort of mound with a few small trees, but we were altogether exposed on the other side, and the fire there was a caution.

"The storming party and supports were almost mixed; there was such a row we could not distinguish the bugle, nor did we hear the explosion. We then saw the colonel, Syngé, who was acting brigade-major, and the head of the reserve, coming round the corner; so, seeing something was wrong, Cross ran on, meeting as he started Bayley, shot through the left arm; and after a little check at the mantlet—a door-like affair in the causeway, which, by the way, at the bridge was only two, or three beams—Cross got in first through the gate, closely followed by Corporal Taylor, who behaved very well in this affair. The small spare door that all those

large gates have was the portion blown in, but the large gates were also displaced. Inside the covered archway there was only one live Pandey, who presented his firelock at Cross, but it was not loaded. There were several others lying dead, evidently killed by the explosion; they were all round an eighteen-pounder, the muzzle of which was about six yards from the gate. The colonel and Syngé were among the first six inside, and we then formed up. Nicholson's column then came in from the other side of the bastion over the breach by ladders, some time after we had passed clear of their route. As soon as we had formed in some sort of order—and a hard matter it was—we proceeded to the left, clearing the water bastion, which was cleared before any other troops got into the place. We also cleared the ramparts as far as the College, where Cross lost the regiment, being ahead with about half a dozen men and the sergeant-major (Streets). He went through a doorway after some fellows; and the colonel with the column, his orders being to take the Jumma Musjid, went off to the right towards the Chandee Choke, driving all before them, and taking a light gun in one street. Here poor Bradshaw was killed in very gallantly charging this gun; Atkinson being grazed by a bullet on the side at the same time. They crossed the Chandee Choke, and went up a narrow street to within fifty yards of the Jumma Musjid, which is a very strong place, and was full of Pandies. The enemy made a stand here, lining the houses and trying to surround us, and as we had no means of blowing open the gates of the Musjid, and being completely isolated and unsupported—to say nothing of half the Ghoorkas and Coke's men straggling and looting about the town—the colonel retired across the Chandee Choke to the Begum's Bagh, in the centre of which is the Bank. The colonel was wounded in the right arm by a bullet, near the Musjid, during a charge of cavalry. The Fifty-second lost four officers and eighty non-commissioned officers and men killed and wounded, nearly one-third of our number. Among the killed was Sergeant M'Keowin, of the band. He volunteered, and had been doing duty in the ranks for some time, and behaved uncommonly well. Brockwell-Howe at the Musjid, Amos and Neale at the gateway, were also killed. Among the wounded, Sergeant-Major Streets had a most narrow escape. The bullet struck him sideways in the stomach and came out on the left side. Sergeant Thomas was

wounded in the foot, Sergeant Ellis had his left arm amputated, Sergeant Palk was shot right through the cheek and mouth, Pitten had his left arm amputated, Marshall was shot in the left arm, Corney the same, Selfe in the cheek. Selfe would not retire, but remained to the last. We all know what a hard little fellow he is. Stonor and Dawson were among the wounded during the next four days. Bugler Miller was among the wounded on the first day."

Bugler Hawthorn afterwards received the Victoria Cross for his services at the Cashmere Gate.

"IT."

IN TWO PARTS. II. DWARFINCH'S.

TIME passed on. Susan Lutestring had been for two months established at the Hornet, and was still unenlightened as to the mysterious malady of her master. Passing some hours daily at work in her mistress's room, his voice had become almost as familiar to her as his mother's, with whom, when not disposed for study or music, he laughed and chatted incessantly. There was no trace of suffering in those clear accents. He played and sang the merriest airs. He moved about his large, luxurious room with perfect freedom, as one in health, nay, there was one occasion on which Susan was prepared to make oath, if required, that she heard him waltzing with a chair, and finishing up with some gymnastic performance, to which his mother at length put an authoritative end. That he ate and drank in the satisfactory manner characterised by Mrs. Martin as "like a good un," none who saw the amount of viands carried in, and not brought out again, by Lufra the deaf and dumb page, would presume to doubt. This youth was Susan's great aversion. She could not divest herself of an odd sort of resentment that the little wretch should be in full possession of the secret she was longing in vain to know. In vain, as it seemed, for her mistress's health had improved of late, and the need of her assistance appeared further off than ever.

At length, one night, Susan's eyes rested on her master. She had had occasion, very late, to revisit the sitting-room below, and while passing through the corridor to regain her room, saw him come forth in his rich, thickly quilted walking-dress, and noiseless slippers. Hardly knowing what to do, Susan shrank back into a recess close at hand, and remained unnoticed.

Her master walked with a measured,

manly step, his head slightly bent, and covered with a hood which concealed his features from a side view. Each hand was thrust into the ample opposite sleeve. He must have been little, if anything, short of six feet in height; and, so far as the thick robe permitted it to be surmised, of a finely-moulded person.

"It!" ejaculated Susan, as she gained her room, and noiselessly closed the door.

Fate willed that she should have a still better chance, and that within a day or two.

Being alone with her mistress, one morning, the latter was summoned to a visitor. Susan was still busied about the room, when her master's voice pronounced her name.

"Sir," said Susan, startled.

"Come in, Susan," was the quiet rejoinder.

So, the moment had arrived. Despite her natural firmness, the girl's heart gave a throb, as she stepped towards the door, just ajar. What was she about to see?

It was not easy, at first, to distinguish anything, the shutters being partially closed, and the spacious chamber being otherwise darkened with heavy curtains. The bed itself, an imposing structure, that might have accommodated Og, spread a mighty canopy across two-thirds of the breadth of the luxurious apartment, yet left abundant space for the tables, couches, cabinets, book and music stands; besides a thousand et ceteras bearing silent witness to the refined taste and intellectual culture of its recluse inhabitant.

The latter, folded in his brocaded gown, reclined upon a soft deep couch that filled up a recess in the window.

"Come in! come in!" he repeated, laughing merrily, as he caught sight of Susan's appalled look in a hand-mirror with which he had been playing. "The tiger's quite tame—he never bites. Besides, you can leave the door well open, Susan, so as to make the better bolt of it, should your fears get the better of you, when you see—"

He glanced round at her, but with so quick a movement that she got no glimpse of his face.

"You stand it very well. You'll do," continued the young man, in a satisfied tone.

"A little nearer, if you please, Miss Lutestring. Put yourself in that comfortable chair—a little behind me—so, where I secure the unfair advantage of seeing you, myself unseen, and oblige me with a few items of Grandchester gossip, from the paper beside you."

made did not seem greatly to interest her listener. It was manifest, however, that he was watching her intently, all the time, in his mirror, holding it in such a manner as to keep his own face invisible to his companion. Presently, either in absence or from accident, he changed the position of the glass for a moment, and Susan, glancing up at the same instant, saw the reflection of his brow and eyes. She had barely time to observe that these latter were large, and glowing with a singular lustre, when her master, with a movement of impatience, bade her proceed.

Susan read:

"To those who take interest in the contemplation of the more eccentric forms of nature, we are in a position to promise an unprecedented treat. The uncertainty attendant upon the best concerted schemes, forbids us to do more than recal to the recollection of our readers the mysterious announcement that has, for the last few days, invested all the dead, and a few of the living, walls in Grandchester with an unusual interest. '*It is coming*'—that is all. But it has been enough, as the poet writes, 'to haunt, to startle, and waylay.' *What is coming? whence? and why?* Is it an earthquake? a famine? a tidal wave? a revolution? Let us be composed. No need to put our houses in order, otherwise than may be consistent with giving the entire establishment a holiday, with permission to visit the most extraordinary existing phenomenon of the present age. '*It is coming*'—steadily, but surely coming. Yet one short week, and we shall be enabled to proclaim—'Hasten to Dwarfinch's. *It is come!*'"

"Ah! to Dwarfinch's!" repeated Mountjoy. "I'm glad *something* is coming to the poor devil! Why, it's months—absolutely months—since there was the glimmer of a lamp about that old shop! They say he has a wife and five children, and nothing to keep them on, except the occasional letting of that horrible old edifice, which was once, my mother declares, a mad-house, and still"—he added, with a short, but not unfeeling laugh—"retains *one* lunatic—the man who took it! Ah! here's my mother. Thanks, Miss Lutestring, I need detain you no longer."

Susan went to her own room.

While standing at the window, her eyes thoughtfully resting upon the drear assembly-rooms, she became conscious of an unwonted movement in front of that building. Workmen were arriving—car-

against the massive walls, gas-fittings sprouted forth, mighty posters unrolled themselves, and an enormous object, seemingly a transparency, but as yet shrouded from the public gaze, was slowly hoisted to the very centre of the structure, just above the principal door. A small, nervous-looking man, in very seedy attire, but having the air of belonging to a better class, fidgeted about among the workmen, and seemed to point out to two pretty and neatly-clad children, who clung to him on either hand, the wonderful metamorphosis in progress. This was Mr. Dwarfinch, the proprietor.

So much was Susan interested in what was before her, that she was only roused by the pleasant voice of the old house-keeper at her elbow.

"Well, I'm glad to see this!" said Mrs. Martin. "Poor things, they wanted a fillip of some sort. The last thing was a horrery and lectur', which didn't pay, for some boys stole the sun, and Mars and Saturn being at the pewterer's, the heavens was thin. I wonder what's coming now?"

In the intervals of conjecture, Mrs. Martin made Susan acquainted with the received history of "Dwarfinch's."

Mr. D., a gentleman by birth, and a graduate of Cambridge, had, in early manhood, been induced to take part in some private theatricals. Such unfortunate good fortune attended his first performance, that the poor gentleman imagined himself an actor on the spot. Abandoning all other views, he embraced the professional stage, failed signally, sank from grade to grade, was unable to obtain an engagement even for the humblest line of parts, wandered aimlessly about, and was ultimately directed by his evil star to Grandchester, the old assembly-rooms of which were at that moment sadly in want of a lessee.

"A bank-note, sir! A bank-note!" asserted the agent. "Mints of money to be made there. Rent, a fleabite. Repairs might be reckoned on your thumb-nail. What do you say?"

Mr. Dwarfinch, with some misgiving, glanced mechanically at his thumb-nail. He did, however, take the rooms, and, for the first year, not only covered his expenses, but contrived to make a decent living. Encouraged by this, the misguided man disappeared for a few days, and returned with a wife, a pretty and interesting woman, who, within the next five years, with the help of twins, managed to surround her embarrassed lord with five little pledges of their mutual love.

Alas! as expenses increased, income diminished. Some new public rooms were opened in a better situation. Their lessees had money as well as enterprise. "Dwarfinch's," despite the respect in which the manager was held, and the sympathy felt by many, in his manly struggles, fell into more and more disfavour, until, as Mountjoy had said, it was with extreme difficulty poor Dwarfinch could provide fitting food and raiment for the wife and children he idolised.

Now and again the desolate pile glimmered with a momentary brightness. A meeting, a cheap concert, a lecture, a charity dinner, might put ten or fifteen pounds into the pockets of the starving family, but this was nothing to their needs, and affairs of late had looked gloomy in the extreme.

Kind-hearted Mrs. Martin, who had scraped acquaintance with Mrs. Dwarfinch, with the object of administering fillips, in the shape of marmalade and raspberry-tarts, to the pretty children, heartily rejoiced to see the spirited preparations now in progress, for what was evidently intended to be a desperate fling at fortune.

An offer of four pounds, light and waiting included, from an itinerant conjuror, had been the straw that broke the camel's back.

"I'll stand this no longer!" exclaimed the outraged proprietor, starting up in a rage, and flinging the conjuror's letter into the grate. "Alice, we must do something—must go in for, for—something. A man or a mouse, my dear! We have just twenty-five pounds left in the world. In it shall go!"

"In what, my dear?" asked his wife, with a somewhat wan and hopeless smile.

"Anything!" was the reckless rejoinder. "Cat-show; baby-show; lions; gladiators; Blondin! I'll have the posters out this very day!"

"Letter, pa," cried Miss Alice Dwarfinch, skipping into the room, and handing him a note, which appeared to have been sealed with marmalade.

Mr. Dwarfinch tore it open, read, and sank back into his chair, pale with emotion.

"The very thing, my love; it's like a— a summons! It's like a providence! My benefactor! Restorer of my fortunes!" he continued, walking about in ecstasy, and waving the letter over his head. "Blessings on your name!"

"What *is* his name?" asked his wife, fully aroused.

"His name," replied Mr. Dwarfinch, growing more composed, "is Tippeny. He is, without exception, the greatest marvel of the age, yet, with the modesty of true genius, this great, this gifted man, will present himself to the public, at these rooms, on being guaranteed twenty pounds."

"Twenty pounds!" ejaculated his wife, faintly.

"Twenty!" repeated Mr. Dwarfinch, firmly. "My love, I know what I am about. Ask no questions. To work—to work!"

Mrs. Dwarfinch, whose faith in her spouse's judgment held out against all his ill-luck, was quite content to ask no questions. He himself went "to work" with all the zeal and intrepidity of a man who feels that fortune is at last really coming to his call, and must be welcomed with all the honours due to a long-absent guest. He papered Grandchester from end to end. He engaged whole columns of the local journals. He sent forth processions, with boards and handbills. All announcements were confined to the three warning words, "It is coming," and it was only when public curiosity had been stimulated to the utmost, that "Dwarfinch's" was at length superadded, as the scene of "It's" appearance.

It was on the day succeeding Susan's first interview with her master that the huge transparency in front of Dwarfinch's was solemnly unveiled, and revealed the tremendous secret.

There appeared the semblance of an enormous *skeleton*, at least twelve feet high.

Dressed it certainly was, but the close-fitting "shape"—of yellowish white, judiciously chosen, as being the nearest approach to bone—revealed the minutest articulation in every joint and limb. The scanty doublet was of a darker hue, but—as if the tailor had shrunk from the task of adapting any outer garment to the fearful angle of those projecting hips—holes had been provided, through which these joints seemed to force their way. The countenance of this spectral monster was lit up with a ghastly grin, intended, as afterwards appeared, to symbolise the gay and genial temperament belonging to the individual who had thus been permitted, through some caprice of nature, to shake off the burden of the flesh, without parting with his bones. New posters, unfolding themselves in every direction, proclaimed that Mr. Edward Tippeny—the

the Age—was about to present himself at Dwarfinch's; and a bill, larger than any yet issued, confidently announced, "IT IS HERE!"

It really seemed that fortune designed to compensate poor Dwarfinch for the many scurvy tricks she had played him. Grandchester happened to be greatly in want of a public sensation of some sort. The militia, at this moment embodied, helped to flood the streets at evening with groups of idlers. A large party of seamen, just paid off from a ship of war, had come up the country on a spree. Any exhibition, of decent attraction, would probably have done good business for a night or two. How much more, then, the mighty *Skeleton*, the *Wonder of the Age*? At all events the thing took, to a degree unparalleled in the annals of the ancient city. Two days before that fixed for "It's" appearance (the bills persisted in so describing Mr. Tippeny) every seat in the vast assembly-room was engaged, and this at prices double those demanded for any previous entertainment on record.

Long before the hour of opening, so dense was the multitude around the doors, that the police on duty with difficulty made way for the carriages to set down. As for pit and gallery, such was the rush that not one half of those who sought admission were lucky enough to pass the threshold.

Before recounting what followed on that eventful day, we must return for a moment to the *Hornet*.

As if—the ice once broken—young Mountjoy found solace in the presence of his new companion, Susan found herself summoned to his room every day. This was indeed the more necessary, as his mother had been indisposed for a day or two, and, on the evening on which we revisit the *Hornet*, had not quitted her bed at all.

Susan had read herself almost hoarse, her master being apparently disinclined to do anything but listen to her musical tones, and gaze intently into the mirror which seldom left his hand. He had grown more careless in handling it. Again and again Susan caught sight of those large, earnest, glittering eyes, and, moreover, knew—or rather felt—that they were perpetually fixed on hers. To read their expression was impossible, and the rest of his features remained too cautiously veiled to offer any interpretation.

The proceedings at Dwarfinch's had

gree. After the uncovering of the transparency, he had remained at the window as if fascinated by the grisly, grinning monster, and had even directed that some branches of one of the trees in the carriage sweep that intercepted his view should be lopped away. Whatever might be his own affliction, it had manifestly softened his heart towards the misfortunes of another, but he could hardly forgive poor Mr. Tippeny for making himself a public show.

"The miserable beggar," he growled. "And as if it was not enough to be poked, and prodded, and snapped, and rattled, at sixpence a head, he must—hand me the fellow's bill, my dear—yes, perform a fantasia on the violin, sing a barcarole to the cithern, dance a saraband, and—hallo! there seems to be a row!" And, throwing the hood over his face, the young man leaned eagerly from the window.

Although, by this time, the assembly-room must have been packed from floor to ceiling, the crowd without seemed quite undiminished, and, if anything, more excited than before. Something was evidently amiss. People stood in the doorway gesticulating violently, in futile endeavours to make themselves heard. The roar of an angry or impatient audience within could at times be distinguished above the noise without. Poor Mr. Dwarf-finch, with a scared and anxious face, could be seen at intervals fitting or struggling among the crowd, as seeking to preserve peace and order. But the tumult only increased.

"I must know what this means," exclaimed Mountjoy, drawing in. "Send, Susan, send and inquire."

Seeing the gardener in the road below, Susan questioned him from the window, and was able to bear back word to her master that the riot, for such it was become, was caused by the non-appearance of the skeleton, who should have made his long-promised bow to the expectant multitude at least half an hour before.

Whether the public had lost faith in Dwarf-finch's, or whether disappointed applicants had set the rumour afloat, could not be known, but a belief was certainly rife that the whole affair was a swindle, the unexampled prices demanded for tickets tending greatly to the strengthening of this suspicion. The crowd within hooted, roared, demanded their money back, and even threatened damage to the rooms. The crowd without laughed and jeered, and howled for the manager, but when they had

Suddenly, a carriage was seen slowly working its way through the throng. Shouts were heard. "It's coming." "Here 'tis, at last." "Tippeny. Tippeny." "Hooray for the skelinton," bellowed the crowd.

Dwarf-finch breathed again, as the coach drew up, and hurried forward to welcome the Wonder of the Age.

"Thank goodness you are come! But why so late? The people are half mad," he gasped. "Quick, quick, my dear fellow. Take my arm."

The skeleton did not immediately respond. Without moving from his seat, he bent forward a great, bewildered-looking face, in form and substance not unlike an ordinary man's, then beckoned Mr. Dwarf-finch to come closer.

The latter obeyed, when the Wonder of the Age, placing two groups of bones, intended for hands, on his friend's shrinking shoulders, uttered these words:

"I shay—ole fell—lesh—lesh make—night of it." And fell forward upon the manager's breast, an inert mass of bone.

There was no mistake about it. Strange and weird as was the effect produced by the unexpected phenomenon, the skeleton was, beyond all question, helplessly drunk.

Overcome as he was by this crowning misfortune, and staggering under the superincumbent skeleton, Dwarf-finch was roused to action by an alarm that the audience within had begun to pelt the lights, as prelude to a general row.

"My wife. My children," gasped the poor man. "Get off, you drunken beggar. That a thing like you should presume to—"

"We won't," murmured the skeleton, "we—won't—gohometillmor—for he's a sholly good—"

"Take that—and be hanged to you," roared the infuriated manager, and dealing a blow that made Mr. Tippeny's strongly-accented ribs rattle like castanets, he sent him fairly back into the carriage. "My wife. My children," he repeated, wildly, as a furious roar echoed from within.

"Here we are, dear," said his wife's voice, close beside him. She had wrapped herself in her cloak, and, carrying the baby, and gathering the rest around, had tried to escape from the scene of disturbance. Unluckily, she had been recognised, and pointed out to the mob, eager for some new incident.

"It's his family, collaring the cash," bellowed some wifery in the crowd. "She's

bolting, with the till under her cloak. Return the money. Ah-h-h-h!"

"It's the baby," roared poor Dwarfinch.

But there is no saying what might have followed, had not some half-dozen stout fellows like grooms and gardeners, acting well together, forced their way through the crowd, and reached the carriage. To learn the origin of this timely succour, we must pay a hasty visit to the Hornet.

Young Mountjoy, who, as we have mentioned, watched with unflagging interest what was passing below, had, through the instrumentality of Susan, established a kind of series of look-outs, composed of all the out-door male attendants of the establishment. By means of these, he had received full information regarding the progress of events, the non-appearance of the skeleton, the impatience and suspicion of the audience, the tardy arrival at length of the Wonder of the Age, and its unpromising condition, even the attempt and failure of poor frightened Mrs. Dwarfinch to effect her escape from the tumultuous scene.

The young man's own observation convinced him that the bearing of the mob, incensed by certain personal remarks, not of the choicest kind, directed at them by the tipsy skeleton—was becoming more and more truculent, and a glimpse of the poor woman cowering beside her husband, yet evidently more alarmed on his account than her own—brought him to a sudden resolution. He directed that his look-outs should assemble, make a simultaneous charge into the throng, and bring the whole thing, carriage, skeleton, Dwarfinches, and all, safely within the Hornet's gates.

The attempt succeeded. In spite of yells, hisses, and some resistance, the carriage not only made good its own retreat, but cleared a path for the fugitive family. The gates were closed and barred, and all was well.

"Thank Heaven!" said Mountjoy, as he sank down on his couch, wearied with the excitement, "the poor woman is safe! Go down Susan, and tell Mrs. Martin to look after the family, and fillip them all round! Pitch the skeleton into the stable, with some sacks and straw."

Susan, who had found the Dwarfinches in the hall, already in the act of being filliped, returned almost immediately.

"Mrs. Dwarfinch, sir, tenders her most grateful—Sir!"

She had stopped suddenly, for her master, in deep agitation, was leaning against the wall, one hand still holding the hood to his face, the other pressed to his side.

"The woman, the woman," he gasped.

"The voice! It reached me, at the door. Girl, did you see—her eyes?"

"Yes, sir, blue," answered Susan, hurriedly.

"I knew it!" Mountjoy exclaimed. "Something warned me that—that I was protecting—her! But there's more to do—much more. (Listen! They'll tear the place down, before I—). Now, Susan, be prompt and obedient. Much depends on you. Send Dwarfinch up to my door."

The manager appeared in an instant.

"Dwarfinch," said young Mountjoy, speaking through the half-open door, "you are pledged to produce this skeleton to-night, and instantly."

"Alas, sir," began the poor manager.

"You shall keep your word."

"Sir, the fellow's as drunk——"

"I will sober him within five minutes. Whatever his condition, let him be brought up to my dressing-room, then every one retire but Lufra, my page."

"Anything more, sir?" asked Dwarfinch, his hopes reviving, he scarce knew why.

"Yes. Issue an announcement that the performance will commence within ten minutes. That Mr. Tippeny will then go through the whole programme assigned for him, with additions which, it is hoped, will make up for this unavoidable delay. Away with you. And keep a passage clear for the skeleton to cross."

Dwarfinch vanished on his errand. Next moment, the skeleton was being borne upstairs, cursing and singing by turns. What passed in the dressing-room, nobody but Lufra knew. The skeleton, however, ceased to swear or sing. Sounds of quick but ordered movement were heard, and, to the amazement of all, within the time allotted, the door, flying open, disclosed the Living Skeleton, sober, dressed, violin in hand, and muffled for the passage, from head to foot, in Mountjoy's broadcated dressing-robe!

The temper of a British mob is acknowledged to be fickle. Perhaps the assurance that glowed aloft, telling of the skeleton's imminent appearance, flattered them, as with a victory won. At all events, when Mr. Tippeny was actually seen being escorted across the road, perfectly himself, and with a stride that lacked neither manhood nor dignity, he was greeted with deafening cheers, to be re-echoed, with even greater heartiness, when, at length, he stepped upon the stage.

Apart from his amazing emaciation, there was nothing about this Wonder of the Age to distinguish him from a tall and well-formed man. He possessed flexible, ani-

mated features, and a forehead indicative of capacity. His thin limbs were straight and beautifully formed, and every movement was marked with ease and power.

After a brief and graceful apologetic address, he entered into conversation with those nearest the stage, and charmed every one with his gentle and pleasing manners. His performance on the violin was worthy of any living professor. His vocal effort was thrice encored. His saraband was grace and vivacity, so to express it, ossified. In a word, he achieved a triumph unparalleled in Grandchester. As if not content with this, he made an appeal to the audience, on behalf of the hitherto unlucky manager, which so touched the hearts of the well-to-do, that a testimonial of nearly one hundred pounds was subscribed for on the spot. In addition to this, Mr. Dwarfinch, after paying all expenses, realised two hundred and twenty pounds.

But the accomplished skeleton was never more seen in Grandchester. He departed at an early hour next morning. It is odd that the groom who, under Lufra's direction, drove Mr. Tippeny to the next station, reported that he did not seem even then to have recovered from the overnight's excesses, and apparently had no recollection of having kept the Grandchester public in a state of speechless delight for two mortal hours. But he was a stupid fellow, at times, this skeleton.

Young Mountjoy was very quiet, and rather melancholy for some weeks succeeding that busy evening. Susan was constantly with him, reading, or writing to his dictation. All this time she never saw his face, only the high, square brows, and lustrous brown eyes; but even in these she was conscious of a change, difficult to define, but still a change.

One day he suddenly took a fancy to weigh himself, an operation he had not, as he remarked, performed for some months. The machine stood ready in his room. The colour rose to his brow as he stepped down.

"I could not have thought it!" he muttered. "I have gained thirteen pounds."

From that day he weighed himself once a week, the result always seeming to afford him great satisfaction. Susan knew that he must be increasing rapidly in size, and began to be seriously alarmed on the score of his health, especially as, the fatter he grew, the more he ate, and the more

nourishing and succulent were the meats he chose.

Mrs. Mountjoy's health had much declined of late, and she rarely quitted her bedroom. Thus Susan felt her responsibility increased, and she heartily longed for an opportunity to warn her imprudent young master of the morbid condition of obesity into which his love of eating was rapidly hurrying him.

There came a day on which Mountjoy, after duly weighing, cheerfully proclaimed that he had gained no less than three stone, and was increasing day by day.

Susan could bear it no longer. She began to cry, and, on the astonished young man pressing for the reason, confessed that she could not see him kill himself under her very eyes, without entering what respectful protest she might.

Her master burst into uncontrollable laughter, and, on recovering his breath, asked her if she would like to see him a second Tippeny.

Susan disclaimed this, but submitted that, between a Tippeny and a Lambert, there was a neutral ground more desirable than either.

"That is precisely the spot at which I aim!" said Mountjoy, as he quietly rose up, and stood before her; "and nearing it so fast, why should I dissemble any longer? See what I am" (he threw back his heavy gown, and showed a tall, manly figure, emaciated, indeed, but sufficiently covered with healthy, growing flesh), "and then imagine what I was, when—ah, you guess it!—when I assumed the dress and part of the tipsy skeleton, and saved the credit and fortune of poor Dwarfinch, and his wife, once the object of my love! Susan, I said 'once.' For now I have another and fitter love, and for her I have been striving to render less revolting this meagre, nay, once almost spectral form. Susan, your presence has helped me to life, and strength, and peace. Confirm these blessings to me. Be my wife?"

The young Grahame Mountjoys are among our most cherished acquaintance, Susan's violet eyes forming an agreeable contrast to my wife's, which are brown.

Next week will be commenced a **SHORT SERIAL STORY**,
By the Author of "**DEWS DOWN**," &c.,

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SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1873.

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XVI. ROSETTA.

"He's had enough, I suspect," said his lordship, quietly, "if not so much as he deserved. Give me my coat some one. Where's my hat? He'll remember me. I'm an old un, but I'm good for something yet. I'm out of condition, with smoke and drink and one thing and another; but I haven't quite forgotten how to use my hands. Let's have a look at him. Don't crowd round, you fools. Let the man have what air there is. He's not so much hurt, although that's a pretty-looking 'mouse' under his eye. He would have it; and so he got it, straight and hard. Clap a bit of raw steak on—the best thing for it in the world. For his nose—well, that is rather a nasty cut at the side; but a strip or two of plaster will soon put that to rights. One thing, it isn't the kind of nose you can spoil the beauty of, do what you will to it. Get him a glass of hot rum-punch some one; here's money; get glasses round for the company while you're about it." He gave gold to one of the performers, who hurried from the tent to the nearest tavern, to return forthwith with a bottle and glasses.

"Where's my boy?" Lord Overbury turned to me. "Learn to use your fists, Duke; they're uncommon handy articles when you know what to do with them. There's no blood on my face is there? Not a scratch, eh? That's all right. He got pretty near me once, though; and if I'd given him only half a chance he'd have been too many for me. There's bulk enough, and power enough about him, but no speed, and not a ha'porth of science. And he'd

been drinking; but so had I for that matter. I'm always drinking, worse luck. Come old chap, look alive." He went up to Diavolo, who was now sitting on the ground dabbing his face with a ragged cotton handkerchief, and staring about him with an air of savage stupidity. He seemed as yet but half conscious of what had happened. "You're knocked out of time, that's all. So has many a better man been before you. You'll be all right after a bit; only mind how you slash about with that cane of yours another time. And keep it off women and children; especially when I happen to be in the way. That's my advice. Do you hear? Come, don't bear malice. It was a fair fight. Shake hands."

But Diavolo did not grasp the proffered hand. He failed to understand what was required of him; or he was too wrathful to forgive the success of his antagonist. He simply rolled his head from side to side and growled inarticulate menaces.

I addressed Rosetta. My heart throbbed, and I felt that I was blushing violently.

"You are not hurt much, I hope?"

"No, not much. I'm used to it."

She had been crying though, and her tears had washed away streaks of paint from her cheeks. Her profuse hair, with threads of red gold mingled with its rich brown, had fallen over her forehead in a tangled mass. She was very beautiful.

Suddenly I saw, crossing her neck and shoulder, the scarlet line left by Diavolo's cane.

"Ah!" I cried, "but it must really pain you. The wretch! the monster! How could he dare to strike you."

"He's my master; I'm his apprentice. He thought it right, I suppose. Perhaps I deserved it. But I hate him, I hate him, all the same. Of course it hurt me. But

what is it to you? It didn't hurt you, I suppose?"

"Indeed it pained me very much."

"Yet you didn't move. It wasn't you that knocked him down. It was that ugly old man there. Your father? Well, he's old enough. Your friend, then? Your schoolmaster, perhaps; for you're only a boy. Yet he doesn't look much like a schoolmaster. Anyway, I'm grateful to him."

"I wish, indeed, that I had interfered; that I could help you, serve you, do anything for you."

"But you didn't, you see; you couldn't, perhaps; being such a mere boy."

I felt vexed at this description of me.

"At least I would have tried. I would have risked my life. But," I was conscious that this was weakly said, "I wasn't quick enough."

"That's just it." She laughed mockingly through her tears.

"Another time——" I began.

"What! Do you want to see me beaten again? No thank you. Some one might step in again before you. Never mind. Don't cry about it."

"I'm not crying." But, indeed, the tears somehow were gathering in my eyes, I was so provoked at her teasing manner, at her so persistently and wantonly misunderstanding me. "Or if I am, it's not for myself, it's for you."

"Well, well," and she smiled and gave me her hand. "You're a good boy, I think, and I dare say some other day, when I'm beaten again, if you're standing by, and plenty of time is allowed you, you'll spring forward to defend me, and be beaten too, perhaps. A lot of good that would do!"

"I should be content, so that I saved you a blow."

"That's well said. There, I'm sure you mean kindly, and I dare say are brave enough in your own way, choosing your own time and place. You don't look like a coward, I'll own that. Don't blush."

"I'm not blushing."

"Oh, but you are. I didn't think a man could blush like that. Why a girl might envy such glowing cheeks! But then, to be sure, you're not a man, as yet; and I think you'd be better at home, or at school. What do you do here at fairs, forcing your way into our booth? You know you'd no business here. If I'm to be beaten, I'd rather not have the public looking on. You should have waited and come to the regular performance, and seen me dance."

"I did see you dance. You danced ex-

quisitely. I never saw anything so beautiful."

"Thank you. But you saw me beaten too."

"It made my heart bleed, it did indeed."

"That shows you shouldn't have come; you should have been at home, learning your lessons. Oh, you came with your friend. I see. But do you think he's quite the right sort of friend for a boy—well, for a young man—like you? He calls you Duke. Why? You're not really a duke, are you?"

I had again to explain, confusedly, the abbreviation of my name.

"Marmaduke! What an odd name. I thought you couldn't really be a duke, you know. Though, of course, dukes are boys sometimes. Marmaduke! Marmaduke what?"

"Marmaduke Nightingale."

"I shall remember that. And your friend? What's his name?"

"He's Lord Overbury."

"Lord Overbury? A real lord? He doesn't look like it. You're sure? You're not hoaxing me?"

"A real lord."

"To think of that! I don't remember ever seeing a real live lord before. And in our booth. Seeing me dance on the rope. Seeing me beaten. But he gave it Diavolo well. How strong he was! What a blow he struck. Diavolo went down as though he'd been shot. I thought he was killed. How glad I felt! Ah!" and here she sighed, "but it will be all the worse for me by-and-bye, perhaps."

Lord Overbury approached us, having, possibly, heard his name mentioned. He had been busy laughing and drinking with the company.

"Well," he said roughly to Rosetta, "so you're the little girl that's been the cause of this row. Well, you're good-looking enough, anyhow. The cane hurt you, didn't it? They used to cane me a goodish bit when I was a boy, and it hurt then, I know. And on these pretty shoulders!" He patted her white neck with his grimy hand. I hated him for it. "Come, I deserve a kiss, I think."

"Take one then," and she calmly proffered him her cheek. He kissed her.

I shuddered; and I remembered again with painful distinctness the old engraving at home of the Satyr and the Nymph, after N. Poussin.

Mauleverer drew me aside.

"You'd better see about getting home, hadn't you? At any rate I think I'd get away from here if I was you. You see it isn't quite the place for you. We're a strange lot, and it's a pity to see us at our worst. Go home to the Down Farm, Master Duke. I should say, Mister Duke. If his lordship could be got away from here it would be quite as well, too. He's no business here; and, somehow, when people like him come among us, it isn't for our good altogether. I'm not thinking now of benefit tickets, or the patronising of bespeaks, or the standing of glasses round. Good things in their way. I should be the last to deny it. But there's something else to be thought of. Rosetta—"

"Yes. What of Rosetta?"

"Well, she's a good little girl enough, and clever—Diavolo teaches his pupils well, though he's not the kindest of masters—and pretty, as you can see for yourself. It would be a thousand pities if any mischief were to come to her out of your visit here to-day. Now wouldn't it?"

"You mean——"

"No, don't press me. You can guess my meaning."

"You don't think that I could possibly injure one so young, so beautiful? Mr. Manleverer, you do me grave injustice."

"My dear boy, I don't think that. You admire her? Well, I'm not surprised. The child's uncommonly pretty. No. Your coming here will do harm only to yourself, though you'd get over it soon enough, very likely. But *his* coming here," he lowered his voice, and jerked his thumb in the direction of Lord Overbury, "do you think that's likely to do her any good?"

His lordship was laughing and talking with Rosetta. She was pleased, it seemed to me; flattered by his attentions, amused by his rough jesting manner. How hideous he looked by the side of her! Could it be that she was forgetting his ugliness, his age, his uncouthness, his half-intoxicated state, remembering only that he was a lord?

"She's pretty and she's vain. She is fond of admiration; but that's a common failing. And to be admired by a lord after being thrashed by a savage—what a contrast! It might turn her head, or any woman's. Better get him away if you can. You're his friend. Though he's not the friend, I take it, they'd choose for you at the Down Farm. He's what

you see him—a lord—and not a very nice kind of lord to my thinking. And you're—what? a young farmer. May I say a very young farmer? You see you don't meet on equal terms, neither as to age, position, nor, thank God! character. Get him away for her sake, then; that's the stronger argument, to judge by your young tell-tale face. In any case, go home, Duke, and give us a wide berth. This isn't the place for your mother's son."

It was much the same advice as Rosetta had already given me. But in his odd disjointed way Mauleverer spoke with an earnestness that contrasted curiously with his usual method of discourse, with his whitened face, his crested tufts of hair, and his striped clown's dress.

It was sound counsel enough. Clearly I had no business in the booth among the player folk. Lord Overbury was certainly no fit companion for me. His society was little likely to profit me.

But it was not on these accounts I sought to draw him away. It was because he was conversing with Rosetta; because, though in a quiet and innocent, rather abashed way, she appeared to be gratified at what he said. I could not hear his speech. But I noted that her eyes were studying the ground, or the soiled sandals that encased her shapely feet, and, it seemed to me, that she was blushing with a sort of pleased surprise through the smeared clouds of vermilion upon her cheeks.

I touched his lordship on the arm.

"We'd better go, I think."

He shook my hand off roughly.

"Let me bide," he said, with an oath. "I'm well enough as I am. Get away with you, boy."

"You again!" said Rosetta, as with a mocking smile she raised her eyes and turned her bright glance full upon me. "Good-bye, Duke."

She looked lovely, and so happy, that somehow I felt pained and miserable.

A bell rung.

"Clear out!" cried a rough voice.

"You must go now," said Mauleverer.

"We're on again with another performance. Take my advice, Duke, and get away home. Forget that you have ever been here—especially that you have ever seen me like this. I do assure you that I do it solely to oblige the management. Nothing but Mrs. Jecker's tears, and the thought of her orphan children, could have brought me to it. Clown to the rope! It seems—

it sounds—absolutely incredible. Not a word about it at the Down Farm. Pledge me your honour—nay, swear—swear by your sword—not a syllable upon the subject. I should sink into the ground should your mother discover me thus. You remember our Shakespearian readings? and that sermon—by Blair, wasn't it?—on the Sunday? It was a fine elocutionary effort, though I say it. I wish I had time to cut another black shade of you. But it's not possible. The house is filling. Something I could have made of his lordship, too, in the black shade way, had but time permitted. Good-bye. Nay, don't llok back at Rosetta. A dancing girl; the tight-jeff business; there's a thousand of 'em about, far above Rosetta, though she's a clever child, I own, and pretty, if you insist upon it. Good-bye. We shall meet again, I'm sure of it, under happier auspices. I may be playing Hamlet, but I'll not warrant it. The time is out of joint, and tragedy is not what it was. But you'd like my Charles Surface. Remember me; but not as clown to the rope, promise me that. I do it solely, after many tears and entreaties—solely to oblige Mrs. Jecker. Good-bye.

"Good-bye, Mauleverer."

"Hush, for your life—Leverini!"

He wrung my hand and we parted. I quitted the tent, turning round after a few paces: was it in the hope of catching one more glimpse of Rosetta through the opening in the canvas? Mauleverer was still standing there.

"Solely to oblige Mrs. Jecker!" he shouted after me.

Then seeing that a small crowd of rustic youths had gathered about the entrance to the booth, I noted that he assumed a clown-like attitude; heard him utter clown-like crows and chuckles, and presently, with pantomimic facetiousness, affect to snatch a plough-boy's felt hat, of basin pattern, from his head. This done he vanished.

What was I to do? What, but to go home again, as Mauleverer had advised. There was nothing else left me to do.

I would go back to the King's Head and have my pony saddled. It was my mood to gallop him back to the Down Farm as fast as I could. I felt dissatisfied, and uncomfortable, and perplexed; why, I hardly knew. If I had before been flushed and elated with wine, that was quite over now.

Reube was standing at the door of the stable-yard of the King's Head.

"Why, Maester Duke, where'st bin to? Amwoast lost, I be thinking. This Dripford be a main caddling place. There, I dunno how we come to get atwo (divided). But 'tis no wonder. The market be all in a muggle, and all the streets about so neoust of a neoustness (nearly alike). I've zold lambs—ah, and zold un well too. I beant aveard to look at measter in's vace. There weren't a tidier lot o' lambs come to market."

He told me the price and the particulars. I am ashamed to say I took little note of what he said.

CHAPTER XVII. ON THE ROAD HOME.

REUBE looked elated and flushed; partly with triumph, and partly, I think, with strong beer. Indeed, he owned that he had enjoyed a quart—pronounced to rhyme with cart—at the Ram Inn, with a "mossel" of cold beef—"main good tackle."

I inquired, by way of saying something, how his rival Garge had fared at the market.

"Why, just no how, Maester Duke," he answered, laughing loudly. "There, I never zet eyes on such a gawney. Why his lambs weren't worth nothing at all. Dree on un dropped dead on's way hedder, and a' lost your in market somewheres; couldn't find un noways for an hour or more. Garge was vuddled, shims (it seems). A' spoke to I. But I told un I didn't want none of's saace. A' wanted to fight, a' did. 'Get whome virst,' I ses to un. 'I'll vight thee then, I'll warnd, if thee'st a moind to't. But not in thic marketplace. I've summat else to do with theesum lambs.' A' shogged off bellocking and kind o' huffed. I didn't zee un agen. But I heard zay athin (within) the Ram as a'd zold a's lambs. I didn't hear the price. I pities themmin as be going to eat un. There bain't no more vlesh on some on un than on hurdle yonder. There, I never did zee such a footy (paltry) lot o' lambs. But Garge caan't abide to hear un zay so. We never could gee (agree), Garge and I. And never shall, s'pose. I'll vight un vast enough if a's a moind to't when a' gets whome."

I counselled Reube against quarrelling with a neighbour, and told him he had now better journey back towards Purrington, obtaining a lift, if he could, in any of the market-carts returning homewards. I promised to overtake him before he had gone far upon the road.

He seemed in no way surprised or disturbed that I had been missing from the market-place, and had taken no share in the sale of the Down Farm lambs. He had, perhaps, expected some such result; or was too much occupied with his own success to note my shortcomings.

My pony was saddled; but I bade the ostler take him back to his stall again. I felt a strange reluctance to quit Dripford. Yet I could not account even to myself for my irresolute condition of mind. Why did I linger? In the hope of seeing Lord Overbury again? No. Or Mauleverer? No. Or Rosetta? Again I answered, no; but this time less confidently. Vague unsatisfied longings possessed me. I knew them to be absurd and unintelligible, yet I could not be rid of them.

In any case I persuaded myself that there was no need for my hurrying home—that I had ample time before me. As a reasonable excuse for remaining, I fancied that I was hungry, and ordered dinner in the coffee-room of the King's Head. But when it was served I could not eat it; my appetite had vanished. I could only drink a few glasses of sherry—the first wine I had ever ordered on my own responsibility. I sat, however, for some time, twiddling my glass and sipping the rather fiery compound—trying to look as though I liked it, anxious that my neighbours in the room should not think me so ill at ease as I really was in my unaccustomed position.

Then I paid my bill, went round to the stable, looked at my pony, prepared to mount him, and then again abandoned my intention. It was growing dusk, but it was still early. It would not take me long to gallop back to Purrington. I would saunter for awhile through the streets of the town. It was fast emptying. But a few pens of sheep were now left in the market-place.

I could hear the din, I could see in the sky the glare of the fair on the outskirts of the town. I turned in that direction. Lamps were lighted in front of the chief booths. Bells were being rung, gongs sounded, trumpets blown. There were hoarse invitations to the crowd to "walk up," and the marvels of the various shows were being uproariously proclaimed.

I found myself again in front of Jecker's Travelling Theatre. Scarcely knowing what I did—certainly my mind had not been made up a second before on the subject—I paid and entered, taking a seat in the division of the booth set apart for the box audience.

The theatre was fairly full; the atmosphere close and oppressive from the scent of flaring tallow candles. It was the first dramatic performance I had ever witnessed. I was surprised that it interested me so little. My feeling, somehow, was one of discontent and disappointment. I could not surrender myself to the illusions of the scene; all seemed to me distressingly coarse, and mean, and spiritless. The fault was in me, perhaps, rather than in the performance. I was preoccupied; expecting, hoping for, I scarcely knew what. The actors won much applause of a rude kind; I sat still and silent. I felt like one in a dream, conscious of dreaming, persuaded of the emptiness and unreality of all that was happening.

Mauleverer did not appear. Nor Diavolo. Nor Rosetta. The rope, I noticed, had been removed. I could still see in the ground, at my feet, the exact place where its cross-bar supports had been erected. It was plain that there was to be no tight-rope dancing.

The performance lasted little more than half an hour. I was weary of it long before it terminated. Could the theatre I had so often thought longingly about proffer me no more attractions than these? The stage—was this all? The players—these ill-dressed creatures, with daubed faces, and harsh voices, so graceless of gesture, so uncouth of presence?

There was nothing now to keep me in Dripford. The moon was up; it was a fine clear night. I could not miss my way. I had but to keep to the straight turnpike-road until I came to the track branching off across the down to Purrington. A mound of chalk sufficiently marked this out. Besides, if I chanced to miss it, my pony would not, it was very certain.

For a mile or two out of Dripford there were many travellers upon the road, returning from the fair—light carts and heavily-laden farm waggons, and horsemen in small parties. Songs were being sung with prolonged and rather tippy choruses; and the smell of beer and tobacco lingered in the air. Now and then a wayfarer, overcome with fatigue or with excess of liquor, was to be seen curled up and dozing under a hedge. I overtook, too, I remember, a sergeant with a party of recruits bound for the barracks at West Poolborough, and with a long night's march before them, somewhat damping to immature military ardour. But the sergeant was inspiring them with wonderful

stories and occasional songs, keeping a sharp look-out, too, that none of his charges strayed or escaped.

At last I seemed alone on the road. I could give my pony his head. Moreover, I could take him on to the turf which now ran parallel with the down, and so save his feet. He was soon at a hand gallop.

Suddenly I saw the flash of a lantern ahead, and heard the sound of wheels. A chaise rapidly driven was approaching me on the down. In a minute or two I could discover that the horse was a piebald, and that two men, much muffled up, sat in the chaise.

"Yo ho! yo ho!" one of them shouted to me. The chaise stopped.

"What is it?" I cried, pulling up.

"Duke!"

"Who calls my name?"

"It is Duke. I felt surp of it," said the man to his companion.

"Who the devil's Duke?"

I knew them then. Mauleverer, and with him Diavolo. I could see the strips of plaster on his nose.

"What has happened?" I asked, as I moved to the side of the chaise.

"That's just what we don't know, for certain," said Mauleverer. "But I'm glad to see you, and alone. I thought—I half suspected—yet I knew it couldn't be. When did you leave Dripford?"

"Little more than half an hour ago, or it may be three quarters."

"You've seen nothing of Rosetta?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"You know nothing of her?"

"Nothing. What has happened? No harm, I trust."

"I can't say about harm."

"For Heaven's sake tell me what you mean, Mauleverer."

"Well, she's gone; been missing since four o'clock this afternoon."

"Gone! alone?"

"That's just what I can't tell you. We had news of a post-chaise hurrying along the road. She may have been in it; or she may not. There's no saying. Still it seemed worth inquiring about. So we borrowed this horse and trap from Slinger's Circus; and we've been miles along, over the plain. For no good that I can see."

"You've seen nothing—you've heard nothing of her?"

"Nothing; that is, we traced the post-chaise part of the way. But they knew nothing of it at the gate over the hill this side

of West Poolborough, I think it's called. So we've missed it, somehow."

"It may have turned off at the cross-road by Little Denton."

"Where would it get to then?"

"Well, it might go through Bulborough and Lisford some miles on, and so into the London road."

"And then turn north or south, I suppose! A pretty fool's errand I'm come out on. This comes of being good-natured and obliging. My bane through life. Here am I, not so young as I was, and a man of full habit, running about this wild endless plain in search of a twopenny dancer on the tight-jeff!"

"Let me find her," growled Diavolo, "and I'll break every bone in her body."

I fervently hoped that he might not find her.

"And Lord Overbury," Mauleverer further inquired, "where did you leave him?"

"In the theatre, with you. I've not seen him since. But you don't mean—" a painful suspicion stirred within me.

"Yes, I do," he answered. "Would she be absconding in a post-chaise by herself? Why, she hadn't a sixpence in her pocket; had she, Diavolo?"

"Not a rap," he grunted, with an oath. I began to pray that Diavolo might find her.

"You'll not give up the pursuit, Mauleverer?" I said, excitedly. "For Heaven's sake try and bring her back. Think how young she is—how beautiful. Save her. She must be saved!"

"It's easy to say that. But the piebald's done. He'll go no further. He's a first-rate trick-horse, and will stand a deal of wear and tear. But he was at work in the ring all the morning; and he's gone over twenty miles on a hard road since. It can't be, you see. Besides, it's a wild-geese chase. It may be all a flam about the post-chaise. There's no knowing. We may find her safe and sound at the booth when we get back, if we ever do get back. She may only have been playing truant—sulking and hiding in a corner, as girls will, you know."

"I trust, indeed, it may be so."

"Good night! We can't miss the way back, I suppose?"

"No, straight as you can go."

"Good night. Get along, piebald."

A flourish and crack of the whip, and the piebald, panting and steaming, resumed his labours. I remained for some minutes

watching the vanishing chaise, the dimming light of the lantern they carried; listening to the gradual dying away of the sounds of the wheels, the creaking of the springs, and the rattling of the harness. Meantime, my pony was pawing the turf with his hoof, anxious to be moving again, homewards.

But there was something coming along the road from Dripford—slowly, heavily—a market-cart drawn by a lame horse.

“Isn't it most time you was at home and abed, young fellow?” shouted Farmer Jobling, as he passed.

WAGNER AND HIS SYSTEM.

A MAN for whom his own country is about to build a magnificent theatre, at a cost of some sixty or seventy thousand pounds, for the purpose of exhibiting his works to the best advantage; whose theories have been debated so fiercely for the last twenty years that an impartial observer would find it difficult to decide whether they are hopelessly bad or superlatively good, must at least belong to that class, abundant in every country of the world, “one of the most remarkable men of the day.” Such is Richard Wagner—not the composer, as he might be popularly called, but the poet.

The question of Wagner's merits from a musical point of view would be much too technical to be dealt with here; but his poetic theories belong to purely dramatic art, and may be fairly dealt with in this place.

These theories may be summed up in the familiar quotation, “the play's the thing!” The drama, according to Wagner, is what should be looked for in opera, and music ought to be its expression. At present librettos, as they are called, have quite a reputation for being about the baldest and most jejune pieces of composition known, and they are not unlike the rather rude frame-work to which the professional ballad-seller of the street often secures his thousand and one halfpenny ballads. In the average operas, too, every one will recal in how artificial a way the airs are brought in. The tenors or sopranos have their official show-off air, before which the orchestra plays the symphony, while the singer has to wander about, looking into the wings with an affectation of interest. So, too, at some grand finale to an act, where the lover is defying a cruel father in

presence of the household and those extraordinary persons who come in on such occasions, who has not been surprised to find the action suspended, while the orchestra plays a solemn prelude, after which the tenor comes forward and delivers himself of a slow and methodical air? Wagner, our new prophet, holds that all this sort of thing is false and undramatic, and that music must be used as speech would be on such occasions—as the natural mode of expressing emotion. Glück, however, long ago taught the same ideas, and, it must be said, with considerable effect. It may be asked, How is music to be made to express indifferent passages, such as “I met him in the street,” or “I have come from paying her a visit?” But this is answered in a broad way by saying that it must not express such ideas at all. The power of music in expressing matter of detail is, in fact, extremely limited.

The true power of music is not direct mimicry, but the reflection, the tone, the humour, of the inspiration under which it has been composed. Thus Mendelssohn wrote a well-known overture when under the inspiration of a visit to the Hebrides. There is nothing in this famous piece of music that imitates anything associated with these islands; the author wrote under an emotion produced by certain grand scenes of nature, and the effect of hearing the piece is to reproduce this emotion in the listener. Hence it follows that mere trite incidents, or commonplace narratives, such as are so often turned into operas, are utterly unfitted for musical expression. The only true subjects should be emotional, or a series of emotions, and hence noble legends, removed by time into an heroic and dignified atmosphere, make the best subjects. Such are King Arthur, Tannhäuser, the Niebelungenlied, the Flying Dutchman, and the innumerable traditions possessed by every country. Any one who reads these finds how suitable they are for translation into music, and how, in fact, music is the most perfect way in which they can be presented. Merely acted, we have an earthly-looking King Arthur and knights, and indifferent and unheroic-looking ladies. What is put into their mouths to be declaimed will sound with a sort of bathos. But if the composer does not merely “set” the words to music, but if his words and his music be born together, as in Wagner's case, the antique and romantic emotion is supplied in our minds, and inspired music, which

is neither old nor young, but immortal as it were, carries us back, and lands us in those heroic times. Wagner himself has written all his own stories, which contain dramatic poetry and situations of the highest order. The music, or the tone of his music, was in his mind, as he wrote, and there is a colour very different from what is to be found in stories given to composers "to set."

Looking a little closer, we shall find that his theory of opera, however it may be controverted, is founded on true dramatic principles. His ideal is the following. Going to see a representation should be a grand national rite, such as it was in the Greek days. The story being of a grand and national character, would have the effect of a public teaching, refining and inspiring, and this effect would be due to the self-denial of the singers, not wishing to show off their voices, but to interpret their part. Again, the voice is but one instrument; the instruments in the orchestra have claim to an almost equal dignity, as drawing all their power from the dramatic inspiration of the performer. Hence the orchestra should no more accompany the voices than the voices should accompany the orchestra. There is a loss of force in putting the one in such a subordinate position. Wagner holds that all should be on equal terms, all should make one whole, that there may be times when an instrument may be the best medium for expressing the situation, and when the voices may sink into the present place of the orchestra. In short, opera should be one whole, where scenery, dress, acting, singing, and playing should each express the story to the best of its means. And all these elements would do so if they were under the inspiration of the author. Again, when once the conception of the characters is fixed, there will be found a distinct tone of music for each, a peculiar style which the character inspires. In the new theatre, too, the orchestra is to be placed out of sight, as the spectacle of conductor beating time and fiddlers "bowing" is distracting for the spectators. The present is a purely conventional arrangement, and as the orchestra is to be as much part of the opera as the voices, their music should enjoy the same dramatic advantages.

This is a very sketchy outline of what Wagner, the prophet, proposes; and it must be said that it is all recommended by common sense, and by the fact that within

the last twenty years many of these principles have been adopted by Gounod, and more especially by Verdi.

Like all reformers, Richard Wagner has gone too far; and certainly one-half of his music can be justified by no known theories. It is simply a dreary concatenation of discords, dry and unmeaning. But these are relieved by bursts of the most exquisite music, which lift the soul into the realms of ecstatic romance.

There is a guarantee for the worth of Wagner's theories in his life and character, and in the tremendous and gallant perseverance which he has shown, in spite of literal persecution, for twenty years back. All countries have been divided between his partisans and his bitter enemies. In Germany there was a time when an overture of his could not be played without a mingled storm of applause and hisses. In England, when he came over to conduct the Philharmonic, he was received with a storm of abuse and vituperation. For much of this, indeed, he is himself accountable, as he has been singularly intolerant.

The merits of Wagner's system have been fiercely debated, and will be yet more fiercely contested; but the principles, he contends, cannot be impeached. His notion of a perfect theatre, where the scenery, and dresses, and decorations shall aim, not at the vulgar and dazzling splendours of foil and lime-light, but of a refined and almost supernatural magnificence, is incontestable. There are other ways of producing effect save by acres of canvas, built-up works, suspended women, and the like. It would take too long to enter on this, but an idea may be gathered from the mystery-play at Ammergau, which revealed a new system both of the drama and of its accessories, based upon faith, and sincerity, and reverence. These of themselves furnished the rest in the true and reverent spirit.

Again, it is supposed that because we are under the empire of those great masters, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, and Handel, that the musical forms in which they consecrated their genius must, on that account, be immutable. Music is boundless, both in forms as well as in its substance. Those who might suppose that finality was reached have only to bethink them of the revived music to which we have recently been introduced, notably of the sublime Passion music of Bach, as given at Westminster Abbey, which seemed like a new revelation, and opened new heavens. So with that old Italian oratorio, performed this

year. So with the vast unexplored land that holds the music of Spontini and Glück. In short, the neatly-trimmed air, the old-fashioned forms of symphony, duet, &c., are not to be the only shapes of music, but the grand science is to be free to develop itself in other directions.

After all, when we consider the present shape of opera for a moment, it will be seen that there is something very arbitrary and artificial in most of its arrangements. Granted that music is to be used to express dramatic emotion, it does not follow that an exhibition of daring vocal efforts, soprano gymnastics, runs, high notes, &c., are becoming expressions of the situation. Who that has heard any famous prima donna go through the great song of the Queen of Night in the *Zauberflöte* could suppose that it was more than a display of training and agility. So with the duet, *Si fine' allore*, between Norma and Adalgisa, where the two ladies pursue each other with painful carefulness in thirds for many pages. It is obvious that such exhibitions do not contribute to telling the story, or to giving it any colour or strength. The voice, with all its feeling, tone, tenderness, or energy, should take its part in rendering the story, but anything that merely shows off an air, or a singer, must be rejected as surplusage. And that this is a wholesome theory, after all, will be found from the fact that there are so few singers with great and agile voices who lift these exercises out of mediocrity into something like grandeur. Now the Wagnerian opera, difficult as it is, presumes that the singer of average ability shall be capable of doing justice to the music, which, though difficult, is shorn of all these exercises of the gymnasium, and the singer contributes his skill and voice just as the orchestra does its skill and instruments.

It is impossible to read one of Wagner's stories without, as it were, hearing or feeling the sense of music. At least, a musician of anything like a poetic instinct will feel that music alone is wanting to convey the full colour and toning of such pictures. When he has heard Wagner's music he feels that such music, be it good or indifferent, really belongs to what he has seen, and is part of it.

Any one who has seen *Der Fliegende Holländer* will admit this. First there is the strange wild overture, that has an extraordinary flavour of rude north seas, of blowing winds, which fall and die away into soft and melancholy breezes, and rise again

into whistling gales, mingled with the cries and calls of sailors. The opera is laid out, not for mere theatrical action, but in a certain emotional key as it were, which seems to be the system of all Wagner's operas. As to the story, it might be comprised in a sentence. A man doomed to wander, yearning for a love that will redeem and save him, finds a young girl who gives him that love, but whom he is obliged to resign, and return to his old never-ending wanderings. Here are the three motives of love, despair, and destiny, worthy of the old Greek stage.

The story begins with a scene off shore, when a vessel is seen after a storm, which dies away, and the pilot sings a watch song in the bows. As he drops to sleep, a strange craft comes, with red sails and masts and cordage perfectly black, and drops her anchor with an extraordinary crash. There is nothing misty or ghostly about this vessel; but there is rather a strange distinctness about her black cordage, and dark and curiously-shaped hull; while the sailors, with hoods, seem like monks, and, having got through their task in a noiseless, reserved fashion, disappear below, and all is silent. This arrival arouses the pilot of the other vessel, who begins to chant again, half dreaming of his love who is far away. The captain of the phantom ship meets Dalland, the owner of the other vessel, who is struck by this strange being proposing to wed his daughter, and dazzling him by treasures which the weird sailor brings ashore. The wind grows fair; the sailors begin to shake out their sails; the red canvas is spread, and the two vessels get under way, and sail off for Dalland's home. Senta is an exalted, dreamy girl, daughter of Dalland, who sits all day with her eyes fixed on a picture of this legendary sea-captain, whom she is convinced it is her mission to save from eternal perdition. She has a lover of her own, to whom she has pledged herself, but this fascination has turned her away from him. She is roused by the appearance of her father and this strange companion. Few who heard it will forget the superb scene that followed between the two—not duet in the technical term—but a torrent of music that seemed to mean a meeting long looked for, but come at last—hope, rapture, and eternal constancy. Music alone could express all this.

Then were seen the two vessels, again close to each other—the one of Dalland lit up with lamps on the rigging, the sailors singing and moving about; the other dark,

silent, mysterious, as if eternally deserted. And here is seen the true and masterly ideas of Wagner in dealing with even the scenic effect of such things, which is indeed founded on truth and nature. The actual physical imitation of what is meant to be impressive is not nearly so impressive as what is suggested; and the contrast of those two vessels was infinitely more effective than it could have been made by any amount of transparency or sulphuric agency, as in the old Fitzball drama of the Flying Dutchman. This was materially strengthened by showing the effect on others: a number of young peasants coming in to sell their wares to the sailors; going on board calling to the ghostly sailors again and again, and never disturbing that grave-like silence, and at last flying in terror at the awful stillness.

Presently the waves begin to rise, the winds to howl, strange will-o'-the-wisp lights begin to flutter about the cordage, dark indistinct figures move about the deck. An unearthly chanting begins, "Johohë, Johohë." The sailors of Daland's vessel listen in wonder, and then commence their own more jovial chant. The two mingle discordantly. The effect of this situation is infinitely dramatic, and the music of the contending crews was strangely inspiring. The lover then appears to reproach Senta with the abandonment of her vows plighted to him—a declaration which the ghostly captain overhears, and which shows that this love does not fulfil the conditions. As she has been faithful to another, she will be so to him. The woman who was to save him must be faithful. He prepares to leave her for ever, to her utter despair. The penalty for faithlessness to him is eternal death. To that he would not expose her, and preferred to recommence his wretched pilgrimage alone. He goes on board his vessel, whence a strange din of preparation begins to issue; the mysterious figures of the sailors are seen hurrying about. Her father and lover try to detain Senta; but she breaks from them, rushes to the edge of the bank, and crying that she knows that her life would be the price of his salvation, flings herself into the sea. The vessel sinks in a flash; in the distance the waves grow calm, and the two glorified figures are seen to rise slowly in a golden sunlight. This in itself is a beautiful and romantic poem, but it would be impossible to give an idea of the romantic and supernatural music to which it is joined, the rapturous love

passages, and the rough, deep, sea-stormy character of other parts of the music. There are no formal airs to speak of; the music is, as it were, laid on like broad masses of colour. Story and music are one, and indissolubly united.

The story of Tannhäuser has been told in a pretty English poem by the present Lord Lytton and his deceased friend Julian Fane. It is more spiritual than the fable just related. A noble warrior bearing this name had been beguiled up a notorious mountain called the Venusberg, where he was held under the thrall of the goddess. He was struggling to set himself free. A procession of pilgrims going by on their way to Rome and singing their hymns furnishes the occasion. He would join them. As he comes down the mountain he falls in with the landgrave's court, who, delighted to meet the famous Tannhäuser again, strive to detain him, but all in vain, until some one uses the name of a certain pure maid, Elsa, with whom Tannhäuser was in love. This spell succeeds, and he accompanies them to the great hall of singers, where the bards are to contend in song. This brings about one of those grand poetical scenes where the music expresses the whole tone of an era. All the songs are expressive of true love and religion and peace. Tannhäuser sits in a sort of trance, but with a sorrowful look on his face. He is still under the old spell. Suddenly he bursts out with his chant in praise of Venus, and declares the wild lawless love of the Venusberg to be the only true love. Shocked and enraged the warriors rise up tumultuously, drawing their swords. But Elsa interposes, and in a soft pleading shields him. They must pray for him; and falling on her knees she pours forth an impassioned prayer to Heaven. He is gradually moved, the chant of the pilgrims is once more heard approaching. Tannhäuser rouses himself, and rushes forth to join them.

Years go by, and no tidings are heard of Tannhäuser. The pilgrims had returned, and he was not with them. Elsa, whose soul was given for him, was pining away. One evening the wanderer was met by Wolfram, one of the bards, at the foot of the Venusberg, ragged, worn, and decayed, and full of fury and impious rage. He had been to Rome, where his crime had been found too great to be forgiven lightly. He had returned, determined to make for the Venusberg. In vain the other frantically tries to save him from perdition. A

soft, white mist begins to rise, the vapours of the night to pass away, and a rose-coloured cloud, behind which gleam mysterious lights, seems to float down from the mountain. The cloud is gradually lifted, and the goddess revealed, while the infatuated knight sinks in delirious agitation before her, then rises to become her slave for ever. His friend struggles with him, conjures him passionately to stay, and at last bethinks him of a charm—the name of Elsa. “She who is at this moment,” he said, “praying for your soul in her last agony, will be presently praying for you before the throne of the Most High!” Tannhäuser is saved, the tempting vision vanishes, and at that moment is heard in the distance the hymn of those who were praying for Elsa’s departing soul.

In this legend there is no stage “business” to speak of, and a certain incoherence. But there is the grand principle, the most dramatic in the world, the struggle between good and evil. The shifting changes of emotion could be made coherent only by music. And the magnificent strains of Wagner, which have also a mediæval and legendary quaintness, for their exaltation, breadth, and colour, would fill the un-musical with enthusiasm.

There is a curious kindred in all Wagner’s stories, which mostly turn on woman’s self-sacrifice, and Lohengrin has many points of resemblance to Tannhäuser. But the music has quite a different colour. Lohengrin turns on a noble young lady being accused in one of the mediæval councils of having murdered her brother. She is a dreamy maid, and owns to having seen a beautiful and divine knight who came to visit her in her dreams. As the accuser would have to support his charge by the sword, she declares this divine knight would be her champion, and vindicate her honour. The time is fixed, the trumpets sounded for the challenge, when an object is seen in the distance coming down the river. It proves to be a car drawn by a swan, and conveying a glittering knight. They recognise the heavenly messenger with shouts and songs; the combat takes place, and Lohengrin, for such is the name of the knight, prostrates his enemy. He receives the hand of the maid he has saved, who is bound by a vow never to ask his name or degree. A wicked woman who hates her, artfully contrives to arouse her curiosity and jealousy, and makes her put the fatal question. The spell is broken, the

silver swan is seen coming down the river again with the car, and Lohengrin returns to his supernatural state. The music of this story is strangely supernatural too, and has a sort of wild inspiration. The prelude with which it is ushered in is one of the most weird-like and exquisitely wrought pieces of music in existence. Though let no one fancy that he will find aught but disappointment should he send to the music-seller, and play it over on the piano. It must be borne in mind that every bar of Wagner’s music belongs to the story, and when separated from it, becomes as it were dead. Indeed, the true musician ought never to subject portions of any of the great operas to the “chamber treatment.”

Tristan and Iseult is a half Irish legend that recalls the Arthurian romances, and is very touching and pathetic. The Meistersinger, where the scene is laid in Nuremberg, and where Hans Sachs figures, has a quaint and grotesque flavour that belongs to the City of Toys. But it would take too long to go through all Wagner’s works down to the Niebelungenlied, which is to be heard when the new theatre at Beyreuth is completed.

In England we know little or nothing of this music. It is discreditable to us that, while Italy and Germany—for, owing to its nationality, it will always be excluded from France—have accorded a fair trial and reception to the new composer, we should have gone on in our humdrum fashion, standing by the old landmarks, and rigorously closing our ears. So did we do to Gounod’s Faust, and after the rest of the world had been whistling and “humming” it for years, a hearing was reluctantly accorded, and the work welcomed with enthusiasm. By-and-bye we shall be forced, from curiosity, if not for shame’s sake, to grant a hearing to Wagner, and next morning perhaps we shall affect to have made a grand discovery of a new composer.

BETWEEN THE LIGHTS.

THE parched earth revives; the drooping flowers
Their thirsting cups lift for the grateful dew,
What time the sun-red sobers into grey,
And dusky shadows in fantastic shapes
Fall on the garden-path.

Now skims the bat,
The stealthy, noiseless messenger of night,
Past the thick-ivied steeple; phantoms weird
Are figured in the quaint old gnarled trees
That skirt the rectory lawn; from cedar clump
Pour forth the love-trills of the nightingale,
In sweet clear cadence. From the belfry-tower

Goes forth the owl, grim, ruthless forager,
Upon his nightly raid; the murmurous bees
Fast-hastening homeward, from the flower-bells,
With their last load of nectar, seek the hive.

A faint breeze stirs the silver-lined leaves
Of river-poplar. Now the short, sharp bark
Of prowling fox, comes harsh upon the ear
From yonder coppice, and the pheasant spreads
Her brown wings closer o'er her helpless brood;
Too well she knows the arch-freebooter's cry.
So night comes onward, crowned with myriad stars,
And tired workers, faint and drowsy-eyed,
Sink to their well-earned rest; soft slumber reigns,
And Nature's silence soothes the hours of peace.

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

TWO ILLUMINATIONS.

ONE of my earliest recollections is a woodcut of Romulus and Remus suckled by the wolf. It was in an edition of Goldsmith's History of Rome, from which I gathered my first notions about the Ancient Romans. In those days I bore no grudge against the toga'd people, not having yet arrived at the period of public school, and Latin verse-making. I used to spell out simple old Goldsmith, standing by my mother's knee, and looking at the pictures.

I suppose no little boys are taught Roman History from Goldsmith, now-a-days. Do they begin by telling the children that half the ancient stories are myths, I wonder? I was never troubled by the presentation of doubts, or conflicting evidence, to my six-year-old intellect. Romulus and Remus, the Babes in the Wood, Canute rebuking the sea, and William Tell with his arrow and his apple, were all equally authentic figures in the gallery of wonderful images that were stored in my childish fancy. I suppose my mother believed in them all herself. I am sure I did. (I had nearly written "I do." But let the kind reader keep my counsel on this point.)

Romulus and Remus and the wolf! I see the woodcut before me now! The foster mother lazily turning her head to lick the plumpest of the two babies, whilst the other is sprawling over her back. And then to think of my being present the other night at a great festival to commemorate the chief exploit of one of those apocryphal infants! A festival in commemoration of the founding of Rome by Romulus some seven hundred and odd years before the Christian era!

On the 21st of April, the municipality and the citizens—Senatus Populusque Romanus; you may see the letters S. P. Q. R. on all the dust-carts of the city—celebrate the anniversary of the foundation of Rome. And the main attraction of the festival is

the illumination of the Forum and Coliseum by coloured fires.

H'm! The Coliseum lighted up with red and blue fires like the transformation scene in a pantomime? H'm! Non mi persuade, as they say in Italy. It does not persuade me. I don't take to the notion. However, it is a sight to be seen. And by half-past seven o'clock P.M. I am on my way toward the Campo Vaccino, as the site of the Forum is now called. The illumination is not to begin until nine; but there will be a great crowd, and it is well to be in time. The night is absolutely perfect for the purpose: mild, dry, and dark. As I near the scene of the illumination, the stream of people going my way grows denser. I am in the midst of a very numerous crowd all drifting towards the show. There is wonderfully little noise. We northerners are apt to fancy a mob of southern holiday-makers as being demonstrative, gay, talkative, animated. Fact, so far as my experience goes, contradicts this fancy; as it contradicts so many conventional notions of things and people which get echoed from one to another down the course of time, because some are too lazy to look for themselves, and others—a greater number these than is generally suspected—cannot see, for all their looking!

We pass through the imperfectly lighted streets in an ever-increasing throng. No carriages, except those which are to bear the royal princes and their suite to the stand erected for them on the Palatine Hill, are permitted within a certain distance of the Coliseum; so that we move onward without rumble of wheels or clatter of hoofs. There is a shuffling sound of many feet over the stone pavement, a subdued murmur, now and then, of voices. No shout, no song, no laugh. It is very dark. I feel the throng rather than see it, and it seems as if we were all wandering, in a dream, through some city of the Shades.

We drift on again in the dimness like a brimful sluggish river; and we make scarcely more noise under the night sky than its rolling waters might make.

When we reach the Forum, I part company from the crowd, and betake myself to the slopes of the Palatine, to enter which I have a ticket of admission, and whence a good view of the illumination will be had. There are many persons here too. They come trooping up the steps that lead into the gardens, by tens, by twenties, by fifties. But there is no crushing. The space is so vast, and the people disperse them-

selves over it at their will, choosing whichever point of view most commends itself to their fancy. The flowers smell sweet in the night air. A bush of dewy roses brushes my face as I walk unwarily. Great laurels bloom luxuriantly above the buried houses of the Cæsars. I put my hand on a stone balustrade, and draw it back bathed with cold, clammy moisture. The exhalations come up chill and heavy from the freshly opened ground, where spade and pickaxe, guided by the antiquary's skill, have dug out thousand-year-old chambers, and long-buried columns, and crumbling fragments of altars to forgotten gods.

Forgotten! How much has been forgotten, and yet here we are, strangers and natives, *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, celebrating the legendary day of the foundation of Rome by the wolf-suckled *Romulus*!

Presently there comes to our ears a crash of military music. It is braying and brassy, and out of harmony with the night and with the scene. It was better listening to the sea-like murmur of the crowd, and the clear bell-note of a little chiù owl from its nest in the ivy that tapestries the wall of Cæsar's dwelling. But the band is loyally playing the quick military strain, known throughout Italy as the *Fanfara del Re*. And the court carriages drive up with shining lamps, and silver harness, and clattering, fiery horses, and it is all very fine and prosaic. The princes and their party are placed on the wooden stage built up for their reception, and commanding a view of the Forum and the Coliseum, and all the points to be illuminated. The *Populus Romanus* has long filled up every avenue of approach to the scene of the show, and has nearly choked up the vast jaws of the great amphitheatre itself, for they are admitted within it. And yet there are no signs of beginning. That the hour fixed for the commencement of the illuminating struck some forty-five minutes ago, is a fact which attracts no sort of wonder or observation in Italy. Indeed, I am strongly persuaded that there would have been a widespread sentiment of unpleasurable surprise in the crowd, had the person charged with the carrying out of the festival arrangements punctually lighted up when the city clocks rang out nine. It would have seemed too rigid and mechanical a proceeding altogether, and would have carried with it a suggestion of sternness and discipline quite antagonistic to an Italian's notion of a holiday. As it is, they

are quite patient, and wait contentedly for the beginning of the display without one sign of roughness or ill-humour.

But see! There glimmers a faint ray out of one of the arches of the Coliseum. It wavers and disappears, and then appears again, and mounts to the summit of the lofty wall in an *ignis fatuus* kind of manner. It is the first signal. That wavering light is borne by one of the workmen engaged in the illumination. But the show does not begin quite yet. There are other feeble glimmerings here and there at other arches up and down the enormous building; but they, too, disappear one by one. At length, as I am straining my eyes for the twentieth time to make out the black outline of the vast bulk of masonry against the blue-black sky, it suddenly glows before my sight in a flood of rose-coloured light. Arch, and pillar, and wall seem to float in a pink radiance. Great clouds of grey smoke ascend from the building, and are tinged with pale rose-colour as they float above it. The air is so absolutely still that the clouds hang there motionless, taking new shapes and fresh shadows as the coloured light beneath them shifts and quivers. To me those clouds of smoke are very precious, partly redeeming the spectacle from a certain trivial prettiness which jars on all my feeling about the wondrous ruin. But this is only my private sentiment, and I keep it to myself.

Then, after the pink light has burned its time, the fire changes its hue to green—a vivid and yet delicate green, like sunlight seen through shallow sea-water. Then comes a parti-coloured illumination, violet and green together. Simultaneously the vast arches of the Basilica of Constantine, precisely in front of me, are lighted up. Red, green, and white fires burn within their vaulted recesses. The Italian tri-colour! The colours of a united kingdom of Italy—of a king who reigns with a parliament in the city of the Cæsars, and holds his court in the palace of the popes!

Then brightness streams from the noble arches of Titus and Constantine. A white electric light burns high upon the tower of the Capitol. The beautiful columns in the Forum, sole survivors of a grove of marble shafts crowned with delicate carven foliage, are revealed in a glare of blue brilliancy. The crowd far away below me on the *Via Sacra*, and within the Coliseum, and all along the line of the *Campo Vaccino*, claps its hands, as children clap at a Christmas fairy show. Doubtless their an-

cestors so rejoiced in the glitter of imperial pageants. The great amphitheatre was to them no more than the local habitation of "holiday" in all its forms. But to us, it is something more. It is hoary with the over-growth of marvellous centuries, and sad with the ineffable sadness of the past, since the days when the purple-robed Cæsar, and the painted Roman dames, and the hard-handed, rough-voiced populace sat and watched barbaric shows, with barbaric enjoyment. However, this again is my own private sentiment, and again I keep it to myself.

All at once, and for the final display, there bursts from the Coliseum a deep, angry, crimson glare. You look into the mighty arches, tier upon tier, and see a glowing heart of fire in each. The smoke clouds rise slowly and hang lurid and menacing above the staring multitude. Fuller and hotter and more intense glows the awful crimson on wall and pillar, and buttress and crumbling stairway. Strange fantastic shadows are cast upon the vaults of the Basilica, which seem to rock and bow under the light of the red flames. The shadows move, and pass, and gesticulate weirdly. They might be beckoning shapes upon the "Stygian shore." For a brief moment yet we see amphitheatre, and basilica, and temple flushed with intensest crimson—awful, infernal. Then the light wanes and goes. A hush seems to drop from the sky with the darkness. The crowd disperses, melts, disappears like a dream. I pass between the laurel hedges, and among the faint dew-wet roses, to the steps that lead down from the Palatine Hill to the Via Sacra. When I reach them, the place is nearly deserted, and I walk homeward with echoing footsteps through the ancient streets.

It has chimed ten of the night from belfry and tower. Ten o'clock of a moonlit May night in Rome! Who can stay indoors bounded by four walls and a painted ceiling, when the wide spaces of piazza and garden, and the canopy of an Italian sky are only waiting to be enjoyed? Let us go down through the ways checkered with white light and black shadow, to where the Coliseum dreams in the moonshine. There are no coloured fires now, no gaping crowds, no royal cortège with its attendant military band to crash away the poetic softness of the hour, and drown the nightingales.

Our road lies first through the wide Bar-

berini-square, where Bernini's Triton blows up, from his conch-shell, a shower of spray which sparkles and splashes merrily. Anon we come to the Acqua Trevi, grateful to eye and ear, with its abundant cascades of cool water flinging themselves lavishly into the wide basin beneath. Rome is the city of fountains. They bubble, and splash, and shower themselves on to the parched stones at every turn, to the infinite refreshment of mind and body—both apt to grow somewhat languid under this southern sun. There are loungers abroad, strolling through the long Corso. And the light breeze carries the sound of voices and the smoke of cigars hither and thither. But the loungers do not extend their stroll into less frequented quarters of the city. Of all creatures your town-bred Italian is surely the most gregarious. We soon have the streets almost to ourselves. We wander through many a quaint winding passage scarcely wider than an alley, yet flanked by towering palaces each big enough to hold a regiment. Every now and then we emerge on to a piazza, with a stray dog for the sole occupant of its wide pavement, and the never-failing fountain whispering to itself in the midst. Do you see those Corinthian columns built into the whitewashed wall of the convent yonder? And the arch above the fruiterer's shop, where a yellow oil lamp is blinking behind the half-closed shutters, is of solid brickwork, such as the ancient Latins piled up in grim strength, flinging a stern challenge to destroying Time.

Now as we turn down this deserted street, the mountain of the Coliseum heaves into sight, with one great shoulder spectral pale in the moonlight, and cavernous shadows brooding over all the rest!

But come within; stand on the great plain of the arena, and look up. Tier after tier of arch and corridor rises with that exquisite curve which is none the less graceful because it is so vast. Blue spaces of sky are framed in the archways like lapis-lazuli set in russet gold. Here and there they are gemmed with a star. A yellow torch goes flickering up among the galleries. Some strangers are climbing to the summit with a guide. A black bat flutters wildly to and fro from the darkness to the silvery light. One might fancy that grotesque form enclosed a restless spirit from the nether world. It is so noiseless, and so vague, and moves so rapidly, and seemingly without an aim, as though chased by an unseen power that

will not let it rest. But this swift-winged thing seems to enhance by contrast the large peace which wraps the place in moonlight and silence. Peace shines whitely upon the iron cross that stands in the centre of the huge circle. Peace and silence hold under their spell the shadowy corridors, which are deeply black when looked at from the light, but when you enter them seem filled only with a soft brown gloom through which you see the massive blocks of masonry in their immovable strength. A light breeze from the Campagna makes the little grasses shiver and tremble at the foot of the iron cross. I seem to myself as frail and as ephemeral as they, when I look up at the sublime structure which rises in the blue air, majestic as if Nature's mighty hand had moulded it, as she moulds the eternal hills.

Whence? Whither? The old, old question, the riddle of humanity, seems to haunt one more persistently here than elsewhere. The pathos of the past, of the forgotten millions who have trod this earth, fills the heart even to aching. And yet, it is so beautiful! The sense of our own vague yearning compassion lifts the spirit to think of a compassion wiser, tenderer, more enduring than our blind sympathy; an Infinite Compassion. Chink, chink, chink, the nightingale preludes with that silver sound I love before bursting into full-throated song. She is singing among the rose-trees and the laurel beside the house of Tiberius on the Palatine yonder. The moon climbs higher into the star-strewn heaven, and pours her soft radiance downward in ever fuller glory.

Do you like this illumination better than the glare of green and crimson which startled the darkness here on the festival of Romulus? I have only painted both pictures as it was given to me to see them.

TWO DUCHIES.

QUEEN VICTORIA is Duchess of Lancaster, and has on some occasions chosen to designate herself by that title, instead of adopting the more regal appellation. It takes us back a very long way into the history of the Middle Ages to discover the origin of this connexion. We must rub up our Hume and Smollett, or—much more captivating—turn to our Shakespeare, to obtain right notions on the subject. We learn that there was an Earl of Lancaster created about the middle of

the thirteenth century, in the person of the second son of Henry the Third; that the title fell into abeyance after the death of one of the holders some generation or two later; that it was again bestowed on a royal prince; and that in the middle of the fourteenth century the title was raised from earl to duke. The famous John of Gaunt married the heiress of this duke, received the dukedom himself in course of time, improved the town of Lancaster, enlarged the castle, established the courts of the Duchy Chamber of Lancaster, and was but little lower than the king in dignity and splendour; so strong, indeed, did these dukes of the north become, that one of them ascended the throne of England as Henry the Fourth. We ought to remember enough of our schoolboy lessons to be aware that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the houses of York and Lancaster (bearing some such mutual relation in England as the houses of Bourbon and Orleans in France) had many sanguinary struggles, collectively known as the Wars of the Roses; and that these terrible scenes were brought to an end by the marriage of the head of the house of York with the heiress of the Lancasters or (to use the surname) Plantagenets.

In reality, subject to a few disturbing turmoils, all our sovereigns have borne the title of Duke (or Duchess) of Lancaster, since Henry of Bolingbroke became Henry the Fourth, four hundred and seventy years ago. Lancaster, or Lancashire, is one of three counties in England which have the distinction of being counties-palatine. The word palatine is supposed to have been derived from palace; but the meaning of it in England is, that the chief personage in the county has a certain range of judicial authority within its boundaries, apart from that held by the Crown. In the county of Durham, the bishop for many generations held this lofty power; but in modern times the palatinate functions have been transferred to the Crown. Other counties in England had in olden days an analogous kind of régime, abrogated in more recent times. In the palatine aspect of the counties, the present Queen is Princess of Durham and Duchess of Lancaster; the Prince of Wales is Earl of Chester. In order that this last-named title may not fall into abeyance when there is no Prince of Wales, the sovereign for the time being becomes Earl (or Countess) of Chester. The peculiarities of the counties of Dur-

ham and Chester have nearly gone out of sight; those of Lancaster are still curious and interesting, as the reader will soon see.

The judicial powers of the duchy are chiefly exercised in controlling the estates, rents, and revenues belonging to it; but the array of officials is nevertheless rather formidable, seeing that we find among them a chancellor, a vice-chancellor, a council, an attorney-general, a solicitor-general, an auditor, a coroner, a queen's serjeant, a queen's counsel, a record clerk, a solicitor, and the sheriffs of the county. Most of these belong to what is called the Chancery Court of the Duchy, which has equity jurisdiction within the shire. There is an office of the duchy in London—a near neighbour, we may add, of ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

When our present sovereign came to the throne, thirty-six years ago, an Act of Parliament was passed confirming her in the ownership of the rights, privileges, and revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster; but, at the same time, requiring that Parliament should be annually furnished with an account of the receipts and expenditure. In reality, the ownership is vested in the state, or nation; but it is conferred on the sovereign for the time being, and the revenues are regarded as part of the regal allowance. Let us see what the capital account tells us for the year 1872. There was a sum of sixty thousand pounds to start with, invested at interest in the government funds. To this was added about fourteen thousand pounds during the year, for various matters connected with the conveyancing and legal manipulation of the estates of the duchy, some of the most valuable of which are in London. The duchy received, during the year, a good round sum of about ten thousand pounds from the Metropolitan Board of Works for "foreshore on the Thames, and water-rights of the Savoy estate." Then there were receipts for "grants in fee" of land, foreshore, tolls, rights of various kinds and in various localities. To these were added other sums for "enfranchisement of copyholds and extinguishment of quit rents"—very dry subjects, but no doubt interesting to the parties concerned. One clergyman paid eleven pounds for permission to carry a sewer through duchy land at Harrogate; while the trustees of a deceased Mr. Thompson paid a little more than a hundred pounds for an encroachment on duchy land at Salford. The outlay on capital, in the same year, comprised items which the proprietors of

landed estates are familiar with, such as building, rebuilding, restoring, repairing, draining, and the like. The balance-sheet showed that the duchy was richer by many thousand pounds at the end of the year than at the beginning, so far as regarded capital.

But the revenue account contained the most curious items, illustrating the two-fold characteristics of a landed estate and a judicial jurisdiction. Rents and profits of "courts" brought in about thirty thousand pounds. Then there were royalties, reservations of dues, and rents of mines and quarries, good for another seventeen thousand. Next came the "produce of escheats, devolutions, and forfeitures;" an annuity received from the state for the "surrender of the duties of prisage and butlerage;" receipts on account of wood sales, and other items, making up a sum total of about seventy thousand pounds. If the reader does not know what is meant by escheats and devolutions, prisage and butlerage, he is in the same predicament as most persons who are not actually concerned in the dealings with real property. Well, then, how does the money go, this annual revenue of the duchy? The first payment is a good round sum to the sovereign, forty thousand pounds "to the keeper of Her Majesty's privy purse for Her Majesty's use." The chancellor of the duchy gets seventeen hundred pounds—a smart payment for very easy duties; salaries and allowances of the other principal officers, and of receivers, agents, bailiffs, stewards, &c., make a great hole in six thousand more; the superannuation allowances, donations to charities, and eleemosynary annuities, run away with three or four thousand. One item, of somewhat over a hundred pounds, excites one's curiosity: it is "disbursements (exclusive of keepers' salaries) made by the axe-bearer and master of the game in Needwood Forest, in feeding, watching, and preserving the game, and transmitting it to Her Majesty's larder." How much does the larder pay per head of game?

One of the estates of the duchy, we may add, is the precinct of the Savoy in the Strand, a little to the west of Waterloo Bridge: a small district which, in virtue of its semi-regal privileges, looks rather down upon the neighbouring parishes. Far back in the feudal days there was an Earl of Richmond, who was also Earl of Savoy; he built a residence on this spot called Savoy Palace, with a pleasant garden fronting the Thames. He afterwards gave

the palace to a fraternity of monks, who, probably wanting money rather than a palace, effected a sale to the queen of Henry the Third, through whom it passed to John of Gaunt. After varied fortunes and some neglect, Henry the Seventh built a hospital there; Charles the Second, some generations later, added a chapel; and the precinct became a nest for rogues and vagabonds, who misused the privileges of sanctuary which pertained to it. The spot occupied by the original palace and gardens is still known by the short name of the Savoy; the land belongs to the Queen, as Duchess of Lancaster; the chapel also is her property; she appoints the incumbent and pays his stipend; and for some purposes the structure serves as a parish church. The precinct has brought a handsome sum of money to the royal duchess recently, by the sale of a strip of mud, or foreshore, to the Metropolitan Board of Works for the Thames Embankment.

We will now transfer our attention to another county-palatine.

It is known to many readers, though not to all, that the Prince of Wales, like his royal mother, is the chief personage in a particular county, the revenues of which are a part of the annual allowance sanctioned by the nation. The Queen has the emoluments just enumerated, because she is Duchess of Lancaster; the prince derives large revenues from Cornwall, because the heir to the throne is duke of that county. This state of things came on by degrees, and had a curious origin. Cornwall being the most famous tin-mining district in England, there have long existed special laws and customs relating to it, known by the name of Stannary (from the Latin name for tin). When the Duchy of Cornwall was presented by the sovereign to Edward the Black Prince, as a sort of private estate, the prince was also made Warden of the Stannaries—a sort of little king over the tin mines and tin miners. The present was a munificent one, for it included all the gold, silver, and tin that might be found beneath the surface of the county. As matters have turned out, gold and silver are found in too small a quantity to be worthy of much note; but the tin is very valuable.

By degrees, the land in Cornwall has become the property of various owners, the Prince of Wales being only one among several; and the tin-mining companies make bargains with the landowners for the right of breaking open the surface ground and digging down to the metalliferous

veins beneath. To the prince in his capacity of duke, the tanners stand in a peculiar relation. He is their metal owner, and afterwards their judge or magistrate. In his contracts with them, he permits them to dig within a certain prescribed area, and to go as far down into the bowels of the earth as they like. He does not claim the tin; he does not employ the tanners to dig for him; nor does he charge them an annual rental. His share of the proceeds is a royalty or percentage, not paid in the form of tin, but in cash. The separate mining properties are called tin bounds; and the Stannary Court, in which the duke exercises judicial powers, settles all matters relating to the boundaries and the mutual relations of the tin companies. One-fifteenth of the gross produce is a frequent proportion set apart as royalty to the lord of the soil; but sometimes it varies according to the richness of the ore: seeing that, if the ore is very rich, the adventurers will be all the more eager to obtain mining rights than if it were poor; and this eagerness will be a measure of the royalty offered.

The relation which the present Prince of Wales bears to the duchy is somewhat different from that which prevailed in former ages. The duchy may be said to belong to the sovereign, by whom it is conferred on his or her eldest son; and if there is no son at all, the revenues go to the sovereign. There have, through various causes, been but few Princes of Wales in the last three hundred years: leaving lengthened periods during which the king or queen enjoyed the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall. Early in the present reign, a special statute made many reforms in the duchy, calculated to increase the revenues, and at the same time to interfere less with the tin trade than the former system had done. Some of the rights were taken over by the state; a small tax was imposed on tanners; and an annuity of seventeen thousand a year was granted to the Duke of Cornwall in lieu of certain fees and royalties, which that tax superseded. The present Queen enjoyed the revenues until the birth of her eldest son, when they were made over to the royal infant in his capacity as Duke of Cornwall. During nearly the whole of the minority of the Prince of Wales, his father, the late Prince Consort, acted as his representative, as chief steward of the duchy and lord warden of the Stannaries. Admirably was this parental duty fulfilled; not only was the seventeen thousand a year prudently

invested, but the other revenues of the duchy were placed upon an improved footing. The prince-duke, besides being a tin proprietor, is an owner of lands, forests, and buildings, and a lessor; it was by the drainage of land and the augmentation of rent under leases that the improvement of revenues of the duchy was chiefly brought about.

Let us see what a Blue-book tells us concerning the affairs of this said duchy in the year 1872. What the real or landed estate is worth is not stated; but the funded property amounted to about a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, the interest on which was a pleasant plum in the ducal pudding. The items which made up the total of receipts during the year, under the head of capital, were much the same in character as those we have had to notice in connexion with the Duchy of Lancaster: bearing relation to the sale of portions of land and manorial rights. Sales of chief rents, sales of rents of assize, sales of small estates, farms, foreshores (muddy margins of shore between high-water and low-water marks), sales of portions of river-beds, sales of cottages and gardens, enfranchisements, and so forth. That which is more immediately interesting, however, is the balance of revenue and expenditure account for one year. The "rents and profits of courts" amounted to the acceptable sum of fifty odd thousand pounds; royalties of coal mines and quarries were good for another eight thousand; these and some smaller items, with the annuity received for the relinquishment of tin dues, told up to a total of about ninety thousand pounds. About two-thirds of this aggregate amount went to the prince-duke himself. Much of the remainder found its way into the pockets of the numerous persons employed in the service of the duchy, under the headings of salaries, wages, superannuation allowances, &c., including "travelling expenses and entertainment of duchy tenants on rent days"—rather a pleasant incident in rent paying, which we poor outsiders are seldom able to enjoy. The range of officials is quite formidable: Lord warden of the Stannaries, vice-warden of courts, attorney-general, solicitor-general, keeper of the privy seal, secretary and keeper of records, auditor, assistant secretary, surveyor-general, receiver, mineral inspector, ranger and master forester, constable of Launceston Castle, and numerous minor lights, the aggregate salaries of whom amount to a very respectable sum. The

apparent incongruity in the duties and designations arises from the fact that some of the officials manage the revenues, while others exercise the peculiar judicial functions of the duchy.

It may not be inopportune to mention, that the emoluments derived by Her Majesty and the heir-apparent from the two duchies are not really additions to the royal incomes; they are component parts, the amount of which determines the amount paid by the nation in other ways.

Rather a curious affair took place about a dozen years ago—the winding-up of a long series of disputes between the two greatest personages in the realm. Nominally, the Queen and the Prince of Wales had been long at loggerheads; really, the fight was between the land revenue of the Crown and the Duchy of Cornwall. The matter arose thus. The sovereign is owner of nearly all the foreshore of our coasts, and also of the bed of the sea, within a few miles of the coast. But the Duke of Cornwall claimed to be the owner of the foreshore and sea-bed adjacent to that county; and as some tin mines have been driven, not merely under the dry land, but also under the foreshore, and in one or two cases under the actual sea itself, a question arose as to whom this strip of tin ore belonged, seeing that none of the ancient charters and grants rendered the matter quite clear. The claimants, always disagreeing, gave the matter up to the arbitration of a learned judge. He pored over the statutes and charters for a year or two, and then made his award. He decided that the submarine minerals belong to the Queen; while those beneath the foreshore, estuaries, and rivers (of Cornwall, and a part of Devonshire which belongs to the duchy), are the property of the prince-duke. The Queen got the worst of the decision; the access to the minerals under the actual bed of the sea being obviously difficult.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER I. THE HOUSE AT THE CORNER.

DILLSBOROUGH, in Hampshire (two hours from Paddington), had been suffering for a long time from a social calm and monotony that had been very sweet to some of the elder people, and very bitter to the majority of the young ones. According to the dicta of those who should have known best—namely, the oldest inhabitants—Dills-

borough-on-the-Leeth contained within itself all the elements of innocent enjoyment. But, according to the verdict of the more exacting younger spirits, the supply of the enjoyment was very inadequate to the demand.

It was the small market-town of an essentially agricultural district, and, as is generally found to be the case in such a centre, its inhabitants of the middle-class were not given to change. As the rich farmers of the neighbourhood died off, their widows and unmarried daughters came to dwell in Dillsborough—looking upon it, from their experience of its giddy delights on market-days, as a cheerful, but still safe section of the wicked world in which to wear out the remainder of their unprotected days. But about these gentle invaders there was no novelty. They had always been regarded as the fringe, so to say, of the mantle of intense respectability which hung over the little market-town. They were known—even to the utmost farthing of their respective incomes. There was no room for surmise or speculation about them. They were very welcome, and thoroughly uninteresting. The rector had inherited the living from his father. The doctors and lawyers had inherited their practices from fathers, or uncles, or familiar friends who knew all about them. And so in Dillsborough social conjecture seemed about to die a natural death from want of healthy exercise, when the house at the corner of the High-street was taken by utter strangers of the name of Devenish.

The house at the corner had never borne any other name than this. From generation to generation it had been occupied by divers well-dowered widows from the neighbourhood, all bearing different names, and none of them presumptuous enough to give one of those names, or indeed any name at all, to the house at the corner. Unfortunately for its landlord, there had been no bereaved woman ready to step into it since the death of its last occupant four years ago. And all young Dillsborough rejoiced that the rate of mortality among the farmers had been so low, when the Devenishes came to look for a house, and found the house at the corner the only one suited to their requirements.

A pleasant, comfortable, old red-brick house it was, looking stiff, and narrow, and unimposing enough from the street, but spacious, and roomy, and convenient to a degree that satisfied every housewife's heart within; and behind it a

sweet, old-fashioned, high-walled garden stretched away to the fields and meadows that bordered the Leeth—a house that conferred on its occupants the dearly prized dignity of visiting all the best people in Dillsborough, and of having a high pew all to themselves in church, and of having their custom eagerly solicited by rival butchers and bakers, and of having their tea and supper parties recorded in a kindly and encouraging way in the "Town's Doings" columns of the Dillsborough Mercury. The feeling was strong throughout the town that the Devenishes ought to be very well authenticated indeed, to justify them in entering into full possession of all these privileges. And as yet, though they had occupied the house at the corner three whole days, nobody knew who they were, or from whence they came. Devenish was a very good name, but, as all the world knows, there are Devenishes and Devenishes! Mrs. Greyling, the sensible and amiable wife of Dillsborough's chief physician, brought all her powers of investigation and discernment to bear on the subject. She even promised several of her friends that the next time she "ran up to London" she would borrow her cousin's Peerage and Landed Gentry. But whether she forgot it, or the books were already lent, is not known. At any rate, Dillsborough was never enlightened as to the Devenishes through the medium of either of these interesting works.

The new people, together with a van-load of furniture, had arrived about nine o'clock in the evening in the middle of June, and a strong feeling had at once prevailed that "for their own sakes it really would have looked better if they had come in by daylight." No one who knew anything about it could suppose for an instant that one van could contain furniture enough for that large house; and as Dillsborough was so justly dissatisfied with the quantity, it would have been as well if the Devenishes had suffered its quality to be seen at once. "Besides," as Mrs. Greyling observed, "midnight fittings never looked well." It was three hours earlier than the time named in her sweeping assertion. But, as all her neighbours said, this uncompromisingly just woman never minced matters, and always called a spade a spade.

For three days Mrs. Greyling neglected her domestic duties, and kept a keen and wary eye on the house at the corner. But at the end of the third day she renounced her post of observation with wrath.

During the whole of that time the outside shutters of the windows facing the street had never once been taken down. None of the new people had shown themselves even on the threshold of their door, and in bitterness of heart she was compelled to acknowledge that after all her praiseworthy efforts she knew as little about the Devenishes as did the rest of Dillsborough.

But all things come to those who can wait. A sight greeted her eyes the next morning that was better to her than the broad golden beams of the warm June sun; better than the trembling masses of flower-laden boughs of banksia rose, that the light breeze bent down before her window; better than the fragrance of her highly successful first efforts in box-planted giant mignonette—the sight, namely, of wide open, muslin-draped windows opposite, out of one of which looked a young, strange face.

A face that was partially framed by a lot of loosely-arranged, fluffy, bronzed, brown hair. A face in which a pair of weary-looking hazel eyes were deeply set under dark, clearly-defined brows. A face that was too nervously mobile for beauty, but that one looked at again and again as it changed from grave to gay, from domineering to penitential, from pleading to pretty imperiousness. A face that would tell its owner's story all too plainly for her welfare. A face that could most surely win many to hate, and some to love her, in either case very far from wisely, and in either case very much too well.

A face that was rapidly, succinctly, and satisfactorily summed up and described by Mrs. Greyling.

"Nothing to talk about one way or the other; that's one comfort in a place like this, where young men are so apt to be led away by anything new; darker by a shade than any of my girls—though their carelessness about sunburn is enough to make one marvel that any one can undertake the duties of a mother, I'm sure."

By this time the face was withdrawn from the window opposite, and Mrs. Greyling had time to devote her attention to what had been its surroundings.

"Plain book-muslin curtains, cheap and tasty! Well, I'd sacrifice a little for the sake of pattern on coming into a strange place; as I have often told Doctor Greyling, economy is not economy when it's practised in the teeth of the High-street, as one may say." Then Mrs. Greyling went on moralising on this evidence of shortsightedness on the part of her opposite neighbours, until her husband came in

from his early round and her daughters came down to breakfast.

"I think we might call there to-day, they seem to be settled in?" Miss Greyling suggested to her mamma, as she glanced across to the airily-draped windows of the house at the corner.

"And it would be only kind to let them feel at once that we don't mean to be stiff with them," Mrs. Greyling replied, with ready zest; "besides, I feel that I ought to be able to say something about them to Mrs. Powers to-day, if she is good enough to inquire."

"Are you going to be turned inside out by that old woman, to-day?" Doctor Greyling asked, with a slight grim smile. His words in the bosom of his family were not many. But he generally made his mark with those he did utter.

"We are going to a garden-party at the Court this afternoon," Mrs. Greyling answered, as majestically as a woman can answer when she is conscious that her husband is laughing at her; "and when dear Mrs. Powers is good enough to express interest in any of the Dillsborough people I'm delighted to—"

"Stick up to her, and gratify her curiosity," Doctor Greyling interposed with a laugh. "Well, my dear, I hope you know whom you're serving; it's not your neighbour, I'll be sworn. Mrs. Powers never cared to hear anything kind of any other human being yet; and it's not Mammon, for she's as mean an old witch as ever preferred borrowing horses to paying for her own legitimate broomstick; so, as I say, I hope you know what you're about."

Doctor Greyling pleased with his breakfast, pleased with the way he had put the remarks which had silenced his wife, pleased with himself for having uttered his protest against the queen-regnant of the Court, went away and about his business as he finished his sentence. And as he shut the door Mrs. Greyling was mistress of the situation again in a moment.

"Your father is so short-sighted; he will not see what a very different position we occupy in Mrs. Powers's estimation to that held by any one else in Dillsborough."

"Well," one of the younger girls responded, discontentedly, "I hope the position will be pleasanter when Claude Powers comes home; it's dull enough now to make me feel with papa, that we pay too high a price for it."

"My dear Agnes, we may not hope to reap the same day we sow," Mrs. Greyling

remonstrated, piously. "Moreover," she went on, with what was very cloying sweetness to Agnes, "why should we expect, or even hope for a reward, when we are only doing our neighbourly duty to a poor old lady who would often be very solitary but for us?"

"Now, mamma, don't!" Agnes cried out, with a hearty horror of humbug that she alone possessed in the feminine portion of the Greyling household; "if Mrs. Powers were poor and powerless, sixty and selfish, I'd say go and do your neighbourly duty by her, lighten her solitude as well as we can; but as it is, do we go there without a hope for a reward? don't we all count the weeks that must creep away before Claude comes home? would you let any one else hint that our heels are too high, or declare that our dresses are too low? It's all done with the hope of the reward of her good word for us to Claude, and papa is quite right, quite right; we're not serving for any satisfactory end."

"Aggy is so eloquent against being civil to poor Mrs. Powers that she may just as well stay at home this afternoon," the eldest Miss Greyling put in with a laugh, that had equal portions of pain and pleasure in it. There was a certain amount of human satisfaction to be derived from the idea that on this occasion she would not be eclipsed by her prettier sister. There was a certain amount of human humiliation in the idea that it was patent to every one that her prettier sister had no desire to eclipse her.

In her hearts of hearts Mrs. Greyling loved her frank-tongued fair-faced youngest daughter the best of all, although Agnes was the only one who ever dared to try and strip the social mask off. So now by way of compensating Agnes for the glories which it was deemed she should relinquish, the mother said:

"Well, if Aggy agrees, I will; and, as the others will be busy about their muslins and laces, dear, you may as well go with me, and call on our new neighbours; if we don't go to-day, they'll be very reasonably wondering at our inattention."

If Mrs. Greyling could only have known how thoroughly unappreciative the people on the other side of the street were to the honour of an early call from her, she would for a certainty have resigned her friendly intention of paying it this day. But the uncanny gift of "seeing ourselves as others see us" had not been bestowed upon her. Could she have imagined the very mediocre person she was in the eyes and estimation

of the Devenishes, she would, in her own graphic and terse vernacular, "have let them alone."

Three days of chaos and cruel uncertainty as to the whereabouts of every single thing that was needful at the instant—three days of the hubbub and confusion, of the anxiety as to the integrity of the few inanimate things one may have permitted oneself the foolish luxury of caring for—three days of the dire discomfort that must have been endured by every British householder who has suffered himself to "be moved" from one place of residence to another, were over, and the Devenishes were ready to see, and be seen by, Dillsborough.

To do them justice, they were supremely indifferent about either exhibition being made. They had not the faintest interest in seeing the people, and it did not occur to them that the people could have any interest in seeing them—utter strangers, without pretence, letters of introduction, or claims of any kind, as they were. They were merely resting in this halting-place; it mattered little to them whether doves bearing olive-branches, or birds of prey, hovered around their temporary dwelling.

But this is a frame of mind that does not exist for the regular residents of a place like Dillsborough. That is to say, it exists as does murder, arson, and the like. But peaceful people, of well-regulated minds, do not desire to pass their time in the contemplation of crime. Therefore Dillsborough gave the Devenishes the benefit of the doubt, and believed thoroughly that the Devenishes were panting for a place among them; were sighing to be seen and approved by them; were ready to be recognised by them at any price.

Now it would only have been right and proper, wise and well, that the Devenishes should have been all these things. They were strangers in the land, therefore the impression that they were pretenders, not to say impostors, was a natural one. In order to have at once dispelled this impression, it behoved them to bow their heads, and trail themselves in the dust.

But odd as it appeared to all Dillsborough, the Devenishes were dead to the many advantages that might have accrued to them if they had behaved differently, and were very little anxious for recognition.

The whole family were down at the extreme end of the garden, the end that was nearest to the sluggish, silent Leeth, on this the fourth day of their sojourn amongst

a strange people, basking in the sun, silently enjoying the heat and the quiet.

A depressed, delicate-looking man, of about fifty, was seated in one end of the gnarled and elaborately-knotted garden-chair that had been turned and varnished to represent rusticity. He had the Dillsborough Mercury in his hand, and was reading local details with a weary, fretful expression of face, that was at once contemptible and pitiful. At any rate, it seemed to strike the younger of the girls (who were sitting on the grass in front of the bench) in this light, for she exclaimed, after glancing up at him impatiently several times :

"Papa, shall I go down to the station and see if I can get you a London paper?"

"The station's at least a mile off. What nonsense you talk, Harty," he answered, peevishly, and she flushed a little as she sprang to her feet, saying :

"I'd rather walk a mile, or a dozen miles for that matter, than see you look as if that paper were printed and published on purpose to bore and disappoint you."

"All papers are pretty much alike to me now in that respect," he said, and the plaintive reproachful fretfulness of his tone touched his wife, a sad-eyed, sweet-faced woman, to tears and verbal tenderness at once.

"My dear Edward, I feel as if it were my fault that you feel this," she murmured, putting her hand on his shoulder, and bending a face that was still fair, and full now of most loving solicitude, towards him. The girl who had risen up stood watching the scene; and there was sympathy and admiration for her mother expressed in each shade of feeling as it flickered across her face. How quickly the expression changed to one of angry contempt again as Mr. Devenish spoke can hardly be described.

"Well, my dear, I must confess that you don't succeed very well in beguiling a man from thoughts of his miseries and misfortunes," he said, languidly, "but I don't complain; don't think that I complain. When a man has been crushed down by a long course of cruelty and injustice, he ceases to complain."

Mrs. Devenish shook her head and sighed. From bitter experience she knew that suffering from a long course of injustice does crush the heart down, to a level from whence complaint is never heard. But the girl he had called Harty promptly answered the reproach he had not even decently veiled by saying :

"It would be impossible for any one to complain of mamma; that would be grosser cruelty and injustice than even you——"

"Harty, Harty!" her mother and elder sister interrupted, pleadingly. While Mr. Devenish took advantage of the pause she made, to say with the smile of a captious martyr :

"Harty ought to do well in life; she's a true woman—always ready to smite the fallen, always ready to surrender the hindmost to the devil."

"My dear Edward!" Mrs. Devenish protested feebly, as he ceased speaking; and there was such intense sympathy for the suffering man in those three simple words, or rather in the manner in which they were uttered, such intense sympathy for him, and so very little for her daughter, that the girl's face flushed with a sharp pain that brought the tears to her eyes.

As she turned away to conceal them, and walked slowly up the garden towards the house, the elder girl looked up and joined in the conversation for the first time.

"Dear papa," she said in a low voice, "be tolerant to Harty; don't think that she doesn't love you, and feels as indignant for you as we do. Be tolerant to Harty."

She was but a younger edition of her mother, a young, fair, sweet-faced, cooing-voiced woman, and her mother's eyes beamed gratefully on her as she waved the olive-branch. But Mr. Devenish took it for granted in a way that specially belonged to him, and threw a tone of almost lofty magnanimity into his reply.

"You're very good, very good and generous about your sister, Mabel; my dear, and I like it in you, I assure you I like it in you; but when you ask me to be tolerant to Harty, you talk nonsense, mere feminine trash. Harty is a young lady who does not require toleration from any one; she is everything to herself; she is satisfied with her own line of country, and it matters little to her whether she rides roughly over any one else or not. My opinion is of no value, I'm aware of that, but I'll venture to say that Harty will get on in life; her sensibilities will never stand in her way."

There was no answering this. The invalid having delivered himself of it, wrapped an old military cloak more closely round him, as if Harty were approaching him in the guise of an east wind. The mother tried not to feel wretched, tried not to cry, tried not to let the evil thought enter in that this man by her side was a trifle selfish and spiteful—and by reason

of all these simultaneous trials was rendered speechless. While as for Mabel, she sat watching through an open doorway, the sunbeams dancing on the sluggish surface of the Leeth, wondering whether "dear papa" would ever get up his spirits sufficiently for them to have water-picnics—speculating as to whether dear Harty would have any heart for the same—and hoping, finally, that the gentle mother, who never complained, whatever happened, had not suffered much in the late wordy war.

Meanwhile, the young offender, the girl with the passionate face, whom Mrs. Greyling had summed up as "not at all dangerous," had gone back to the house alone. She had passed through the court-yard and kitchen quickly, but the two servants (they were beginning to find it dull at Dillsborough) had been mercifully given time to observe that her eyes were sparkling, that her mouth was quivering, and that her colour was high. "Miss Harty was in one of her tantrums again!" they declared one to the other; "she wouldn't be trod down like the others." And they went about their work with lighter hearts, for they adored Miss Harty, and delighted in her rebellion against a master whom they disliked.

Harty went on into the drawing-room and restored herself to good temper and light-heartedness by undertaking and carrying out the task of re-arranging the room. A man who is always an invalid and always at home, and who has the free use of his limbs, is naturally a being who is sadly subversive of the tidiness and neatness which women like to see reigning in their special territory. Therefore Harty had a good deal to do in clearing away Mr. Devenish's wraps and slippers, in folding up Mr. Devenish's scattered papers, and in generally causing the room to present such an appearance as should be pleasing to Mr. Devenish's tired eyes when he should presently come in.

"Poor papa!" the girl said, gently, when she had given the magic touches. "I wish I could help them to do more to make him happy; but I'm more and more glad every day I live that he's not my father."

Presently she put herself on a long, low box, which she had cleverly covered with a huge tiger-skin in order to conceal its native deal deformity, and took up a book, and still, for all that the book was an interesting one, gave some half glances through the window at the bright summer light that was reigning in the street.

"What a thing it is to have done with

loving anything very much," Harty muttered to herself. "Years ago I'd have learnt every bit about this place before I'd been in it four days. What a thing it is to get not to care for anything!"

Then (she was only three-and-twenty), for all her openly-avowed philosophy of indifference, she leant her head back against the window-sash and marvelled a little as to "where the winding road that stretched away from the corner led?" and where the congregation came from to fill the handsome large church that stood in the heart of the town.

And while she was thus employed, Mrs. Greyling was announced, and Harty felt that an end had come to the peaceful mystery of their life at Dillsborough.

"Welcome to Dillsborough." Mrs. Greyling had come fraught with the determination of being grand; but something undefinable in the manner of the girl who advanced to meet her caused her to be bland instead.

"Welcome to Dillsborough; I am sure I am speaking to Miss Devenish."

"Papa and mamma are in the garden; I'll send for them," Harty said. And by the time she had sent for them, and had greeted Agnes Greyling, and found a seat for Mrs. Greyling that suited that lady's purpose of viewing and valuing "the belongings of the new people"—by the time all these things were done, the moment had passed for dispelling the illusion as to her being a Miss Devenish. "It would involve a statement," Harty thought, "if I told her my name is Carlisle; and I should be in the middle of it when the others came in, and papa would twist it into further evidence of my being ashamed of him."

Therefore, instead of explaining that she and her sister were Mrs. Devenish's daughters by a former marriage, and had no right to the name which had been a household word in Dillsborough for the last week, Harriet Carlisle sat and listened to Mrs. Greyling's exposition of her own motives in calling so soon on the new-comers, until the rest of the family came in.

They were polite, and the ladies of the family were pleasant. But, to her intense chagrin, Mrs. Greyling was compelled to acknowledge that they were not specially gratified, much less elated, at this early proof of her intention of being on neighbourly terms with them. It was only when she mentioned the magic name of the present mistress of the Court that they betrayed the faintest interest in the people among whom they had come to dwell.

"I shall not be able to stay and tell you much more about our Dillsborough life to-day," she said, presently, "for my two elder daughters and I are going to a garden-party at the Court; a most delightful place—quite the place of the neighbourhood; the oldest family in Hampshire. I shall mention your arrival to Mrs. Powers to-day, and I'm sure I shall hope to meet your young ladies at the Court frequently."

There was a slight, scarcely perceptible movement on the part of each one of her listeners that made her feel sure that she had arrested their attention, aroused their interest, and gained their consideration at last. Over Mrs. Devenish's fair, gentle face the colour crept like a rosy veil. Mabel paused abruptly in the middle of a speech she was making to Miss Greyling, and looked at Harty with sudden gravity. Harty herself turned her face to the window, and looked out resolutely. Only Mr. Devenish spoke.

"Powers! is there a family of the name of Powers living here?"

"Yes, indeed, a very charming family too; at least there is only one member of it resident here at present. Mrs. Powers, my friend, lives at the Court. She is the aunt of the owner of the place. We are looking forward to his return, though, some time this summer, and then Dillsborough will hardly know itself, there will be so much going on; depend upon it I will introduce you as soon as possible." And as she said this in a tone of airy patronage Mrs. Greyling rose up to take her leave.

"And the owner of the Court, who is he?—what is he?" Mr. Devenish persisted, with querulous curiosity, and Mrs. Greyling expanded still more under the balmy influence of the belief that she was "thoroughly impressing these people."

"He is nothing now—no profession, I mean. Before his father's death he was in the army; but when old Mr. Powers died, Claude (his name is Claude, lovely name isn't it?) left the service; good-bye; we are rather late, and Mrs. Powers always relies on us to help to entertain the other guests. I hope our young people will be very friendly; good-bye."

There was silence in the room for a minute or two after the guests' departure. Mrs. Devenish and her eldest daughter were anxiously watching the face of the head of the house, who was uttering "ah's" and other exclamations expressive of pity

for himself. Harty had returned to her post at the window, and stood with her back resolutely turned to the room. At the expiration of the wearifully long minute Mr. Devenish addressed her.

"I'm perfectly aware that you don't acknowledge any claim on my part to your confidence, Harty, but for your mother's sake you might have saved me from walking into this net."

"What do you mean?" she asked, slowly turning round and facing him; and her mother and sister, watching her in fear, saw that all softness had vanished from her face.

"I mean that you might have given me the option of avoiding Claude Powers."

"Do you think that I would have come if I had known that my eyes would ever light on him or his?" she cried out passionately; "do you think all feeling has been crushed out of me? Do you think that my heart has turned to stone, and my nature to utter meanness——"

"Now don't be melodramatic, pray," he interrupted, waving one slender-fingered invalid's hand at her; "but just answer my simple question. I suppose, my dear, you'll not question my right to ask your daughter one simple question?"

"Question your right, oh, Edward!" poor Mrs. Devenish whimpered. She had hoped for peace in this remote place, and her hope was proved vain already. Vain as every other hope had proved in her disappointed life.

"I'll swear it if you like," Harty cried, springing to the table with a bound that made Mr. Devenish jump. "I was as ignorant (until that woman told us) of Claude's having any interest in this place as my mother was, as you were yourself."

"Do you mean to tell me that your devoted lover never mentioned the name of his family place to you?" Mr. Devenish asked, with a slight sneer.

"You know he mentioned the Court to me and to you, dozens of times," she said, eagerly; "but how was I to divine any more than you could that it was near Dillsborough? Dillsborough! whoever heard of the hateful place."

"And we can't afford to move again," Mrs. Devenish sobbed, "and you'll have to meet him, my poor Harty."

"And he may betray me, and poison my existence more than it is already," Mr. Devenish muttered, reproachfully.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE DAY AFTER THE FAIR.

WILD thoughts occurred to me of rushing off somewhere—I knew not whither—in quest of Rosetta; of taking up the pursuit where Manleverer and Diavolo had abandoned it. But what could I do? It was all too hopeless. And yet I felt furious at the thought of remaining idle while she was in peril. For I could not doubt that she was in peril. She was missing for certain. If she had fled alone it was bad enough; so young as she was, so fair, so poor, so helpless, so inexperienced as she needs must be in the world's ways, temptations, dangers. But if she had gone with Lord Overbury, had been lured away by him! I could not bear the thought. It was too terrible.

It was clear I could do nothing, but hope that, as Manleverer had suggested, all would prove to be a mistake, that she would be found at Dripford on his return.

Yet to think that all the time I had wasted loitering idly about the town, this had happened! I had been close at hand, and yet again had never stirred on her behalf, to protect her against her enemies, perhaps against herself. It was maddening.

My pony left to his own devices—for I was too much preoccupied to heed much what became of him or of myself—carried me safely home. As we mounted the shoulder of the down that sheltered the hollow in which the farm-house was built, I noted that a light was burning in the kitchen.

I rang the stable bell and roused a sleepy servant, resigning the pony to his charge. I then entered the kitchen. My mother

was seated by the fire, her knitting in her lap.

"How late you are, Duke! I feared something had happened."

"I was detained, I should say perhaps that I stayed, to see the fair by night."

"Reuben has been home hours since."

"And my uncle is satisfied?"

"Quite satisfied. But he is suffering a little. He complains of his rheumatism. He went to bed early. But he seemed pleased the lambs had sold so well."

"It was all Reube's doing. I had no share in it. He told you so, perhaps?"

"No, he said nothing of that."

"It's true though. I missed him somehow. The place was in such a whirl."

"It matters little, Duke, so that you're home again, safe and well. How your hand burns! You're not ill, my boy?"

"No. I'm well enough, only— Pardon me, mother; I did not mean to speak so roughly."

"You're tired, Duke, that's all. No wonder. It's been a long day, and all's been very new and strange to you. A good night's rest—"

"Mother," I said suddenly, "I met Lord Overbury in Dripford."

"Indeed!" She started, and it seemed to me that she had turned pale. But the light was not strong; the candle on the kitchen table was burning dimly, and the fire was sinking into a dull, flameless red.

"He knew you?" she asked, rather faintly.

"Yes. He invited me to lunch with him."

"It was kindly meant, perhaps," she said with some effort apparently. "But—you like him, Duke?"

"No."

I was about to add that I hated him. I

checked myself, however. She looked at me curiously.

"It is as well, perhaps. He is your uncle's landlord—for great part of the farm. But, you are not equals, Duke. Your positions are widely different. You cannot associate with him on fair terms. It is not for me to judge him, or to speak disrespectfully of him. He is——" she hesitated.

"A nobleman," I said, rather bitterly.

"Yes. And you are—my son. There can be nothing in common between you."

"You know him, mother?"

"I have not seen him for many years." And she added after a pause, "I never wish to see him more. Duke," she went on, resting her hand softly on my shoulder, "Lord Overbury is nothing—can be nothing to you. Avoid him."

"He will do me harm, you think?"

"Heaven forbid, my boy." She kissed me tenderly; there were tears in her eyes. "He must not come between us, Duke. He must never part us; promise me he shall not." I was amazed at her sudden emotion.

"Indeed, I don't wish to see his face again."

She wrung my hand.

Rosetta's name was on my tongue. It was on her account, I knew, that I had turned against Lord Overbury. For otherwise, surely, I had received but kindness at his hands. Mistaken kindness, it might be; yet well intentioned; could I doubt it?

I longed to speak of Rosetta, with a boy's garrulousness and fond craving for sympathy. It would have so eased my heart to have told something of what was troubling it, and to have given words to the vague suspicions and pains, regrets and yearnings that were tossing and burning within me. They would have been more easily endured, it seemed to me, could I have given them shape and some definite substance by speaking of them. I could not. Rosetta! a rope-dancer! flying with Lord Overbury after but a few minutes' speech with him! How could I talk of such things to my mother? I had hidden little from her hitherto; but this revelation would seem insulting, monstrous, outrageous. She would certainly fail to understand me, would misjudge the matter terribly, suspect, rebuke me far more than I merited. She had not seen Rosetta. Perhaps, she could never be brought to see her with my eyes. She would misconceive her, think of her probably as Mauleverer, a far more

lenient judge, had thought and spoken—no, I could not do it. Rosetta must remain a secret; yet it was hard to hide from my mother a thing that seemed so vital to me.

She thought me only over-fatigued and nervously excited, probably, by experiences very new to me. I left her for a moment, in obedience to an established rule at the Down Farm, to visit the stables and make sure that my pony had been properly cared for. When I returned she had raked out the fire, and packed up her knitting.

I thought I had never before seen her looking so sad, enfeebled, and wan. But it was now past midnight, and she was perhaps tired out with waiting for my return.

I slept heavily for an hour or two, and then found myself starting up, restless on my bed, far too wakeful for further repose. I occupied myself, or was occupied in spite of myself, in going through, over and over again, each event of the day, down to the most minute particulars. All I had said and done, and my thoughts and feelings the while. All that had been said and done in my presence, and, conjecturally, the thoughts and feelings of those I had encountered. And Rosetta, of course, engaged me incessantly. Or if, for a time, I seemed able to banish her from my mind, she was soon back there again, to the subjection of all other meditations. Her beauty, her graceful gestures, her glances, her words, all were present to me most vividly. And then came the terrible thought of her flight, of her unworthiness.

Again and again I persuaded myself that this could not be; that cruel injustice had been done her; that some unfortunate accident, capable of very simple explanation, had brought the most unfair suspicions upon her. Yet I had ever to begin anew this task of self-persuasion. Could I resist the judgment of her fellows of the booth? What had they thought? Mauleverer was no severe censor; he had been inclined to make excuses; he had expressed himself with reserve; yet could I question the conclusion at which he had arrived? Would he have joined Diavolo in the pursuit but that he felt some confidence as to the likely fate of Rosetta? He had known her longer and better, of course, than I did, who had seen her but for a few minutes. And though he had talked of finding her at Dripford on his return, he was clearly not hopeful on that score; he really believed—there could be no doubt of it—that she had fled with Lord Overbury.

I was up early and about the farm, for I was too ill at ease to lie in my bed; action of some kind seemed indispensable to me. I found my uncle limping with rheumatic pains in the farm-yard. The horses were being harnessed for the fields.

"Well, Duke, so you sold the lambs well, I hear," he said to me, cheerily. "Glad to see you abroad so early."

"I'm going on to Reube."

"You'll find him in the ten acre bottom, just beyond the swedes."

I hastened onward, anxious to avoid questioning about the fair.

Reube washard at work, pitching hurdles for the stock sheep. He had resumed his every-day clothes. For him the chief event of the year was over. Thoughts of it and of the successful part he had played in it, cheered him still; but it was not his way to waste time in brooding over the past. He prided himself on what he called his "vore-cast." Probably, in his mind's eye, if he possessed such an organ, he had already in view the lambs of next season, the flocks of the future.

I inquired of him if he had been overtaken by—if he had seen anything of—a post-chaise driven rapidly along the road from Dripford, on his way home?

"Not that I moind, Measter Duke. But there was a nation zight of carts and carriages on the road. Just about a lot of people. I dunno as I ever saw more volks got together than there was at fair, yesterday."

"You saw nothing of Lord Overbury?"

"Eez, I zaw un at fair anightst the market-plaace, just avore I started whome. 'Well, shepherd,' a' zays, 'hast zold lambs?' 'Eez,' I zays. 'What price?' a' axes. 'Trimming!' I zays."

"He was alone?"

"No, a'd a young ooman alongside un."

"What like was she, Reube?"

"I just didn't take pertickler notice, Measter Duke. 'Twarn't for the likes of I to be pryin' about his lordship. A' zeemed a main sprack kind o' wench, though. Not from these parts, as I knows on. I caan't mind as I ever zet eyes on her avore, or should know her again if I was to zee her. There's always a caddling lot of women gets about fair, zee, sir. Where um comes from, or where um goes to, there I caan't tell'ee. But um bain't there for much good, most-like, I be thinking."

"Was she tall or short?"

"There, I caan't zay as to heeth (height) nor colour. A' was young, I moind, and

his lordship was laughin' and talkin' just as a' always is. Main maggotty a' zeemed, and dree parts vuddled; only 'tain't for I to be zaying zo."

I could gather nothing further from Reube, and so departed, idly to watch the ploughing in an adjoining field, my thoughts little concerned, however, in that operation. I saw the brown earth striped with lines of a deeper brown as the bright colter clove and upturned the soil. I listened to the ploughmen's cries of direction to their teams of horses and oxen. "Ga oot!" "Coom hedder!" "There, right!" as the obedient cattle paced to and fro, furrowing the land with curious precision. But the while I was, in truth, thinking, dreaming of Rosetta.

In the afternoon, pleading some vague excuse, I know not what, I hurried out and rode hard as I could to Dripford.

Compared with yesterday, the town seemed dead; its inhabitants absent, or locked in slumber. Scarce a trace of the fair was discernible. The market-place was empty; there might almost have been grass growing in the streets. Sheep, shepherds, dogs, pens, hurdles, all were gone. The booths, tents, shows, swings, and theatre, were no more to be seen.

There was not a soul in the coffee-room of the King's Head. Even the barmaids were absent from their post. A waiter could not be found.

It was with difficulty I roused a sleepy ostler in the stable. But I could elicit no information from him. He knew nothing of Lord Overbury; save that he had been in the town yesterday, and was not there to-day. No post-chaise, he asserted, had left the King's Head.

I could learn nothing, in fact.

"And the shows and theatres, when will they be here again?"

"This time next year, most like."

"And where are they gone? Where are they to be found meanwhile?"

"Lord knows!" he answered.

It was no affair of his. He turned away, and fell asleep again upon a truss of straw.

CHAPTER XIX. LOST.

DID I love Rosetta? I fancied so; but I could not be sure. I was, as she had said, "a mere boy." What did I know of love? What, indeed, did I know of anything? I had studied some few books; but of life and the world I had scarcely read a page. I had been reared in absolute retirement. The little village of

Purrington had been to me a universe. Steepleborough, and now Dripford, had been the furthest points of my wanderings from home. The expedition to the great sheep fair was the most memorable event in my career. And it had nearly turned my brain.

Before this how few of my fellow-men I had ever even seen! I could almost count upon my fingers the names of those with whom I had interchanged speech. And how few women! My mother, Kem, a dairy-maid or two, the wives and daughters of the farm servants who worked in the fields—there were not many to be added to this list. To be sure there were to be seen in Purrington Church on Sundays some be-ribboned bonnets and glaring shawls clothing the farmers' spouses of the neighbourhood, and the apple-cheeked, sloe-eyed, broad-nosed Miss Rawsons, who sometimes came over from the Lower Wick Farm at Bulborough to our afternoon service, and were thought by their friends, and by themselves, to be very fine-grown, comely, and attractive young women. With these I had certainly conversed now and then, but not often, and always without interest, and upon indifferent topics—chiefly, perhaps, as to the state of the weather, the thriving of Mr. Rawson's crops, or the condition of his sheep. I could find little else to say to them. I thought them good-natured and lively; but boisterous and a trifle vulgar. My mother, I remember, was always critical as to their style of dress, which she judged unbecoming and extravagant for their position in life. For the Lower Wick was but a small farm; Mr. Rawson was said to have been originally a "pig jobber," and was undoubtedly a rough and uncultivated person.

No. The Miss Rawsons, for all the glare of their finery and the flashing of their round open eyes, were nothing to me. But Rosetta! She was as a new revelation. The thought of her—the utterance of her name, audible but to myself—sent a strange thrill through me—set my heart beating, my cheeks blushing, my blood coursing and dancing through my veins with most exciting rapidity.

But if I indeed loved her it was with a boy's love: a nebulous poetic fondness that could assume no distinctness of shape or find certainty of expression; that was yet content with its own vagueness; that did not aspire to possession, but was so largely leavened with reverence that it craved only for liberty to adore humbly, abjectly, at

the feet of its idol. It was, at this time, my crowning wish to see her again—only to see her, for however brief a span, and feed anew my excess of admiration. It was all foolish and absurd enough, very likely. But, at least, my boyish passion was instinct with a boy's purity and spirit of self-sacrifice.

It was strange that with all my extravagance on this head—and it is, I think, a sort of tribute, so far, to its genuineness and integrity—that I never once concealed from myself, or strove to conceal, the wretched circumstances attending my first meeting with Rosetta, and marking her life, condition, and aspect. As it seems to me, I recognised fully all these disenchantments, and yet remained in spite of them wholly enchanted. I was at once sane and insane. She was to me an angel; and yet a rope-dancer too. She was exquisitely beautiful; yet her cheeks were roughly stained with paint, her dress miserable in its tawdriness. When I thought of her, as I did incessantly, and conjured up from memory a vision of her as I had first seen her—and this I seemed for ever doing—she appeared to me at once lovely and squalid. While I dwelt upon her wondrous charms of glance and expression, and form and colour, I could yet note, not less certainly, her soiled dancer's dress; her tarnished spangles, shabby ribbons, and frayed sandals. I could admit that her speech to me had been abrupt even to rudeness; that her manner had lacked refinement; that her life had been without doubt rough and wretched enough; that her calling had entailed upon her a thousand degradations that could not but blemish her nature, and destroy her self-respect. She was probably uncultivated, illiterate; skilled in nothing but the poor art she professed; was content to win applause from the most despicable of crowds. Yet seeing, knowing all this, I loved her. Her grace and beauty overcame and possessed me absolutely. I viewed her with a supreme tenderness and pity that subdued and absorbed all attendant considerations, however forcibly they might be presented to me by myself or by others.

But, indeed, there was no one to speak to me about her, there was no one to whom I could speak. My love was my secret, unguessed, assuredly, by its object, known to myself alone. It was at this period I produced my first verses; love and Rosetta being of course their theme and burden. My first verses! I content myself with

recording the fact. I have looked at them since, years and years after they were written. I read them with amazement. Yet, at the time, how veritable and sterling seemed their fervour!

I was unhappy, yet, somehow, pleased at being unhappy, proud of my passion, not dissatisfied at hearing that I looked pale and worn. There was even a sort of comfort in studying my image in the glass, and assuring myself of this fact—young idiot that I was!

I had seen nothing more of Rosetta; I could learn no tidings of her. I went long distances, almost to the foundering of my pony, to various fairs and rural festivals in the county, and searched and inquired for her in booths and shows of all kinds. But without avail. Indeed, while doing this I felt that it was futile. She was lost to me. I should never see her more.

Again and again I visited the lodge of Overbury Hall, and cross-questioned old Thacker as to the proceedings of his lordship. I learnt nothing. Old Thacker could tell me nothing; he had indeed nothing to tell. It seemed quite certain that Lord Overbury had not been near the hall for a long time past.

Once a ray of hope did, for a moment, illumine my despair. The time for Lockport races had come round again. On the platform of a booth just outside the course, I felt assured that I recognised Mauleverer. He was parading round and round in front of a travelling theatre with other performers variously dressed. But he no longer played the part of a clown. He wore flowing robes, a majestic beard; a tinselled crown circled his brows. He was a king.

I hurriedly mounted to the platform and spoke to him; he knew me at once. He looked old and dejected I thought; the lines in his face had deepened much, his cheeks were pendulous, and his voice had lost its old round-toned quality; he now spoke with difficulty, and in a harsh husky whisper. He expressed great joy at meeting me, while deploring the evil fortune that still attended his professional exertions.

"I'm not the man I was," he said; "but still this isn't quite the thing, is it? for me—for me of all people! I hope still for better days; but I don't know—I grow old. I can't afford to wait much longer. The tide's been too long turning. And I've caught cold sitting on the bank watching for change. It's my luck. My cough? Chronic asthma they call it. At times I can

shout with the best of them—louder, and to more effect. For I was an elocutionist, if there ever was one, of the best school. Then comes my cough again, and I'm—as you find me. So I'm cast for heavy business now; and I try to make hoarseness pass for suppressed emotion. It's all I can do. Cold, from exposure, and perhaps want. Ah, Master Duke, how often I've thought of the victuals of the Down Farm. All well there? That's right. Real victuals they were. Yes. I'm still among the boothers. But not clown now. Hush. Not a word of that. It's not generally known. Loss of dignity in our profession is loss of money. And loss of money is hunger, and thirst, and—asthma. You were saying——"

I had tried to interject a question as to Rosetta. But I broke down.

"Diavolo," I said. "Where is he?"

"Dead," replied Mauleverer. "What? You've not heard of it? It made some noise too. He was trying the high jeff—the high rope, you know—and he wasn't sober. To do him justice he seldom was. And he fell heavily. They picked him up—dead. Internal injuries, the doctors said. Exit Diavolo. He was not a nice man. Yet he had been first-rate in his own line; an inferior business when all's said; but he knew it all thoroughly, and could do it all, taken at his best, beyond any one I ever saw in that way of life. You remember meeting us that night as we drove back to Dripford?"

I could now fairly inquire about Rosetta. Mauleverer shook his head.

"From that day to this, I've never seen her, nor heard a word of or from her. I thought she might have written a line to Mrs. Jecker, who'd been kind to her; but she didn't—women are not grateful generally. Afraid of Diavolo? Perhaps so. A clever little girl; but there, she's gone."

"And you can't think what's become of her?"

"Perhaps. But where's the use? I don't know."

"But you think she went away with——"

"Don't you?" he asked quickly. "But it isn't our business, is it?"

"If I could only find her, Mauleverer: if I could only see her again!"

He was silent, looking at me with a curious blending of wonder and pity.

"You're still a young farmer," he said, after awhile. Then he added, noting I suppose my depressed air: "Come, don't

you be chapfallen. Leave that to me and others. You've life and the world before you. Fortune hasn't yet been hard upon you. Think how she's served me! And I was your age, once. Make better use of your time than I have done. And never fret. I don't. Though Heaven knows I've cause."

He wrung my hand. He was summoned to enter the booth and take part in the performance.

"For the tight-rope girl, you'll laugh about her, some day. Don't be angry, I don't mean immediately."

Laugh about Rosetta! I was angry. He apologised profusely, and I could not but be appeased. Then he drew me aside, and, in a hurried whisper, implored a loan. I emptied my purse into his hand.

"Shall I pass you into the boxes?" he asked. Poor Manleverer!

I quitted the race-course hurriedly, without even waiting to see the Lockport Cup run for, although the race for the Lockport Cup was the chief "turf" event of our country side. And the favourite, indeed, had been trained within a few miles of Purrington, and much anxiety prevailed thereabout as to his success.

No wonder that when I met Farmer Jobling on my way home—he had been to a sale of farming stock at Denton—and could not answer his question as to the winner of the race, he thought "that boy of Mrs. Nightingale's" stark mad, or a born fool, he could not quite decide which. So I afterwards learnt he had expressed himself in my regard to certain of his neighbours, who kindly made speed to publish his opinion.

That I was the occasion of much perplexity and distress to my mother and my uncle I could not doubt. They forebore to question me; waiting probably for explanation to come from me. We seemed all strangely silent, indeed, at the Down Farm. There was division amongst us of a new kind. If a certain lack of sympathy ever existed between us, and there were times perhaps when this was really the case, it now seemed curiously increased and intensified. They failed, as it was natural enough they should fail, to understand me; how then could they sympathise with me? There was no shortcoming in their kindness to me; this perhaps was rather augmented than otherwise. But they viewed me somewhat as a patient, suffering from some undefined malady, that was alike beyond their skill to heal or their power to comprehend. And they watched me; affec-

tionately, and yet with an anxiety that had its elements, as it seemed to me, of suspicion and distrust. They watched me, the while they seemed unconscious of so doing, or busily sought to conceal the intentness of their regard. Often I noted my uncle's cold inquiring eyes steadfastly fixed upon me, while his face wore a baffled and bewildered expression. Then, finding that he was in his turn observed, he would with a start endeavour to concern himself with some indifferent subject, speaking at random or permitting his snuff-box to engross his attention. My mother, too, scrutinised me not less persistently, saying little the while. Once, however, having convinced herself that I was really ill, she adjured me urgently to seek the aid of Doctor Turton of Steepleborough. It was with difficulty I could avoid submitting myself for cure of my troubled heart to the hands of that practitioner, our nearest medical man.

My failure as a farmer, too, became very apparent. I was conscious that in my character as "the young squire," I exhibited myself to signal disadvantage. I went to and fro, hither and thither, about the fields and among the labouring people, but I did little more than make manifest my deficiencies. I felt that I knew nothing, that I learned nothing. My uncle had reason enough to be dissatisfied with me—to charge me with taking no interest in my occupation, with neglecting the opportunities afforded me for improving myself. Yet, if he reproached me, it was more by his looks than his words.

"You remember what we had last year in that fifteen-acre field yonder, beside the firs?" he asked me one day, testing me.

"Vetches," I answered at random.

"No, no, Duke, you forget," he said, with a disappointed air. "Barley; some of the best barley I ever sent to market. There was none finer in the whole county. It's in clover, now; and a very fine crop. What do you think I ought to do with it for next year?"

"Swedes," I suggested.

"No, no; wheat, and then swedes, perhaps, and then barley again; that's considered a very good honest course. Fair to the land, to the landlord, and to the farmer. It's what they call the Norfolk course, and Norfolk farming's thought highly of. You should try and recollect these things."

I did try, yet somehow I failed.

It was a very hard winter that year, I remember. The spring seemed never coming. There had been a long continu-

ance of severe frost and biting winds, with heavy falls of snow. It was an anxious time for all our farmers and flock-masters; the poor sheep suffered severely. The ponds were all frozen; the roads were impassable almost. Reube was at his folds day and night. His devotion to his duty, to his master's interests, knew no bounds; he fought against the elements with exceeding gallantry. The fainting ewes had oftentimes to be dug bodily out of deep snow-drifts; the new-born lambs entered upon life under most trying conditions, found themselves occupants of a very hard and bleak world indeed. Death decimated the flock. Poor Reube was in despair. Oftentimes I found him stripping off his coat to wrap it round his infant lambs; shivering in his shirt-sleeves himself, yet content if they could but be kept warm and alive. It was ludicrous, perhaps, yet it was, in its way, genuine heroism. No mother could have lavished more care and tenderness upon her baby children. He was content and comforted in that his pains and zeal were not wholly unavailing; and he took pride in some specific of his own devising, composed, I think, of warm milk and gin, with which he freely dosed his own ailing young charges in their earliest stages of animation. We lost fewer lambs than any of our neighbours, although that was not saying very much.

My uncle was gratified that I did all in my power to assist the shepherd, that I was with him early and late, relieving him of some labour, and oftentimes taking his place as night-watcher by the fold. The fact was that I had need of occupation and excitement of any sort; that I slept but ill; that it was a relief and satisfaction to be about doing something—anything.

It was late in the afternoon. A frosty sunset lent a rosy flush to the snow-laden landscape. There stretched out before me a vast sea of dazzling white waves and tender purple-grey shadows. I was warmly wrapped in a shepherd's coat, wandering I scarcely knew whither, idly noting the strange wintry beauty of the scene; the snow crunching noisily under my heavy boots, my devious track marked upon the down by deep indentations. I was advancing towards the fir plantation, lured by the sight of the whitened trees, each branch and leaf sustaining its feathery load of snow, as though it had been a trophy or a prize; or bent on watching the rays of the sinking sun glancing among the boughs in ruddy arrows of misty light.

Suddenly—could it be?—I perceived a figure in the plantation. A woman seated upon a pile of fallen fir trunks, crouching, covering her face with her hands. I was within a few paces of her before she stirred. Then she looked up. I almost screamed in my amazement.

It was Rosetta!

BLACKMAIL.

BLACKMAIL, like other evils, has a wonderful tenacity of life. It is indeed no novelty, although its changes of shape are worthy of Proteus. Illicit payments and illegal demands, or quasi-demands, have no doubt existed in all ages of the world. Extortion is coeval with human society. In its rudest and earliest form it was levied by wholesale, and with a simple directness of action that might be understood by a child. A petty principality paid tribute to some mighty kingdom hard by. A peaceful people bought off the hostility of some clan of warlike barbarians. The Danegeld—the sword of gold by the aid of which England so often purchased a precarious truce from the pagans of the north—was identical in principle with the ignominious ransoms wrung from Rome, first by the Gaul and then by the Goth. The bribes by which Rob Roy and his caterans were induced to spare the cattle of their Lowland neighbours, were akin to those regarding which the tourist who ventures beyond Jordan has to haggle with the greedy sheikh who is to protect him from the rapacity of other tribes.

The exaction of arbitrary tolls is one of the oldest and most general impediments to travel. A mediæval merchant, for example, resembled a sheep forcing its way through briars, and leaving on every thorn a scrap of torn fleece. All along the Rhine each mountain peak had its strong castle, whence a robber-baron surveyed the broad river, and the rocky road, ready to pounce on boat or train of pack-mules with the swoop of a hawk that spies some incautious covey of partridges. The trader whose route lay among Flemish meadows and corn-fields fared little better, for were there not lying in his path frequent frontiers, where his Grace of Guelders, and my Lord of Cleves, and the Prince Bishop of Liege, and his Highness of Brabant, and his Mightiness of Burgundy, and the Free Cities of the Holy Roman Empire, required, per proxy of harpy-eyed inten-

dants, and swaggering men-at-arms, a slice of every commercial cake that was carried across the boundary? In the East, Mecca, and Samarcand, and Bagdad were to be reached only by those who had coaxed and feed Bedouin, Turcoman, and Kurd into tolerant good humour, while in Africa a caravan has ever been considered, in the expressive jargon of the Soudan, as "Dum-malafong," a thing for prey and plunder, mulcted to-day by a negro king, and subject on the morrow to a tax enforced at the point of the spear by Moslem marauders.

In comparatively civilised countries, and especially under a system of centralised despotism, blackmail naturally changes its character. Small tyrannies and tyrants are swallowed up by the Imperial Gargantua, and satraps, proconsuls, and mandarins are presumed to be merely the passive instruments of the one sovereign will that sways the destinies of the nation. Of course this method, from inherent faults, has never worked smoothly in practice. The jack-in-office, by whatsoever sonorous name he may be called, whose business it is to plunder for his master, is perfectly certain to rob still more unscrupulously on his own account, and to his greed must be added the hunger of all his deputies and led captains, his satellites, henchmen, and hangers-on. It is a Persian proverb, that when the shah asks for an egg, his servants demand a cow, and, indeed, the snowball of exaction grows with the multiplication of those who are the willing tools of power. The Turkish soldier, after living at free quarters, modestly requests to be paid in hard cash for the wear and tear of his teeth, and, in many European and Asiatic countries, the privates in that great host of civil placemen which the government retains in its service must choose between a lingering death by famine, and the raising of unlawful contributions from those with whom they have to deal.

Justice, a tempting commodity, has not seldom been dealt in as unblushingly as if it had been cloth or butter to be vended by the yard or by the pound. This peculiar variety of the noxious weed, blackmail, readily extirpated in a strong and healthy state, finds favourable conditions of growth where the moral standard is low, and the public conscience dull. We in England have not had to reckon judicial corruption among our national shortcomings. The lasting indignation which Bacon's venality evoked, would to Neapolitans or Mexicans

appear absurdly misplaced. The so-called compliments, the gifts of money or produce, with which, in days long past, a few English suitors have approached a few English judges, were not deemed so degrading to donor or recipient as we should now most properly consider them. They were not intended as the price of a judicial decision, but rather as a means of securing an early hearing. It was prompt justice, perhaps a little leavened by indulgence, which the giver strove to procure; a little underhanded oiling of the legal machinery; and bargaining for the gain of a lawsuit was unknown. And in even the most debased community there exists a wholesome instinct of repugnance to the habitual maladministration of justice which cannot fail to keep the mischief within bounds. We read of cadis who weighed Hassan's proffered purse against that of Selim, and of Russian magistrates, who met plaintiff and defendant with the pertinent question, "What will you give?" But such barefaced traffickers in verdicts were, we may be sure, outnumbered by the humdrum functionaries who dispensed decrees that were tolerably equitable, while the legal cormorant was never safe from being forced to disgorge his prey, and his life along with it, by the unceremonious interference of some shah, sultan, or governor, more lynx-eyed than was common.

Grace, however, the king's bounty, the goodwill of my lord high treasurer, the smile of his grandeur the bishop, or of some other potent personage, lay or ecclesiastical, had its market value long after hireling judges had become nearly or quite extinct. London was always full of young men, who, like Shakespeare's Roderigo, had put money in their purses, and sowed the golden seed in hopes of a glittering harvest. Tall, rawboned Ralph sought his majesty's commission to raise a company for service in Flanders or Ulster. Will, who was thought to have a pretty wit, went about with copies of verses in the pocket of his best doublet, and burned to recite his rhythmic fancies before a fashionable audience. Handsome Harry, who had been equipped for his metropolitan venture by the combined efforts of his admiring family, and whose laced shirts and coat of green satin slashed and pinked with silver had sorely diminished his sister's slender dowry, already saw himself a courtier living on some comfortable sinecure. Even sober Tom, with supple backbone and faultless Latinity, had come to London with

the shrewd notion that he might readily wriggle himself into a fat benefice, and that the shortest road to preferment lay through some great man's antechamber. All these aspirants, in one shape or another, paid blackmail. Now, it was a broad piece slipped into the willing palm of the patron's confidential servant, now a tavern bill or a tailor's account defrayed to please some Grub-street bard, at whose buffooneries the young bloods of the court condescended to laugh when in their cups. Anon it was a purse tremulously pressed upon my lord himself, along with the abject entreaty of his lordship's worshipful good word with king or minister. Cerberus had many heads, and a sop was seldom unwelcome to each and all of them.

France was, perhaps, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the happy hunting-ground of those who lived by blackmail. For every place-seeker who haunted the Mall or the Park there were a score whose red-heeled shoes were familiar with the pavement of Versailles. On the other side of the Channel there was, indeed, much more to give away than ever lay at the disposal of English sovereigns and statesmen. It is wonderful to reflect on the patience with which a burden of taxation, gradually growing more and more intolerable, was endured by the bulk of the nation. Almost equally amazing, to the student of historical records, is the pertinacious and clamorous fashion in which the privileged classes forced their demands upon royalty. Exempt from taxes, masters of two-thirds of the soil of France, and with a traditional right to all that was choicest in the wide patronage of the crown, the nobility and clergy still craved for hard money, for pensions, gifts, and gratifications, with a hungry eagerness which it was impossible to appease.

The Bourbon monarchs of France, apparently all-powerful, were in reality little more than glorified sharers of the spoil among the nobles of their prodigal court. The great officers of state had a freehold right to their posts about the person of the king. All over the realm stretched a network of titular employments, often obsolete, often absurdly useless, but all as completely private property as the chateau of the marquis, or the manor-house of the chevalier. Each regiment belonged to the colonel whose name it bore, and who knew to a pistole its value in the market. Presidents and counsellors of parliament held their places in the tribunal

as they held the silver plate in their oaken presses, as something for which they had paid, and which they were at liberty to sell. And besides the needy young abbés begging for the rents of some monastery that they would never see, while they wasted its revenues in Parisian amusements, besides the applicants for military, judicial, or diplomatic promotion, there were hundreds of voices always swelling the chorus of "Give, give!" Crowds of suitors hovered around the royal purlieus, resolved that, if the king did not portion their daughters, pension their sons, or indemnify themselves for some supposititious injury or service, it should not be for want of importunity. Suppliants so shameless as these were not likely to recoil from bribery, if thus the royal favour could be won. Accordingly pots-de-*vin*, homages, and other variously-styled payments were constantly offered to those who were supposed to have easy access to the most Christian king. Under Louis the Fifteenth in especial, there was almost an open auction for the sale of what the monarch had to bestow.

Vails, perquisites, and fees to servants may fairly be included under the general head of blackmail. In the last century this abuse had swollen, in England at least, to almost unbearable dimensions. Gentlemen of modest income hesitated before accepting my lord the earl's hospitality. The dinner might be excellent, and the company of the finest, but the guest had too often a drop of bitter in his cup, that spoiled the flavour of the claret, as he remembered the awful ordeal of departing betwixt a double file of rapacious menials, every one of whom considered himself as basely defrauded if the present which he received were not up to the standard of his expectations. A little lower in the social scale were the houses where "card and candle money" was exacted from those who were rash enough to sit down to the whist-table, or to partake of supper. The besom of Time has swept away this last abuse, but it is still an expensive luxury to visit at one of those country mansions that are the boast of rural England, and especially if the sojourner be inclined, for once, to imitate the feats of the provincial Nimrods around him. Sir John, whose pride is in his well-stocked covers, and who vaunts that every pheasant costs him a guinea before it drops to the gun, must surely be aware that his guests pay fantastic prices to his chief gamekeeper for the ammunition which they employ in knocking over

those barley-fed birds, and that, while a "hot corner" is differentially allotted to the free-handed donor of a rustling bank-note, scowls and neglect are the portion of the "shabby" fellow who last October remunerated the services of Mr. Ramrod by the gift of a pitiful sovereign. Lord Harkaway, who mounts half a score of horseless visitors for a lawn meet of his unrivalled pack, can hardly be in ignorance that the stud-groom and his subordinates reckon as confidently on being paid—and well paid—for each sleek-necked steed, as if Harkaway Castle stables were those of a London job-master.

Our fathers and grandsires of the coaching days were accustomed to groan over the extortions which then attended a long journey by stage or mail. The rubicund coachman had to be remembered, the red-coated guard not forgotten, while the traveller who quitted a wayside inn found on the first landing Betty Chambermaid, with outstretched hand familiar with half-crowns, a few steps lower down the nap-kined waiter, hard-eyed and glib of speech, and in the hall the Boots expectant, ready, if not contented, to point out the parsimonious pilgrim as a butt for the derisive jeers of a sympathetic knot of postillions and carriage-washers. And although throughout civilised Europe attendance is now a fixed charge in the hotel bill, few, very few, travellers have the moral hardihood to disregard the speaking looks which warn them that custom exacts that they should pay twice over for service rendered. When first the snorting dragon of steam bore down the feeble opposition of the old coaches, one of the merits of railways was announced to be the abolition of a number of vexatious imposts once deemed inseparable from the act of journeying in a public conveyance. In some respects this confident prediction has been realised. The swart stoker pouches no shillings, the careworn engine-driver has by no means succeeded to the dignity and emoluments of Mr. Coachman. The guard is as polite to ladies who give him nothing as to young men who do. But the fustian-clad porter unites a discriminating eye for the probable donor of loose silver, a serene scorn for the obsolete proclamation which forbids the servants of the company to accept money, and prompt attention is considered as a fair equivalent for current coin.

That a cabman should regard himself as an injured being when tendered his legal fare, a circumstance which often

sorely puzzles the intelligent foreigner on his first visit to London, is perhaps not so very remarkable. The enormous extent of the capital prevents the adoption, as in Paris and elsewhere, of a uniform rate of payment, so that a small financial and geographical problem demands solution each time that a journey is made in a hackney-carriage. That the tariff seems low in itself, and that miles have a tendency, in the cabman's imagination, to succeed one another with a rapidity strange to the impartial scrutiny of calm science, is also natural enough, considering how very easily we credit that which it is convenient to us to believe. But in truth the whole state of public opinion on the vexed subject of cab fares is a relic of the epoch of extortion, ruffianism, and false shame, which went before. The jarveys and chairmen of London, the Thames watermen, the porters who shouldered portmanteaus belonging to voyagers in Hessian boots and roquelaures, had established a kind of vested interest in wrong doing. That when a steam-packet bound for Rotterdam or Antwerp lay in mid-river, First Oars and his fellow Triton should obstinately keep the wherry bobbing about at the distance of a cable's length from the ship's side, until the entrapped hirers had agreed to pay a couple of guineas "smart money," instead of some two shillings honestly due for their conveyance, was thought merely a piece of sharp practice. The only way of turning the tables on some abusive giant of the shoulder-knot was to defeat him in single combat, and even in the days when Jackson taught boxing, those who were competent to engage in such a task could have been but a minority. Neither to thrash an extortioner, nor to comply with his demands, was held to imply a mixture of stinginess and effeminacy worthy of the heartfelt contempt of a British mob, and as such was often visited by promiscuous pelting with mud and cabbage-stalks. The cabman is, after all, a mild and revised edition of the ancient ministers to the needs of locomotive Londoners.

Crossing the Line, originally a rough but not necessarily ill-natured outbreak of animal spirits and horseplay, was by degrees changed into an ingenious method of wringing blackmail from the passengers of an Indiaman. It was certainly more agreeable to extend enforced liberality to Neptune and his band of sturdy mummers, than to commemorate the passage of the equator by being soaped and scraped,

ducked and drenched, in blinding brine and villanous lather, but it was better still when the rum-drinking, tobacco-chewing sea-king and his mimic court were improved for ever from off the face of the waters by the combined efforts of Waghorn and of steam. The Camorra of Naples, which lasted till that yesterday which witnessed the reunion of dismembered Italy, was a remarkable instance of illegal taxation submitted to without a murmur. When the great gang had been finally broken up by the Italian police, the Neapolitans of the lower class felt, for a time, that uneasy alarm which sheep feel when abandoned by dog and drover on a strange high-road. The market-woman crossed herself as she took up her accustomed station without seeing the business-like agent of the Camorra gliding towards her to take toll of her butter and ripe figs. The winning gambler muttered his orison to Hercules and Saint Januarius when no authoritative hand was outstretched for a share of the bright ducats. Bronzed fishermen, who had duly set aside the little heap of fresh-caught fish that was the perquisite of the Camorra, grew suspicious and unhappy when no notice was taken of the offering. It was not immediately that those whose contributions swelled the revenues of the mysterious association could convince themselves that the compact was dissolved, and the brotherhood of the dagger no longer powerful to protect or to punish.

Blackmail sometimes assumes the form of presents, periodical, or given only on some remarkable occasion. Wedding gifts belong to the latter category, Etrennes and Christmas boxes to the former. New Year's Day has its terrors for many a Parisian bachelor of moderate means. If he be an elderly young man—and there are not a few garçons à marier, whose varnished boots have trodden the polished hard wood of his friends' floors for more seasons than they would care to acknowledge—he sighs for the good old times of Orleanist simplicity, when a few flowers, a few bonbons, and some toys of trifling value, sufficed to set him right with his entertainers and their families. Alas! bouquets of rare exotics cost more and more money as the *Nouvel An* comes round; dolls become each year more gorgeous as to their wardrobes, and more life-like as regards their size; sweetmeats are no longer acceptable unless enclosed in showy boxes that triple the expense of the

gaudy sugar-plums inside, and the critical children of this generation think scorn of such humble playthings as inspired transports of delight when displayed before their aunts and uncles. The concierge, too, Monsieur Pipelet, is as a lion in the path, each first of January finding him harder to satisfy, gruffer, greedier, more implacably tyrannical than before. Poor Anatole! poor Jules! As they spread their scanty store upon the green cloth of the writing-table, and call to mind how many claimants there are for every five-franc piece, how cordially must they wish for any decent excuse for rushing into the country, there to remain until the new year should be well begun, and Etrennes regarded already as things of the past.

Our English tribulations at Christmas are more patiently submitted to than the extravagant New Year's tax which has grown to its present Parisian proportions during the lavish expenditure of the Second Empire; but paterfamilias, if worried and perturbed by the inky snowdrift of legitimate bills, must often question himself as to the right by which beadle and bellman, sweep and scavenger, the Waits that make night hideous with cracked clarionet and braying trombone, the journeymen butcher and baker, and, in short, all and sundry who profess to have contributed to his comfort, levy tribute at Yule tide. The postman's yearly fee is, perhaps, the one that is the least grudged, for few are so unfortunate as not to have a lively interest in their letters; and most householders appreciate the activity of the zealous Mercury whose knock, in all weathers, is so punctual and so welcome. This, like poor Robin's tap, tapping with an anxious little beak outside the frosted window-pane, in quest of crumbs, is probably the most innocent among the varieties of blackmail.

LAY ME LOW.

LAY me low, my work is done,
I am weary. Lay me low,
Where the wild flowers woo the sun,
Where the balmy breezes blow,
Where the butterfly takes wing,
Where the aspens drooping grow,
Where the young birds chirp and sing.
I am weary, let me go.

I have striven hard and long,
In the world's unequal fight,
Always to resist the wrong,
Always to maintain the right,
Always with a stubborn heart
Taking, giving blow for blow.
Brother, I have played my part,
And am weary, let me go.

Stern the world and bitter cold,
 Irksome, painful to endure,
 Everywhere a love of gold,
 Nowhere pity for the poor.
 Everywhere mistrust, disguise,
 Pride, hypocrisy, and show,
 Draw the curtain, close mine eyes,
 I am weary, let me go.

Others 'chance when I am gone
 May restore the battle-call,
 Bravely lead the good cause on,
 Fighting in the which I fall.
 God may quicken some true soul
 Here to take my place below
 In the heroes' muster-roll.
 I am weary, let me go.

Shield and buckler, hang them up,
 Drape the standard on the wall,
 I have drained the mortal cup
 To the finish, dregs and all.
 When our work is done 'tis best,
 Brother, best that we should go.
 I'm weary, let me rest,
 I'm weary, lay me low.

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MONSIEUR CHOSE.

VIII. AT DOMINOES.

"MADAME CHOSE is quite right," Tonnerre ventured to remark to me, while, with his long fingers, he shuffled the dominoes. "Look at Genest's way of arranging the government of the 4th of September. The first, Monsieur de Rochefort, is at the bagne. The second, Monsieur Jules Simon, is Minister of Public Instruction. The third, Monsieur Gambetta, is the hope of France. The fourth, Monsieur J. Favre, is called a forger by the third. The fifth, Monsieur Cremieux, is outraged by the second. The sixth and seventh are ambassadors. The eighth, Monsieur Trochu, is dragged through the mud by the first, the third, and the fifth. The ninth, Monsieur Glais-Bizoin, is spurned by all the rest. It's ignoble, Chose. Is there an honest man left in France? Your play."

"Upon my word, Tonnerre, your sympathy with womankind will end by warping your judgment." I made this answer angrily. "Not that I can agree with the people who cry treason everywhere; and never believe a man is unfortunate, but always that the fallen man is a traitor. I wish I had the spirits of Cham. He can always laugh. The country is on the verge of another revolution, because Monsieur Thiers is indisposed. Let him cut his finger, and the funds will run down. Cham prescribes a new constitution for France under which the President will be bound by law to show his tongue three times a day, to prevent financial crises on the Bourse. The laughter over national dis-

aster is the puzzling part of my country's politics to me. The Tuileries are a charred ruin. Are we ashamed of it? No. Two clever fellows pass. One suggests it would make a first-rate museum—of draughts! There is catarrh in every angle of it. I shiver at the jest."

"We must be more serious, Chose. It is your play. We must get rid of the funny gentlemen who will hang their little jests upon the funeral car of their dearest friend. It is our curse that we are so spirituel. I play."

Tonnerre is right. "I had a lively ride a few days ago with half a dozen deputies. They were in the highest spirits, although the fortunes of the country were at a low ebb; and indulged in some very witty speculations. One honourable farceur suggested a compromise of all existing difficulties. 'Give,' said he, 'the presidency of the Senate to the Count of Chambord; the chairmanship of the Council of State to the Duke of Anmale; and the presidential fauteuil of the Deputies to the Prince Imperial, and thus, with the Little Man president for life, all susceptibilities would be satisfied, and we should run upon wheels, each of us with a fair bit of the cake in his hands.'"

"The rascals!" growled Tonnerre. "I can't play. It's the bit of cake they're all running after, while the workpeople want bread."

"It's a game of devil-take-the-hind-most," was my observation, and I gave Tonnerre an instance that had come within my own knowledge. "Some fifty years ago two young men came to Paris from the south, one was named Beaume, the other Thiers. They dined together at a twenty-two sous restaurant. Beaume was an artist, Thiers an art-critic. They were chums, and in the beginning Beaume had the advantage, for he had great talent as an artist, whereas his friend was but a poor art-critic. Beaume used to say to Adolphe, 'You know as much about art as my slipper.' That was true; but Thiers had more than one string to his bow. And so he struck off in a new direction, leaving the artist, who had only one string, far behind him. Beaume is still an artist of merit, and has been a knight of the Legion of Honour for thirty years; but how many people have heard of his talent? But who has not heard of the little art-critic who knew no more about pictures fifty years ago than his chum's slipper? The art-critic is president of us, and his old com-

panion is not certain of a corner in the salon. We are all players of the same game, Tonnerre, with France for our stage. When you tell me a certain man is a patriot, I say he is a winner. When Monsieur Patin put up the other day for the Municipal Council, and issued that flowery manifesto, and when he was opposed by that incendiary chemist, Guimauve, with his red posters—what did we see?"

"Two *faiseurs d'embarras*—two saltimbanques," was Tonnerre's prompt reply.

"True; two runners in the race of devil-take-the-hindmost. Patin pretended that he had reluctantly put down his bags of brown sugar to serve his country in the hour of her peril; while Guimauve aired himself as a sacrifice to the triumph of democratic ideas."

"Bah," growled Tonnerre, "you are neglecting the game, Chose. The double six."

But I would not be diverted from my point by dominoes. "We want unselfishness in these times; we want heart; we want courage. This fencing with tongues; these fights and plots of the infinitely little; these ignoble compromises which bring the Patins and the Guimauves to the front; these gods from the gutters; this drinking of sugar and water, and phrase-making over unhappy France; these dances of death to the air of *Ca Ira* mean national annihilation."

"Chose," said Tonnerre, presently, when I had beaten him, and when he was paying our reckoning, "I should advise you, my friend, to be more circumspect in your observations on passing events. It is you bourgeois who are the cause of every one of the evils you deplore. You chatter like monkeys, when you should be acting like men. Do you know what is happening; nay, shall I ask, do you know what has happened?"

I waited to hear in silence. I shall never forget the solemnity and agitation with which the old man spoke.

"Cannot you see it, man?" The wrinkled hand, scarred with a sabre-cut dealt by a Muscovite sword, while it held the flag of France in the front of battle, was pointed to the street. "You see nothing; but I see the clear outline of the ragged figure. From its cruel eyes to its flat feet, it is covered with red rags—made of the standards it has soiled and torn. The teeth are clenched like those of a hungry tiger. Was ever a more brutal caricature of a human head? The hair is matted upon the low skull. Mark the knotted

sinews of the bull-throat. The lean, ignoble figure is all angles. The gnarled joints are of monstrous size. Blood drips from the nails of the fingers. The legs are muddy to the knees. The feet seek the line of route where the dirt is thickest and slimiest. The point of a knife and the barrel of a pistol peep through the red rags. Cowards that they are—the crowd make way for the monster while he walks. The respectable citizens scowl, and hold their noses, and turn their backs; but not one lays a hand upon the brute.* And pray, Monsieur Chose, great critic of modern politics, whither, think you, is that pestilent wretch bound?"

I confessed my inability even to hazard a conjecture.

"To the workshops. To the houses of the poor. To the cabins of the match-box makers of Belleville. To the skilled and intelligent cabinet-makers and bronze-workers of the east of Paris. The red rags will madden them as they stand by their lathes and benches. And then, Monsieur Chose, the bourgeois will learn another lesson, by which—cared as he is, I admit it, in self-conceit and laziness—he will profit as little as he did when that figure passed along the Boulevards a year or two ago. Hark! The *Carmagnole*!"

But I heard nothing, except the click of the billiard-balls at the back of the café in which we were sitting.

"You can't hear it! Will you hear it when the *Red Spectre* plays it under your windows, summoning you to go forth and turn your pockets inside out? Do you think your deafness will cease when the *Spectre's* gory hand is in your watch-fob? Will your phrases be at an end?"

Captain Tonnerre glared round at the guests in the café; and the growling in his throat must have been audible almost at the billiard-table. An acquaintance drew me aside to ask me what could be the matter with the old gentleman.

"A little political discussion," said I. Whereat my questioner went away laughing.

"There is another fool," said Tonnerre, when I rejoined him. "He will wait till the red hand plucks his nightcap from his head. Oh! he will talk enough between this and then, and be very valiant over his absinthe; but devil a step will he take, even to vote against the *Spectre*. I sup-

* Gilray has drawn a figure of Revolution, in many points closely resembling the captain's.

pose he was laughing at my picture; but the last laugh will be mine, and I shall not have long to wait for it. So—let us have another game.

CHAPTER IX. THE FEATHERS OF THE EAGLE.

"BLUNDER upon blunder!" said I to Madame Chose.

"You men do nothing else," was the conjugal reply. "The Captain Tonnerre has been here in a fury. He is generally a little more reasonable than you are"—(I bowed low as my acknowledgment of the compliment)—"but to-day he is a mad-man."

"But what is the matter, madame?"

"Don't ask me, Monsieur Chose. A man who is so lost as to refuse his wife point blank so pardonable a request as a friture at St. Cloud; when he has—to indulge his own ridiculous vanity—given up fishing one for her, with no better excuse than an itching to put his clumsy fingers into the state cauldron; that man—it is an act of indulgence to call him one—has lost all right not only to question his wife, but——"

Human patience had been tried too long. I brought my fist heavily down upon the table, where my wife was arranging a prodigious bouquet of violets, and fairly shouted:

"But! But what, madame? Have a care."

"Monsieur Chose having become a thorough brute—possibly to qualify himself for an active part in politics—I leave him." And, gathering up her flowers, she swept from the room.

But where was Tonnerre? He had, then, heard the news! Perhaps he was in the list of the Outraged. The bare idea made me tremble, for I knew that in the event of my surmise being correct, I should find him in one of those tumults of passion which make me fear that he will burst some day, like one of the muskets the patriotic agents of the 4th of September bought for our valiant army. I paced up and down the salon, asking myself whether it was possible to conceive a more ridiculous, and, at the same time, a more exasperating affront to a powerful section of an impatient and unsettled community? With "liberty, equality, and fraternity" painted upon the very building! A few old men—venerable and glorious as the flags that fluttered in the aisle; the fast-fading remnants of an epoch that was at any rate a grand one; the sabreurs of

Austerlitz; the half-score of witnesses to the glory of France, who were still on the right side of the cemetery gates; to slam the gates——

But here Madame Chose thrust her head into the salon, and, with the exquisite politeness that cuts like a surgeon's knife—only with no such honourable object—had the temerity to call my attention to the fact that our neighbours underneath us (with whom we were already not on good terms, because the water from our flower-pots had lately given an untimely douche to one of their friends) would probably tell the concierge, who would tell all the house, that Monsieur Chose had gone mad. "I should have thought," my discreet wife added, "that you had quite enough of speech-making at your club. But, perhaps, they have shut it up?"

"Shut up the White Mice! The club of respectability, where no man is admitted who doesn't wear spectacles, and no man can preside whom Nature has not gifted with a brutus! Madame, your pleasantry is in the worst taste, especially at this moment; and, permit me the liberty of adding, very silly."

"In a course of political study, I long ago discovered, Monsieur Chose, that gallantry to women was not included. I am sure I wonder how Captain Tonnerre has managed to remember something of the bienséances, while he has been under your august protection as a sucking saviour of his country. But he has managed to retain a little good sense for his own personal use, at the risk of injuring his country by the loss of it. He is no longer a White Mouse!"

With this shot, which struck home, madame closed the door of her chamber. Tonnerre no longer a White Mouse! The thing was impossible! He was among the earliest members. He was of the committee of organisation. He was one of the founders. No, no, this was merely a poisoned shaft from Madame Chose's capacious quiver. Now, if ever, the White Mice should stand together—as one mouse. The times were critical indeed when men went about with liberty upon their lips and gaoler's keys in their pockets; when young conscripts could be found to slap the faces of the tottering heroes of our mightiest story; when——

At this moment Madame Chose returned to the salon, her daintily-arrayed head covered with her best capuchon, and fan and lorgnette and bonbonnière in hand.

"I am going to the Opera, and then en soirée, Monsieur Chose," she said, in a silvery voice; "perhaps it is daring too much to request you to see me to a carriage."

"Madame, I am always at your service. But first tell me about Captain Tonnerre. You say he went off in a fury. I can very well understand it."

"Then, to a politician of your acuteness, there can be nothing to explain; and I am already very late."

My wife moved with determined steps towards the door, and I followed her; hoping by my politeness to elicit from her the cause of Tonnerre's exasperation—though I was partly sure about it.

"Yes, he has heard of the outrage, and his soldier's heart——"

"Is Monsieur Chose rehearsing his speech for the club?" my wife asked, taking my arm as we reached the courtyard; and giving me her perfumed impedimenta (including the bouquet of violets) to carry. Women can stab you and ask you to hold their shawl at the same moment.

"Ah, Felicie!" I responded (a kiss sometimes hits harder than a blow), "you cannot sympathise with all I feel at this moment. I am bleeding, inwardly, for my country."

"Then be thankful that it is inwardly, mon ami," was the reply I heard; and the "mon ami" sent the blood tingling in my ears; for it was the first time since I had cast my fishing-tackle aside that I had heard those words. Why was I not going en soirée also? I was on the point of murmuring my regret, when a sharp tug at my arm, and an exclamation to the effect that it was hardly possible to be more stupid than I was in the vital conjugal matter of getting cabs; recalled me to my hard self, and in a minute I was settling Madame Chose in a coupé.

"There, that will do: tell the driver where to go." The window was about to be drawn up in my face, when I put my hand resolutely upon it, and said:

"At least, madame, tell me what Tonnerre said, for he must have left some message: and, where I can find him."

With a movement of impatience Madame Chose replied, "Well, he said, in his mad way and your mad way too, that they had scattered the feathers of the eagle; but that every quill would be made into a pen of revenge. Make what you can out of that. Allez cocher!"

It was easy enough to translate. Tonnerre had been on the spot, and seen the old men shouldered from the temple. But why, on this account, should he leave the White Mice? Why separate himself from the friends of order, at the very moment when order was most threatened? Yesterday he was for a republic because it separated men least; and for a variety of reasons that, although they were altered, and chopped about every time the club met, were, moderately good ones. To be sure his was a peculiar republic; a republic, as he cleverly expressed it, in which republicanism showed itself the least; and when it took the form of outrage upon his beloved Old Guard, he would be likely to drop it like a hot chestnut. But where should I find him? Sleep would be impossible until I had seen, and comforted my old friend. I searched at the meeting-place of the White Mice: he had not been there. I went to the café where he occasionally met his military friends. I trotted off to the establishment where we generally played our game of dominoes, and took our absinthe. No Captain Tonnerre. At last I resolved to seek him in his own rooms, by the Champs de Mars, that dusty plain being, as he expressed it, his Bois de Boulogne, lake, cascade and all.

He was at home, the concierge said; but she thought he looked very ill when he came in; and when she spoke to him he gave her no answer. I hastened to his fourth floor, and rang. I waited, but heard nobody stirring within. After a long pause I mustered courage to ring a second time. His growl and the clanking of metal thrown aside were the immediate response, followed by his heavy footsteps and his muttered anger. He threw the door wide open and roared:

"Who is it at this hour?"

"I hope, my good friend, I am not indiscreet."

He turned his back, and told me to shut the door and follow him.

It was a superb picture, perfect in every detail. I don't think Meissonnier would have altered a single accessory, or a play of light. The old soldier, his pipe in his mouth, his shirt-sleeves tucked up, an old kepi upon his head, with the peak over his ear; was giving the final touches to his accoutrements. His sword, as he fondly rubbed it, was a dancing mirror.

"Well," he grunted, without lifting his eyes, "you have heard the news, or you would not be here. Infames!"

I confessed that I had learned it with profound sorrow.

"And after?" He still polished the sword that was speckless.

"After! Is it true you have left the club?"

"Is it true that I am Captain Tonnerre?" the old man roared. "I was of the White Mice: idiot that I was. Is this the weapon to chop logic with? With their reasons and counter-reasons, their changes and counter-changes, their fine words for themselves and foul epithets for everybody else; I ought to have known I was out of place; and that their tricks would be played some day even upon the two or three braves time has left us. But to-day, Monsieur Chose, Captain Tonnerre, who is speaking to you, is of THE TIGERS!"

And Captain Tonnerre gripped the hilt of his sword with a power far from contemptible.

"We have picked up the feathers, Monsieur Chose, and these are our pen-knives."

I jumped out of the reach of the flashing sabre.

CHINESE FESTIVALS.

THE Chinese, having no hebdomadal day of rest like more highly civilised nations, pay considerable attention to holidays and festivals; for though they are so plodding and industrious in their habits, they naturally feel that the mind and body cannot endure the strain of continuous toil, but must have relaxation in some way or other. After a few prefatory remarks on their division of time, we propose to give a brief sketch of the more important of their annually-recurring festive celebrations.

The Chinese year consists of twelve months (or moons, as they are usually styled) of twenty-nine or thirty days each, but of every nineteen years seven have an extra or intercalary moon, as otherwise their calendar would get seriously out of order. Their months or moons are numbered, and have no names in daily use, though they are sometimes known by what may be called poetical names. The year is also divided into twenty-four periods or terms of about fifteen days each, some of which are known as chieh (joints), and others as chi (breaths). Each "term" has a special name of its own, one or two of which sound oddly to us, but most of them are natural enough; for example, January

21st is called Ta han (great cold); again, towards the end of March, comes Chun fên (spring divider, that is, the vernal equinox), &c. Some of these "terms" are made the occasion of holidays or festivals—such as, Li chun, or commencement of spring, Tung chih, or winter solstice, &c.

The Chinese have an elaborate almanack, published under the seal of the Astronomical Board at Peking, which regulates their festivals, and which may fairly claim to compete with the productions of Zadkiel and Old Moore; it certainly goes much more minutely into the details of every-day life than they do. On this subject Sir John Davis remarks:* "The Chinese almanack, like many others of the kind in Europe, contains predictions and advice for every day in the year, and presents the same spectacle of the abuse of a little mystical learning to impose on the ignorant majority of mankind. It even gives directions as to the most lucky days for going out or for staying at home, for shaving the head after the Tartar fashion, changing an abode, executing an agreement, or burying the dead. With this are mixed up, in the same page, a number of useful observations concerning natural phenomena pertaining to the season, though these remarks are interlarded with a number of vulgar errors as to the transformations of animals."

First and foremost among Chinese festivals and holidays is that of the new year, which happens sometimes at the end of January and sometimes in February. At this season, for two, three, or more days the shops are all shut, and work of every description is at a complete stand-still; at Peking the holiday-making is carried to such an extent that people are obliged to take the precaution of laying in a stock of provisions sufficient for a week or ten days. Crowds of people may be seen worshipping in the temples early in the morning, and during the day they are mainly occupied in visiting and congratulating one another; the Chinese call this pai nien, and tao hsi—much the same being meant as by our phrase, "A happy new year to you." The public offices are all closed, and it is of no use to attempt to prosecute thieves, &c., for petty offences, for the magistrates will take cognisance of none but extreme and serious cases. Gambling, at which the Chinese are great adepts, though it is theoretically prohibited by law, is now indulged in with great zest and publicity, and not

* The Chinese, &c., page 308. Ed. 1840.

the slightest attempt is made by the authorities to put a stop to it. The new year's festivities may be briefly summed up as comprehending sacrifices to heaven and earth; the worship of the gods of the family and of deceased ancestors; prostrations before parents; calls and congratulations, and the sending of cards and complimentary messages.

On the fifteenth day of the first moon occurs the Feast of Lanterns, called by the Chinese Hua têng and also Shai têng, which may be translated "a striving to excel in an exhibition of lanterns." A good deal of excitement is caused for some days beforehand by the crowds of people thronging the streets, especially at night, for the purpose of purchasing or staring at the lanterns, of which a goodly assortment is always on view. These lanterns are of all shapes and sizes, some being made to imitate animals; the commoner kinds are of paper, while the better and more expensive sorts are covered with gauze or fine silk, on which various fanciful objects are painted. At the Feast of Lanterns of 1862, just after the last war, ludicrous caricatures of French and English soldiers, sailors, and civilians, steamers, horses, &c., were much in vogue on the lanterns at Peking, in the neighbourhood of which Europeans in foreign garb had never before been seen. Fireworks, especially crackers, help to enliven the festive proceedings at night. In many parts of the empire married women on this day go to a temple and worship the goddess "Mother," burning incense to her, and having crackers let off in her honour, in the hope that she will grant them male offspring.

The second day of the second moon is the birthday of the Lares; plays are then performed at the public offices, and crackers and rockets are constantly being let off.

The Festival of the Tombs (Ching ming chieh), which commonly falls early in the third moon (April), a hundred and six days after the winter solstice, is observed all over the empire, and its date is mentioned in the imperial calendar. At this time all devout people visit the graves of their parents to Chi-sao, that is, to offer sacrifices of various kinds, and to put them in order. At the conclusion of the ceremonies they fix a piece of paper in the top of the hillock to show that all has been duly performed.

The eighth day of the fourth moon is celebrated as the birthday of Buddha. Many people go and gather a fragrant

herb, called yuan hsi, which is used as a charm against all sorts of disease.

The Festival of Dragon-boats takes place on the fifth day of the fifth moon (usually early in June). At this time races are run in long narrow boats, some forty or fifty feet in length, which are called lung chuan or dragon-boats, gongs being beaten all the time by a man standing up in the boat. The origin of this festival is said by some to be as follows: Many centuries ago, during the Chou dynasty (that is, about B.C. 400), a minister proposed certain reforms, which his sovereign refused to listen to; he persisted in urging his good advice, and at last got dismissed from his post. Knowing that his country was on the high road to ruin, and being unable to face this, he committed suicide by throwing himself into a river. His fellow-countrymen, with whom he was a favourite, as soon as they heard what had happened, scoured the river in all directions in small boats, well-manned, in the hope of finding his body. Tradition says that he died on the fifth day of the fifth moon, the day on which this festival has accordingly always been held.

The autumnal festival is celebrated in the eighth month, and the moon takes a leading part in it. From the first to the fifteenth people make cakes like the moon, painting figures on them; these are called yüeh ping, that is, moon cakes. Visits are interchanged between friends, and presents of these cakes are made. At the full moon, on the fifteenth, homage is paid to the ancestral tablets, and the family gods are worshipped; certain religious ceremonies are also performed to the moon. Tradesmen's bills are presented at this time, and if a man wishes to preserve his credit, he pays at least a portion of the amounts due.

The ninth day of the ninth moon is called Chung yang chieh, or Têng kao (that is, ascending high). At this season some go to the hills to drink and amuse themselves; others fly curious kites of extraordinary shapes, and gaudily painted; some representing Chinese goggle spectacles, others huge butterflies, others, again, fish, and indeed an infinite variety of objects. We have been told that it is customary for the holiday-makers eventually to let the kites go whither the wind listeth, as a sign that they treat all their cares in like manner!

In the eleventh moon (December), the shortest day of the year is made the occasion of a great festival. All officials are then expected to go to the imperial

hall (Wan shou ching) in the provincial capital and make their prostrations to the winter solstice. They also perform the three kneelings and nine knockings of the head on the ground (ko-tou) before the emperor's tablet, which is placed at the back of the temple, and congratulate him on the arrival of the winter solstice; at Peking the high officials do the same before the emperor himself, or before a yellow screen, which is supposed to represent him. On this day the emperor usually performs certain sacrificial rites in the Altar of Heaven. Entertainments are given by the officials in honour of the day, and the populace also chiefly observe the holiday by feasting.

After the middle of the twelfth moon various preparations for holiday-making commence, and on the twentieth an event occurs which is a very important one in all the public offices, namely, fêng yin, or the shutting up of the seal of office for a whole month, which is equivalent to a holiday for the same period. To make this quite intelligible to an English reader, we must remark that all public documents in China, including despatches, proclamations, warrants, &c., bear, not the signature of the official issuing them, but the impression of his seal of office in vermilion. As very important business, however, must be attended to, even during a holiday season, it is customary to stamp a certain number of blank sheets of paper before the seal is shut up, so that despatches, &c., can be written in due form, should cases of emergency arise. One of the chief clerks takes the seal and places it in his box, which is then locked up, and two strips of paper, stamped with the seal and bearing the date and name of the office, are next pasted over the box crosswise, thus, as it were, sealing it up. These fastenings are removed and the seal taken out on the twentieth day of the first moon of the new year, when the ordinary business routine of the office is resumed.

On the evening of the twenty-fourth of the last moon every family worships Tsao Shên, the god of the oven or kitchen fire, thanking him for his past kindness and care. On the evening of the thirtieth all let off crackers, and so see the old year out. Sacrifices and wine are offered to the deities, and all then partake of a meal; this is called tuan nien, that is, rounding off the year. Many sit up all night and shou sui, that is, watch for the year; and the Chinese have an old saw, that "he who can watch for the year will obtain long life."

One more festival remains to be noticed,

which is held in great honour among the Chinese, and shows how highly they esteem agriculture; but as it sometimes happens at the end of their year, and sometimes at the beginning, we have thought it better to speak of it last. This holiday or festival occurs at the Li Chun term or period, when the sun is in fifteen degrees of Aquarius (February 5th), and continues for ten days, to each of which a different name is applied, namely, fowl, dog, pig, sheep, cow, horse, man, grain, hemp, and pea; the seventh, or man-day, is the greatest. A large image of a buffalo, called the Chun niu, or spring buffalo, is made of clay at the public expense, and on the day before the chief one of the festival, the prefect goes out of the east gate of the city with much ceremony to "meet spring," which is represented by this figure, and also the image of a man in clay, called Tai sui, in allusion to the year of the cycle. He then makes certain offerings, prostrating himself before them. In the procession are numbers of children (called Chun sê), who are decked out with great care by the people and placed on tables, which are carried about the streets on men's shoulders. On the next day the same official appears as the priest of spring, and in that capacity he holds the highest rank for the time being, those who are really his superiors in office being then supposed to make way for him, if they chance to encounter him in his progress. Having delivered an address, eulogising agricultural pursuits, he strikes the clay figures with a whip two or three times, and they are then pelted with stones by the populace and broken in pieces, which is thought to be an omen of a good harvest. A writer on China has remarked that "this ceremony bears some resemblance to the procession of the bull Apis in ancient Egypt, which was connected in like manner with the labours of agriculture and the hopes of an abundant season."

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER II. FRIENDS THAT HAD BEEN LONG ESTRANGED.

MRS. GREYLING was reaping her reward!

She had gone to a vast expense this day in order to do due honour to the queen of the Court. She had bothered and beguiled her husband into the folly of hiring a horse for the day to put into his dog-cart, that so she might be enabled to have

"the pair" for her little brougham. She had trimmed her daughters' white muslin dresses with lace of price, because she had once heard Mrs. Powers hold forth on the subject of real lace in connexion with well-bred women's dresses, in a way that made her shiver to the soul as she reflected that she had been "short-sighted enough" to induct herself and her offspring into "mere machine-made" on various occasions. She had bonneted, and gloved, and booted them to the best of her ability, and quite regardless of cost. She had put her husband into a vile temper by the energy and whole-heartedness she had displayed in doing all these things. And now she was reaping her reward!

Her daughters were sent home with the glad tidings that "Mrs. Powers was keeping mamma to dine and spend the evening with her alone."

The garden-party had been very much like every other garden-party. People had met, and distrusted each other's claims to be there; had drank tea and coffee, admired the conservatories, and knocked croquet balls about. But through all these conventional preliminaries, Mrs. Greyling had been patiently hopeful of better things. For had not Mrs. Powers said to her at the onset:

"You must wait here till the other people are gone, and then you must send your girls home, and stay and dine with me, and tell me about the people who have taken the house at the corner."

Had not the acting lady of the land said this, and, from the moment of her saying it, was not Mrs. Greyling's heart at rest? She had nothing in common with the great majority of Mrs. Powers's friends, for these were either London or county people, who had their own set of allusions, interests, and topics. But what did it matter to this gallant woman that, in every little conversational effort that was made, it was manifested to her, if she struggled to join in it, that her contributions would not be thankfully received? She still had it in her power to go back to Dillsborough and say she "had spent a delightful hour or two with the rest of the company, and a still more delightful time alone with dear Mrs. Powers." Verily she was having her reward!

She was dining now under the auspices of a butler and a couple of footmen—dining, with the sure conviction that her hostess and fellow-labourer at the repast was not at all hungry, and not at all inclined to dally idly through the hour for the sole purpose of gratifying her visitor's appetite.

Mrs. Powers was thoroughly determined upon redeeming the time—and she made her determination manifest with the first spoonful of soup which she sipped.

"I suppose you can tell me all about them?" she commenced. "Devenish is not a common name, and there was a Devenish in my nephew's regiment; one would like to know if one ought to know them."

Mrs. Powers was a delightful woman in society—a sharp, clever, amusing woman of the world, full of anecdote, an excellent listener, and altogether sufficiently popular, plausible, and polished to make her a power in her own set. But to those who cast themselves before her chariot-wheels she was very ruthless in a domineering friendly kind of way, and she was occasionally very ruthless indeed to her faithful Mrs. Greyling.

"Thinking you might like to hear a little about them, I called just before I came here to-day," Mrs. Greyling answered, beaming with delight at having anticipated the great lady's wishes on the subject. "I should not have called so soon, having a great objection to rushing into intimacies, only as I said to Doctor Greyling—"

"Never mind what you said to Doctor Greyling," Mrs. Powers interrupted. Then she went on suavely: "I am very anxious to hear what impression these new people made upon you?"

"I should say they were not too well off," Mrs. Greyling responded, shaking her head; "the house, so much of it as I saw, looked nice, but I noticed a good many makeshifts." And then Mrs. Greyling relieved her mind about the "plain muslin curtains," and added a crushing statement to the effect that they "were coarse, quite coarse; the only thing that could be said in their favour was that they were clean."

"And that's everything," Mrs. Powers responded, overpoweringly. "I don't want to hear about their furniture, or whether they're rich or poor; I want to know if they're gentlepeople."

"It's so difficult to say," Mrs. Greyling murmured, sweetly.

She did wish, above all things, to avoid being definite about the Devenishes just at first. The longer she could keep up an air of doubt about them, the longer would Mrs. Powers's curiosity crave for her society, and the longer would Dillsborough suffer pangs of envy at the honour that was done her in being so sought and so distinguished by the queen of the Court.

"It's so difficult to say," she repeated, with a contemplative expression.

"I have no doubt that you find it difficult," Mrs. Powers said, dryly; "but if you can describe them, perhaps I shall be able to judge."

"Well, I should think they had seen better days," Mrs. Greyling began, nervously taxing her descriptive powers, which were not strong. "They were all neat; yes, I should decidedly say they were all neat, except the youngest girl's hair; but there was a worn look about all their dresses, and Mr. Devenish was wrapped up in a shabby old military cloak—"

"I don't want to hear about their clothes, but of their minds and manners, if they have any."

"Oh, they've very little manner—very little manner, any of them!" Mrs. Greyling exclaimed, hurriedly. Her task was becoming rather more difficult than she had believed it would be. "They all have a cool kind of way, as if they were rather careless and indifferent about you, you know—"

"They may well be; they don't know me," Mrs. Powers laughed.

"Oh, I don't mean about you individually, but about every one; they didn't ask me a single question about the place or the people, though I led up to the subject several times."

"Evidently they're free from vulgar curiosity; that sounds well," old Mrs. Powers said, approvingly. Woman-like, she was ready to condemn the quality she herself was displaying. "Are the daughters pretty?"

"One is pleasing-looking—yes, I should certainly call the eldest pleasing-looking; the second girl might look pretty at times, I dare say, but she's one of those persons whose looks you can't rely on; it's a very variable face. I don't admire the style myself; give me features."

"Where have they come from?"

"I couldn't find out, though I gave more than one hint; but when they call on me I shall ask them."

"I shall call on them to-morrow," Mrs. Powers said, magnificently—"yes, to-morrow will suit me very well; will you ask your good kind husband to let me have his carriage to-morrow at two?"

Mrs. Powers was rigidly economical in the country. In London, during the season, she kept a charming little brougham. But when she was at the Court, Doctor Greyling's carriage was "good enough for her," as she was kind enough to observe. Perhaps if she had known what anguish of mind poor Mrs. Greyling endured each time that she

was called upon to negotiate the loan, Christian charity would have induced her (Mrs. Powers) to borrow it less frequently.

"I am sure Doctor Greyling will be delighted," Mrs. Greyling gasped.

Poor woman! she was wincing already under the bitter sneers that would be dealt out freely to her when she went home, and was asked for the price of the honour that she had this day enjoyed. She was shrinking inwardly from the thought of the weary time she would have of it to-morrow when she would be obliged again to offer the suggestion that Doctor Greyling should hire a horse for the dog-cart, and send his own handsome well-bred pair over to the Court to do dutiful service for Mrs. Powers.

But what matters a little domestic discord more or less, when such interests are at stake socially? What matters the sharpest heart-pangs so long as they are concealed? Mrs. Powers never knew what her humble patient friend suffered in the cause of lending the carriage. Therefore she went on borrowing it in blithe unconscionousness whenever she wanted it—which was very often.

But patient and forbearing as Mrs. Greyling was, she still made gallant struggles to get at least part payment for that which she endured. Her friendship with Mrs. Powers would seem a sham, a hollow mockery, an idle thing indeed, if she could not go back to Dillsborough with late and voluminous information concerning the absent master of the Court—that Claude Powers, whose life had been a long romance to the people of his own land, so little did they know of him. Therefore, when she had promised to lend the carriage, and drained the cup of bitterness to the dregs, she turned to the topic of the absentee with the feeling that there was balm in Gilead still.

"I hope you have had good accounts of Mr. Powers lately?" she began, insinuatingly.

"Of my nephew Claude? Yes, very good accounts indeed; the very best, according to my idea. The 'king will soon have his own again; he's coming home to settle."

"And marry?" Mrs. Greyling meekly suggested.

"That too, I suppose, by-and-bye; young men do marry, though why they do I don't know; I hope Claude won't impetuously surrender his liberty to the first girl who makes love to him."

"I am sure I echo your hope," Mrs. Greyling said, with virtuous horror and

disgust; "it is woman's place to be sought; the forward manners of some young girls of the present day petrify me—absolutely petrify me."

"They don't petrify me at all, for they're only like the girls of the past, and the girls of the future will very probably closely resemble them; human nature does not alter very much in a generation or two; either the mothers go to market for the girls, or the girls go to market for themselves."

"I am sure I can conscientiously say that the longer I can keep my girls with me the better I shall be pleased," Mrs. Greyling answered, with a heightened colour.

Her hopes about the coming Claude were high. Was it possible that Mrs. Powers could have discerned them, carefully concealed as they were?

"Yours are very nice girls, and they'll make very nice wives; I was not thinking of them when I spoke," Mrs. Powers said, good-naturedly. "But Claude will have to run the gauntlet in quite another sphere to Dillsborough society, and, as I said before, I hope he won't surrender to the first girl who makes love to him; he has a charming nature, but it's one to lead him astray."

"He used to be a delightful boy," Mrs. Greyling said, with effusion. "It's so long since I have seen him, he will find me grown quite an old woman; when do you expect him home?"

"About the end of July."

"And we shall not lose you when we gain him, I trust?"

Mrs. Greyling asked it so fervently, that Mrs. Powers could but feel convinced that her friend was panting for the day to come when farewells for ever should be exchanged between them. This conviction imparted additional suavity to her reply.

"Oh, no; my nephew and I have settled that. I am to remain here—he says for ever, I say until he marries. Must you be going now? Remember the carriage at two to-morrow, and my kindest regards to your excellent husband."

"Well I have got some certain information about Claude, that's a comfort," Mrs. Greyling said to her three daughters that night. "He's not engaged at present, and he's coming home in July. I'm glad I stayed, if it was only to hear that; but what I shall have to go through with your father when I tell him that I have promised to send the carriage for her at two, I don't know."

"Anything duller than her detestable garden-party to-day, I can't conceive in my most dismal moments," Miss Greyling remarked, discontentedly. "I'm sure for all we endure at her hands down here, she ought to ask us up to visit her in town sometimes."

"Well, well, it will all be different when Claude comes home. Be thankful that we are on the familiar footing we are at the Court; I know that it causes a good deal of ill-feeling towards us in this place, but we can't please everybody. I have done a friendly thing to the Devenishes—persuaded Mrs. Powers to call on them; it will put them in a good position at once."

The soothing and comforting reflection that she had done this good thing, supported and carried Mrs. Greyling through the appalling ordeal of arranging that matter of lending the carriage to her patroness. However, that she negotiated the loan with consummate skill, may be gathered from the fact of the carriage being at the door of the Court at two o'clock precisely the following day.

Already was life at Dillsborough allowing itself to appear as the wearisome thing it was to those new-comers in the house at the corner. Town mice cannot take up the manners and interests of country mice at a moment's notice, and these special town mice had not even attempted a course of preliminary education. Given certain conditions, and the country is very desirable and delicious; withdraw these conditions and it becomes detestable—a howling wilderness at once.

Each one of the family felt the change from the easy, unobserved life they had led, to this one of being undesirably prominent and thought about. That they owed this dubious honour to nothing good in themselves, but merely to the curiosity of their neighbours, was a fact that did not lessen the burden in the least degree. They had to bear it. They had to bear the knowledge that speculation and suspicion were rife about them. And within themselves they had the chilling consciousness of inability to set them at rest.

A day at the house at the corner was not a thing to be marked with a white stone about this time. Mrs. Devenish and Mabel threw any quantity of moral oil on the troubled waters of their daily life, but the waters were not quieted thereby. The two dominant spirits of that household—Harty Carlisle and her step-father, Mr. Devenish—were not at peace with one another, and whatever the cause of the feud, it was

full of vitality. It came to the fore on every occasion, and made the path of the wife and mother a thorny one.

For she loved each of these antagonists so well. They were almost equally dear to her, although the slavish element in her essentially feminine nature made her render up the tribute of a fuller outwardly affectionate observance to her lord and master, Mr. Devenish. But though she did this, and though she scolded Harty daily, and wept over her delinquencies nightly, this wilful winsome child of hers was very dear to her.

Harty was doubly dear to her mother. She was dear for the sorrow she had caused, and for the sorrow she had suffered. Mrs. Devenish passed the whole of her time in either deprecating harsh feeling towards Harty, or in developing pity for the girl. As Harty herself worded it, "Mamma is always either apologising for my existence, or offering me the martyr's crown." And either extreme was irksome to one who only sighed for sufferance, who only asked to be let alone.

Harty Carlisle, some three or four years ago, had been on the topmost round of the feminine ladder of success. She had been for a brief time the object of envy to every other girl in the garrison town in which the —th were quartered, for she was engaged to be married to the best-liked, the wealthiest, and the handsomest man in the regiment. Suddenly the calamity to which Mr. Devenish made reference in the course of his conversation with his wife and daughters, overtook him, and "how it happened" no one knew but the girl herself. But her marriage scheme was abruptly demolished, and Claude Powers left the service.

Various reports about the affair were current, but the Devenishes and their daughters did not wait to hear many of them. The most popular version of the cause of the rupture was, that "Powers had jilted the girl, and very properly too, as her stepfather was such a bad egg." Harty knew that this was said, and never, by word or sign, did she attempt to contradict it. But Claude and herself, of all the world, were the only ones who knew how and why they had parted, and whose had been the severing hand.

Even to her mother Harty offered no explanation when the crisis came. Mrs. Devenish was busying herself about the trousseau one morning, wishing that Harty would decide as to the texture and particular white of the wedding dress, when

Harty came quietly in and stood by her mother's shoulder, and said :

"Claude Powers has sent his good-bye to you, mamma, through me; he won't be able to see you before he goes."

"His good-bye before he goes," Mrs. Devenish repeated, in utter bewilderment.

"Yes; this won't be wanted," Harty went on, putting her hand on the patterns of wedding silks.

"Oh, Harty, Harty, tell me, tell me," Mrs. Devenish asked, dissolving into tears of bitter disappointment and helpless misery. And then Harty told her all that she could ever be got to tell any one.

"We are not going to be married, mamma, and he has gone away; that is all."

"No, no, it isn't all. Harty, is your heart broken, or didn't you love him, that you take it so gently? Oh, I don't understand my own child!"

"My heart isn't broken. As to the other thing, we needn't talk about that, as I'm not going to marry him."

"It will be a blight on your whole life," Mrs. Devenish moaned; "as if we had not had misery and misfortune enough without Claude-adding to it."

"Claude hasn't added to it," Harty said imperiously; "Claude could only do what he has done; he had no alternative. I won't hear Claude blamed; and I don't mean my life to be blighted."

"You'll never love any one else as you have loved Claude, Harty; I know it. How could he give up such love as yours for false pride, for that is what it is, I feel sure, though you won't tell me; how could he?"

"Don't!" Harty cried, with a sudden stamp of her foot. "I tell you he could only do as he has done, and I won't hear him blamed; it's my affair altogether; no one else has anything to do with it."

"This will add bitterly to poor Edward's heavy trials." Mrs. Devenish sighed, and Harty could not check the contemptuous smile which flashed over her face as she answered :

"Don't put it before me in that light, pray, mamma. Papa will be sorry that the marriage is broken off, because it was a good match; but that will be all."

"Oh, Harty, Harty, you don't do justice to his sensitive nature," Mrs. Devenish pleaded. "I know that it will be a heavy trial to him, and I dread the effect the news will have on him. I shrink from breaking it to him; I dread my task."

"I'll break it to him, and that directly,"

Harty cried; and without any hesitation she went in search of Mr. Devenish, who was, as usual, wrapped in his old military cloak and melancholy reflections.

"Papa, I have come to tell you that Claude Powers and I are not going to be married," she said. "He has gone away."

Then had ensued a scene of recrimination and bitter bewailings that had been very ghastly to the girl. In vain she tried to avert the stream of self-pitying talk which Mr. Devenish poured upon her devoted head. She struggled with her own imperious nature, and refrained from giving wrathful answers, until he said:

"It's a cowardly thing to strike such a blow at a man in my position; a cruel and a cowardly thing, and I'll call him to account for it."

"If you ever speak to Claude Powers about—about our parting, I'll leave your house," she stormed out; "haven't we all suffered enough for you, that you must contemplate doing me this shameful wrong? To think of going to Claude, and trying to make him despise me; let me keep his respect, for Heaven's sake, even if I must lose his love."

The only sentence in her passionate plaint that made an impression on him was that one, "haven't we all suffered enough for you." That rang in his ears, and rankled in his mind, and from that day Mr. Devenish cordially disliked and distrusted his step-daughter.

But she carried her point successfully. Never a question was asked of Claude by any one member of her family relative to that abruptly broken engagement. Where he went no one knew; he passed completely out of their lives, and it seemed to them that they had done with him for ever. Whether the girl suffered much or suffered at all, was a problem to them, a problem which Harty never permitted them to solve. When they moved from the place which had witnessed the birth and death of her romance, she flung herself into the new life with a fervour that looked like forgetfulness. Whether it was or not remains to be seen.

"I never expected her to feel it much," Mr. Devenish would say, shrugging his shoulders. "I have had too full an experience of the ease with which she can give pain to expect anything like a tender regretfulness from her: but I didn't know that she was quite so shallow in feeling; she's ready to flirt with any fellow."

"Oh, papa, she meets so few people now," Mabel would plead in vindication of

her sister's manner, which was unquestionably always more vivacious and attractive when men were present, than when she was in the society of her own sex; "she's young, and it would be hard for her never to care for any one else; though I don't think she ever can find any one who can make her forget Claude."

"She's ready enough to flirt with any fellow," Mr. Devenish would say, querulously; "it will end, I see plainly, in her not marrying at all; we shall always have her on our hands."

In her illogical affectionate heart Mabel was very much inclined to pity her step-father for having the "burden of the maintenance of herself and her sister cast upon him." Not that he had anything of the sort. Mr. Devenish's share of the income on which they lived was utterly insufficient for his own wants. But then, as Mabel argued, "If mamma hadn't us there would be more for poor papa; and I'm sure he wants all he can have to make up for all he has suffered."

It was a great shock to the family mind, this news which Mrs. Greyling had given them about Claude Powers. They were not left long in doubt as to his being the Claude Powers who had figured so largely on the canvas of Harty's life. The day after Mrs. Greyling's visit, Mrs. Powers came to call on them, and almost her first words killed the frail hope they had entertained that he might not be the real Claude.

"There was a Devenish in my nephew's regiment, the —th," she said, cordially. And at the remark Mr. Devenish sighed heavily, and Mrs. Devenish put in hurriedly:

"Yes, we knew something of Mr. Powers; but my husband left the regiment some time before Mr. Powers sold out."

Mrs. Powers betrayed just the proper amount of courteous interest in this statement and nothing more. It was clear to the keen-visioned old lady that the subject was embarrassing to them, therefore she turned lightly away from it. She registered a vow on the spot to unravel the mystery if there was one, to discover that, whatever it was which these people seemed to desire to conceal. But she was a gentlewoman, and so she would not go grossly and coarsely about her self-imposed work. She would not investigate their case and hurt their feelings before their faces! She would know all about them, and collect all the threads of their story, however

blown abroad these might be. But she would do it in her own good time, and they should not be hurt or mortified by her at any rate in the process.

So she resolved as she sat in the little drawing-room in which on every side she detected marks of the tastes of refined women, and in which Mrs. Greyling had failed to see anything save the harsh marks of poverty. And all the time they were liking her, and being drawn to her by the irresistible influence of class sympathy. She resembled the traditions of their former life, of the life they had lived before Mr. Devenish's "misfortunes" turned the social tide against them, more closely than anything else they had seen in Dillsborough.

And some subtle element from the old romance—from the dead and done with romance—breathed its spirit into Harty, and charged her with the power and the will to be at her best before this old lady, who would probably ignore their existence as soon as her nephew came home and enlightened her. And Harty's best was a very bewitching thing.

"What did you mean by telling me that the youngest girl 'might look pretty at times?' She can look beautiful at times, and wonderfully attractive always, I should say, with that pliant figure and brilliant face. I like her; I like the vigour she throws into a word when she's interested, and the careless grace with which she turns from a person, or a topic, when she is indifferent; the other girl is an amiable, pretty, common-place creature, who has never given any one connected with her a pang, or a doubt, I should say; but the little dark one has the rare gift."

"What rare gift?" Mrs. Greyling asked, puzzled. "I can't see it."

"No, no, none of you can; it's fascination; not one woman in a hundred—not one woman in a thousand—has it, and when they have, they generally make themselves and their friends wretched. I'm sorry Claude is coming home."

"Mr. Powers will see so many beautiful women in London," Mrs. Greyling cooed, reassuringly, "that he is not likely to see very much in this young lady."

"Most men will see whatever she chooses they shall see in her," Mrs. Powers replied, emphatically; "I can see that."

The sea was like a lake that day. There

was not a breath of wind to stir the surface of the water, as the steamer ploughed her way across from Calais to Dover. On the deck two young men were lounging, lazily smoking, and languidly speaking to one another, now and again, but chiefly enjoying the warmth and the stillness.

"I can't get up any enthusiasm about the white cliffs, though I haven't seen them for some years; can you, Claude?" the younger man asked between the slow puffs he was giving at his cigar.

The man he addressed stretched himself out on his back, pulled his hat over his eyes, and laughed.

"I've had home sickness, though, a good deal, Jack; in dreams, both waking and sleeping, I've seen the old land,

"And in the dim blue distance
A strip of green there shone,
That green strip was a country,
That country was my own.

"Nor knew I till this vision
Had come into my heart,
Thou dear far land, how very dear
And very far thou art."

"Hah!" Jack Ferrier exclaimed by way of answer. Then after a pause of a few moments he added, "Dear enough in all conscience, unless prices have dropped considerably during our absence; but not so very far—half an hour longer will see us there."

They got up and went over and leant on the side of the boat, showing themselves to be two well-grown, good-looking men. At the first glance, the more stalwart figure and handsomer face of Mr. Ferrier led the eyes off his companion; but there was something about Claude Powers, the memory of which more than one woman had found to her cost, that "you couldn't get away from." It was not beauty only, and it was not power only; probably it was the subtle combination of the two. There was power enough in the broad brow, and earnest eyes, and there was great beauty, a most rare refinement in the chin and mouth, that were modelled delicately as a woman's. The inflections of his voice, too, were haunting, softly clear and sweet, and desperately passionate. Mr. Devenish had made many mistakes in life, but never a greater one than when he imagined that Harty had entirely forgotten Claude Powers.

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XX. FOUND.

I COULD not be mistaken, although it was certain that she did not recognise me. Our eyes met, but she only glanced at me in a vacant, listless way. She had been crying it appeared; rocking herself to and fro, as she gathered closely about her a long fur-trimmed mantle of black velvet, streaked and soiled here and there by trailing through the snow. Her hands were bare I noticed, and swollen and blue from the cold. There were jewels upon her fingers, and a rich gold bracelet clasped her wrist. She had drawn the hood of her cloak over her head, and held to her mouth a filmy lace-bordered handkerchief which she was biting and tearing with her teeth. For a moment or two I stood silent and amazed, contemplating her.

"Why are you here?" I asked at length, faintly, scarcely knowing what I said.

"Why should I not be here?" she answered, with lowered brows and angry-gleaming eyes.

"But you will die of cold."

"Well, and why not? As well here as elsewhere; as well of cold as of anything else. But it is cold, bitter, cruel cold. The wind cuts and stabs like a knife." Then in a changed voice she asked, "How far is it from here to Overbury Hall?"

"About three miles across the down."

"Not more? You're sure? I thought I'd come miles and miles. Ugh!" She shivered, and folding her cloak round her shoulders left her feet uncovered. I observed that her shoes were thin, and wet through. I was much distressed.

"Rosetta!" I cried.

She started. An expression of fear crossed her face.

"What! You know me! Who are you, then? A shepherd? Well, go and look after your sheep—I'm not one of them." And she laughed almost savagely.

"I am not a shepherd. You have forgotten me, it seems—Duke Nightingale."

But it was plain the name conveyed no meaning to her, that she did not know me.

"Duke Nightingale," she repeated, pressing her hand upon her forehead.

"I saw you at Dripford, at the fair, some months back. You were dancing in a tent. Surely you remember?"

"What! You were there? With him? Ah, I think I do recollect something about it now. So, you were the boy that came with him? But what of it? Are you his servant—his spy? Why have you tracked me here?"

"I live close by, at the farm-house in the hollow yonder."

"You have not followed me, then? Is that what you mean? It was mere chance brought you here?"

"It was mere chance."

"Well, you've seen me, you've found me. Now go."

"I cannot leave you here. Night is coming on. You will die of cold if you remain here."

"I'm only resting. I shall go on presently. Where? God only knows! Out of the world, perhaps. I don't care where. Oh, if it wasn't so cold! My fingers ache, my teeth chatter, my heart seems breaking, my feet are like stones. Am I dying, do you think?"

"Impossible! Heaven forbid! No, Rosetta, it shall not be."

"Why do you speak to me like that? How strange of you! What am I to you?"

"Indeed, indeed, you are very much to me, Rosetta."

"You have got my name pat enough, it seems," she said with a wild, scornful laugh.

"I was not likely to forget it, or you, Rosetta. You cannot know, you cannot guess, what joy it is to me to see you once more."

"You've a kind voice," she said, after a pause. "And you mean kindly, I think. But you never saw me but once, and then only for a few minutes. And you've thought of me since—often? very often?"

"Indeed, Rosetta, I have never ceased to think of you."

"How strange all this sounds. You're not mad, are you? But you couldn't know, if you were. It's no use asking that. So you saw me dance at the fair, and have thought of me ever since? Yes, I remember all now. And you saw Diavolo cane me, the wretch. He's dead since. So I've heard. I can't but hope it's true. It's wrong to hope that, I suppose. Somehow everything one does is wrong, according to some people. They haven't been beaten by him as I have. I hated him. He was a cruel, savage monster, and I was so helpless in his hands—a child and his apprentice—not that he was worse to me than to the others, poor little wretches that we were. For father and mother I had none that ever I heard of. So I was at his mercy. And he half starved me, and took all my earnings. But that's over now. And he's dead. He broke his neck they told me. It little matters now. All's past and gone. I've left that life behind me—exchanged it for what? This! A pretty change. Oh, this bitter wind! It cuts me to pieces."

She swayed to and fro as she talked in this wandering, fragmentary way, scarce knowing, as I judged, what she said. Her eyes were closing, and she appeared half fainting from the intense cold. Suddenly she bowed her head, and was falling asleep in the snow. I knew the danger of this, and grew much alarmed. Happily I carried with me a small flask of brandy. I applied it to her lips, and constrained her to swallow some few drops. I took off my heavy coat, and wrapped it round her. I chafed her hands, breathing upon them to warm them. I folded my arms round her, and drew her close to me. Presently she revived a little.

"How kind you are to me," she murmured, dreamily. "You're a good boy, I'm sure, Duke Nightingale! Yes, I know

the name now. God bless you, Duke. Kiss me. How warm your face is, and smooth as a woman's. It quite burns my cheeks. I was so cold and wretched; but I'm better now. I should have died, I'm sure, but for you. Not that I cared; I wanted to die, I think. But the cold was dreadful. And you've thought of me often? How strange that seems. For what was I to you? A girl dancing in a booth. That's all: Though I danced well, I know; and could still, if I haven't forgot it all. I hated the life. I felt that I could, and should, have been doing better. Plenty of talent has come out of booths—why not in my case as in another's? But I had no chance. I was a slave to a cruel master. I had only to obey his bidding, and was beaten when I refused. How weary, weary I grew of it! So I escaped at last. You know that, I suppose? It was the day you saw me at the fair."

"And you escaped alone?"

"No; not alone. How could I? With him."

"With Lord Overbury?" I asked, faintly, after a pause. My heart was throbbing cruelly.

"With Lord Overbury."

It was true, then. I felt, I knew it must be so. And yet it pained me grievously, unspeakably, to learn the fact for certain from her lips. I was silent, longing for some look upon her face of sorrow, of shame, of penitence. I saw none. She only shivered and looked about her with fatigued, half-closed eyes.

"Diavolo followed me, did you know that, to take me back?"

"Yes, Diavolo, with Mauleverer."

"Mauleverer? Oh, you mean the clown. Mauleverer? That wasn't the name, I think. But it doesn't matter. We've so many names, and change them so often. Yes, Mauleverer, as you call him. I remember. He was a good fellow that, I think. I liked him. He was a little crazy, wasn't he? But he was kind to me. He had always a friendly word for me. And he tried often to keep Diavolo's cane from me. It wasn't much use, for how could he hinder Diavolo? He couldn't, you know. So he followed, too, did he, with Diavolo, to bring me back? It was no business of his. Why should he care what became of me? Why did he try to take me back?"

I could not answer. I was too much distressed and perplexed. And what was to be done? I asked myself.

"I would have died sooner than go back.

I had a knife with me. I would have used it had they laid a finger upon me. I was free at last. There was no going back for me. And they couldn't overtake us. He knew all the country, and turned off somewhere at a by-road. And then we went north. It was a long, dreary journey, I remember; and now I'm back in this part of the world. Is it far from here to—what's the place where the fair was? ah, Dripford—that's it. How many miles?"

I told her how many. She had raised herself with difficulty, moving stiffly, as though her limbs were half frozen. With a tremulous hand she shaded her eyes, dazzled by the snow; glanced at the bleak landscape about her, and shuddered. The sun was now fast sinking into a coppery bank of snow-charged clouds behind Beacon Mount. The parting rays touched as with fire the gilt vane of Purrington Church in the distance, and tinged with rose-red the tree-tops of the leafless woodlands surrounding and shrouding Overbury Hall.

"I must try and get on somehow," she said, feebly.

"Where are you going?"

"Anywhere but back there." She pointed in the direction of the great house.

"You have come from the hall?"

"From where else, do you suppose? I didn't drop from the sky. Did you think I did?"

It seemed not impossible. It was so strange that she should be where she was; and she was so beautiful, and my admiration for her was so extreme; for the moment it had outstripped and almost quelled my love. Not because a conviction was growing upon me, as it well might do, of her unworthiness. Not appreciably on that account. But I stood in her presence; my heart had lost its boldness. I was all reverence, and trembling devotion. Besides, I had to think, to the disturbance of my wild fondness, what was to be done next. The matter was becoming urgent.

"How wretchedly tired and weak I feel," she said; "and I thought I was so strong. What a fool I am! No, I can't go on yet. I must rest here a little while longer. If you would only let me go to sleep for half an hour, I feel I should wake up quite well and strong again."

"Impossible, Rosetta; it must not be; it will be certain death to you."

"And if it is, what does it matter? Who will care?"

"I shall. Indeed, indeed, Rosetta, it would break my heart," I cried, desperately.

"You! Your heart! What! You love me?"

I know not what I said in answer; but there was no need of words; my face sufficiently revealed the story of my passion.

"My poor boy!" She looked at me with curious tenderness, and a sort of wondering compassion. This softened expression rendered her in my eyes more lovely than ever. I clasped her cold hands in mine. She withdrew them abruptly, pressing them against her forehead.

"How strange! How mad! You love me! Me of all people!" Then presently she added, "No, no, it must not be. There must be no more of this. Let me go. I can walk now."

"You will go back to the hall—to him?" A fierce jealousy burned within me. I grew bolder now, for all was told and known, by some desperate chance as it seemed. She had seen into my heart.

"No, not there—not to him." But she spoke less firmly than before.

"Rosetta, you love Lord Overbury?"

"I!" It was uttered in a kind of scream.

"He was to me escape, that was all; and now——" she paused, tossing her head in imperious anger.

"And now——"

"I hate him!"

I fell at her feet. My heart found words—frantic words enough, very likely. I cannot now recal them; yet they were intelligible—could not be misread; I said, at least I know I strove to say, that I loved her, that I should love her always; that she was dearer to me than anything in this world. That the thought of her, the memory of her, was ever with me. That she was part of my very being, of myself. That she was my life, my soul. That I adored her, that I devoted myself to her, and to her service thenceforward and for ever. And much more to the same effect, expressed with all the iteration and diffuseness customary with passion long or short lived, but for the time fervid and thorough.

She listened, amazed and bewildered, and yet, I think, pleased too.

"I have never been spoken to like this before," she said, half musingly, softly and simply. She stooped down, and gently kissed me on the forehead. "But you musn't say such things to me." She was turning from me. I clutched her cloak, and sought to detain her. She snatched it from me, and was hurrying away through the firs.

Suddenly she slipped in the snow and fell.

When I came up to where she was lying, I found that she had fainted. What was I to do? I raised her from the ground, and, sustaining her with one hand, tried with the other to beat from her dress the thick snow that clung to it. How deadly pale she was! Was she hurt?

CLUBS AND CO-OPERATION.

"You ought to belong to us, old man," said Honeydew, as we at last came to coffee and curaçoa, after a long but delightfully discriminated dinner, which I am bound to say was as nearly perfect as possible, from the eggs to the apples—that is to say, from the oysters to the ice-pudding.

I was dining tête-à-tête with Honeydew at his new club, the Acropolis. It was a new club necessarily to him and some six hundred members; for it had been established only a few months, and had not passed the period—common to all such institutions in their infancy—when their merits form a prominent subject of conversation among those frequenting them. It was with pardonable pride in the resources of the Acropolis, doubtless, that Honeydew had made a point of developing them unusually upon this occasion, and I am bound to say that the wines were well worthy of the viands. The sherry was a little too dry for me, so was the champagne; but men will have them so in these days, and both were admirable wines. The hock and the claret could not be made to err in this respect, and were beyond all praise. I could see that Honeydew was pleased with my approval of them, marked in the most practical manner, and it was when the coffee and curaçoa succeeded that he revealed the current of his thoughts, by saying:

"You ought to belong to us, old man;" adding, "let me put you up."

I expressed my thanks for the proffered honour, but elected to reserve my decision; intimating that I was already a member of several clubs to which I never went, and that I should like to be off with one or two old loves before being on with a new one.

There was a little hesitation as to whether we should go and hear "the best thing in Opera Bouffe that had been out for a long time," or ascend to the region above, where weeds and flowers do not promis-

cuons shoot, as the weeds have it to themselves. Agreeably charged with wine as we were, we found ourselves more disposed to talk than to listen (degenerate are players in these days!) and after some gentle dalliance, on the question being formally put, the weeds had it.

So I mounted the velvet pile of the palatial staircase to the apartment indicated, while Honeydew transacted pecuniary business at a high desk in the corner of the room. This, I may here remark, is an ungraceful necessity when a man has guests, and one which should be avoided. In some clubs it is usual to postpone the settlement when hospitality is being dispensed, though in contravention of the rules. To be sure Tom Ransack—who has since gone to the dogs—used to abuse the privilege considerably. His normal condition was to be without money; and you always knew when he was particularly impecunious by seeing him entertaining a tableful of friends at the Junior Sybarite—had he dined alone he would have had no excuse for not paying his bill. It is curious, by the way, to observe what stringent restrictions seem required to keep a society of gentlemen of unblemished honour in order. To look at the ordinary rules of a club you would suppose the members capable of committing the most atrocious crimes.

The smoking-room of the Acropolis differs advantageously from many smoking-rooms I know by being less severe in style. Its velvet couches and mirrors, and ornamental aspect generally, relieve you from the too common impression produced by these places, that they are penitentiaries where you are sent to indulge habits unfitting you for respectable society. I took my seat upon a vacant couch beside its attendant table—a comfortable article of furniture, by the way, which did not look as if it would overturn at your slightest movement—and was joined in two or three minutes by Honeydew. As he entered the room his eye seemed to catch some object in my rear, and he shied, just like a horse, turning three quarters right-about, as if preparing for a retreat. He did leave the room, indeed, but in a careless manner, giving me a look which I understood.

"What the deuce is the matter?" I asked, when I joined him on the landing outside.

"It's that awful bore, Buzwell," said Honeydew. "You actually placed yourself at the table next him—within the

shortest range of his batteries, where every shot would have told. We should scarcely have escaped alive. But you knew no better—come this way, old man.”

And Honeydew marshalled me to the extreme end of the apartment, placing the longest possible distance between us and the enemy, from whom we were sheltered, too, by several groups of guests. While our seltzers were coming, my friend explained to me the monster's peculiarities.

“He has as a rule only three subjects of conversation—eating, drinking, and smoking—and these he takes up regularly, one after the other, uniting them in one discourse. He has always had a grievance that he cannot obtain his pet pleasures to perfection at reasonable rates; and, lately, he has discovered what he considers the weak points of club management, and will occupy the whole evening in proving to you that every committee in London ought to be hanged.”

As he spoke I saw an expression of horror come over the face of Honeydew, and was not long in understanding its cause. Turning, I beheld a portly gentleman, slightly bald as to the head, the hair on his face cut with military precision, bearing an aspect generally of softened ferocity, and looking as much like a major of the old school as a man can look. It was, indeed, the dreaded Major Buzwell, and—horrible portent—he carried in his hand a coffee-cup!

It was all up. He had carried our garrison by a coup de main, and surrender was inevitable. Seating himself at our table he began to talk—I need scarcely say upon what subject.

After “compliments”—occasioned by his introduction to a stranger—he proceeded to hold forth without ceremony, addressing us both indiscriminately, something in the following fashion:

“I've told you before, and I tell you again, that it's all nonsense to talk about the comfort and economy of clubs, as at present managed. There is not a club in London where you can get a decent cutlet and pint of wine without paying for it more than you would be charged in any restaurant. And in the restaurant, remember, when you pay for your cutlet, you are paying rent and taxes, upholsterer's bills, gas bills, servants' wages, landlord's profits, and for everything necessary for the enjoyment of your cutlet and wine in peace and quietness. At a club all these accessories are supposed to be covered by

your entrance fee and annual subscription, and you are told that you get your eating and drinking at cost price. Cost price! A pretty price it costs the members! Yes—I know what you are going to say—you can at least get lunch here at a reasonable rate. I know you can, and men can make it their dinner if they like to dine on cold meat before four o'clock. But if there was not an awful waste of cold meat—as of everything else—this could not be done, and what members save one way, they lose in another. Waste—I should think there was waste, and well there may be. A set of men who may be good enough at bawling to a battalion with the help of an adjutant, or dabbling in stocks or politics, but who know nothing of household management, are set to work to control a secretary, and a steward, and a host of cooks and waiters, and to take care not only that we have everything at proper market rates, but that we make the best use of everything when we get it. Of wine they do know something as a rule; but the wine merchants can get the better of them for all that. Do you mean to tell me that the hock I had down-stairs at dinner, is the same wine as the sample tasted by the committee, which they found so good as to be actually cheap at the price? Of course not, and it's the same with half the wine laid down. I don't mean to say that any of our committee are in league with the wine merchants, but such things have been heard of, and I could tell you some pretty stories of the kind, only of course you know them as well as I do. I need scarcely tell you that most new clubs are set up by wine merchants, just as public-houses are set up by brewers; and in that case, having the custom secure, they can mix their wines if they please. When remonstrances are made, things are improved for the time, and members who know exactly what to order may get well supplied. But the inexperienced men get let in considerably.

“It is well, you say, not to be at the mercy of one merchant. Well, take a club where the cellar is supplied by three or four. A man who only occasionally uses the club gives a dinner to a few friends. He knows no more of wine, we will suppose, than three-fourths of the men who pretend to know everything. In particular he knows nothing of the carte, so he asks the waiter what he recommends. The waiter has always a favourite wine merchant, and of course his wines are those recommended.

Do you mean to tell me that the waiter has not a good and substantial reason for his preference? But that's only of a piece with the entire system. There is not a tradesman employed who does not pay for the custom he obtains, and this payment is necessarily added to the price of the articles he supplies. A committee will of course find out this sort of thing now and then, and somebody gets dismissed; but the sort of thing goes on for all that. If a secretary complains of a steward for practices of the kind he very likely gets no thanks. The steward has his answer, and the secretary is probably placed in an invidious position as to his motives in seeking the dismissal of an apparently faithful servant. Sometimes a secretary or manager will ask a tradesman—say a butcher—for discount for ready money. I know the answer returned in more than one case, a derisive reply that nobody gives discount to clubs, that no tradesmen can be found to do it. One man I know made a facetious proposal to allow two and a half per cent, as if that was of any use! And one went so far as to concede ten per cent; but it was soon found that ten per cent was added to the bills before being taken off, and who was the gainer by that? The very men, too, who are most firm in refusing fair discount are the most liberal in their percentages and tips in an underhand way, for it is by these means that they secure the custom of the house. Otherwise, they know very well that the first opportunity would be taken to complain of them, and to transfer the patronage elsewhere. You may depend upon it that nothing of the kind occurs at an hotel or restaurant—unless, indeed, it be on the limited liability principle. The proprietor knows his own interests and looks after them; and I know it as a fact, that hotel and tavern-keepers uniformly refuse to take servants who have been in clubs, on the ground that they are demoralised, and unfit for an establishment that has to be worked at a profit. I tell you, sir, that the club system is always an extravagant one, and in too many instances is made up of gross jobbery.

"A new club, as often as not, is originally evolved from the moral consciousness of a gentleman about town who has nothing to do—say a half-pay officer—half-pay officers without private fortunes are capable of anything. He finds a solicitor who knows somebody who has a site, or, it may be, a house ready built. An archi-

tect is probably required, and he is sure to turn up punctually. A wine merchant is certain not to be far off; and an upholsterer, you may be sure, is faithfully to the fore. All these people use their connexion to get a nucleus of members; you may be sure that they all get something more than their professional emoluments; and the club commences its career with a cheerful debt. Entrance fees and subscriptions of course come in; but these are found insufficient for the purpose. Then there is a whip round; then a hundred or two of rather mixed members are taken in without entrance fee; then there is another whip; then more touting for additional members, and so the game goes on. Sometimes a club tides over its troubles and becomes safely established; but the majority of new speculations of the kind go to the wall after a year or two. There are a set of men going about—of sufficient ostensible position to bear description in a list of names—who belong, I really believe, to every new club that starts.

"As for the tips to servants, of course they are added to the price of the articles sold; but that is not the chief objection to them. If the cook is in the pay of the tradesmen, how can he complain if he is furnished with coarse meat, skinny fowls, or inferior fish? He has to take what he can get, and his masters suffer.

"Of course all this kind of thing makes the tariff of prices to members much higher than it ought to be—higher, as I have said, than that of any restaurant; but will you believe me if I tell you that all the dear dinners and lunches we have here (I suppose here because I know it is so elsewhere) are actually supplied at a loss? Here is a statement—"

Honeydew and I winced when Major Buzwell drew a paper from his pocket—being talked at is bad enough, but being read at is intolerable. But we could no more stop him than the Wedding Guest could stop the Ancient Mariner.

"Here is a statement which I have had drawn up from trustworthy sources, concerning the expenditure of clubs. According to their own accounts, twenty clubs at the West-end collectively spend upon their provisions and beverages no less than a quarter of a million a year, which is at the average rate of about ten pounds for each of their twenty-five thousand members. Taking a tradesman's ordinary profit to be five-and-twenty per cent, the custom of these twenty clubs must be worth two

pounds ten shillings a member a year; and this sum would render practicable a reduction of from one-fourth to one-third the present rate of annual subscriptions. There is now shown in most West-end clubs an average deficiency in their provision accounts of about one pound per member per annum. It is usually said that this is caused by the cost of keeping the servants; but the real reason is bad management, for the members are charged quite enough to leave a good margin for profit, and there are clubs in which a gain upon this account is actually made, and that with very moderate tariffs. Yet at some West-end clubs, the loss upon the provision account comes to nearly two thousand a year.

"This is what I say then—let there be a better and more economical system in the purchase of supplies, and most of the clubs would be quite as well off as they are with half their present rate of subscriptions; while those who owe money could very soon pay it off. Here is an instance. A club I happen to know has a debt of eight thousand five hundred pounds. It has something more than thirteen hundred members, paying a subscription of seven guineas; and its loss on the provision account is nearly a thousand a year. I have calculated that by a system by which it saved the tradesman's profit upon the provisions supplied, and counting these at the rate of two pounds ten a member a year, the club would find itself more than four thousand pounds in pocket, and be able the first year to remit half of its rate of subscription, or pay off half its debt.

"I have spoken as yet only about economies in the coffee-room supplies; but there are plenty of things, such as fuel, chandlery, stationery—most things in fact—which might be made to figure as profit instead of loss. I have included these general items in another calculation which I have made, and applied it to the case of a club (which I could name) with fifteen hundred members, a subscription of from eight to ten guineas, thirty thousand pounds debt, and a loss on provisions of nearly two thousand pounds. Its expenditure for provisions and other supplies amounts to between sixteen and seventeen thousand pounds. Now if five-and-twenty per cent could be saved on this amount, and the loss on provisions be prevented, the concern would benefit to the extent of some six thousand a year—a sum equal to one-half of its subscriptions or one-fifth of its debt.

"You doubt the possibility of saving the

five-and-twenty per cent? Read the last published accounts of the Civil Service Supply Association, and you will see that, after securing for its eighteen thousand members a reduction in the price of articles purchased amounting to twenty per cent, there still remains a net five and a half per cent profit for the proprietors—that is to say, the purchases being four hundred and sixty thousand, the sales four hundred and ninety-two thousand five hundred, the net profits, after paying six and a half per cent for working expenses, are twenty-seven thousand six hundred a year. You suppose, then, that I wish to introduce the co-operative system? Of course I do. It is introduced, however, already—a club being essentially a co-operative body—and my object is to carry out the principle to its logical extent. It is absurd for us, say, to get our supplies from tradesmen open to all the world, at retail prices made higher by the demoralisation of our own servants. What is to prevent us from going into the wholesale market, and putting all the retailers' profits into our own pockets? This applies to five hundred things besides provisions; but, as regards the last, I admit that each club might send its purveyor down to Billingsgate, Leadenhall, or any other markets they please, without any special organisation. But what would be the consequence? They would very likely bid against each other and increase the cost of the articles purchased. Why, then, should the clubs not be made members of a co-operative store? No existing store could supply them, even if it would. And you must remember that they have no butcher's meat, fish, poultry, game, butter, milk, eggs, vegetables—all of which a club requires daily in large quantities. To do any good in the way of reform, the clubs should combine and establish a great co-operative store of their own. They are nearly all in the same neighbourhood, and might have their supplies close at hand; and one purveyor could then do the whole business on a monster scale. There is no reason why the stores should be limited to provisions and beverages. If the principle holds good for one article, it holds good for every other. Nor is there any reason why the privilege of employing the stores should be limited to clubs in their corporate capacity. Every member might enjoy the same advantages for his personal profit and convenience, thus increasing the custom and the wealth of the association. I know a limited liability hotel that was

saved from bankruptcy by adopting a system of the kind, and now pays a large dividend to its once hopeless shareholders. But I've told you before, and I tell you again—the fact is, we are fools for going on in the way we are going."

The major here made a pause, and puffed at his cigar ferociously, by way of vent for his emotion. Honeydew and myself had by this time been talked into an utter abnegation of will. We were dull, spiritless beings; lost to pride, ambition, even self-respect; abased as hereditary bondsmen—as the slave who has lost the sap of manhood. Such is the degeneracy which comes over the noblest minds under the enthralling boredom of a dominant spirit like that of Major Buzwell. We could not choose but hear; and from a healthy power of discrimination or dissent were reduced to such abject acquiescence as is expressed by "Yes," "Indeed," or "You don't say so." And all this time we might have been hearing "the best thing in Opera Bouffe that had been out for a long time," or talking any amount of congenial buffoonery between ourselves.

As people on the verge of starvation can be restored only by slow degrees, we could not immediately regain our intellectual force when Buzwell made a pause; but quailing under his determined glance, listened to some clenching reflections.

"If club-management is not wrong, I say, how is it that taverns can sell cheaper than clubs and make a profit, while clubs make a loss? And how is it that while so many hundreds of men are clubless in London, many of them with their names down and waiting for years to be put up at existing clubs, nearly every new club formed for their accommodation fails for want of funds? The fact is, they have funds amply sufficient for their purpose; but nothing, except enormous capital, can stand against the waste and extravagance which—I told you before and I tell you again—has grown into a system, sir, a system, which it is my intention to put down."

Whether Buzwell will keep his word or not, I cannot say; but if not, it will not be for want of trying. He pays no homage to things any more than persons. He is the sort of man who would "speak disrespectfully of the equator" on small provocation; and I have heard that he was, a short time ago, very severe even upon such an august institution as the Cape of Good Hope. Speaking of the supercession of the Cape in its relation to India, by the Suez Canal, he turned fiercely upon a

meek man who ventured to praise its climate, and said, "Sir, the Cape of Good Hope has had its day—it has retired into that obscurity from which it ought never to have emerged."

After this there is every chance that such an institution as the system of club management will not be safe from his attacks; and I must say for Honeydew and myself—and in justice to the major—that as we two walked out together into the free air of St. James's-street, we half forgot the infliction we had suffered, recovered our intellectual vitality, and agreed seriously that there was an immense deal of truth in what the old bore had said.

THE KAISERSTADT.

FROM Balkh—the "Mother of Cities"—to Chicago, every city on this globe has, at some period of its existence, kept its native trumpeter. The best known borcs in this respect are Naples and Seville, for there exists probably no one who has not heard of the Neapolitan's friendly advice to go and die after gazing on the ineffable glories of his bay; and of the Andalusian boast that he who has not seen Seville has not seen a "marvel." Most people in the present state of Spain will be content to remain a little longer under this latter deprivation, and console themselves with a sight of Lisbon, which is declared confidently by its special trumpeter to be a "good thing." Naturally "to every bird his own nest is beautiful," and, as the late Mr. Barham has observed,

There is not a nation in Europe but labours
To toady itself and to humbug its neighbours;

but the sublime faith of the old double-headed fowl of Austria in the superiority of Vienna, in times past, present, and to come, cannot be outdone from China to Peru, and is very touching. In their own Lerchenfelder patois the Viennese never weary repeating to their babies and to strangers,

'Sgibt nur a' Kaiserstadt,
'Sgibt nur a' Wien!

which signifies there is only one emperor's city, and one Vienna, and has a curious resemblance to the Muhammedan formula of faith that there is but one God and one Prophet. From the time of Maria Theresa to that of Königgrätz, they used to add in bitter wrath, and with perhaps much historical justification,

'Sgibt nur a' räubernest,
Und das ist Berlin!

but this uncomplimentary allusion to the new Kaiserstadt on the Spree is now generally omitted under the renescent influences of German grandeur and brotherhood, and would, of course, have been out of place on the festive May-day, when all the nations of the earth were expected to reassemble (but didn't), for the fifth time, to swear peace on earth and good will to each other.

This great imperial city of such unique pretension sprang from a marsh where a few "rude huts by the Danube lay," peopled by a Keltic tribe called Vinds, when the Romans under Tiberius, afterwards Cæsar, pushed their frontier posts fifteen years before the Christian era, to the right bank of the great river. Of this Keltic people little is known, which is probably no great loss; but the Romans gave its first fame and civilisation to the settlement. They called it Vindobona, and, on the site of the present Hohermarkt, as learned men aver, they built a Castrum, and garrisoned it with the Thirteenth Legion, and there the Emperor Marcus Aurelius died. In course of time the name of Vindobona disappeared, and the station came to be known as Castra Fabiana, from the Tenth Legion, which had replaced the Thirteenth, and remained in garrison for three hundred years, till the falling fortunes of Rome necessitated its recal. From Fabiana or Faviana, as some learned men have also decided, came in the Carolingian era, Viana, Viena, and ultimately Wien.

After the departure of the Tenth Legion, Vienna had rather a rough time of it between the Rugii, Huns, Goths, Lombards, and Avars, until Charlemagne chased the last named into Hungary, and incorporated the country with the empire under the designation of the Eastern March, to be known later as Cesterreich, the Eastern domain, and governed by a markgraf or marquis. Through all the wars and vicissitudes of the new fief, Vienna was destined to remain in obscurity for nearly four hundred and fifty years, until the reign of the eighth Markgraf and first Duke of the Babenberg House, the famous Heinrich Sam Mir Gott or Jasomirgott, who enlarged, fortified, and made it his capital. His works live after him, notably in the west front of St. Stephen's Gothic pile, where Meister Falkner of Krakau reared the Giant's Portal and the Heathen's Towers as a testimony for him to future times, while all the acknowledgment accorded him by a prosperous and boastful city and a succeeding and successful dy-

nasty, is a miserable effigy, crowded with others, on the parapet of a modern bridge. This "enlarged" capital of Jasomirgott was, however, of such modest dimensions, that it could be traversed from wall to wall in five minutes. The boundary was a line drawn from the Trattnerhof on the Graben, through and round by the Brandstätt, Lichtensteg, Haarmarkt, Fischerstiege, Tiefer Graben, Hof, and Bogner Gasse, back to the Graben, which was then, as its name denotes, a ditch, but is now the combined Cheapside and Regent-street of the city.

These Babenbergs seem to have been able and doughty warriors, and, on the whole, rather more enlightened and sagacious than the generality of mediæval rulers. If surnames be of any value as indications of a prince's character or disposition, they were happy in them, for the first of the line was the Illustrious, and the last the Warlike, with others between, who were Victorious, Holy, Glorious, and Virtuous. The selfish and calculated intolerance of their Hapsburg successors, however, has almost overshadowed their merits and memory; and histories have not treated them with that distinction and full measure of justice which they undoubtedly deserve; because, until recently, the notorious and stupid censorship rigorously and systematically burked or mangled all honest literature, free inquiry, and thought itself, particularly in regard to politics, theology, and history. On the other hand, any glorification of the House of Hapsburg, no matter how extravagant, was encouraged and passed. Among the many such, the most curious example is a chronicle written in the seventeenth century by a monk and a "teacher," which traces the imperial pedigree with didactic craziness to Noah!

The Babenberg best known in England is Jasomirgott's son, the sixth Leopold and second Duke of Austria, Richard's fellow crusader, who has been carefully handed down by our monkish chroniclers to the everlasting contempt and hatred of British boys and girls. Nevertheless, German writers have laboured, and not altogether unsuccessfully, to justify by German facts and lights the caging of the Lion in Dürrenstein. About the chivalry of the proceeding there cannot be two opinions, but it is very possible that chivalry—at least in the Holy Roman Empire—was not quite the sentimental and disinterested institution which it is generally understood to have been. The English monarch was recognised and ar-

rested in the present Erdberg suburb, then a small village, while engaged in the homely but necessary office of cooking a fowl for his dinner. Part of the blackmail or ransom money exacted for his release was expended in true Teutonic fashion—which has come down to our own day—in rebuilding and extending the defences of Vienna, Enns, and other towns, by which the “majesty of Germany”—a German historian’s term—must have been wonderfully soothed, more especially as the origin of Richard’s affront to the escutcheon and banner of Babenberg was Leopold’s churlish refusal to assist with his men in rebuilding the walls of Ascalon, on the plea that “he was neither a mason nor a carpenter!” But he had no objection to borrow money of the “wealthy king of England” wherewith to pay his troops. The Pope cursed him for laying hands on such a champion of the Cross, and nothing could be more orthodox or becoming after that than that he should be thrown from his horse, break his leg, and die. But for all this the fact remains that Leopold is regarded as one of the best princes of his house, and was called by his subjects “the Virtuous.”

A little lesson may be deduced from this historical episode for the advantage of English visitors to Vienna. There is no doubt that Richard was wrong in losing his temper, and dragging other people’s flags through the dirt, simply because other people might not have behaved as they ought to have done, and were impudent to him. If he had lived in the present day he would no doubt have been more courteous, and have submitted the matter to arbitration, for it is much nicer to lose your money than your temper. In our hot youth, when the grand old Plancus was our consul, Great Britons used to enjoy a sinister reputation on the Continent on account of “righting their wrongs where they were given,” by a dexterous and rather too prompt pugilism. There is a marked improvement, happily, since then in our national suavity and forbearance, and we have made commendable progress in the school of Epictetus, though we have not quite yet arrived at the perfection attained by Saint Onesiphorus, who, when he received a box on the ear, begged the donor’s pardon for standing in his way. Individual Britons are still, however, to be found who retain much of Malek Richard’s temper and muscle, and to these a word of friendly warning may

be necessary, which is, never to be provoked into a breach of the peace in Vienna if they value time, money, and comfort. “The box” is not permitted in Austria; it is considered a barbarous remedy, as creating a “scene” and a “scandal,” and “ein skandal machen” is an unpardonable solecism.

A blow is punished with fine and imprisonment, out of all proportion to our English ideas of the offence. If, unfortunately, an Englishman should have a difficulty with an Austrian, and straightway assault and batter him, the best course is to agree quickly with the adversary while on the way with him to the *Polizei-Amt*. “The hurt that honour feels” can in most cases be salved by a judicious application of money. The Viennese are much too lazy to be implacable, and it takes a good deal to rouse them into actual ferocity, even when they get up a revolution. The chiefs of the Peter’s Platz will always be found willing to assist in a friendly arbitration, but they must naturally be treated with politeness, for Austrian commissaries of police, apart from the code they have to administer, are, as a rule, well-educated, patient, courteous, and by no means harsh interpreters of the law. A simple blow may be condoned by five to twenty florins, according to its impact; a black eye has cost the dispenser of it a hundred, and, in the case of a person kicked down two flights of stairs, the kicked held out for five hundred, as the ransom of the kicker from captivity, but was eventually induced by arbitration to take three hundred. By this sort of arrangement, everybody is satisfied; the commissary is saved much trouble, the alien violator of the German majesty of the law is rescued from the disagreeable consequences of “that rash humour which his mother gave him,” the foreign minister and British ambassador are spared any vulgar interruption of their diplomatic repose, and, most important of all, Pepe, if he has no garden wall to repair, can at least take Pepi in a new bonnet on Sunday to Neuwaldegg, or invest in a few tickets in the last lottery loan.

Leopold the Glorious, son of Cœur de Lion’s jailer, was a poet, musician, mason, and carpenter. With the English ransom money he extended the city walls so as to enclose the Stephan’s Platz and Wollzeile on one side, and the Scottish convent, at the back of the Römischer Kaiser Hotel, on the other; and built himself a new Schloss—the old one was in the Hof, on the

site of the present War Office—outside the enceinte. This was the first instalment of that irregular agglomeration of buildings constituting the Burg, and is the oldest inhabited imperial or royal residence in Europe. Entering the great court of the palace from the Michaeler Platz, it stands on the left hand with its grass-grown fosse, mediæval gateway and front riven by fire and war, grim survivor of Ottoman bombardments and of burgher turbulence, when the Viennese did not hesitate every now and then to cannonade an emperor within its walls.

The last of the Babenbergs, Frederick the Warlike, seems to have very fairly earned his surname, for, from his accession to his death in battle in 1246, a period of sixteen years, he was constantly at feud, either with the robber-knights who infested the country, and whom he put down; or with the Emperor Frederick the Second, who, at one time, chased him away from his patrimony; or with the citizens of Vienna, who shut their gates in his face for three years until pestilence and famine tamed them; or with the Magyars whom he routed on the plain by Wiener-Neustadt, where he lost his life. One of the most charming excursions in the neighbourhood of Vienna, is by Mödling, the Vorderer Brühl, and Gaden (returning by the Helenenthal and Baden) to the Cistercian monastery of Heiligenkreuz—the Holy-Rood of Austria—founded by Leopold the Saintry Babenberg. In the Fürstengruft, or “Pit of Princes” in the abbey, along with others of his race, lies Friedrich der Streitbare, whose bellicose destiny appears to have pursued him even to this peaceful and secluded retreat, for his tomb is conspicuous for the grievous mutilation it has suffered at the hands of the desolating Akindschi, the wild horsemen of Soliman’s and Kara Mustapha’s armies. The Emperor Frederick the Second, during his quarrels with his refractory vassal, granted the Golden Bull to Vienna, creating it a free imperial city. When the last duke was laid to rest in Heiligenkreuz, the duchy reverted to the empire as a lapsed fief, and was governed—or rather not governed—by imperial administrators. But the extinction of the House of Babenberg corresponded with the decline of that of Hohenstaufen, and the consequent disorganisation and anarchy of the empire, of which the Bohemian King Ottokar was not slow to take advantage by annexing the duchy to himself. Vienna had

suffered much in all these disastrous years from conflagrations, sieges, and plagues. As Ottokar repaired all damages, enlarged the city to nearly the same limits as the girdle of the old fortifications demolished in 1858 by decree of the reigning emperor, and now marked by the Ringstrasse, and confirmed all former privileges and charters, the Viennese were well content to remain under such a powerful and beneficent ruler, when Rudolf of Hapsburg, elected emperor in 1273, made his appearance on the scene to claim the duchy, nominally for the empire but really for himself, and finally succeeded by the decisive battle of the Markfeld in establishing himself and his family.

As the traveller approaches Vienna by the Northern Railroad from Berlin and Prague, the train speeds for the last few miles of the journey, before crossing the Danube, through a vast and fertile plain without enclosures and dotted with many hamlets. This is the historic Markfeld, a veritable Champ de Mars, on which all the armies of Europe would find space to manoeuvre, and a fit muster ground even for the final day of Armageddon. Here, more than once, rival pretenders and cunning strategists have contended for the possession of the Kaiserstadt, and worthy is the battle ground for such a noble prize. On it Napoleon fought two of the most sanguinary battles of his career, Aspern and Wagram, winning by Hapsburg defeat a Hapsburg princess for his wife. Here, in our own times, Kaiser Franz-Josef stood at bay, within the hastily thrown up lines of Florisdorf, with the defeated army of Königgrätz, resolving to strike a desperate blow for his capital. But the children of Abraham, who do all the banking and financing of the city, were panic-stricken at the vision of Prussian generals examining their ledgers with a view to levying an equitable war contribution, and the burghers had no fancy to see their wives and sweethearts monopolised by the “verdammt Preusse.” The discontented, and there were many, saw a chance of getting rid of men and things obnoxious to them. It seemed as if the old spirit, which had prompted the citizens to beg Rudolf to retire, on the last advance of Ottokar to Vienna, and not to compromise them in his disputes, had revived in 1866; for the burgomaster with a deputation of the townspeople waited on the disgusted emperor to urge peace. They coolly and significantly added that if he must fight, they would

prefer his going to do so at some place not quite so close to their household gods and goddesses. Francis Joseph—the honestest and most unselfish sovereign of his house—yielded, and paid once again for the sins of his fathers. This courageous refusal of the Viennese to suffer martyrdom in the cause of their monarch, was but the fruit of a long course of the traditional Hapsburg system of government, generally, but erroneously, attributed in England to Metternich, who, however, was but the administrator and not the author of it. This system taught the people through the priests and the police that they had no business to trouble themselves with any questions or ideas about governing or being governed; that implicit obedience to all the powers that were, from the kaiser to the gendarme, was the first law of nature, and the pursuit of pleasure the whole duty of man. The citizens naturally enough, therefore, concluded that they had nothing to do with the question of haute politique involved in the rivalry of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern, and they were fearful that the “historic shells of Königgrätz”—of which the pious Prussian monarch was reminded at Gravelotte—hurtling over the Danube, would seriously interfere with the comfort and interior economy of the restaurations, bierhalle, and whirligigs in the Prater.

If Rudolf had yielded to the wishes of the citizens of his days there would have been no Imperial House of Hapsburg, and very probably Vienna would have been more Slav than Teuton, taking its laws from Prague, instead of giving them to an empire as its proud “Reichs-haupt und Residenz Stadt.” But Rudolf was a parvenu, a man of destiny and selfish, so he crossed the Danube to give battle to his enemy, and the armies met on the great plain by the village of Jedenspeugen, near the bank of the Morava, the border river of Austria and Hungary. He set his life and Vienna on the east, and came near to losing both, for a gigantic Thuringian knight unhorsed and rolled him in the dust, and, but for the rescue wrought by his trusty lieutenant, Berchtold Capillar, the imperial line of Hapsburg would have ended where it began. Ottokar fought like a paladin to the last, but was finally unhorsed, wounded, and taken prisoner, when he was immediately stripped naked and murdered by some semi-savage nobles who had private wrongs to avenge. Rudolf treated his scarred body with all honour, and soon afterwards delivered it over to the

Bohemians, who buried it behind the high altar of the cathedral in the Hradschin at Prague. And so Vienna became German, and tried to remain German, until Bismarck appeared on the edge of the fateful Markfeld and decreed otherwise at Nikolsburg.

LOOKING FOR LOVE.

As a fisherman looks out over the bay
For a ship that comes from sea,
I look for my love from day to day,
But my love comes not to me.

Who is the maid that the finger of fate
Has given, and where lives she?
How long shall I linger, and hope, and wait,
Before she will come to me?

Or, have I no love, and shall I be blown
Like a lost boat out to sea?
No! Pleasure and peace shall be my own,
And my love shall come to me.

And when and where shall I know my doom?
In-doors, or where flowers grow?
Will the pear-trees all be white with bloom?
Or will they be white with snow?

Have I ever heard of your name in talk?
Or seen you a child at play?
Are you twenty yet, and where do you walk?
Is it near or far away?

Come my love while my heart is in the south,
While youth is about my ways;
I will run to meet you and kiss your mouth,
And bless you for all my days!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE TWELFTH LANCERS.

It may surprise some of our readers to be informed that there were no regiments of lancers in the English service before 1816. Napoleon had first introduced that Polish form of cavalry into the French army, and these flying spearmen in the quaint caps, lightly accoutred and quick to advance or retreat, were found very useful in harassing infantry and destroying them when broken and in retreat. Our heavy cavalry suffered from them severely at Waterloo, and one of the first modifications introduced by our War Office after the peace, was the change of several regiments from light dragoons to lancers.

The conspiracies, and eventually the rising of the Pretender's faction, on the accession of George the First, in 1715, led to the immediate augmentation of the army. It was at this time that Brigadier-General Phineas Bowles, a zealous partisan of the House of Hanover, who had distinguished himself in the Spanish war of succession, was commissioned to raise six troops of cavalry in the counties of Berks, Bucks, and Hants, and the first duty of these troops was to escort to London a

number of Jacobite prisoners who had mounted the white cockade with more rashness than discretion. In 1718, the new regiment embarked for Ireland, and remained there seventy-five years.

In 1750, King George the Second issued a warrant prescribing the following dress to the Twelfth Dragoons. The coats were to be scarlet, double-breasted, without lappels, and lined with white; the sleeves slit, and turned up with white, the button-holes ornamented with white lace, the buttons of white metal, and white worsted aiguillettes (such as footmen wear now) on the right shoulder. The waistcoats and breeches white. The cocked-hats to be bound with silver lace, and ornamented with white metal loops and Hanoverian black cockades. The forage caps red, turned up with white, with XII. D. on the flap. The boots of jacked leather. The cloaks scarlet, white collars and linings, the buttons to be set on yellow frogs, with green stripes down the centre. The horse furniture to be white cloth, bordered with yellow lace with a green stripe down the centre, and XII. D. to be embroidered on the housings, within a wreath of roses and thistles, with the king's cipher and crown over it. The officers to wear silver lace and crimson sashes over the left shoulder; the sergeants silver aiguillettes and green and yellow worsted sashes. The drummers and hautboys to have white coats lined with scarlet, and scarlet waistcoats and breeches, ornamented with yellow lace with the usual green stripe. The king's guidon was to be of crimson silk with a green and silver fringe. In the centre were to be the rose and thistle conjoined, and a crown over them with the motto, "Dien et mon Droit." The white horse of the House of Hanover to be in a compartment in the first and fourth corners, and XII. D. in silver characters on a white ground in the second and third corners. The second and third guidons were modifications of the first.

In 1768, George the Third conferred on this regiment, which had behaved very well in Ireland, and had been altered from "heavies" to light dragoons, the honourable title of "The Prince of Wales's Regiment;" the future George the Fourth being then only seven years old; and the new regimental badge was a coronet with three ostrich feathers, the motto, "Ich Dien," a rising sun and a red dragon. In 1784, the uniform was changed from scarlet to blue, and the year after

blue cloaks were given out to the men. In June, 1789, the regiment was honoured by Lieutenant the Honourable Arthur Wellesley entering it, on removal from the Forty-first Foot. He left the Twelfth in 1791.

Soon after Lord Hood had taken Toulon, the Twelfth Light Dragoons were sent out to aid the garrison, which was threatened by the French. The Twelfth afterwards helped in taking Corsica, and from thence sailed to Civita Vecchia, where the Pope, eager to please the English, chose to be so gratified by their exemplary conduct, that he gave gold medals to Colonel Erskine and all the officers of the Twelfth, and on their being presented to him at Rome, he took a helmet and placed it on Captain Browne's head, praying that Heaven would enable the cause of truth and religion to triumph over injustice and infidelity.

The Twelfth went to Lisbon in 1797, and in 1800 were sent to join Abercromby's expedition to Egypt. On landing in Turkey the regiment received a supply of Turkish horses so poor that the Lieutenant-Colonel, Mervyn Archdale, proposed that the regiment should serve as infantry; but eventually six hundred of the men were mounted. At Aboukir, our light dragoons soon came into play and put the French dragoons, "with their long swords, saddles, bridles," to the right-about, before two notes could be played upon a bugle. The day they left Mandora Tower and the grove of date-trees, they sent the French scouring, and on the 18th of March, 1801, Lieutenant-Colonel Archdale, with eighty men, routed one hundred and fifty French hussars and infantry sent out to reconnoitre. Lieutenant Levinston, and a few horsemen, threw themselves, sword in hand, on the French left flank, while Colonel Archdale dashed full at the centre of the infantry, and broke it as one would break a pane of glass. But the old story happened again. Our cavalry, reckless and impetuous, pursued too far; the French foot rallied behind some sand-hills, and eventually Colonel Archdale lost an arm, and Captain the Honourable Pierce Butler, Cornets Earle, Lindsay, Daniel, and seven dragoons were intercepted and made prisoners. In the repulse of the French, the day the lamented Abercromby fell, the Twelfth had seven men wounded. At the taking of the Fort of Rahmanie, Lieutenant Drake, with only thirty men, compelled fifty men of the Twenty-second French Dragoons to surrender. In the

advance along the banks of the Nile towards Cairo, the Twelfth, acting for the most part as infantry, made a dip into the Desert in company with the Twenty-sixth Light Dragoons. They met a French convoy, which, weary of Egypt, at once surrendered. A white handkerchief was waved, and by that sign twenty-eight officers and five hundred and seventy rank and file laid down their arms, surrendering at the same time a gun, a stand of colours, three hundred horses and dromedaries, and five hundred camels. Brigadier-General Doyle was delighted at this, and in a letter to Colonel Browne said warmly, "With such troops I shall always feel a pride to serve, and at their head be content to fall, being convinced it must be with honour." When Sir John Doyle afterwards received supporters to his arms, he chose for one of them a dragoon of the Twelfth holding the French colour taken from the Desert convoy. When, after the capture of Cairo and Alexandria, the Twelfth returned to England, each of the officers received a gold medal from the Grand Signior, and the regiment was subsequently allowed the honour of bearing on its guidons and appointments a sphynx, with the word "Egypt."

In 1811, the Twelfth Light Dragoons were ordered to Lisbon, where Lord Wellington's army was gathering to expel Bonaparte's legions from Spain and Portugal. They assisted in the operations at the sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and advancing against the French, drove the enemy's outposts from Usagre and occupied the town (April the 16th, 1812). On the following day the Twelfth covered itself with glory. The cavalry brigade, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable Frederick Ponsonby of the Twelfth, moved towards Llerena, and by a masterly bit of stratagem kept the attention of a large body of French cavalry engaged, while the Fifth Dragoon Guards and the Third and Fourth Dragoons, commanded by Major-General Le Marchant, passed secretly around some adjoining heights and gained the enemy's flank. The stratagem answered admirably. The French were still occupied in front with Ponsonby's three squadrons when the Fifth Dragoon Guards slipped out of a grove of olive-trees and came thundering down on the French flanks. The same moment Ponsonby let his light brigade slip; it charged the French line, which it broke to pieces, and the enemy was pursued and sabred for several miles.

A hundred French horsemen were killed, and a far greater number, including a lieutenant-colonel, two captains, and a lieutenant were made prisoners. As often happens in these dashing cavalry affairs, when successful, the loss of the Twelfth was very slight; one sergeant, two private soldiers, and one horse only were killed, and five men and three horses wounded. Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton, in the following day's cavalry orders, spoke highly of the zeal and attention of all the regiments engaged, and praised the order observed in the pursuit, and the quickness with which the ranks were formed after each attack.

The Twelfth had some rather hot skirmishing with Marmont's dragoons during the retreat behind the Guarena (1812). At the Battle of Salamanca our brave regiment was stationed on the left near Arapiles, and towards the evening charged twice, and each time broke up the French infantry. The Twelfth lost only two men. They skirmished a good deal with the French at Tudela, Valladolid, the Pisuerga Valley, Monasterio, and the retreat from Burgos. In the latter affair the Twelfth covered our rear and fought stubbornly with the French advanced guard, and in one of the frequent rencontres the gallant commanding officer, Ponsonby, and Lieutenant Taylor were wounded.

When the regiment went into quarters at Oliveira, it could reckon thirty-three skirmishes, and one general engagement in its six months' campaign. At the battle of Vittoria, the Twelfth supported the attacks of the infantry and artillery on the right of the enemy's position at Abechuco and Gamarra Major, and towards the close of the action it crossed the Zadorra, turned the right of the French, and cut off their retreat by the Bayonne road. The regiment lost only two men. The Twelfth helped to defeat General Foy's division at Tolosa, in June, 1813, and were employed in covering the siege of St. Sebastian during Soult's unsuccessful attempt to relieve that important fortress. They also assisted in forcing the passage of the Bidassoa, and supported the infantry at Nivelle. When Lieutenant-General Hope, in 1814, effected the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, a squadron of the Twelfth crossed in boats, the horses swimming. The blockade of Bayonne soon followed. The regiment remained some time at Bourdeaux, and furnished posts and patrols between the Garonne and the Dordogne,

on one occasion breaking up some French infantry at Etoliers.

When the regiment moored down at Itchen at Dorchester, it could boast that, during the whole Peninsular war, it had never had a picket surprised nor a patrol taken, nor had any case of desertion taken place from its ranks. After commanding the regiment for twenty-three years, General Sir James Steuart Denham, Baronet, was removed to the Scots Greys, and succeeded by Lieutenant-General Sir William Payne, Baronet. The Prince Regent permitted the Twelfth Dragoons to bear on their guidons the word "Peninsula," and rewarded Colonel Ponsonby with a medal and two clasps for his share in the battles of Barossa, Salamanca, and Vittoria.

The cry of "Vive Napoleon!" when Bonaparte broke from Elba, soon brought the Twelfth into the field. Six troops of the regiment, commanded by Colonel the Honourable F. C. Ponsonby, embarked at Ramsgate, April, 1815, and landed at Ostend, forming a brigade with the Eleventh and Sixteenth Light Dragoons under Major-General Sir John Ormsby Vandeleur. Soon after their arrival in Flanders, they were reviewed by the Duke of Wellington, who was pleased to express his approbation of a corps "which had always been distinguished for its gallantry and discipline; and he did not doubt but, should occasion offer, it would continue to deserve his good opinion; and he hoped every man would feel a pride in endeavouring to maintain the reputation of the regiment."

When Napoleon endeavoured to drive his army, like a wedge, between the British and Prussians, the Twelfth was suddenly ordered to Enghien, and from thence to Quatre Bras, where they arrived just as Ney was withdrawing his forces. On the 17th the Twelfth, when the army retrograded to get nearer the Prussians, withdrew by the woods, passed the river Dyle at a deep ford below Genappe, and took post on the left of our position in front of the village of Waterloo, bivouacking in the open fields under heavy rain.

On the morning of the 18th of June, the Twelfth were formed in columns of squadrons, and posted in a pea-field above Papilot, a short distance from the left of the fifth division, which formed the left of the British infantry. About eleven A.M., Count d'Erlon's corps attacked the British left, but was repulsed by desperate charges of the Royals, the Greys, and the Innis-

killings Dragoons. One French column on the French right, however, still pressed forward. Part of Vandeleur's brigade was away supporting the Royals and Inniskillings, who were reforming after their last charge, and Ponsonby, having a discretionary power, and thinking the French column unsteady, somewhat rashly ventured on an attack, though with so inferior a force. As the French column came into the valley, he rode down past a ledge occupied by Highlanders, and over ploughed land soaked with rain, exposed to the French artillery, then charged. The Twelfth cut through the column with great carnage, but were soon stopped by the columns of reserve, and then charged by three hundred Polish lancers (equal in numbers to the English alone). Ponsonby, too late, attempted to withdraw his regiment, but fell wounded in the mêlée.

The Twelfth, utterly overweighed, were at last reformed under Captain Hawell; but in ten minutes one of the three squadrons had gone down, and the regiment had to be told off into two. Major James Paul Bridger, whose horse had been killed, mounted another and assumed the command. Colonel Ponsonby's groom, a faithful old soldier, who was in the rear with a led horse, rushed forward with tears in his eyes, and continued to search for his master, regardless of fire and sword, till he was driven away by the advance of the French skirmishers.

The following is Colonel Ponsonby's interesting account of his own sufferings, after this rash and unlucky charge:

"I was stationed with my regiment (about three hundred strong) at the extreme left wing, and directed to act discretionally; each of the armies was drawn up on a gentle declivity, a small valley lying between them.

"At one o'clock, observing, as I thought, unsteadiness in a column of French infantry, which was advancing with an irregular fire, I resolved to charge them. As we were descending in a gallop, we received from our own troops on the right a fire much more destructive than the enemy's, they having begun long before it could take effect, and slackening as we drew nearer; when we were within fifty paces of them, the French turned, and much execution was done among them, as we were followed by some Belgians who had remarked our success. But we had no sooner passed through them, than we were attacked in our turn, before we could form, by about three

hundred Polish lancers, who had come down to their relief; the French artillery pouring in among us a heavy fire of grape-shot, which, however, killed three of their own for one of our men. In the *mêlée*, I was disabled almost instantly in both of my arms, and followed by a few of my men, who were presently cut down (no quarter being asked or given), I was carried on by my horse, till, receiving a blow on my head from a sabre, I was thrown senseless on my face to the ground. Recovering, I raised myself a little to look round, when a lancer, passing by, exclaimed, 'Tu n'es pas mort, coquin,' and struck his lance through my back; my head dropped, the blood gushed into my mouth, a difficulty of breathing came on, and I thought all was over.

"Not long afterwards a *tirailleur* came up to plunder me, threatening to take my life. I told him that he might search me, directing him to a small side pocket, in which he found three dollars, being all I had; he unloosed my stock and tore open my waistcoat, then leaving me in a very uneasy posture; and was no sooner gone than another came for the same purpose; but assuring him I had been plundered already, he left me, when an officer, bringing up some troops (to which, probably, the *tirailleurs* belonged), and halting where I lay, stooped down and addressed me, saying, he feared I was badly wounded; I replied that I was, and expressed a wish to be removed to the rear; he said it was against the order to remove even their own men, but that if they gained the day, as they probably would (for he understood the Duke of Wellington was killed, and that six of our battalions had surrendered), every attention in his power should be shown me. I complained of thirst, and he held his brandy-bottle to my lips, directing one of his men to lay me straight on my side, and place a knapsack under my head; he then passed on into action, and I shall never know to whose generosity I was indebted, as I conceive, for my life. Of what rank he was I cannot say; he wore a blue great-coat. By-and-bye another *tirailleur* came and knelt and fired over me, loading and firing many times, and conversing with great gaiety all the while; at last he ran off, saying, 'Vous serez bien aise d'entendre que nous allons nous retirer; bon jour, mon ami.'

"While the battle continued in that part, several of the wounded men and dead

bodies near me were hit with the balls, which came very thick in that place. Towards evening, when the Prussians came, the continued roar of the cannon along theirs and the British line growing louder and louder as they drew near, was the finest thing I ever heard. It was dusk when two squadrons of Prussian cavalry, both of them two deep, passed over me in full trot, lifting me from the ground, and tumbling me about cruelly; the clatter of their approach, and the apprehensions it excited, may be easily conceived; had a gun come that way, it would have done for me. The battle was then nearly over, or removed a distance; the cries and groans of the wounded all around me became every instant more and more audible, succeeding to the shouts, imprecations, outcries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' the discharge of musketry and cannon; now and then intervals of perfect silence, which were worse than the noise. I thought the night would never end. Much about this time I found a soldier of the *Royals* lying across my legs, who had probably crawled thither in his agony; his weight, convulsive motions, noises, and the air issuing through a wound in his side, distressed me greatly; the latter circumstance the most of all, as the case was my own. It was not a dark night, and the Prussians were wandering about to plunder (and the scene in Ferdinand, Count Fathom, came into my mind, though no women, I believe, were there); several of them came and looked at me, and passed on; at length one stopped to examine me. I told him as well as I could (for I could say but little in German) that I was a British officer, and had been plundered already; he did not desist, however, and pulled me about roughly before he left me. About an hour before midnight, I saw a soldier in an English uniform coming towards me; he was, I suspect, on the same errand. He came and looked in my face; I spoke instantly, telling him who I was, and assuring him of a reward if he would remain by me. He said that he belonged to the Fortieth regiment, but had missed it. He released me from the dying man; being unarmed, he took up a sword from the ground, and stood over me, pacing backwards and forwards. At eight o'clock in the morning, some English were seen in the distance; he ran to them, and a messenger was sent off to Hervey. A cart came for me. I was placed in it, and carried to a farm-house, about a mile and a half distant, and laid in the bed from

which poor Gordon (as I understood afterwards) had been just carried out. The jolting of the cart, and the difficulty of breathing, were very painful. I had received seven wounds; a surgeon slept in my room, and I was saved by continual bleedings, one hundred and twenty ounces in two days, besides the great loss of blood on the field."

But at the close of the day the Twelfth had a second opportunity of distinguishing itself. Many of our regiments were now so decimated, that in some instances it took two or three regiments to form a square, and the heavy cavalry had suffered much from its rashness, when Lord Uxbridge ordered six regiments of cavalry (including the Twelfth) from the left to the main point of attack, where our troops were fatigued and much harassed. At this juncture Bulow's two brigades of Prussian infantry and a brigade of cavalry had arrived in a wood on the right flank of the French. At half-past seven, Napoleon made a last tremendous charge on the English centre with four regiments of Guards and a large body of cavalry, and had even forced, by mere dint of numbers, some of our regiments to fall back. It was at this critical moment that Vandeleur's brigade, aided by Sir William Ponsonby's, made a charge which disordered both French infantry and cavalry, and not long after, Wellington, seeing signs of retreat in the French rear, shut the telescope which he had been attentively using, and cried to his delighted staff, "Now every man must advance!" The cry flew like lightning along the line. The tired men advanced fresh as boys broken from school. The last squares of the Imperial Guards were broken, Napoleon's army fell into hopeless ruins, and Waterloo was won.

The Twelfth lost Captain Sandys, Lieutenant Bertie, and Cornet Lockhart, six sergeants, and thirty-seven rank and file, in this great conflict, while Colonel Ponsonby, Lieutenant Dowbiggen, three sergeants, and fifty-five rank and file were wounded. In the distribution of national rewards, the Twelfth, as we might feel sure, was not forgotten. Colonel Ponsonby (second son of the Earl of Besborough), was made Knight Companion of the Bath and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, besides receiving a bushel of German orders. He was afterwards commandant at Malta and colonel of the Eighty-sixth regiment, and died in 1837. "Waterloo," was instantly

inscribed on the guidons of the Twelfth. Major James Paul Bridger was made Companion of the Bath, Sergeant-Major Carruthers was appointed to a cornetcy, and all the officers and men got silver medals.

In 1816, the Twelfth, forming part of the army of occupation, while stationed at Fruges, was mustered on the memorable field of Agincourt, and there the men received their Waterloo medals. This year the regiment became a corps of lancers, and in 1817, when the Twelfth was first styled "The Prince of Wales's Royal Lancers," the colour of the facings was changed from yellow to scarlet, and the lace from silver to gold. At their return to England in November, 1818, the regiment was on duty at the funeral of Queen Charlotte. In 1819, it was reviewed by that gallant knight, the Prince Regent, and in 1820 embarked for Ireland. In 1821, it helped to guard Dublin, during the joyous welcome of George the Fourth. In 1825, General Sir William Payne succeeded in the colonelcy by Major-General Sir Colquhoun Grant. In 1826, four troops of the Twelfth, under Major Barton, were sent to Portugal to protect it from invasion by Spain. They returned in 1828. In 1827, Major-General Sir Hussey Vivian became colonel of the Twelfth, and on his advancement to the peerage in 1841, chose for one of his supporters "a bay horse gardant, thereon mounted a lancer of the Twelfth, habited, armed, and accoutred, proper." In 1837, the colonelcy was given to Lieutenant-General Sir Henry John Cumming. On June the 28th, 1838, the regiment had the honour of being on duty at the coronation of Her Majesty, and, by a singular coincidence, three of the cavalry regiments attending on that auspicious day were commanded by lieutenant-colonels who had served side by side at Waterloo in the Twelfth Light Dragoons. The queen presented each of them (Hawell, Chatterton, and Vandeleur) with a gold medal. In 1842, the regiment was again clothed in blue.

But it is not in war alone that heroism is shown. Peace, too, has its times of peril, and its unostentatious heroes. At the dreadful wreck of the Birkenhead steam troop-ship near the Cape of Good Hope, during the Kaffir war, on the 25th of February, 1852, eight men of the Twelfth Lancers displayed a chivalrous generosity, an heroic calmness and devotion, worthy to be compared with any shown in Grecian or in Roman times. The martyr-like

courage with which these brave men drew up as on parade, and prepared to die without one selfish struggle, one coward cry, rather than imperil the safety of the women and children in the boats, is a fact that has thrown fresh lustre on the name of the English soldier, for there was no mad rush of war to urge these men on, no reward to be obtained; yet there they stood like statues, till the vessel sank with them.

The pitiful yet noble story is soon told. There were on board the steam transport two cornets (Bond and Rolt) and six men of the Twelfth, fifty-two men of the Second (Queen's Royal), sixty-two men of the Sixth, sixteen men of the Twelfth Foot, forty-two men of the Forty-third Light Infantry, seventy-two men of the Forty-fifth, forty-one men of the Sixtieth Rifles, seventy-three men of the Seventy-third, sixty-five men of the Seventy-fourth, sixty-two men of the Ninety-first, making in all a total of thirteen officers, nine sergeants, and four hundred and sixty-six men. There were besides twenty women and children, and a crew of about one hundred and thirty officers and seamen. The unfortunate vessel left Simon's Bay for Algoa Bay on the 25th of February. It was a calm, starlight night, and land was distinctly visible on the port bow. At ten minutes to two A.M., the leadsman on the paddle-box got soundings in twelve or thirteen fathoms, and before he could heave the lead again the ship struck on a rock with only two fathoms of water under her bows. The master commander of the ship instantly ordered the boats to be lowered, and a turn astern to be given to the engines. This last was a fatal step. As the ship backed from the rock the water rushed in, and the ship then struck again, "buckling up" all the foremost plates, and tearing asunder the bulkhead partitions. But there was no cowardly confusion on board. Colonel Seton set the soldiers to work at the chain pumps, and the women and children calmly placed in the cutter, were pulled a short distance from the ship. Only three boats, holding seventy-eight persons, could be lowered in time. Ten minutes after the first shock, the ship separated in two, the fore part of the ship sank instantly, and the funnel went over the side; the stern part, crowded with soldiers, floated a few minutes, then sank also. At this awful moment the soldiers behaved admirably.

"Far exceeding," says Captain Wright, "anything that I thought could be effected by the best discipline; every one did as he

was directed, and there was not a murmur or a cry among them until the vessel made her final plunge. All the officers received their orders, and had them carried out, as if the men were embarking instead of going to the bottom; there was only this difference, that I never saw any embarkation conducted with so little noise and confusion. When the vessel was just about going down, the commander called out, 'All those who can swim jump overboard and make for the boats.' We begged the men not to do as the commander said, as the boats must be swamped. Not more than three made the attempt."

Those who came to the surface clung to the masts and yards, some swam to shore, others caught hold of spars and drift wood. But now three terrible dangers awaited the survivors. A sea swarming with sharks, a coast almost inaccessible through miles of breakers, and a bar of most dangerous weed, which entangled and drowned nearly all who ventured near it. Many of the survivors were bitten in two and carried away by sharks, others perished in the long weed. Of the many souls on board the Birkenhead ninety-seven only were saved; that is, seven officers of the ship, and fifty-three seamen, boys and marines; of the military passengers, seven women, thirteen children, five officers, and twelve soldiers.

It is heroic to mount the "imminent deadly breach," to face the flaming cannon, to rush on bayonets, to bear the hunger and hardships of a long campaign; but surely men who could meet, in a moment and without preparation, so terrible a death as this, were as much heroes as any whose names "storied urn and monumental bust" have ever recorded.

The Twelfth have since distinguished themselves in the Crimea, and in Central India.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER III. "ONCE AGAIN."

It was the morning after Claude Powers came home. He was, sitting at a late breakfast with his friend Mr. Ferrier, who had come down to Dillsborough to see how "Claude adapted himself to buttercups and daisies," as he phrased it. Mrs. Powers had breakfasted many hours before, and was busily employed in trying to keep

herself out of the room where the two young men were.

She was having a hard tussle with herself to do this, for she was longing to learn as much about her nephew as an old woman can ever hope to learn about a young man. Claude had come home the night before, and been his own well-remembered gracious, graceful self to her. He had made her feel that she had conferred the boon on him by residing in his house during his absence, and he had given her to understand that her position would be unaltered, so long as she liked to fill it, now that he had returned. But in spite of all this he had given her an impression of having become estranged from her, of all the vitality having faded out of his affection for her. Poor old lady, she did not realise that the vitality had faded out of everything in life for him, save his regret for a woman who was lost to him, and his friendship for Jack Ferrier!

She had come to the resolution of not saying a word to her nephew about the new tenants of the house at the corner. During the short time that had intervened between her first call on the Devenishes and Claude's coming home, she had seen them all two or three times, and Harty she had seen frequently. Some fatal gift of attraction there must have been about the girl, for Mrs. Powers found herself looking out whenever she went into Dillsborough for Harty Carlisle, and inviting Harty Carlisle to the Court whenever she met her. What it was she could not define. It certainly was not homage shown by Harty that won the ordinarily exacting old lady. Nor was it anything like a display of affection. After that first interview, when, as has been said, Harty arrayed herself in that winning way of hers which made her more dangerous than many a Venus, after that first triumph she seemed disinclined to pursue victory further, and betrayed nothing but a calm indifference towards Mrs. Powers.

"She'll hate me by-and-bye when Claude comes home and tells her," Harty was always saying to herself when some extra demonstration of liking for her on Mrs. Powers's part would almost win a cordial response. "What's the good of building houses of cards however brilliantly coloured they may be and pretty to look at for an hour? They must come down at last."

Still, though she said this, she went to the Court whenever Mrs. Powers invited her, and compromised the matter with her pride by going with visible reluctance.

"He will hear of the Devenishes soon enough, and if there is anything to hear about them, he will know it and tell me; but I won't lead myself into the temptation of saying anything about that girl," Mrs. Powers had said to herself before she finally rewarded herself for the abstinence of the last hour, by making a mission of attention to the flowers in the balcony of the room in which Claude and Jack Ferrier were breakfasting:

"Any changes in the place among the people I used to know, aunt?" Claude asked, rising up and sauntering over to the window. "I see a number of the old names in the Dillsborough Mercury."

"Very few changes, none worth mentioning to you, Claude."

"Dillsborough must be in a lively condition," Jack Ferrier laughed; "how many years is it, Claude, since you were here last?"

"Eight or nine, I'm not sure which," Claude answered, carelessly, and Mrs. Powers paused in her task of watering the plants to shake her head regretfully as she observed:

"He has never seen the place since it's been his own, Mr. Ferrier; he takes no interest in the place that has been in his family since the time of Edward the Fourth; and if it were not for me, I believe he would let it without a pang."

She said the words of the last sentence with a certain wistful air of wishing him to contradict her, that almost touched him into gratifying her at the cost of his veracity. But he could only bring himself to say:

"All right, dear old lady; I'll never let it in opposition to your wishes; so much I can promise you; but I can't undertake to get up anything like a preference for one spot of earth over another: they're all alike."

It was a direct violation of one of Mrs. Powers's most cherished articles of faith, this want of family feeling for a fine old family place. That the herd, who either had no ancestors, or whose ancestors had failed to secure either a local habitation or a name of importance for themselves, that these should be indifferent or callous about their homes was natural and reasonable enough. But light mention of the Court from the lips of a Powers, was as shocking to her as if she had seen an anointed king playing football with his crown.

"Don't you believe him, Mrs. Powers," Jack Ferrier interposed, good-naturedly;

"the poetical howls for his home which I have been condemned to listen to from the lips of this fellow in all manner of sequestered nooks, both in the Old World and the New, convince me that he is struggling hard to restrain his ecstasies at being here again. I assure you he's an awful humbug; we'll put down his affected indifference to his extreme youth, and humbly hope that he'll soon outgrow it."

Mrs. Powers looked at the speaker, and shook her head slightly with an air of meditative disbelief in his statement. And Claude laughed, and rested his arm on Jack Ferrier's shoulder, and said, cordially:

"Anyway, I confess to a feeling of gentle toleration for you, old fellow. He's quite right, aunt; you will see me develop a healthy enthusiasm for Dillsborough, and all who dwell in it, in a short time. Come on, Jack, we'll go and have a look at the place, and see if any of the people remember me."

"If you are going to walk over to Dillsborough, and if you should happen to see Mrs. Greyling, you might mention to her that as her good husband is so kind about the carriage——" Mrs. Powers was beginning modestly, when Claude interrupted.

"Walk over to Dillsborough! No, surely not; you'll lend us whatever you have been in the habit of jogging about in, won't you?"

"I assure you a lady's luxurious little brougham will be quite good enough for us," Jack Ferrier put in before she could answer her nephew, and the assumption that she had been less mean than was in reality the case angered the old lady.

"Young men, both in jest and earnest, take a most ridiculous tone of belief in nothing in the world being good enough for them, and of everything being a bore and a trouble," she said, coldly. "I have not indulged myself by keeping a carriage and horses for my solitary pleasure at your expense, Claude."

"I ought to have arranged all that for you," Claude said, warmly; "you ought not to have been put to the inconvenience of walking or hiring all these years."

"Well, Claude, to be candid, I haven't either walked or hired much; the fact is, your father's old friend and medical attendant, Doctor Greyling, has been unfailing in his consideration for and attention to me. His carriage is always at my service, and I sympathise too thoroughly with the sentiment of esteem for the Powers

family which prompts him to offer it, ever to refuse the loan."

Mrs. Powers offered her little explanation pleasantly and readily, and rid herself of all feeling of annoyance against Jack Ferrier in the course of wording it. She even smiled approvingly on his next suggestion.

"Nerve yourself to the task of filling your stables at once, Claude—and your kennels, too, for that matter—the pure and simple pleasures of the country are very well in fiction, but to make it endurable in fact one needs horses and dogs and women."

"Women may be obliged to you for placing them last on your list of needful pleasures," Mrs. Powers said, encouragingly. She liked life and society, and the command of well-appointed powers of locomotion. Above all, she liked the idea of the head of the house coming to the fore prominently in the county. And she knew that in this vain and weary world well-bred horses, dogs, and women would assist him materially in doing so. Therefore she smiled encouragingly on Jack Ferrier's suggestion, and listened eagerly to her nephew's response to it.

"Horses and dogs as many as you like, Jack; but for Heaven's sake don't make women one of the essentials of your existence here. For my own part, that would be the real earthly paradise to me in which there was no feminine human being under thirty."

Claude began his remark lightly enough, but a tone of deeper meaning crept into his last words, and Jack Ferrier looked up quickly, a half-fear expressed in his face that his friend was nearly betraying himself.

"You see, I'm not a sufficiently good match for the women to pester me with attentions that I've no desire to reciprocate; that's another of Claude's shams, Mrs. Powers. He affects to have found out that love is only a gorgeously-coloured flower, with a root of bitterness which every one has to bite in due time, but he doesn't mean it any more than he does disparagement of the Court."

"Come on, Jack, let us start for Dillsborough," Claude said, getting himself out of the room, and away from a conversation that was distasteful to him.

As soon as he was gone, Mrs. Powers asked:

"What am I to do? It hurts me to believe Claude, and I can't quite trust you.

What is it? He has had some blow in life of which I am ignorant; he has been bitterly deceived and sharply wounded, and you know all about it."

Jack Ferrier carefully examined the petals of a geranium, and maintained a strict silence.

"I won't ask you more than this," the old lady resumed. "It's a woman, I can see that. But all I ask you to tell me is this, is it going on now, or is it all over?"

"It's all over," Jack said, hastily. "I mean that I really know nothing at all about it, and that Claude wouldn't thank me for theorising about his views; what is it we are to say if we see somebody in Dillsborough? About a carriage, I think you said——"

"Oh, yes, the carriage, to be sure," Mrs. Powers interrupted. "Claude ought to call on the Greyings if he's going into Dillsborough; excellent people, devoted to the family, and really invaluable as country neighbours; perhaps you'll say—but no, I'll send a little note by you to Mrs. Greyling." And then, as Mrs. Powers bustled away to write her little note, Jack Ferrier felt himself free to go in search of Claude.

"I'm a sieve in that old lady's hands, Claude," he said in mock despair, as he met the master of the house, who was soothing himself with a cigar. "You'll see your whole story in the Dillsborough Mercury in a few days as it's filtered out through her, unless you refrain from making suggestive remarks before your penetrating aunt. She asked me after you left the room if 'it' was going on, or if 'it' was 'all over,' and I assured her that it was 'all over' as solemnly as if I knew all about it."

"My penetrating aunt is welcome to do her worst in the investigating line," Claude said, with a laugh. "When there's nothing to be discovered one doesn't shrink from discovery, you see."

"There's always the truth to be discovered," Jack said, quietly; "whether it be important or unimportant, there's always the truth to be found out."

"The truth is generally to be found at the bottom of a well, I believe; in this case it is hidden in a much more inaccessible place, the heart of a deceitful woman," Claude answered, with one of those efforts at laughing which show that laughter is about the last emotion to which one wishes to give way. "Well! shall

we 'act in the living present' and trudge over to Dillsborough? We may just as well walk into Dillsborough as stay at home, for the matter of that."

"And better too," Jack Ferrier thought, "for during the walk we shall be free from the excellent aunt who loves yet doubts, in a way that puts a fellow on his metal to keep a secret he doesn't know!" Then he said aloud: "All right, Claude, come on; just imagine the state of the female Dillsborough heart, and the female Dillsborough brain, as the one throbs in anticipation of our appearance, and the other tries to make calculations about us!"

"If they possess hearts and brains they are safe to make a bad use of both; but they are not generally burdened with either; at any rate, we are not likely to be bothered with that combination in Dillsborough; let us hope at least that they only know how to spin and be virtuous."

"It's hoping for rather dull companionship if that's the extent of their knowledge," Jack Ferrier answered, carelessly; "but you're right, a few pudding-headed matrons and milky-minded maidens will be a wholesome course; and when we have found them failures, Claude, there is always the dear old life of adventure to fall back upon. No woman can intrude into that."

"And no woman can ever come between us," Claude answered, heartily; "not even my good aunt, who is dying to pump you on the subject of me. Good Heavens! I painted a fancy picture of my return home, once, a few years ago; the memory of it makes me inclined to curse the reality."

"He must have been hard hit to retain the savage sentiment so long," Jack Ferrier thought. "What is it, I wonder?" Then he reminded Claude that the morning hours were slipping away; and presently they were on the road to Dillsborough with Mrs. Powers's little note to Doctor Greyling in Claude's pocket.

Mrs. Greyling had anticipated it. She had been girding up her soul, so to say, the whole morning, to the point of meeting it with that delicate and subtle admixture of gratification and indifference which would be befitting in her first meeting with a man who probably thought rather less of her than she did of him. But still, well prepared as she was, she found herself rather thrown off her cool mental balance when the two young men were announced. Here, indeed, was a marked and visible sign that must be clearly manifest to the

eyes of all Dillsborough, that the Greylings' intimacy at the Court was no chimera.

It was rather magnanimous on Mrs. Greyling's part to feel and to express such deep and pure delight at this early recognition of rights, which she almost regarded as divine, by the owner of the Court. For she herself, her daughters, and her house, were in dire confusion in consequence of a party—a party on a more exhaustive scale than had ever been accomplished in the town before—which was to come off this night under the designation of Mrs. Greyling's At Home.

Surreptitious preparations had been making for it for many weeks. But it had been only during the last three days that Mrs. Greyling had boldly thrown off all disguise in the matter, and driven her husband from every familiar fastness, with that overpowering force which does accumulate in the party-giving mind as the time for a possible triumph approaches. She invariably prefaced her declaration of a firm resolve to "do it, and do it well," meekly, and began by affirming that she was "really quite ashamed to see any one; the girls had been out so much that it was high time to have some friends at home in a quiet way." When this remark had soaked through her husband's imperturbability to the point of causing him to speak in terms expressive of disfavour of the scheme, she would go a step further and marvel at her own unselfishness. "I shall have all the trouble and worry; and I shall bear it without a murmur, for the sake of your position in the town," she would tell the wretched man who knew, from bitter experience, that as soon as she made that statement he might, indeed, leave all hope behind.

The thing grew like an ugly nightmare on Doctor Greyling, for his wife was a woman of an adaptive order of mind, and prided herself on her skill in turning every room in the house from its original purpose. The dining-room was to be devoted to dancing; the drawing-room, by means of white muslin, rose-coloured ribbons, flowers, and fantastically-arranged lights, was made into a bower of bliss for whist-players and non-dancers. Doctor Greyling's own airy, spacious, comfortable bedroom was seized for the supper; and in furtherance of this scheme the unfortunate master of the house was banished for three nights to a remote corner of the dwelling to which the odours from the kitchen, and the complaining tones of the overwrought cook,

ascended freely and robbed him of rest. But all other wrongs paled before the crowning one that was offered him on the morning of the eventful day. For then, emboldened by uninterrupted successes, Mrs. Greyling swept all his boots out of his dressing-room, and transformed it into a boudoir; and called him to congratulate her on having "made more of her house" than any other woman in Dillsborough could have done.

The higher powers are prompt to help those who help themselves in a thorough-going and hearty manner. There was something "providential," Mrs. Greyling assured herself in her having planned this party just as Mr. Powers and his friend came home to glorify it. It was a slight drawback to her gratification that her girls should appear before the eyes of these two marriageable men in dusty and unbecoming attire, and with fatigue visibly stamped on their faces, for the first time. But their evening appearance would be only the more dazzling by contrast she reflected, and in their own house the honours of the evening must be with them, as far as these strangers were concerned.

She repressed a thrill of delight at their immediate acceptance of her invitation to her "quiet little gathering, at which probably the young people would amuse themselves by dancing," as she stated, carelessly, and then glancing over the way at the house at the corner, she remembered Harty Carlisle, and her heart quailed.

For though she had decreed at first that Harty Carlisle was no beauty, and very unlikely ever to compete favourably with her own daughters, there had been times since when she feared that her judgment had been a faulty one. The power which the girl possessed, which was not beauty, and which she wielded with careless ease, had been recognised by every man in the place, even by Doctor Greyling himself, who was not at all a promising subject, ordinarily, for subtle feminine influence. "But she will hardly be so ungrateful as to attempt to eclipse my girls, after the kind way I have taken her people up from the first," Mrs. Greyling thought uneasily; "though there's no knowing, as soon as there is a man in the case, what girls will do."

It was useless throwing her anxious maternal soul into the future in this way, she speedily realised. A dozen things might happen to avert a consummation she devoutly dreaded. In the first place;

Harty might not come; in the second place, if she did come she might not look well; and, in the third place, the hero of the night might either not gain an introduction, or, better still, might not even desire one.

Meanwhile, poor Harty had seen the man who had been her lover come to and depart from the Greyings. She had seen him, and not a tear had cooled her hot, miserable eyes, not a sigh had burst from her overcharged, aching heart. Her sister Mabel seeing him at the same moment, had shrunk back from the window, exclaiming:

"Harty, dear, how will you bear it? If he is there to-night you won't be able to bear it."

And then, though through all her being Harty was writhing with the agony that can never be depicted properly, she was able to answer very quietly and steadily:

"I shall bear it as other people have had to bear it, I suppose; because a man has not married me there is no reason that the sight of him should be unbearable to me."

"He looked so exactly like himself," Mabel murmured, pitifully, "it quite shocked me."

"It would have shocked me infinitely more if he had looked exactly like any one else," Harty said. Then, as she heard a shambling step which she knew well approach the door, she turned to meet whatever was to follow, with that look of being hunted on her face which only exists when we cannot fly from the enemy within, and dare not defy the enemy without.

Mr. Devenish came into the room this day with his pallid face paler, and his head bent more hopelessly than usual even. "I hope he won't speak—oh, I hope he won't speak!" the girl thought as she pressed her hands tightly together, and tried to pity him for that abasement which he always made so cruelly apparent to her.

"Well," he began, glancing at Harty, as he placed himself wearily on the sofa, "well, I hope you derive sufficient pleasure from the sight of the man who tired of you, to outbalance any little regret you may feel for the pain it gives me."

She lifted her head and looked at him, her colour rising fast, her lips quivering with the stinging pain that would make itself manifest, hot words of reproach ready to rush from her tongue. But one look at the shrinking figure, one look at

the weary weak face changed her purpose and softened her spirit.

"Try to believe what I told you when I first heard that Mr. Powers was coming home, papa; try to believe that my desire to avoid him has been fifty thousand times stronger than your own; try to believe that my prayer for years has been that my eyes might close in death rather than ever light on him again."

"Try to speak like a reasonable young woman and not like a ranting actress, and possibly I may credit your assertions," he answered, petulantly. "But how idle all this is! Call your mother, and see if any one can be found to go to the station for a newspaper, and may I ask you to open the window, Harty? I don't expect to have my predilection for fresh air remembered, but I wonder that you should remain in an atmosphere that resembles an oven, when you could improve it at the cost of such slight exertion as opening the window."

Harty went and opened the window, and, as she was in the act of doing it, the two young men came out from the opposite house. She would not permit herself either to shrink or to start. She would not even allow herself to turn her head away from them, but just went on with her task of lifting the heavy sash. Claude walked on unconscious of her presence, but Jack Ferrier, looking across the road, had his attention arrested at once.

"What an attractive little face; did you see it?" he muttered, hesitating for a moment as he looked at Harty, and then hurriedly getting himself abreast of his friend. And his friend answered with what looked like horribly cruel indifference to the watching girl.

"No; there's only one face in the world that could ever attract me, and thank the Lord I'm not likely to see it here," Claude responded; and so through his careless renunciation of the opportunity of seeing her, he delivered himself (and her) up to the dangerous probability of their meeting once again that very night.

"Did that fellow see you?" her stepfather asked, as she turned away.

The pained little face turned itself towards him.

"No, not yet; that's to come," she said.

He shook his head in fretful impatience.

"After several years of callous indifference on your part this show of sentiment does not impose on me at all, Harty; but I wish you would remember, for your

mother's sake, not for mine—I make no claim on your consideration—that though it does not impose upon me, it distresses me.”

He changed his position with fractious impatience as he spoke, and at the same moment his wife—his unvaryingly faithful slave—came into the room. She came in with a little flush of colour upon her, and a little atmosphere of worry enveloping her, that spoke plainly enough of household care and fatigue. An air and an atmosphere that were suggestive of two ends that refused to meet, of domestic discords that wouldn't be made to harmonise, of those feminine fusses, in fact, which are inevitable, and which are ceded up to us as our precious rights by the nobler sex without demur.

“You look quite warm and worn, my dear,” he said, in the complaining tone which makes the words, “my dear,” a dire offence in the ears of a lovingly, sensitive woman. “I wish—not that I could presume to advise her—but I do wish that I could see your daughter Harty interpose to spare you a little.”

She was by his side in an instant—the poor over-tired, over-strained, affectionate fool. By his side arranging his cloak and his cushions, and suggesting that he should “Try a little claret, and compose himself;” and all the while Harty stood by longing so piteously for a word of love from her mother, waiting so touchingly for her turn!

For the mother and the children had been so desperately dear to one another before this man had monopolised the former, and managed the latter, out of all their former relations. And Harty could not forget her mother's love and her mother's lament, when she had been compelled to take the first draught from her cup of bitterness.

Mabel would have wept and wailed with her, and have worried her to any extent with affectionate solicitude and sympathy, if only Harty would have rendered herself up a victim to these manifestations. But Harty could not do this. She had no intention of becoming maudlin and weariful in this progress which she was compelled to make retrospectively through the lone, long valley of humiliation. But what she did yearn for was one word of understanding sympathy from her mother.

But her mother failed to give it on this occasion. Poor woman, she herself was driven out of her stronghold of sweet calm by the demands that were being made on her on all sides, and by her utter inability to meet them. The butcher and the baker were tendering their little bills, with an engaging frankness that would have been pleasing had she been able to meet them. And the girls needed boots and gloves for this party at Mrs. Greyling's, and poor Edward always grew bleaker than was well for those who dwelt in the tent with him, when his supply of seventy shilling claret was stopped. And, altogether, how could she be expected to turn from these real troubles of every-day life to those realms of phantasy where love's young dream and disappointment floated vapourously.

So the girl was thrown back upon herself, upon her own unselfish powers of reserve, and the jerk with which she was so thrown back, harmed her. We cannot throw nature backwards and forwards in this way without brushing off a portion of its beautiful bloom. “My mother might have commanded me to stay at home to-night, if she had taken the trouble to speak about it at all,” the girl thought, as she robed herself with the most radiant aspect which she was capable of assuming that night. “Will any man care to look at little dark me, I wonder? Will Claude Powers care if any other man does?”

She turned away from the contemplation of herself in the glass, with a little petulant air of finding herself wanting, that any other observer would have found it hard to indorse. Standing there in the midst of clouds of grey tulle, bound round her small head and throat, and wrists with grey Roman pearls, she was just one of those studies in harmonious colouring that men delight to gaze upon. And in this guise, and this mood, she went out to meet the man who had loved her once, and the man who had admired her this morning. And as she went into the house, her young heart throbbing responsively to the strains of the waltz which was being played, Doctor Greyling met her, and proposed a “swinging good partner” to her at once.

So heedlessly she bounded into a fresh fray.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBBON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXI. MY MOTHER AND ROSETTA.

It was plain to me that I must somehow convey her to the Down Farm House. There at least she would obtain the shelter and succour she needed so pressingly. It was some little distance, however, and my strength was scarcely equal to carrying her. Should I leave her, and run back home for assistance? But she might perish in my absence. Or—and the thought roused within me a feeling of cruel fear and miserable jealousy—she might revive suddenly and escape from me, proceed on her way, and vanish—I might see her no more. No, I could not quit her side, if I remained but to die with her. I shouted for help until my voice died away into a hoarse, toneless murmur. There was just a chance of some one of the farm servants being at work within hail. But there came no answer to my cries, save a moaning echo among the firs, as they creaked beneath the weight of snow they bore upon their branches, and now and then a rustling sound, as, stirred by my clamours, the drifts yielded a little, and feathery flakes crumbled from their crests and fell in powdery showers.

Her face—how beautiful still! like a sleeping child's—was marble white and cold. I pressed it against my own, I kissed it, to instil some life and warmth into it. For me, my blood was on fire. My forehead was wet; I was trembling all over with feverish excitement. It was not winter to me, but a fierce summer of passion and wild emotion. Was she dead? What an agony the thought inflicted upon me! No; she still lived.

Warm breath still issued, however faintly, from her pallid lips. I could note it wreathing and curling, in a thin cloud, in the frosty air.

My sweet Rosetta! And I was holding her clasped, how tenderly! in my arms. The thought was most precious to me—that I could not be deprived, even though death were to come then at once to her, to both of us.

But this was madness. I roused myself. By an effort I constrained my thoughts to resume something like a rational form. I must save her; yet what to do? I again applied my flask to her lips. She shivered, then unclosed her eyes, and revived a little.

"You're not hurt, Rosetta?"

She did not speak, but she faintly shook her head. She weighed heavily upon my arm; as yet she had not strength to stand.

Presently, part carrying, part dragging her, I moved her some way towards the farm. The snow was deep, and my feet seemed often slipping from under me. I was compelled to pause every now and then, both for Rosetta's sake and my own. At intervals I shouted for help, but unavailingly. And I was careful to wrap my thick coat about her as closely as I could. I even meditated taking off my heavy boots, and constraining Rosetta to wear them. I was grieved to think how cold and wet her poor feet must be in the thin soaked shoes she wore. I would willingly have gone bare-footed myself to have spared her any suffering. But I felt that the task was too difficult, she being so helpless, and that much valuable time would be lost. It seemed more advisable to hurry on as rapidly as possible. But we made slow progress. I was in despair. I had blundered somewhat on my way back, missing, in my trouble and excitement, the foot-track to the plantation.

We had come upon deeper snow and heavier drifts. Still there was no chance of losing our way. Darkness was fast coming over; there was now but a dull kind of bloom discernible in the cloudy west, marking where the sun had gone down. But, thank Heaven! the roof-tops of the farm-house were now in sight.

"How good you are to me! But I tire you dreadfully. My dear Duke, you will kill yourself slaving for me," she moaned. "Better leave me, and go on alone."

"I'll die sooner."

"My Duke, I love you." And she hid her face on my shoulder. She scarce knew what she said, probably. But her words inspired me with new courage, with unexpected strength. I lifted her in my arms, and succeeded in carrying her some hundred yards or so, though my limbs trembled under me, the hold of my feet upon the snow was so precarious.

There was help at last. A figure could be seen in the distance. It was Kem.

"Kem!" I cried to her.

She was making her way laboriously through the snow, searching for something, as it seemed. She was in quest, as I afterwards learned, of a blue pyle hen, her favourite amongst the poultry, that was missing, and had, as she feared, met with serious misadventure.

"Kem," I shouted again and again. She looked every way but in the right one, as somehow people always will do when cried to and urgently needed. She was even retracing her steps and going back homeward at one moment. But she perceived me at last, and stood still. She could with difficulty understand that I wished her to approach. Then she hurried up.

"Help me," I said. "A lady lost in the snow. We must carry her home."

"Lost! Poor soul! And shrammed with the cold. 'Twill be her death like enough. And such a pretty creature too! And her poor hands and arms all spreazed. What did she out in such weather?"

Kem lent willing and substantial help. Soon Rosetta was carried to the farm, and reclining in front of the kitchen fire. She had revived, drawing life, as it were, from its warmth. She spoke but little, and was languid and weary. But her face now wore a look of repose, almost of happiness. At her own request she had been supplied with some tea; but she could eat nothing. I pressed her hand—she rewarded me with a kind and grateful smile—and left her in charge of Kem, who was soon busy

drying the poor child's clothes. Warm slippers had been found for her, and the snow shaken from her mantle. She wore beneath it a rich dress of light green silk decked with much costly trimming of lace. A heavy gold chain was twisted about her neck, and jewels hung from her ears.

"A real lady I'd say by her donnings," whispered Kem. "But how come she out in snow? Well nigh froar to death she were. Who is she, Master Duke, and what? Dost know?"

I made no answer. Yet it was clear that some explanation upon the subject I must afford sooner or later.

Who was she, and what? To me she was Rosetta; that answer was sufficient. But more must be said than that to my uncle—to my mother. The secret of my love was in peril. How would they judge it? And Rosetta. What opinion would they form of her? I shrank from the subject, yet I felt that I must meet it.

They would condemn her. So much seemed certain. They would not, they could not, find the excuses for her that I did—in her youth and wondrous beauty, in the cruel sufferings she had endured, the hard life, the savage schooling, the miserable companionship. They would put these far from them, and demand what was she now? It was hard to answer, painful to think upon.

And did I not myself, in truth, condemn her? If I did not, it was because I wilfully shrank from considering the subject; because out of moral cowardice I refused to let my mind dwell upon it; because of my love, or what was then even more absorbing than my love, my excessive pity. No. I could not condemn her; I preferred to slink away from the judgment seat. I was not competent; I was too weak, too erring, too fond, to occupy it and censure the sins of one so fair to look upon.

I sought my uncle, resolved to confess all to him: my first meeting with Rosetta, my insensate passion for her, and the sequel; her flight with Lord Overbury, and now, her escape from the hall, and my finding her in the snow. I meant to appeal to his compassion, and, above all, to conjure him to deal kindly with the poor stranger whom wild chance had brought within his gates. But my uncle was absent from the house. I learnt that he was out in the water meadows superintending the breaking up of the ice for the cattle.

To my mother I found it impossible to tell all that I had promised myself, perhaps

vainly, to reveal to my uncle. I simply informed her, in a confused statement, that I had chanced to meet a lady lost in the snow, and had with difficulty brought her home for shelter. I said little beyond this.

"Who is she, Duke? A stranger?"

"She knows little of this country, I think," I answered evasively.

"You've seen her before? Nay, it matters not; if help is needed it shall be given, though she be the veriest tramp. Lost in the snow! Poor soul, she might have died. Thank God, you found her. Where is she? In the kitchen?"

"Yes, before the fire; I told Kem to do all that needed to be done."

"That's right; I can trust Kem. Poor woman! Thank God, you found her, Duke," she said again. Then she added: "If you're wet be sure you change your clothes. I'll see to this lost creature myself."

Lost creature! That was how she spoke of Rosetta, never having seen her, wholly uninformed of her story. If she were to know all!

She had been sitting at her desk, busy over the account-books of the farm. She closed them at once, locked her desk, and hurried to the kitchen. It was some time before I found courage to follow her. With a tremulous heart I asked myself what would she think of Rosetta? What would she say to her? Could her surpassing beauty fail to impress and fascinate others as it did me? I was cowardly enough to open the parlour door and listen, in the hope of hearing something of what was passing in the kitchen. There was the confused sound of conversation, in subdued tones, but I could overhear nothing distinctly, though I could note that now Rosetta was speaking and now my mother. I would not enter to disturb them yet, I thought. So I stood idly by the fire, staring at the coals, or out of the window into the darkness, or studying the pictures and books, and the other familiar objects of the room. But all in a vacant, preoccupied way, terribly nervous and disturbed the while.

At last I could bear the suspense no longer. With assumed boldness, noisy tread, and an affectation of a cough to announce my coming, I entered the kitchen.

Kem was standing apart, occupied, or pretending to be occupied, at the dresser. Rosetta reclined before the fire, resting her feet upon the fender. Her cheeks were now aglow with colour, and she was hold-

ing up one of her jewelled hands to screen her face from the glare of the flames. She looked very handsome, the fitful firelight touching with bright reflections her lustrous auburn hair, gleaming upon the glossy folds of her silken skirts, and kindling sparkles upon the gold chain round her neck, her rings and bracelets, and the jewels she wore in the ears. She had thoroughly recovered, as it seemed. My mother stood near, with one hand resting upon the table. There was something of wonder and admiration in her face, as though she, too, had recognised the extreme beauty of her guest, and, mixed with this, earnest commiseration; and yet in addition, as I read it, an element of doubt and misgiving.

"Pray understand that I am most grateful for all the kindness that you have shown to me."

Rosetta was speaking. I was struck at once by a certain change in her tone and manner; both were new to me.

"It is little enough—it is nothing," my mother said, quickly.

"But for the assistance of your son—that is so, I think? But for the assistance of your son I should have died of the cold."

"The winter has been very severe, and this heavy fall of snow makes the country dangerous to those who quit the roads; and even the roads in many places are, I learn, almost impassable. My son is happy, as we are all, that he was able to render you any help. But he would have done the same, I'm sure, as we all should, for any one in like trouble. He did no more than his duty."

"I am, as I said, most grateful, and if I can repay him or you in any way it will give me much pleasure."

She spoke, not with the lassitude of recent suffering or abated strength, but with a certain languid condescension that had something almost insolent about it. Of my presence in the room none took heed. My mother's pale face flushed.

"There is no need to speak or to think of repayment. For all we have done, or can do for you—it's little enough—you are most welcome."

"May I not even thank you when I owe you my life?" But this was said with a scornful curl of the lip and a peculiar bitterness of tone. It seemed marked by mock gratitude as well as mock humility. I was puzzled and distressed.

Why, I asked myself, did these two, my mother and Rosetta, stand thus apart and unsympathetic on the instant of their first

encounter? Why did Rosetta assume this new air of laboured arrogance and affected superiority? Why was my mother so cold to her, so anxious to escape her gratitude? What had passed between them prior to my entrance? Nothing of any real import, surely. I wholly failed to grasp the significance of their bearing towards each other—only that it was plain that some sudden antagonism had arisen between them, sundering them.

Are women possessed of some subtle gift of perception—some instinct, as it were, that enables them to read each other better than men can do? to detect frailties, to lay bare falsities, to discern the innermost secrets and infirmities of character, however hidden these may be to our ruder faculties of observation? I thought it must be so when I noted the look in my mother's face as she surveyed Rosetta.

"If you have indeed been in peril," she said, almost coldly, "thank Heaven for your preservation."

Rosetta tossed her head disdainfully. I felt pained—I hardly knew why. But I regretted my mother's severity of demeanour, for which it seemed to me there was little real occasion; she might, I judged, have been more indulgent and forbearing, considering all the circumstances; and I had the sense to perceive that Rosetta's manner was open to objection. I was at a loss to account for this new waywardness of hers. It was unlike herself, so far as I knew her, and that, in truth, was not much. But it appeared as though some histrionic impulse had suddenly moved her, and that she was playing a part, and a part that was to me distasteful, for it was deficient in the respect due to my mother. Still I made excuses for her. At such a time, seeing all she had gone through, how weak she was, I could not hold her accountable for what she did or said. And then I loved her.

She did not once look towards me. Yet I felt that she knew I was present.

"I will trespass upon your kindness but a few moments longer," she said with careless haughtiness. "I have no desire to tax your hospitality more than I can avoid. I may not, it seems, speak of my gratitude, or of compensating you for the trouble I have occasioned. Still I may perhaps be allowed some day to show my sense of the favours I have received at your hands."

She drew her skirts about her with superb insolence.

"I am glad if we have served you.

But we had failed in Christian charity had we done less than we have done. You will stay here I trust, until you are well rested and strong enough to set forth again upon your way. Until then you will find a home beneath this roof. It is not much I offer you; but at such a time, in such a case, I would not offer less to the poorest and wretchedest of outcasts. In this weather I could scarcely turn even a wolf from the door."

Rosetta rose angrily. "Woman!" she cried. "Do you know to whom you speak?"

"Rosetta!" I interposed, appealingly.

My mother's eyes met mine.

"Hush, Duke," she said; and she laid her hand gently on my arm.

"Rosetta, indeed! I am Lady Overbury!" and she glanced fiercely round her. Even at that trying moment I could but note the beauty of her anger, the grand kindling of her eyes, the thrilling music of her voice. I turned again to my mother.

She was startled, pale, and trembling somewhat, but she still stood erect; she even removed her hand from the table, as though to show that she had no need of support.

"Your ladyship is welcome to the Down Farm," she said, gravely.

After a pause Rosetta advanced towards her.

"You doubt me? I am Lord Overbury's wedded wife—married to him in Scotland months since. This will prove it."

She drew from her bosom a folded scrap of paper, and tossed it on to the table.

"There is no need of proof," said my mother. "Take back the paper. It concerns me not. As I said, you are welcome to the Down Farm. I should say, your ladyship is welcome."

Intentional or not, there was a suggestion almost of irony in her tone as she said this. Certainly it was but a cold and uncordial welcome.

THE MEDICINE-MAN IN EUROPE.

A DOCTOR tells me it's all very well to laugh at charms, but that if I'd had much to do with sick people I should be sorry (as he is) that they've pretty well gone out of use. After all, a charm is as good as a bread pill, and sometimes the main thing to do with a patient is to soothe his nerves, and give him courage to bear up. If a

fairy stone or a jingle of doggerel will do this for him, why not let him use them? So says my doctor.

But old charms did more than that; they dealt with every possible relation of life. Thus: "Eat hare if you want to look handsome for nine days after." "Put a hen's heart on your wife's left side while she is asleep, and she'll tell all her secrets." "Swallow a mole's heart, fresh and palpitating, and you'll at once be expert in divination." "Quartan agues yield not to ordinary medicine; so take of the dust in which a hawk has been rolling, tie it up in a bit of white cloth with a red thread, and wear it; or else knock out the right eye of a live lizard, and wear it wrapped in a bit of goat-skin." These are from Pliny, who also teaches that all medicinal herbs should be gathered, pickpocket fashion, with the right hand poked through the left armhole of the tunic; you ought to be clad in a white robe, with naked clean-washed feet, and to have just offered an oblation of bread and wine. Worms out of a goat's brain are good for epilepsy; so is a rivet from a wrecked ship, if you insert in it the bone cut out of a living stag's heart, and then make it into a brooch. If you see a shooting star, count quickly, for you'll be free from inflammation as many years as you can count numbers while the star remains in view. To cure cataract in the eye, catch a fox, cut out his tongue, let him go, dry his tongue, and tie it up in a red rag, and hang round the man's neck. When something has got into your eye, rub it with five fingers of the same side as the eye affected, saying thrice, "Tetunc resonco bregam gresso," and spit thrice. If you would escape stomach-ache, take care that you always put on your left shoe first, and wear on gold-leaf the letters L * M @ R I A, written three times. For toothache, say "Argidam margidam stur-gidam" thrice over, and spit in a frog's mouth, solemnly desiring him to take the toothache. If any one has swallowed a bone, gently touch the mouth with ring-finger and thumb, and say nine times "I kiss the Gorgon's mouth." This is sovereign; the great Galen himself testifies to the value of charms in such a case. These are from Marcellus Empiricus (the Quack, as he well deserves to be called), who flourished about 380 A.D. But this, from Albertus Magnus, is the most wonderful of all: Gather in August the herb heliotropion, wrap it in a bay-leaf with a wolf's

tooth, and it will, if placed under the pillow, show a man who has been robbed where are his goods and who has taken them; also, if placed in a church, it will keep fixed to their places all the women present who have broken their marriage vow. "This last is most tried and most true."

No doubt fancy goes a long way. Hearne, travelling among the Red Indians, was asked by a friendly chief for a charm against his enemy. He wrote some words, and made some marks on a piece of paper. The Indian took care to let this come to his enemy's ears, "who forthwith sickened and before long died." It was often so, no doubt, among our Saxon forefathers. They had such faith in charms that they called the gods charm-smiths. Nightmares they dreaded, and looked on them as fiendly visitations. And verily some of those recorded in Scott's *Demonology* are horrible enough to have had their birth in the nether pit. One hears of such things occasionally when a heavy supper could not have been the cause: a man, for instance, was obliged always to sleep sitting up, for as soon as he fell into a reclining position he was attacked by a spectre skeleton, which throttled him. Even in his chair he would sometimes slide down, so he had a servant always on watch to wake him the moment he ceased to be bolt upright. In early times he would have been dosed with charms and well exorcised, and so perhaps cured; but now that one could only "appeal to his reason," his case was hopeless. There is a horrid story of a day mare in the *Yulinga Saga* (Cockayne's translation). Vanlandi, son of Svegth, King of Upsal, was a mickle man of war, and fared far and wide about lands. He stayed the winter in Finland with Snid the Old, and took to wife his daughter Drifa. In spring he went away, leaving her behind, and gave his word to come again in three winters' time, but he came not in ten winters. So Drifa communed with a cunning woman that she might bewitch Vanlandi back into Finland, or if not, do him to death. And one day when he was in Upsal the witchery came upon him, and he made him ready to go, but his friends suffered him not, and said that there was the hand of a Finn witch in his getting ready. Then he lay down in a deep sleep, but waking soon he called and said a mare trod him. His men came to help; but when they took up his head then she trod his legs, and when they took

up his legs then she danced upon his head, that he died.

These Finns were great at raising storms. A Swedish sailor (and many an English one too) doesn't like a Finn on board his ship; he thinks the fellow can whistle a wind whenever he likes. But others besides Finns had this power over the elements; witness this from Cæsalpinus, his Investigation of Dæmons, A.D. 1593. A Swabian farm-bailiff took his little daughter, eight years old, to visit the fields, and talked as they went of the extreme drought.

"But I can soon bring rain or hail either," said she, "if there is need of it."

"Who taught thee that, my child?" said the father, wondering.

"From my mother," said she; "it is not hard to find teachers of such things."

So the bailiff bade her call for rain, for he would fain see if she could do what she said. She then desired a little water, which he presently brought her from a stream hard by. This water she stirred with her finger in the fiend's name, using certain words. Whereupon the sky grew black, and the air was troubled (the prince thereof stirring it), and the rain came down.

"Bring also hail on this other field," said the father, which, when she had done, he straightway denounced his wife to the authorities. She was burnt alive; but the child was reconciled to the Church, and became a nun. This, remember, was in the time of good Queen Bess, in civilised Germany. No wonder the Mongol Tartar thinks rain can be compelled from the clouds by certain charms, as does also the negro; while for the red-skins' medicine-man to conjure it down is an every-day matter—or was, so long as the red-skins had leisure to care about rain or anything but how to save themselves from the great republic.

But I must give you a few more samples of charms for bodily ailments. Here are some recipes from various animals:

"The wolf: Lay his head under the pillow, and the unhealthy shall sleep sweetly. His flesh well dressed and sodden, given to eat, cureth devil's sickness, and an ill sight."

"For disease of joints, take a live fox, and seethe him till the bones alone be left, adding oil during the seething, and use this as a bath right often."

"Let those who suffer from apparitions eat lion's flesh; they will not, after that, suffer any apparition." But the king of

beasts is condescending: "For sore ears take lion's suet, melt in a dish, and drop into the ear," which makes us think either that lions were much more plentiful, or sore ears much more distressing than now-a-days. Fancy in "the Chepe" the announcement "a fat lion killed last week; of his suet a little left. To prevent disappoiment apply early."

Is ophthalmia common in China? Surely it ought not to be when we read: "If thou in early summer takest for food any whelp, thou shalt be safe of blindness and all eye-sores." But eye-sores are curable in another way: "Take a wolf's right eye, and prick it to pieces, and bind it to the suffering eye; it maketh the sore to wane."

Is any one disposed to try this? "For tear of mad hound, take the worms which be under a mad hound's tongue, snip them away, lead them round about a fig-tree, give them to him who hath been rent; he will soon be healed?" or this; "a hound's head burnt to ashes, and applied on the wound, casteth out all the venom and the foulness, and healeth the man."

And so goat's grease cures dropsy; dog's milk helps children through their teething; gall of a wild buck mingled with field-bees' honey, makes the eyes bright; a hare's heel carried in the pocket keeps away stomach-ache; a hare's brain in wine cures drowsiness; burnt hartshorn in hot water kills worms; and so on.

But of all beasts, the badger was the most valuable. There is a four-footed neat, which we name taxonem (French *taisson*), but in English, brock; catch that deer, and do off the teeth of him while yet quick, those which he hath biggest, and thus say: "In the name of the Almighty God I thee slay, and beat thy teeth off thee." Then wind the teeth up in a linen rail (garment), and work them in gold or silver that they touch not the body. Have them with thee, then shall scathe thee neither heavenly body, nor hail, nor strong storm, nor evil man, nor aught of pestilential. His right fore foot, too, gives victory in any contest, and prolongs life, and keeps off mickle ailments; and his blood mixed with salt, cures cattle and horses. And if you bury his liver, cut into bits, "at the turnings round of the land boundaries," and his heart at the borough gates, you and yours will always return in health from journeys. His hide, too, keeps you from being footsore; his brain cures all pains in the head. Indeed, he is a wonderful

beast, and well may the old leech adjure his reader, "I will that thou shouldest believe that this wild deer benefits well." The only wonder is there are any badgers left.

Well, if any one cares to pursue the subject, let him turn to "Saxon leechdours," edited in the Rolls series by the Reverend O. Cockayne. The editor thinks his books valuable as "illustrating the history of science in this country before the Conquest;" they certainly give us a queer idea of the stuff with which doctors' heads must have been filled. If any one can find any principle, sympathetic or other, running through the use of "worts," or animal remedies, it is more than I have been able to do. They are merely "charms," quack recipes handed down from Teutonic ancestors, or (like the Herbaria of Dioscorides) borrowed wholesale from the Greeks. Then, as now, men spent far more time and money, patience and thought, in perfecting the art of killing one another than that of curing either themselves or others.

Some people would fain attribute all the virtues of this mixed English nation to those whom we used to call Saxons; but they cannot clear their pets of the charge of gross and childish superstition. England was priest-ridden in the first half of the eleventh century, not only in her lower, but in her upper ranks. That is one great reason why she fell before the Norman, who, much as he might talk of reverence to clergy, held his own against pope as well as against friar.

Here are two stories by Ælfric, abbot, probably, of Cerne, in 1006: "An ill-conditioned (ungenad) man of Bishop Ælfstan's retinue at Ramsbury would not go on Ash Wednesday after mass to get ashes as did the others. His fellows urged him to go and receive the mysteries. 'No,' said he, 'I will not.' That week the heretic was riding out on some message when dogs made at him very savagely, and he defended himself till his staff stuck in the ground before him, and his horse carried him forward, so the spear went right through him, and he fell a-dying. Whereupon many loads of earth lay atop of him within seven days, because he refused a few ashes." Again, "The saintly Bishop Æthelwold, he who is now working miracles at his tomb, oft told me that he knew a man who had a mind to drink in Lent whenever he pleased. So one day he asked Bishop Ælfheab to bless his cup. The bishop

refused, so the silly fellow (dysiga) drank without a blessing, and went out. Well, one suddenly set a dog upon a bull out there, and the bull ran at the man and gored him, so he lost his life, and bought the untimely drink with that price."

Fitting pendants are tales like these (given, you see, "on the highest authority") to the charms and dream-stuff—just like Mother Shipton's book, which may be in great part traditional—and prognostics (as old, by the way, as Hesiod, and who knows how much older?) from the moon's age. I hope nobody who reads this was born on the fifth day. We remember Virgil's "Quintum fuge, pallidus Oves Eumenides que satæ," and my Saxon prognostic says, "Take no oath on it, for he who then perjures himself will soon be dead or in bonds." (Alas, for Saxon truthfulness!) "A boy born on it will not easily escape, after five years he often dies useless. A maid will die worst, for she will be a witch and an herborist. He who takes to his bed on it will die."

Once more: The dwarf was always a terror to our forefathers. He was identified at once with the malignant Finn, who was supposed to have so much occult power, and also with more wholly supernatural beings. Even in quite late times convulsions were supposed to be dwarfs' (devorty) work, and the charm was "three crosses, T for the Trinity, and Alpha and Omega, Saint Machutus and Saint Victricius, written along the arms, along with a draught of celandine rubbed down into all."

"A civilised people," says Mr. Cockayne. Well, it may be so; but still a people whose chief credit is that they have got on so much beyond what they then were than have any of their European brethren. Whatever they may have been in war, in silly superstition and grovelling bigotry the Saxons of the eleventh century were certainly below the Welsh or Irish of the same time.

CANDIDATES FOR MATRIMONY.

"WANT a husband, miss; only three-pence?" was the extraordinary question we heard put to a young lady, waiting to cross a bustling London street. The querist was an impudent young tatterdemalion, who, as he spoke, flourished a bundle of papers before the eyes of the astonished damsel. The rascal was pushing the sale of a journal unique in its way,

an organ "specially devoted to the promotion of marital felicity," and the relief of the "thousands of marriageable men and women, of all ages and conditions, capable of making each other happy, who have no chance of ever coming together either in town or country," thanks to the restrictions imposed by "the cold formalities of society and the rigid rules of etiquette." We suppose this odd literary venture has proved a success commercially, seeing that it has managed to exist for a couple of years, during which time some eight thousand candidates for matrimony have made their wants and wishes known in its columns. Whether marital felicity has been promoted thereby is another matter, upon which we must be content to remain ignorant.

Interesting as this publication may be to its contributors, who pay for the pleasure of seeing themselves in print, it is rather monotonous reading for outsiders; still an analysis of its contents may prove amusing, since we have the editor's assurance that the ancient institution of Marriage excites universal interest among the human family.

After striking out duplicates we find a month's issue of our matrimonial organ containing five hundred and forty-eight advertisements. Two hundred and ninety-four emanating from would-be wives, and two hundred and fifty-four from would-be husbands. Let us give the ladies precedence, and begin with the two hundred and thirty-three unappreciated maidens, who have grown desperate, waiting in vain for the coming man. That rogue Cupid must have gone sparrow-hunting to the neglect of his proper business, for so many connubially-inclined spinsters to be sighing for mates all unregarded. These unwooed ones are of various conditions, and of all ages, from sweet seventeen to forlorn forty; eight being yet in their teens, fourteen just out of them; sixty-three have not seen more than five-and-twenty summers; sixty-one count from twenty-one to thirty years; sixty-two from thirty-one to thirty-nine; while nineteen confess to forty, and eight have passed beyond. Fair maidens stand to dark ones in the proportion of three to two, but black hair would seem to be at a discount, for only one raven-locked lady is to be found among them. It is from no want of charms that these poor ladies are left out in the cold. Oblivious of the copy-book maxim about self-praise, five proclaim themselves beautiful, eight write themselves down very hand-

some; twenty-three are, according to their own accounts, handsome, sixteen very pretty, and the same number pretty without the very. Fifty-two tell us they are good-looking, nine are nice-looking, and seven fine-looking. Eight are attractive, two prepossessing, twenty-nine of good appearance, one is stylish, and one fascinating. Some are accomplished, some brilliant musicians, some clever needlewomen, some highly educated. Others make parade of their connexion with first-rate families; few forget to declare their amiability and affectionate disposition; some pride themselves upon being domesticated, and all are evidently strong in the belief that they will make excellent wives.

Nineteen-year-old Madeline bemoans her want of money, but hopes that want may be compensated by her "string of virtues," said virtues being thus enumerated, "medium height, golden hair, blue eyes, merry disposition, not at all sentimental, very musical, sings well, also a good house-keeper." A good home and five hundred a year is the price put upon her charms by Augusta, who has no money, nor any expectations of any. She is thirty-five years old, five feet nine inches in height, fair complexion, auburn hair (natural colour), a very good figure, is good-looking, very accomplished, well-bred and domesticated. She has always moved in good society, but having hitherto lived a retired life has had few opportunities of marrying. We suppose Augusta's high breeding would not allow her to admit that she was "on view;" but she does much the same thing when she finishes up with "now in London." Another lady, of twenty-eight, tired of her solitary, secluded life, wishes to meet with a man able to appreciate a warm and loving heart. Unfortunately she is without money, but if good looks and pleasing manners, combined with accomplishments and domesticated charms, would suffice to afford satisfaction, she feels quite sure she would make her husband the happiest of men and envied by all his sex. There is something very pitiful in the following appeal: "Wanted a husband, by a spinster, aged thirty-eight, without money, and not good-looking. Should this meet the eye of any gentleman wanting a wife, and in a position, and generous enough to take one with these disadvantages, the editor can give address." We fear the editor would not be overburdened with applications for an introduction to this disconsolate dame, when so many well-

dowered ladies are in the matrimonial market, to say nothing of heiresses in prospective. Some, who are waiting for dead folks' shoes, announce the fact in a heartlessly complacent fashion. An only child, a sweet thing of twenty-two, says she will come into "a large amount at the death of her parents;" the dark-eyed daughter of a rector "has money, and will get more," when the rector lies in his churchyard; and the highly educated, very fair, very pretty, very jolly Miss Lucy, displays her jolly disposition by stating that in addition to the two thousand pounds she will receive at her marriage, four times that amount will be hers upon the death of her father, "who is now seventy-five."

Actuated by the hope of inspiring the pity akin to love, or perhaps thinking a bride's value enhanced by the absence of mother-in-law, no fewer than forty-three enter the matrimonial lists as orphans. A goodly proportion of these lonely ones are provided with worldly gear. Rosa, aged twenty-six, not pretty, but very fascinating, has a small landed estate and six hundred a year to bestow upon a gentleman of undoubted respectability. Eva, aged thirty-four, with a pleasing face, slight figure, in perfect health, blessed with an active, happy temperament, who does not dislike the country but hates everything false, false hair included, would make a devoted wife to a man of piety, culture, humour, and means. A sufficiently good-looking orphan of forty-two desires to win a gentleman of good position, "her parents being dead," a rather superfluous bit of information. Another mature orphan, owing to forty-four, boasting a pleasing face, a good figure, with temper to match, could be happy either travelling or settled down, and believes she would prove a good wife to a kind, elderly man, gentlemanly in mind and manners, with sufficient means to enable them to enjoy life together.

Sixty-one widows, ranging in ages from nineteen to fifty, are anxious to enter the holy state again. A beautiful widow of nineteen, fair, tall, accomplished, and highly connected, who knows she is very affectionate, might surely wait a little longer; perhaps her impatience is explained by the fact that she is one of the five relicts who are silent as to their property qualifications. The remaining fifty-one have one and all something besides themselves to offer, a little money, a small income, a nice residence, a good house, or a snug private

property. One tempts men with two thousand pounds and a large property hereafter, another gilds the pill with "about twelve thousand," and a third owns a splendid home in the country, without encumbrances, although we should think a wise man would carefully ware widows who apply that hideous term to children. He would be far better off with the highly-connected young widow, who is considered pretty, clever, and amusing—a merry weed-wearer who quotes Scott's lines:

Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou.

And thereupon observes, "she does not deny that she might at times realise the two first lines of the couplet quoted above, but she can assure any gentleman willing to make the experiment, that she is certain to be true to the conclusion." Some of these feminine appeals may have been inserted for the fun of the thing, no doubt; the majority appear genuine enough, but we cannot believe in any "Lady Charlotte" being reduced to the ignominious necessity of putting her daughter up for public competition in this style: "Matrimony.—A lady of title, with an only daughter just nineteen, is wishful to see her well settled in life. She is considered attractive, and will have twenty-five thousand pounds when of age. Gentlemen of social position and ample means only treated with."

The unorthodox method of obtaining a wife, by advertisement, is sanctioned by the example of twenty-five clergymen. Most of them are Church of England curates, having a penchant for well-educated ladies of thirty or thereabouts; but an active, energetic, healthy, Presbyterian clergyman, fond of riding or driving a good horse, whom his female friends say would make one of the best and kindest of husbands, offers himself to any sensible, kind-hearted, and good-looking girl with a thousand pounds in cash, or an income of fifty pounds a year. This paragon, unluckily, has at present to live upon a hundred and twenty pounds a year, and we fear is a wolf in sheep's clothing, if, indeed, he be not identical with that clergyman of the Presbyterian Church who has lately figured before an Old Bailey jury for indulging in a plurality of wives, obtained with fatal facility through the medium of a journal devoted to the promotion of conjugal felicity. It is to be hoped the

captains, majors, colonels, and officers on the Indian staff who employ the same means, do so for honest purposes; but we sadly mistrust the intentions of the young barrister of accomplished education, engaging manners, unexceptionable habits, genial disposition, good appearance and position, who has the entrée of the best society. He does not seem such a genuine article as the teacher of mathematics, about to furnish a quiet country-house, and wishing to "take to himself one of the daughters of Mother Eve, for better or worse, as the event may prove;" or the tall tutor, of excellent figure and warm affections, who has an opportunity of establishing a lucrative school, and seeks a lady of education and some means willing to co-operate in the venture. Three physicians, in good practice, and twice as many surgeons, make up the tale of medical matrimonial aspirants. Art is represented by a solitary individual, and literature by a gentleman standing five feet nine and a half inches, with dark hair and beard, holding a leading position on a weekly paper in an interesting district thirty miles from town; said leading position being worth a hundred and twenty pounds per annum, which should prove an irresistible temptation to a fair lady of thought, culture, and means, who would find him a man who could thoroughly appreciate her merits.

Ladies of an agricultural turn of mind may possibly find a man just suited to them among the five gentleman farmers, and the three farmers who are not gentlemen. Merchants are more plentiful, the most notable of the twenty-three being a Lancashire bachelor, of plain and simple tastes, a religious, but by no means ascetic, cast of mind; who has set his heart upon winning the hand of a warm-hearted English country lady, but stipulates that she "must have head as well as hands in domestic affairs, and, above all, piety is indispensably requisite." Four civil-engineers, nineteen tradesmen, a few clerks, a manufacturer, a commercial gentleman, three respectable young men, and one who is highly respectable, set forth their matrimonial desires in plain, business-like fashion. Eighty-seven bachelors, who would be Benedicks, call themselves gentlemen. Some appear to have nothing but their gentility to support them, and want a wife who would take that office on herself. Some are country gentlemen with estates of greater or less value. One has a

splendid residence, a carriage and pair, and a good income; another has three thousand, and another eight thousand a year. Even two English noblemen come into the open market for wives. Both are in the sere and yellow leaf, one being between fifty and sixty, and the other exactly fifty-five. The latter evidently thinks his age will be forgiven him for the sake of four thousand a year, and a thousand a year for his widow as long as she lives. Another old gentleman who has no handle to his name is still more explicit, announcing that he can secure a good jointure to his widow, as well as provide for a family.

Among the two hundred and fifty-four connubially-disposed gentlemen, only eleven have experienced the happiness of married life. With the exception of one who insists upon a tiny waist and pretty little feet, the widowers are less particular about personal attractions than their bachelor brothers. These latter cannot be accused of undervaluing themselves. Tom, a respectable mechanic, modestly hopes to gain a lady possessing means. An Oxonian, having a nice home and three hundred a year, wants a good-looking wife, a thorough lady in every respect, and with some money. A Roman Catholic gentleman, with a handsome, intellectual face, looking ten years younger than he is, of regular habits, and decidedly literary tastes, desires a Roman Catholic wife, but she must be nice-looking, good-tempered, with some money of her own. A dark, good-looking Yorkshireman, of pleasing, unassuming manners, doing a lucrative business, will not be satisfied unless the lady has at least five hundred a year to bring her unassuming groom. A very good-looking bachelor of thirty-six will not strike his flag to any lady owing to more than twenty-seven, and then only if she be tall, dark, handsome, accomplished, good-tempered, careful, domesticated, and has some money. A gentleman of three-and-twenty, of first-rate family and name, who is considered good-looking, and a very fair amateur violinist, seeks a young lady of his own age who can marry him for love—a gentle hint that he has no money. He might just as well have spoken out like the young fellow who, promising that he is dark, slender, and of an easy disposition, but has "no money, no prospects," expresses his wish to share the lot of a young lady of comfortable independent means. Another young gentleman, revelling in bachelor luxury upon

two hundred a year, will not dispose of his sweet self to any but a lady of fortune. An old bachelor of fifty-five describes himself as worth actually only a thousand pounds or so; but in character one of the richest of men, whose mind is, perhaps, superior to his means, since he has a fine sense of propriety, and a taste for education. He wants an intelligent, domesticated wife, who must be religious, as he is thoroughly so himself. This modest man concludes, "this is worthy the attention of any lady willing to accommodate herself to the particulars."

A young foreigner of distinguished family, with bright hair, blue eyes, nice complexion, and five hundred a year, wishes to find a fair companion among the daughters of Albion. He is not the only foreigner harbouring that desire. A foreign gentleman of good birth, well-built, and of distinguished appearance, a great favourite with the ladies, but unfortunately possessed of but moderate means, wants a wife who could supply the deficiency. A well-educated German, not rich, seeks an independent lady with a good yearly income, who is fond of music and prefers the country to large towns. A resident of Brussels, speaking English, would have no particular objection to a Protestant widow, willing to assist her husband in his business. Then we have a French gentleman of old family and large estates, another with a moderate income, a third, very loving, good-tempered, and musical, who would return to Paris, if agreeable, and a fourth who says, "He is a French noble gentleman of thirty, considered as good and young looking, well tasted, good heart, serious but lively, highly connected and educated, middle size, who would live in England, if agreeable; he talks four languages, gets a little income, but afterwards would receive more than twenty thousand pounds, expected of relative. He wishes to marry, and open correspondence with, an English lady under twenty-six, pretty, of small feet, highly educated, daughter of a wealthy and respectable manufacturer, from whom she would yet receive a same warranted fortune." An American, about to establish a business agency in London, wishes to marry an English woman of means; a Chicago lawyer, worth five thousand dollars, wants an English girl with a like amount of cash. The tall and handsome son of a physician of the highest standing, boasting a well-proportioned figure and dark luxuriant mous-

tache; an author, poet, and musician; connected with the most distinguished families in St. Petersburg, Paris, Washington, and New York; who has travelled all his life and knows the world well, deigns to offer his delectable self to any refined lady of means, loving poetry, music, and the fine arts, and not objecting to the formalities of society—age no object! Here is another American specimen. An American, thirty-one years of age, five feet seven inches high, fair, blue eyes, dark-brown hair, and of good family, with five thousand pounds capital in business, yielding an income of fifteen hundred pounds, would like to correspond with an English lady of between eighteen and twenty-five, of medium size, with black hair and eyes, good form, amiable disposition, and possessing some property yielding an income; but that is a minor consequence, if she possesses those other attractions loved by all true men (pure-hearted, and all that makes her one of God's noble women). All letters will be answered, and cartes returned when required, and confidence in every case, with future to decide the likes and dislikes.

How far the marriage rate of the United Kingdom has been affected by the establishment of the new means of intercommunication between the sexes we cannot tell; but of one thing we feel no doubt, that not a few of its aiders and abettors have bitterly regretted they ever heard of its existence.

AT SCARBOROUGH.

A grey sky and a grey sea,
All in the wild March weather;
A wind that bore down the storm-tossed shore
Snowflake and spray together.
A wreck's jagged timbers, sharp and brown,
That shivered and swayed as the tide went down;
Red roofs, high piled in the quaint old town,
A headland grim with a castled crown,
'Mid a waste of withered heather.

A grey sky and a grey sea,
And a noise like rolling thunder,
As the foam flew fast on the bitter blast,
That tore the waves asunder.
A golden sand reach, long and low;
Black rocks, that 'mid ages of ebb and flow,
Guard the beautiful bay, where long ago
Came ships, with the Raven flag at their prow,
For slaughter, fire, and plunder.

A grey sky and a grey sea,
And two, who stood together,
With hands close clasped, as hands are grasped,
That parting, part for ever.
Two, whose pale lips quivered to say,
The words the world hears every day;
As for all we struggle, and weep, and pray,
Young hearts must break in life's fever play,
And links are light to sever.

A grey sky and a grey sea,
Where white gulls stooped to hover,
Their broad wings flashed, as the great waves dashed,
Where by lover lingered lover.
Those two may never more meet again,
But the wild March wind with its chafe and strain,
Will for aye recal the passionate pain
Of that farewell tryset by the stormy main,
When First Love's dream was over.

TOMMY HALFACRE'S PARLOUR.

ALTHOUGH there be but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous, it was a stride of many centuries that divided Harold Halfacre, the redoubted sea-king, from his descendant, Tommy Halfacre, son of the much-respected tailor of Little Podsham, Wilts.

Time was when Tommy would have been regarded with a grave respect, not to say veneration, as one who, without trespass of his own, is the object of the wrathful judgment of One who cannot err. But opinion hath changed. Poor Tommy had to be content with pity, pity not unmingled with contempt. He was less than man. He was not even a noun-substantive. A loose adjective was the dower of the descendant of the sea-kings. Tommy Halfacre was a "silly"—nothing more.

I am not jesting when I affirm that the blood of the old Danish warriors—though somewhat chilled and turbid—still meandered in the veins of Tommy Halfacre. Five generations of his house had been laid to rest in the quaint old church of Little Podsham, a structure hastily thrown up in old days by an abbot of Westersham, who had got into trouble, and was understood to have entrenched himself behind this pious act, as, in another profession, he might have thrown up an earthwork. The memorial tablet appertaining to the remotest of these buried ancestors, spelt the name "Alfaker," and a still more ancient entry in the parish register, announced that one Harold Rosen Alfaqre, ship-master, had taken to wife Barbara Bunce, a daughter of Little Podsham. From this bold source proceeded those generations of tailors which threatened to become extinct in Tommy. Poor fellow! he could as easily have cut out a world as a waistcoat, and, indeed, the efforts of the family were mainly directed to the preserving as wide a distance as possible between Tommy and that fascinating but dangerous plaything, the shears.

Yet he was never idle. Tommy's mind, as if making up for its minuteness by cease-

less activity, was ever on the move. Moreover, there was one great paramount duty devolving on him, every day, save Sunday, and admitted, with justice, to be fulfillable to perfection by no hands but his, namely, the conducting his father's cow to the various patches of common land and grassy roadsides of the vicinity.

Whether Tommy led the cow, or the cow took charge of Tommy, is a question we prefer to leave to the scoffers who occasionally mooted it. A cord of some length connected the parties, and the management of this bond we conceive to have been the subject of some mutual understanding. For whereas, on quitting home, Mr. Halfacre authoritatively led the way, heading for whatever points his judgment suggested, the cow, when somewhat satiated, assumed the direction of affairs, would evince morbid fancies for a dusty thistle, or a toothful of wild barley, or saunter and splash for half an hour just within the margin of a russet pond, whisking the patient Tommy with her dripping tail, till the threadbare swallow-tailed coat he always wore had the appearance of having been exposed to a pelting shower.

Having cooled her toes sufficiently, the cow would quietly march homeward, Tommy abjectly trotting behind (he never walked), less custodian than train-bearer, and, at the least pause, being jerked abruptly forward by the impatient toss of his leader's head.

Tommy Halfacre was possibly about eighteen when I first made his acquaintance. Returning one day from hunting through the usually quiet village, I was aware of a slight disturbance. Tommy, beset, as was too often the case, by certain idle urchins on their way from school, had on this occasion turned to bay. His usual tactics were to trot straight on, answering, indeed, in his piping voice, to any direct question, but never stopping—experience having imparted to poor Tommy that any prolonged discourse would usually end in his discomfiture. He therefore only peeped (readers may recal this quaint old phrase as used by the Old Testament translators, "mutter and peep," that is, chirp like a bird), and hastened on; but on this occasion some one had offered violence. Tommy cared not a button for verbal missiles, but attack his sacred person, and what remained of the blood of the sea-kings was at once in conflagration!

He had swooped like a hawk upon the offender, and might, in his lack of self-

control, have done him a much worse injury than the mere 'eaving a potato-skin (such, I learned, had been the affront) properly deserved. The lad was, however, rescued by a general charge, and the aspect of affairs seemed now to demand that I should interpose between the luckless "silly" and his persecutors.

Order being restored, Tommy, who seemed to be fully awake to the value of a cavalry escort, trotted easily along at my side.

"Do they often tease you like this, my boy?" I asked, by way of opening the conversation.

"I don't mind 'em, bless 'ee!" chirped Tommy.

"But when they pelt you——"

"Ah! *then*——" said Tommy, setting his teeth.

"What?"

"I chops their feet off—then their heads," responded Mr. Halfacre, with perfect serenity.

"Ha! And how do they take that?"

"Their mothers comes, and puts 'em to rights, and says, 'You let Tommy bide, and this wouldn't happen. G'long to your teas!'"

"What do you cut off the heads with?"

"Bill-hook," said the voracious Tommy.

"Would you like them to do it to you?"

"Can't!" peeped Tommy, exultingly; "my head goes off and on. Sometimes I wish it didn't," added the poor fellow, with a sigh. "I've strained it, somehow. It don't fit as it ought to. Wot colour's your?"

"Scarlet."

"Why do you wear scarlet?"

"I am a fox-hunter."

"Does scarlet catch foxes?"

"Rather the contrary, I should say."

Tommy turned up his face with a cunning expression:

"I say, does your head fit?" he chirped; and, turning suddenly off at a sharp angle, disappeared among some cottages.

As I rode on, the question occurred to me, whether a gentleman of Mr. Halfacre's pronounced opinions as regarded homicide would be altogether an agreeable neighbour. What if, under some ungovernable impulse, he should one day carry out the truculent exploits he had hitherto only dreamed? However, no such misgiving appeared to disturb the Little Podshamites, who were, or ought to be, the best judges of the case; and as I, sub-

sequently, more than once encountered the descendant of the sea-kings trotting homeward, cow-conducted, the picture of content and harmlessness, the doubt I have mentioned had passed from my mind, when a strange and tragical event recalled it.

Tommy returned home, one evening, later than usual, somewhat excited, and with his hands so studiously concealed in the pockets of his dress-coat, as to invite inquiry. They were found to be covered with blood!

Having himself sustained no injury, the inference was that he had inflicted some; but neither from Tommy himself, nor from perquisitions hastily made in the neighbourhood, could any clue to the matter be obtained.

Tommy, cleansed of the mysterious stains, had been dismissed to his garret, and the village generally was sinking into repose, when the keeper of the toll-gate, just without the town, was startled by a vehicle passing through without the ceremony of stopping to pay.

The alert custodian was, however, beside the horse in a moment, and at once discovered that the reins were hanging loose, the driver missing. He recognised the vehicle as belonging to a young commercial traveller, Mr. Joseph Barnby, well known in those parts, and whose cheerful good-temper and genial manners had made him a universal favourite. Dark as it was, the toll-man could distinguish traces of blood upon the apron and cushions of the carriage. It was evident that a mishap of some sort had very recently occurred. He at once raised an alarm, and the horse-patrol, at that opportune moment arriving from the village, galloped off in search of the missing man.

He was quickly found. Less than a quarter of a mile distant, stretched almost in the middle of the highway, with his head in a pool of blood, lay poor Barnby, still breathing, but insensible, even to pain. He had been stricken only once, but it was by a hand of unusual power, and with a weighty but peculiar instrument; for the latter, though blunt in its general character, had inflicted small and distinct lacerations—punctures, such as might, in old days, have been effected by the spike-studded mace wielded by our sturdy sires.

Transported with care to the nearest inn, poor Barnby received all the remedial attentions medical aid could supply; but he never rallied, and before morning drew his last sigh.

Late as it was when the discovery was made, news of the atrocious deed sped like wildfire through the village, and many a stout fellow who had known the injured man offered to assist in the pursuit which was at once organised for the apprehension of the cowardly assassin. Robber he could not be called, for not only were the goods contained in the carriage untouched, but Barnby's watch, purse, and pocket-book, were safe upon his person.

The toll-man had little to report beyond what has been narrated. He had heard no unusual sounds upon the road, nor observed any suspicious lurkers in the neighbourhood, only remarking, with an indifference that showed how little he conceived it to bear upon the point at issue, that the last person he had spoken with—perhaps an hour before the alarm of murder—was the poor "silly," Tommy Halfacre.

Excepting that certain zealous youths started off to scour the roads and fields in the vicinity, nothing could be done that night, and it was about nine, next day, that the nearest magistrate, Mr. Secretan, apprised of poor Barnby's death, appeared at Little Podsham, and commenced an inquiry.

On hearing that Tommy Halfacre had been seen by the toll-man so near the place and time of the murder, Mr. Secretan, though aware of the little value that could attach to such testimony, considered it desirable to examine the poor idiot, and accordingly despatched a policeman to the house, requiring his presence.

The officer, to his surprise, found the family in great agitation; old Halfacre stern and grave-browed, his wife in hysterics, and their daughter pale and anxious, apparently at her wit's end to comfort the rest. Tommy was invisible, but his hat lay on the table, and his shoes by the door. The truth was at once declared. Tommy had come home within half an hour of the murder, disordered, his hands reeking with blood; and if this fact, taken by itself, was wanting in significance, a more deadly consequence was imparted by the circumstance that Tommy, before entering the house, had concealed under a heap of lucerne in the cow-shed, the segment of a ponderous hoop, stained with blood, and having iron nails in various parts, which, on close examination, were found to be stained in a similar manner.

"You have the poor lad safe?" asked the officer, glancing at the weeping mother.

Old Halfacre replied that, on hearing of the murder, and recalling the circumstances that seemed to connect with it their unfortunate son, he had proceeded to the latter's room, and, finding him quietly asleep, contented himself with securing the door until they had decided on their course of proceeding.

"Was the boy known to Mr. Barnby?" the officer inquired.

"As well as to most others who frequent the village," was the answer. "Mr. Barnby would nod to him, sometimes say a few words in passing."

"Mr. Barnby was a good-natured gentleman," remarked the officer, thoughtfully. "Tommy could have had no spite again him—eh?"

"Spite? How should he?" asked the old man, briskly. "They never had a—Stay, though."

"May as well out with it, neighbour, whatever 'tis," said the officer, encouragingly. "Come to the worst, the law don't punish innocents."

"But 'twas a year ago. They must have met scores of times since that," said Halfacre; "and 'twas next to nothing at best. Tommy came home very white and sick. He told his mother that Mr. Barnby had put fire and smoke down his throat, and he'd cut his head and feet off—they're the poor lad's usual words, but don't mean nothing—the first time he caught him alone."

"Fire and smoke?"

"The young gentleman was just finishing his pipe, and gave it to Tommy as he drove away, advising him to take the last whiff," explained old Halfacre.

"Is it possible that could have rankled in his mind?" meditated the officer. "Well, neighbour, I must have him, please. Don't be down-hearted, Mrs. Halfacre, nor you, my dear" (to Miss Susan Halfacre, the belle of the village, and universally admired), "Tommy's sure to be kindly treated whatever comes of it. Why, bless 'ee, his cow is a more 'sponsible bein' to the laws than him!"

Poor old Halfacre shrugged his shoulders. The remark, if not complimentary to his first-born, and the last male representative of such a line, was at least consolatory. Inviting the officer to accompany him, he led the way up the narrow stair.

The door was secured, as he had said, but the key had been left below. Halfacre called to his daughter to bring it up.

Meanwhile, they knocked. No answer. Again, no answer. Susan now arriving with the key, the room was entered.

Tommy had disappeared!

The solitary window was bolted within, but a small trap in the ceiling, never opened within the memory of man, revealed the mode of escape. Tommy had managed to reach the leads, whence, over an intervening outbuilding, he had descended on the cow-shed, and thence to the ground. He had, unquestionably, for the moment, eluded capture; and, after an eager but fruitless examination of the vicinity, the officer could only return and report to the magistrate not only the suspicious circumstances attaching to Tommy, but the still more suspicious one of his desperate flight.

An inquest, holden on the following day, revealed nothing beyond that which we already know, save that the testimony of a medical witness, who had examined the portion of hoop found at Halfacre's, and compared it with the injuries apparent on the victim's head, proved beyond the possibility of doubt that, with that very instrument and no other, the deadly outrage had been perpetrated. With this before them, the jury felt that they had no alternative, and accordingly returned a verdict of wilful murder against Thomas Halfacre the younger, thus leaving to another tribunal the task of deciding how far the unlucky "innocent" was amenable to the penalties of law.

His apprehension was regarded as so certain, that it seemed superfluous to offer a reward. Nevertheless, to quicken this desirable end, and to diminish the possibility that he might, in his evident consciousness of impending danger, lay hands on his own life, a reward of twenty pounds was offered, and a general search at once began. Here also begins the most singular part of the story that for some time brought the sequestered village of Little Podsham into continual notice, and will be remembered in its own particular annals long after the existing generation shall have passed away.

Contrary to public—and especially police—expectation, Tommy was not to be found. Not the slightest clue to the lad's movements or place of concealment was to be obtained.

At the end of a week the reward was increased to fifty pounds, and a more regularly organised inquiry commenced. Not only Little Podsham itself, but every

village within fifteen miles was searched or visited by persons selected for the purpose. The promise of reward and the description of the supposed culprit were disseminated far and wide. No Tommy. The little trout stream that trickled through Little Podsham, wherever it presented deeps sufficient to drown a man, was carefully sounded and examined; every well and pond to which access could have been obtained were scrutinised in like manner, and probably not a square inch of open or wooded ground in that part of the county escaped the notice of one or other of the searchers. But no Tommy, alive or dead, was found.

So piqued was the magistrate, Mr. Secretan, at this frustration of justice, that he offered a second reward of fifty pounds on his own account; and now it was held certain that, unless the unfortunate youth had managed to reach London, or died in some lurking-place on the way, he must be quickly accounted for.

It would seem, however, that one of these alternatives had occurred, for another week elapsed without tidings of the missing man. Judge, then, of the excitement that at last ensued when, one day, it transpired that an officer had waited on Mr. Secretan, accompanied by one Bill Stokes, a lad well known in the village, who confidently averred that he had met—nay, touched and spoken with—the much-coveted Tommy Halfacre, no later than the preceding night!

Bill Stokes had been accustomed to drive the light goods cart of Messrs. Jardine, the general dealers, of Little Podsham, but had recently been dismissed for some act of carelessness. He had been generally considered as a sharp, intelligent fellow, and the magistrate listened with attention to the lad's concise statement.

Bill had suddenly encountered the "silly," after dark, at a turning in the road close to the village. Tommy was trotting along in his accustomed fashion, and smoking! We have omitted to state that, though Tommy had resented his first introduction to the fragrant weed, he had subsequently become so addicted to the habit, that the nearest way to Tommy's heart was known to lie through the tobacco-box.

"Ha, Tommy!" young Stokes had exclaimed, making an ineffectual grasp at Tommy's dress-coat. But it tore away.

Tommy uttered a piping screech, like the warning cry of a peewit (imitated by Mr.

Stokes, and admitted to be faithful), and, vaulting over some paling close at hand, disappeared in the darkness.

"If his blessed coat hadn't giv'—I was a made man!" said Mr. Stokes, mournfully.

Tommy had got to be regarded by this time as a sort of prize or fortune—a wandering argosy, which would abundantly repay the time and labour expended in its capture.

"You were sober, of course, Stokes?" said the magistrate, faintly interrogative.

"Perfectly, sir."

"You were lately dismissed from a situation. Will you tell me why?"

"'Cause some un collared a Dutch cheese out of my cart while I ran into Mrs. Murphy's with some coffee-nibs. Wasn't gone a moment, sir," said Billy.

"You were not suspected of stealing it?"

"Oh no, sir. Master said such carelessness was a'most as bad—and giv' me the sack."

"There has been much petty pilfering going on of late, sir," put in the policeman; "bits o' cloth, heatables, and such. We can't check it, do what we will."

"A mysterious community, we Little Podshamites are becoming!" remarked Mr. Secretan, musingly. "Well, Bennett, this at all events narrows the area of search. This unhappy lad cannot be far off. Be brisk, now, and we have him. I had thought of some detective aid from London—but the idea of our not being able to tackle a poor idiot! No, no, we'll manage without that now."

Once more, therefore, the hunt was renewed, and with sanguine hopes of success, for the chase was again fairly sighted—this time by an old dame on her way from the adjacent village. She had met Tommy, pipe in mouth, as usual; but the wide-awake "silly" puffed a volume of smoke into her face and escaped in the temporary obscurity.

Where could he be secreted? And how did he manage to live? As to the first question, there was not a living soul in Little Podsham—his own family included—who would harbour him for an hour. The reward was tempting; and, moreover, it was agreed on all hands that nothing better could happen for the poor lad's own benefit than that he should fall into the hands of the authorities. As to the question of subsistence, it was thought that the petty thefts referred to by the police might furnish a solution. Little plots were laid;

so to speak, baited chiefly with tobacco, were set in likely places and at favourable seasons; but nothing came of it. If Tommy were the marauder, he was evidently too cunning to be caught in such a manner, and doubt began to be felt whether so wise a "silly" had not adopted the safest course in keeping out of the way.

One village philosopher suggested that the cow might be enlisted in the inquiry. He thought it not unlikely that the force of habit might draw Tommy to the spots he was most accustomed to frequent—and who was so familiar with these as his friend the cow? It was determined to give her the chance, and her head. But, on visiting the cow-shed, old Halfacre found that her cord was missing, and before a substitute could be found, Susan, running out, reported that her brother's hat and boots, not to mention a loaf of bread and a bottle of beer, had vanished in the like mysterious manner! From the familiarity with the premises displayed by the intruder, it seemed impossible to doubt that Tommy himself—in the spirit of his ancestors—had executed a daring raid upon the paternal mansion and stolen his own boots, besides the provisions aforesaid!

Angry and perplexed, yet still unwilling to invoke detective aid, Mr. Secretan sought the co-operation of a brother magistrate, Colonel Bolland, and the two set seriously to work to unravel the enigma. The village and its precincts must be once more examined, and that exhaustively.

Now Little Podsham chances to be a village almost as innocent of any eligible lurking-place as is Trafalgar-square. Its two rows of small dwellings cross each other at right angles—all else, that is neither house nor garden, being small patches of grass land separated by low, open palings, and fenced from the high road by a thick and tall quickset hedge, offering little inducement for anything bigger than a tomtit to penetrate its thorny recesses. All outlying spots had been visited again and again; still, it was certain that Tommy's refuge must be close at hand.

One day the two magistrates, who had taken different beats, chanced to meet about dusk on the high road. Standing beside the hedge, they conversed about their plans for the morrow, and were on the point of parting, when Colonel Bolland asked his colleague for a light for his cigar.

"My dear sir, have you ever seen me smoke?" asked Secretan.

"No; but I could have sworn you did—and first-rate tobacco, too!" said Colonel Bolland, laughing. "Why, I can smell it now. There's a delicious whiff!"

"I—I do perceive something," replied the other, with the disdainful sniff of a non-smoker. "Why, where the deuce can it—"

"I can see it now," said Bolland. "It's some fellow t'other side of the hedge. Eh! why, bless my soul, the smoke is rising through the hedge! There's something moving, too."

Mr. Secretan caught his friend's arm, the colour, in his excitement, mounting to his face.

"We have him!" he whispered. "We have limed the bird! My best hunter to a jackass, Tommy Halfacre is in that hedge."

"But how, in the name of—"

"Follow my directions, and you'll see."

Accordingly, after some whispered words, Colonel Bolland proceeded to the termination of the hedge, and, rounding it, walked back, till he arrived opposite his friend.

"Now!" shouted the latter.

Both gentlemen thrust their umbrellas deep into the bosom of the dense quickset. Both were met by some opposing substance.

"It's a hare!" exclaimed Mr. Secretan, loudly. "Shoot her, Bolland, as she sits!"

There would have been no time to carry out the unsportsman-like suggestion, for the hedge was seized with a convulsive tremor, and a piping scream announced that the bird was really "limed."

"Tommy! Tommy Halfacre! Come out, lad!" cried Mr. Secretan. "Here's no man going to harm thee."

"I be comin'," responded the son of the sea-kings, sullenly.

"Which way?"

"G'long to th' end, and you'll see," said Tommy.

The two magistrates obeyed, walking slowly, to allow time for their captive to make his way along the thorny defile. He arrived, however, as soon as they, and, forcing back a portion of the hedge with the aid of a stout stick, appeared, stooping, in the orifice.

It should now be explained that, many years before this, a paling and ditch occupied the place of the quickset, which had been originally planted only on the side next the high road, it being intended at an after period to remove the paling and

fill up the ditch. Owing, however, to circumstances long since forgotten, this had been only partially done, a second row of quickset having been planted on the field side, shutting in whatever remained both of ditch and rail. The result of this was to produce, in process of time, a quickset hedge of extraordinary (but yet unnoticed) width, having a hollow centre, easily made hollower by a skilful and patient hand.

As Mr. Halfacre, now apparently quite at his ease, made a gesture, as inviting them to walk in, the two magistrates—Colonel Bolland, as became him, leading the forlorn hope—boldly adventured the narrow way, and, guided by Tommy's swallow-tails, arrived at a spot where the space widened to nearly five feet, the head room being at least a foot more. Here, to their unspeakable astonishment, they found themselves in a sort of wigwam or tent, somewhat resembling the tilt of a gipsy's cart, and capable of protecting its inhabitant alike from the thorny walls surrounding him, and from any moisture that might descend from above. The floor, paved with bricks and stones, was perfectly dry, and, in a snug corner, was visible Mr. Halfacre's couch, composed of straw, dried fern, and leaves.

Nor were the luxuries of the mansion confined to this. With some little pride of manner, Tommy withdrew a ragged curtain and displayed a recess, in which his cooking utensils, provisions, cup and saucer, tool-box, and tobacco-pouch, were ranged in compact order, and imparted an air of comfort to that remarkable cell which, when illuminated by the aid of the match-box, left nothing to be desired. For many a month after that eventful day, "Tommy Halfacre's Parlour," as it was called, was an object of intense interest. From many a distant county pilgrims visited the spot, and the obliging owner of the fortunate field was understood to have amassed a considerable sum by simply introducing the curious in at one end of the hedge and out at the other.

To return, however, to our party. After completing their amused inspection, the two magistrates groped their way forth, taking, of course, their host with them, and placing him in safe but kindly custody, until his examination on the morrow—his friends being, moreover, made aware of what had occurred.

When examined, the poor fellow, though exhibiting no trace of uneasiness as to his position, with a reserve unusual in him, refused to answer any question relating

to the murder. He remained obstinately and profoundly silent. Only when shown the portion of hoop used in the murder, did Tommy evince any emotion, but, then, his countenance changed, his eyes sparkled and glowed like those of a mongoose at the sight of his natural enemy, the snake, the foam gathered on his lips, and to save him from convulsions, it was necessary to remove the object from his sight.

No safe inference could, however, be drawn from this, and the difficulty of dealing with their strange prisoner pressed heavily on the magisterial mind. That Tommy was a born "silly," it seemed impossible to dispute, and yet his evident consciousness of having committed a punishable act, not to mention the mixture of craft and daring which had distinguished his conduct while in hiding, denoted an amount of intelligence and reasoning power, which was held by more than one of his examiners to entitle poor Tommy to the lurid honours of a criminal indictment. Among other things, attention was called to the fact that he had never plunged more deeply into ill-doing than his actual necessities demanded. He had evidently lived, and pilfered, from hand to mouth, never, excepting in the case of the Dutch cheese, which cost poor Bill Stokes his place, taking more than was sufficient for the day, and even when making his inroad on his native home, touching nothing but his own boots, the cow's cord, which that faithful companion would never have denied him, and the modest refreshments of bread and beer.

But a new and tragical incident came to solve the enigma.

Just at this period, a poaching affray occurred in the adjacent county, the serious nature of which attracted much attention.

A large band of "professed" poachers executed a foray on the grounds of a rich proprietor, but their plans having been betrayed, a strong party of keepers and assistants placed themselves in ambush, and pouncing on the intruders in full work, endeavoured to secure them all. The poachers opposed a desperate resistance, during which one of the gang, attacked by a large dog, shouted to a comrade to free him from the animal. The man, unable to do so in any other manner, fired, and certainly killed the dog, but also wounded his friend so seriously that the latter was captured, and in spite of medical aid, expired on the following day. He had been previously recognised as a wild young fellow, well known to the rural police of the county.

Warned of approaching dissolution, he desired the presence of the neighbouring minister, wishing, as he said, to deliver his mind of the burden of a terrible secret.

"I 'ont say, guv'nor," gasped the unhappy man, faintly, "that if I hadn't knowed the game was up, I 'oodn't have held my tongue, but I'll be a stiff un afore you sits down to your supper, and I don't wish as any should get into trouble, 'count o' me. 'Twas I as did for the bagman, Podsham way. I on'y meant fur to snam (rob) him, and on'y giv' him a tightener, when somethin' come dancing and shreeking down the road, and I vamooosed."

Such was indeed the fact. Poor Tommy's alarm, combined with the haze that overhung his judgment, and the roving and predatory proclivities he was believed to have derived from his nautical ancestors, supplied a sufficient clue to the somewhat suspicious line of conduct he had thought fit to adopt, and released him from all penalties save that of occasionally acting as showman to his own singular parlour.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER IV. MRS. GREYLING AT HOME.

THE scene into which Harty found herself propelled with friendly vehemence by Doctor Greyling, was a bewildering one to her. Bewildering, not so much from any excess of brightness and splendour of fair women and brave men, as from her being puzzled as to the identity of those who were seen by her for the first time in festive array. The dress clothes of the men, and the bare necks and arms of the girls, were for the first minute or two very effectual disguises. For Harty had not been out in evening society in Dillsborough before, and she had founded her recollections of these fellow-creatures of hers, on them as they appeared in the costumes of common-sense and daylight.

The two girls had come over from the house at the corner alone, for Mr. Devenish had announced his intention of appearing later in the evening, and his wife stayed with him, as in duty bound, to listen to all his complaints about his dress-boots and ties, and to save him from any personal exertion in the arrangement of his toilet which she could possibly take upon herself. "So you girls must go alone and put yourselves under Mrs. Greyling's wing at once; as Edward is going to make the

effort to appear in society again for our sakes, we must all do our best to make it pleasant to him."

About eight couples were twirling round when they entered the room, and Harty blinked for a few moments, and then scanned each circling pair eagerly. And lo! he was not one of them.

But his friend, the fair, handsome, andacious-looking stranger was swinging round with Agnes Greyling, steering clear of the seven rudderless barks who were drifting about, and at the same time keeping an observant eye on the door to see if anything more attractive than was already present should appear through it.

Presently he saw Harty standing in the doorway, her hand on Doctor Greyling's arm, her wistful eyes wandering round the room with that expression in them of "looking for some one," which is not to be mistaken. At once he took his partner up close to the new arrival in a series of swift sinuous curves, and simultaneously Mrs. Greyling appeared on Harty's other side, ready to aid the "young man about whom no one knew anything" in his obvious desire to gain an introduction to the girl who was not dangerously pretty certainly, but who was dangerously unlike the great majority.

The band clanged out the last bars of the waltz just as they came together thus, and Mr. Ferrier proceeded at once to provide for the future. Agnes Greyling stepped well with him, bore her own weight fairly, and still surrendered herself freely to the swing with which he deemed it well to go. On the whole he thought it advisable to secure her for one or two more round dances, for "the girl in grey may be a failure, in spite of that way she has of looking you right in the eyes as if she meant taking your measure," he thought.

"Introduce me to the young lady with your father," Mr. Ferrier was whispering to Agnes, when her mother intervened.

"Mr. Ferrier, let me introduce you to Miss Carlisle for the next dance—you see it's just forming, a quadrille——"

"I want to introduce Powers to her," Doctor Greyling interrupted, and looking all round in vain for the hero of the occasion. "I promised him that I would directly she came in. Mr. Ferrier must find another partner for this dance."

"Promised him!" Mrs. Greyling was very angry, but still she compelled suavely to reign outwardly. She had in a weak moment allowed it to become apparent that she desired to keep Claude Powers and

Harty Carlisle apart, and her husband had at once made up his mind that he would render that desire of hers null and void. Plots about nothing, plans that were not designed to further a good end, were specially odious to Doctor Greyling. Accordingly he set himself to the task of frustrating and confounding them, whenever he could do so at the cost of little trouble to himself.

"Yes, promised him an introduction to the only person worth talking to in the room; he isn't a dancing man; he'll be staggered to see a bright young girl like this brought up to him; he's expecting, from what I said, to be handed over to a local wit, or an aged blue stocking." Doctor Greyling laughed pleasantly as he wound up his speech.

"He shall dream the fond dream a little while longer, then," Harty said, quickly; "let him laugh with some local wit, or at some aged blue-stocking, and let me dance, Doctor Greyling."

She took her hand off Doctor Greyling's arm, and put it on Jack Ferrier's without hesitation. She would not suffer herself to shrink from facing Claude Powers. But it would have been humiliation to her to have been taken up to him and thrust upon his notice, before he had been given a full and fair opportunity of shunning her if he wished to do it.

"Your friend, Mr. Powers; I saw you with him this morning," she began, looking the stranger resolutely in the face; "is he in this room now?"

"Ah! you don't know him yet, do you? No, I don't see him; yes, I do; over there, at the opposite corner, looking at us."

Jack Ferrier indicated the place in which was Mr. Powers with a blithe nod and a light laugh, and Claude saw Harty turn her head round slowly and face him, with one of those long, steady, penetrating glances that are fraught with explanation and inquiry.

And his glance, as it met hers, what did it express? Surprise, disappointment, disgust; and she read it aright, read it clearly, and smarted under it bitterly, even though she knew that he would feel none of these things for her, if once he could be made to understand that she had been innocent of all design of meeting him again, in coming to Dillsborough. She was stung by the consciousness of the possibility that she might never have the opportunity of tendering him this information verbally. So she gave it to him with all the eloquence

of her steady, speaking glance, and he misunderstood it! She saw that he misunderstood it, and the sight took the soul out of her body, as it were, leaving the latter to do its work in the quadrille with consummate ease and vigour, and taking the former away into the realms of other days, and tormenting it with the remembrance of happier things.

After that one long, inquiring, explanatory glance, she turned her eyes away from the place where he stood, and the variable little face was shaded by an expression that was strange to those who only knew it since it came to Dillsborough. It was startlingly unnatural to see a girl dancing with such desolation in her eyes, with such desperation painted legibly in every line of the too suddenly steadied face. "And with that handsome young man, Mr. Ferrier, dancing with her, too! what more can she want? Ridiculous in a girl who isn't even good-looking two minutes together," was the verdict of her friends and acquaintances.

Jack Ferrier made one or two praiseworthy efforts to lift the conversation out of the ordinary mire in which human beings are too apt to grovel in their despair, when thus yoked together for a brief time, and commanded by social laws to be as agreeable as if they had an idea in common. He liked the girl by his side in an easy, undefined sort of way, because she abstained with perfect grace from doing anything that was either usual or unusual. She neither furled her fan, nor feigned to be brimming over with amiable zeal about her flowers, or her share in the figure they were dancing. Nor did she rush to the opposite extreme of stony, indifferent, passive stupidity. She just remained quiescent, and it was borne in upon him that there was no pretence in this ungirlish, passive quiet of hers. It was very real, he felt, and "meant, probably," he thought kindly, "that she was delicate and tired, country-bred, and therefore shy."

And all the time she was bringing all her powers of mind to bear upon the solution of this difficulty, "How should she make Claude Powers understand that she had not come to Dillsborough with any idea of meeting him again, with any thought of the possibility of darkening his path in her mind."

"What a stupid partner you find me, don't you?" she asked, abruptly. "No, don't say no, because I shall not believe you, and shall fancy you think me weak

enough to believe you into the bargain." She lifted her hazel eyes to Jack Ferrier's face as she spoke with almost an air of apology, for she was painfully conscious of her own shortcomings, and miserably aware that Mrs. Greyling would have no mercy on her for them.

"Let us make the most of this next minute we shall stand still; you must let me introduce Mr. Powers to you, Miss Carlisle; he has a way of hitting on each person's pet topic. I always want to be helped myself, but he has a way of giving the initiative that is—yes, your turn now; I beg your pardon. What did you say?"

"He is a great friend of yours?" she repeated as she came back to her place.

"Yes, we have knocked about together a good deal, and he——"

"Has never told you that he knows me already? What a blow to my vanity! I have seen Mr. Powers before. Tell him presently that I remember him well, and that there is no need of a fresh introduction unless he likes."

She said it all so lightly and carelessly that Jack Ferrier assumed at once, as was natural, that Claude and Harty had been the most casual commonplace acquaintances. And so when that dance was over, he happening to pass by Claude, said:

"There is a Miss Carlisle here who just remembers you, Claude——"

"Does she?" Claude interrupted with a bitter meaning that was utterly thrown away on his friend.

"Yes," the other resumed; "pretty little girl rather, in grey, with a pink rose pudding on her head. I'm looking for my partner, or I'd go back with you; but she doesn't want any fresh introduction to you, and——"

And Jack Ferrier was off to his partner, and Claude was communing with himself in a way that was not very flattering to Harty.

"Remember me, does she? and doesn't need any fresh introduction? and says these things to a fellow she never saw before. Good Heavens, she has deteriorated with a vengeance—unless she has given up the other and means me only now."

The thought brightened his brow and relaxed the muscles of his mouth in an instant. Before he gave himself time to reflect upon the better possibility, or reason it away, he was at her side.

She had got herself away into the shade of some muslin curtains that were gathered about the doorway of an accessible cupboard that was transformed into a tem-

porary bower of bloom. Probably the thought had lurked in her heart that if he wanted to speak to her he would follow her there. And so she felt no surprise, and therefore portrayed none, when he stood by her—close by her, and murmured in the old well-remembered accents:

“Harty, have you come to me? Tell me what all this means—tell me it means all I wish.”

He had taken her hand and was holding it in his own, and his eyes were fastening themselves on hers; he was bending his head towards her, and looking at her with the earnestness of utter devotion, and she had been without sign or semblance of love for so many years, and she had so hungered for it! Nevertheless, now she drew her hand from his, and leant her head back against the portal of the door, and said steadily:

“Papa and mamma will be here directly; when we came down to Dillsborough, I didn’t know—we none of us knew—that you had any connexion with the place; when we heard that you had, we had taken the house, and we’re too poor to move. Now you know all about it.”

Her voice had been clear and steady as she ran through the facts of their case; but as she spoke the last sentence there came a little tremor into it, a little note of appeal, and people near them in the room noticed how “odd it was that Harty Carlisle should half offer her hand to Mr. Powers,” and observed with cordial approval that he refrained from responding to the demonstration.

Poor little thing! Her dignity dropped down thus suddenly at the first sight of him. She had the strength to tell him the truth and run the risk of shocking him off from her for ever. But she had not the strength to restrain herself from fluttering the olive-branch at him. Nor had she the strength to be other than she was, that is, cut to the heart when he refused to take it.

“If you only met me to tell me this, you were cruel and unwomanly to meet me again,” he said, disregarding her proffered hand. “You have had your triumph again in raising false hopes in me, just that you may have the pleasure of dashing them down; but you have had it for the last time.”

“I wonder if you know how cruel you are, Claude, I wonder if you know it.”

She said it with concentrated, fiery energy. And he was so apt, like herself, to be touched by anything that was fiery, and real, and fervent. Utterly foolish as he

would have felt himself to be immediately afterwards, it was on the cards, and he knew that it was, to be touched now with little further delay into making an exhibition of his former self. When suddenly she flung off all the controlling influences, and easily, naturally, almost gaily said:

“What a big man you are down here: how we all tremble at your nod; do you know you must speak very gently to me, or I shall crumble up altogether; we’re on the right level now, Mr. Powers. I’m a girl you remember slightly, who had a girl’s enthusiasm for you. Let those be the terms known here of our intercourse in the past——”

“It’s a galop, Miss Carlisle,” Jack Ferrier interrupted. “You gave me the next, you know, of your own free will, but I claimed this; Powers and you know each other without my aid, I see; shall we start?”

And Claude Powers saw his friend put his arm round Harty’s waist, and sweep her away—and felt that sublimely sulky feeling in his heart, that he was annoyed at the sight, and had no right to be annoyed, which is one of the gad-flies that are most prolific during the continuance of that hot season, jealousy.

She was so much freer, brighter, better in every way now that she had seen Claude and spoken to him. He had mortified her, repulsed her, hurt her, but—she knew what she was about now as far as he was concerned. She was no longer moving in the dark. She had given her explanation of her appearance there to him, and inefficient, unsatisfactory, cruel as he deemed it, he had accepted and believed it. She was convinced that he knew that this meeting had not been brought about by any wish or will of hers. It was an ungracious, ungraceful act on the part of Chance. But since Chance had so acted, she resolved to enjoy those round dances that were in store for her with Jack Ferrier.

At the close of this galop she saw Mr. Devenish and her mother come in, her mother looking sweeter in her solicitude for every one she loved than any other woman in the room, and Mr. Devenish commanding that sort of theoretical kindly interest that is bestowed upon practically selfish people. And as she saw them enter there came a feeling of weakness over her, and she pressed her hands to her forehead, declaring herself to be giddy. And sitting down on an obscure chair she asked her partner to “go to the one to whom he was due for the next dance, as she was suffi-

ciently out of practice to be too much out of breath to talk to him." And as he left her she began to watch with her heart in her eyes for that inevitable meeting between Mr. Devenish and Mr. Powers, which would prove to her whether or not her rugged road stretched out before her still, giving her no alternative of turning from it.

In the course of his search for the young lady on whose card his name stood inscribed for the next dance, Jack Ferrier found himself jostled against his friend, and paused a few moments to say:

"That girl in grey is a nice little thing; her dancing has nearly capsized me; only she won't talk; who is she?"

"Miss Carlisle," Claude answered, with a parched tongue. It was all over between Harty and himself, but to hear his own familiar friend lightly declare himself capsized by her was too much.

"Yes, I know her name; but I mean who is she? or don't you know?" Then, without waiting for an answer, he went on to the expectant one who was waiting on a rout-seat among the dowagers, trying hard to look as if she were not filled with agonising doubts as to his coming for her before the waltz was half over.

"Perhaps if he realised how she has capsized my life he wouldn't come and air his idiotically sudden admiration for her before me," Claude thought, crossly. Then he went on considering the subject. Wondering why he couldn't forget the girl. Speculating a little as to what had made him love her at first, and what made him linger on loving her "as I shall to the last," he thought prophetically. It was not beauty, for she had none according to the ordinary acceptation of the word. He knew dozens of cleverer women. He had been taught what feminine sweetness was by dozens of sweet women. And yet the very memory of all the others died out, as he looked at the little dark girl who sobered down into absolute plainness, whenever she was depressed, or disappointed, or "put out" in any way. What was it? What charm was working through her, luring him on to love when he could neither admire nor approve?

Even as he asked himself this, he glanced across at her, and received not even the poor flattery of a glance. Her face was turned away from him; but even the back of her small shapely head seemed to express some of the animated, pleasurable eagerness she was infusing into the conversation with the man who was bending over her. As Claude's eyes travelled up

disapprovingly, they rested on the face of Jack Ferrier.

He had given up the girl to whom he had been engaged for this waltz, partly because he could not do himself the injustice of dancing with one who suffered her head to jerk backwards alarmingly, and let her arm slip on his shoulder in a way that obliged her to clutch him at brief intervals, and partly because the young lady had lost a large portion of her dress, in the course of the frantic efforts she made to leap round in time with that sliding, dipping step of his. He had given her up gladly when she hinted at pins, and needle and cotton, but he had not shown equal attention to that other hint of hers—namely, that he should wait until she came back repaired. On the contrary, as soon as she had unwillingly released him, he had got himself back to the "little girl in grey," and Harty gave him a careless welcome, which, careless as it was, was still a welcome, for he was Claude Powers's friend.

"Will you take pity on a bereft man for the remainder of this?" he asked; "it's a swinging good one, only I couldn't get on just now, because my partner kept on coming to pieces!"

And she was coming to pieces herself mentally, poor girl, but he did not know that. How should he or any one else have known it while she kept up such a smiling show of satisfaction as was on her face at this moment? For the thought had come to her, "Claude is cruel, and he will be glad to see that his cruelty can make me suffer." And this thought is one fraught with the most terrible temptation, because it makes a woman feel that to successfully deceive him into thinking her less miserable than she is, is a praiseworthy end, and justifies her in the use of any means, however dubious they may be. So Harty curved her mouth with smiles, and gave long soft glances from her expressive hazel eyes, and did her best to make Jack Ferrier believe that she was elated by his show of preference for her.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Devenish had quietly, unmarked by any one, ventured into the heart of the enemy's camp, the enemy being represented by one who had been such a familiar friend. Had ventured in, and been repulsed ignominiously. Mr. Devenish had passed close to Claude Powers, had looked the latter full in the face with a mixed expression of deprecation, defiance, and peevish self-pity, and Claude Powers had responded to this with

a clear cold look of non-recognition. And Mrs. Devenish, taking no active part in that contest, watching it from afar only, suffered from the stab even more acutely than her husband did.

Presently, to her great indignation—the real, righteous, womanly, wifely indignation—the man who had cut her husband with what she deemed wanton cruelty, came up to give a kindly greeting to herself. He had no feeling in his heart but of tenderness strongly mixed with pity for Harty's mother. He so utterly separated her from her husband in his own mind, that it never occurred to him that she might possibly resent his justifiable conduct towards Mr. Devenish. And so he was not a little astonished when she refused his outstretched hand, when anger and contempt flashed from her usually dove-like eyes, when a few low-spoken and most bitter words rang in his ears.

"I should be as false and cowardly as you are yourself, Mr. Powers, if I could touch your hand after what I saw just now," she murmured, and then she swept away from him, following in the wake of her husband, feeling and expressing as plainly as she could, that she had as much pride in and love for the fretful, stricken man who made her life a weariful burden to her, as if he had been one of the noblest of men.

What a merciful dispensation it is for the majority of men that the majority of women are constituted in this way! If the idol were knocked off his pedestal as soon as he was seen to be unworthy of the position, how many pedestals would be vacant! The real woman props her idol up again and again when he totters; keeps him straight by her own sheer strength and tenacity of belief when he is staggering in her estimation; shuts her eyes when he reels; stultifies her reasoning faculties, resolutely refuses to see him as he is, and resents any one being clearer visioned than she is herself. And generally reaps the same sort of reward for her devotion as Mrs. Devenish did on this occasion, when she approached her spouse.

"I hope you and your daughter are satisfied now; that fellow who jilted her has cut me, and is probably ready and anxious to give the reason why to every one in this place, where I came hoping to end my days in peace."

"Don't say such bitter words, dear," she whispered, trying to smile a society smile, the poor woman, in order that all Dillsborough might not be made ac-

quainted with the fact of there being "something wrong;" "don't say such bitter words, dear! Harty will resent his shameful, ungentlemanly conduct as I have done; I wouldn't speak to him. I wouldn't touch his hand. I wouldn't know him on any terms, if he went on his knees even, and confessed how grossly, bitterly mistaken and wrong he has been."

She spoke with a suppressed vehemence that was as touching as the rage of a dove who has been outraged. Her fair, pure face flushed, her eyes beamed love and partisanship. In her attitude as she stood, one hand on his arm, her face upturned to him, her still graceful figure bending towards him, there was such devotion for him expressed, that he may be forgiven for believing himself to be worthy of it. However undeserving he may have been in other respects, he must at some period or other have done something that satisfied that woman's heart, for it never wavered in its allegiance to him. He could not have been ignoble always. Under some extraordinary combination of circumstances he must have revealed himself to her, as something better and higher than he had ever shown himself to be to any one else. For she loved him utterly.

His response to her protestation on this occasion was not exhilarating.

"Don't make yourself absurd; of course I should never allow you to have anything to do with a man who has insulted me; but, as for your daughter, I quite anticipate that she will pointedly show people that she disdains all connexion with me; it's what I quite expect of Harty; I can generally predict what her line of country will be; inconsistent in everything else, she is perfectly consistent in her treatment of me."

"I wish she could make you understand her better," the poor wife murmured, still with the society smile on. At which Mr. Devenish gave vent to a short laugh, followed by an assertion to the effect that he "understood Harty rather too well to be humbugged by her, even if she payed him the graceful compliment of thinking it worth while to humbug him, which she never did."

The evening, on the whole, was not quite as "delightful" as they were all mendaciously preparing to declare it to have been to their hostess, for those with whom we have to deal. Claude Powers, for instance, felt sorry, and rather more savage than a man who has quite done with a

girl ought to feel, when he saw Harty whirling round with Jack Ferrier for the seventh time. Whirling round with evidently thorough enjoyment, and looking as Harty could look when she was at peace with the present.

"See that little Miss Carlisle now," Doctor Greyling said, as if poor Claude was not seeing her enough already; "see her now; the belle of the room the instant anything pleases her. She looks alight with animation now, and she's talking as well as she's dancing, I can see that by her partner's face."

"Restless looking, fond of change, I should think?" Claude said, interrogatively. He wanted to find out what was the impression conveyed by the manner of the rather chameleon-like Harty to the clear mind of a man who liked and understood, without being in love with her. He wanted, moreover, to know if any suspicion of her "story" had breathed itself into this air.

"Fond of change!" Doctor Greyling laughed; "you've hit it there; it's the need of her life. A girl to be trusted, for all that, for she'd tell one if she changed, and never shirk the doing it; the mother is a charming woman too—as different to the girl as milk is to champagne—a sweet, charming creature, who wins every one's goodwill; but Devenish, the stepfather, always strikes me as being a bad egg."

"Ah!" Claude Powers answered, indifferently. Then, after a pause, he said good night to Doctor Greyling, and uttered the proper and polite words of untruth as to his having had a "delightful evening" to his hostess, and got himself away without seeking for another word or look from Harty.

"He was as agreeable as ever, just like the old Claude to me," Mabel said to her sister late that night, as they were languidly removing their festive apparel from their fatigued forms. "Just as agreeable and friendly as ever. Harty, darling! it will come right. I feel that it will."

"Of course it will come right, it is right now; we have met, and not rejoiced in the meeting with vulgar demonstrative glee, and we are perfectly civil and friendly, and utterly careless about each other; do for goodness sake believe that, Mabel; and

don't worry me by throwing suggestive hopes about. I hate them."

"Then you don't care for him any longer, for I could see as he watched you to-night that he likes you still, and didn't like to see you flirting with Mr. Ferrier——"

"Flirting!" Harty interrupted, with a passionate stamp of her foot. "I loathe the word, it's applied so indiscriminately; I should have gone on as I did to-night with a dustman (if he had been clean), or a demon, or with any one who wasn't dull, and you call that 'flirting.'"

"Well, what do you call it?" Mabel asked, amazed.

"I! I call it getting through the time and the dances; a dog that could stand on his hind legs and do the steps and save me from banging against other people, would have done just as well as this Mr. Ferrier—and Claude thought I was 'flirting!'"

"I think we had better not talk about it any more to-night," Mabel suggested, humbly. "You're right, I'm sure, and I was foolish to speak of it in that way; but if we go on talking we shall do no good, and we may wake poor papa."

"'Poor papa' has given me a good many sleepless nights," Harty said sharply. Then she recalled the memory of some kindnesses he had shown her years ago, when she was a bit of a child (and he wanted to marry her mother), and recanted hastily, as was her wont.

"Mab, dear, I'm sorry I said that; I am sorry for him; I do pity him, and sympathise with mamma about him, and I do wish with all my heart that I could brush away the shadows that envelop him, and seem to be stifling all the manliness in him; but as I can't—as you say, we had better leave off talking and go to bed."

"You may meet him—Claude, I mean—one day, Harty," Mabel said, pathetically. "And when you do, how will it be; you never can be ordinary acquaintances, can you?"

"Well, yes, I think we can," Harty said, philosophically. "When a man says, 'then I cannot marry you, my pretty maid,' it's better to answer, 'nobody axed you, sir,' and be cheerful and merely friendly, than it is to whine and go down."

Who can say whether or not she "whined and went down," when she was alone that night?

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXII. HER LADYSHIP.

ROSETTA abruptly resumed possession of the folded paper, the proof, as she had alleged, of her marriage with Lord Overbury. How strange and unaccountable it all seemed! I was speechless, motionless with surprise.

"Let me pass," she said. "I'll not remain here a moment longer."

My mother interposed.

"Pardon me. Your ladyship forgets, I think, that it is now night, and bitter cold, the snow deep, the way very dangerous. It were safer, better, surely, to remain here—at least until the morning. You have endured much already."

My mother's staid manner and sober speech—she was really troubled and excited, I was certain, but she had great power of self-control—appeared to irritate Rosetta curiously.

"I'll go hence," she said, sharply. "I'll not stay here to be insulted."

"You mistake, indeed. There is no intention to insult you. I have bidden you welcome. Our poor house is much at your ladyship's service. My brother, Mr. Orme, is, in part, a tenant of Lord Overbury's. We are bound, therefore, if only on that account, to do all we may on behalf of Lord Overbury's lady."

My mother spoke with an old-fashioned formality and precision; and there was no appreciable lack of respectfulness in her tone and bearing. Yet her impassiveness had its galling effect in some way. I felt it myself, and Rosetta no less.

"I'll go," Rosetta repeated, roughly. "And at once."

"And where to, may I ask?"

"That matters not; only let me go."

"To your husband's house, of course. Overbury Hall is, without doubt, the proper place, the only place, for Lady Overbury to return to. Where else could she go?"

Rosetta hesitated. Then she tossed her head and stamped her foot impatiently. There was silence for a few moments. "Let it be so," she said at length. "I'll go back to the hall."

"It will be best, I think, if your ladyship really feels well enough to undertake the journey. His lordship must be already anxious on your ladyship's account. But I can send to the hall to let him know that you are here in safety, if your ladyship will honour us by remaining here until the morning."

"No, I'll go back; at once," Rosetta said, peevishly. She was nearly crying, I think. "Perhaps you can send some one to point out the best and nearest way. I'll not trouble you to do more than that." She was losing her grand manner.

"It is no question of trouble. I'll go with you myself," said my mother, promptly. And she rang a bell which communicated with the stables.

"Mother," I cried, "let me go. It is not fit for you to venture out. The night is very bitter." But she put me from her with calm decision.

"Your uncle is not here at this moment, or it would be for him to see her ladyship safely to the hall. In his absence it is my duty to undertake the task. Kem, tell Truckle to get the covered cart ready and to harness the old chestnut; he's very sure-footed, and will take us by the down track well enough if Truckle leads him. There is no fear. I know every step of the way. I have been out in worse

weather than this—and Truckle and the chestnut too.”

Kem departed on her errand. My mother took down a large lantern from a high shelf above the dresser, and lighted it. Then she equipped herself in a heavy cloak of scarlet cloth with a close hood to it, that hung behind the kitchen door. She was soon ready for the journey.

Rosetta sank down again by the kitchen fire, and listlessly kicked the fender as she gazed into the glowing coals. Her face wore the pouting looks of a vexed child. She had played out her part. She looked more herself—the Rosetta of my love. There was silence for some minutes, broken only by the loud ticking of the old Dutch clock, the occasional crackling and rustling of the coals in the grate, the light silvery sound of falling cinders, and the jarring of Rosetta's foot kicking against the iron fender.

To me there was something dreamlike about the whole scene. I could not yet fully believe that it was all real and true. Rosetta—the tight-rope dancer—my Rosetta—Lady Overbury! and seated in front of our kitchen fire. My mother, standing apart, cloaked and carrying a lantern, ready to see her ladyship safe back to the hall. And I, leaning against the dresser, looking on, bewildered, helpless, dumb. It was all most strange.

Soon Kem returned to say that the covered cart was ready and waiting at the farm-yard gate. It could not be drawn nearer to the house because of the snow. Rosetta rose. I approached to assist her in resuming her fur-trimmed mantle, but my mother was beforehand with me. She saw herself to the due wrapping-up of her ladyship for her night's trip across the down. Again I was compelled to be a mere useless bystander, forbidden to take active part in the scene.

Rosetta was herself once more. She turned upon me a most radiant smile.

“Good-bye, Duke, and thank you. I shall never forget this day.” She stretched forth her hand to me. I pressed it, timidly and awkwardly, I fear. I had not a word to say. I went out with them to the farm-yard gate.

Rosetta, declining my aid, sprang lightly into the high cart.

“It reminds me of mounting to the rope,” she whispered, with a musical laugh.

My mother drew me on one side.

“You will remain at home, Duke. Promise me.” I promised, for she spoke urgently, although, in truth, I had intended to follow the cart. “Your uncle

will be back soon. I cannot think what has detained him so late,” she went on. “You will tell him that I have gone out, and explain the errand I am bound on. I hope to be back before very long. Assure him that there is no danger. Tell him that I have taken Truckle with me, and the old chestnut. Kem will see to his supper. Keep up good fires.”

The cart moved off slowly, with a heavy muffled sound as the wheels forced their way along the heavy choked path.

“Good-bye, Duke,” cried Rosetta, merrily.

What an exquisite voice it was! She laughed again, and I thought I saw her hand waving adieu to me. She seemed like a child enjoying its first ride. Was this acting still? I felt how little her strange mirth would commend her to my mother's favour.

For some time I stood, leaning against the farm-yard gate, watching the departing cart as it jogged and struggled on its uneven way, looking jet black upon the field of dead white it traversed, the lantern my mother carried within casting in front a circle of dim orange light upon the snow. I could hear the creaking of the springs and the jolting of the wheels, long after I had failed to discern the figure of old Truckle at the chestnut's head and the form of the high hood of the cart. It was quite out of sight at last, hidden by the shoulder of the down. Yet still I stood listening to the dull sounds of its uneasy progress. I almost longed to hear cries for assistance—for I knew the snow was very deep just outside Purrington—that I might hasten forward released from my promise, and see Rosetta once again.

Yet what madness it was! What could she ever be to me? Was she not lost to me for ever? There was shame and sin in even thinking of her. She was Lord Overbury's wife. The night was bitterly cold. I returned to the house, and sat down in Rosetta's chair beside the fire, moody and vexed, and despondent enough. I had never felt so wretched.

“And to think of her being a real lady,” said Kem, “and sitting avore the fire in my kitchen, warming herself just as you or I might do, Master Duke. There, it quite mazes me, it does. A pretty creature she was, too; I'll say that for her, though not in her ways like the quality folks quite, to my thinking. She'd a temper of her own. She'd no need that I could see to fall out with the missus. But she was quite in a miff, all on a sudden. Lady Overbury!

Why his lordship must be terrible old for so young a wife! What were they stones called she wore in her ears, Master Duke, dost know? Not glass, surely, though 'em looked summut like it."

"Diamonds, I suppose, Kem."

"Dimants, was they? I've heerd tell of dimants, but I dunno as I ever set eyes on un avore. They was main bright, to be sure, and glittered so you'd think they was avire; but they wasn't so much for size. That there pebble I wears o' Sundays in my tucker is a sight bigger. Reube gave it I. I didn't care to take un, but he said he'd chuck un in sheep-pond if I didn't. 'Twas a fairing he bought at Dripford, so a' said." She laughed, and then returned to the subject of Rosetta: "Where did she come from, Master Duke, hast heerd tell?"

To this question I made no reply.

"Not from these parts, I reckon," continued Kem. "She'd something of London about her talk, I'm thinking. Not but what she spoke pretty, too, avore she fell rusty with the missus; and then she was main rudderish. 'I'm Lady Overbury,' she ses, getting up, terrible huffed. And to think of her being lost in snow. Out in plantation wasn't she, Master Duke? How come she there, I wonder? His lordship ought to take better heed on's wife. Strange, I never heerd on's marrying. But gentle-folks has queer ways. There's no telling what they'll do, and what they'll let alone. And his lordship's allays been a queer quist, so folks allays says hereabout. Well, a's got a young wife, and a sprack un, too. There's no saying how 'twill turn out. 'Tis like shovelling coals on a dull fire. There may be a blaze, and there may be a smother. Red-haired girls is mostly fractious I've been told. I mind my father could never abide a ginger hackle, as a' called un. But I dunno, I thought her ladyship main pretty, and her hair a wonder for quantity. Not that it's for me to be judging of such things and spying about my betters. But they dimants was a real sight to look on, and rings on her fingers she had, and a gold chain round her throat, and for lace and silk, there, I never did see a prettier show; and for the like of she to be out lost in plantation this weather, and night coming on! 'Twas like to be her death. Why I mind once years ago——" and Kem, so far as I noted what she was saying, wandered into a protracted narrative of how Jim Truckle's aunt, or it might have been his great aunt, had remained fixed in a

snow-drift in Bulborough meadows for three whole days during one very severe winter, within sight of her own cottage. She was released at last, it appeared, much more dead than alive, by a neighbour approaching her by chance in his search after a strayed pig. As I gathered, the lady was a scold, and her husband had not stirred himself much to search for his missing partner. Her sufferings, it was suggested, had a beneficial effect upon her subsequent conduct as a wife.

"Her wore a red cloak," said Kem, "and there her was, unable to move hand or foot, all but froar to death, and yet her could see her own kitchen chimney all the while. Poor soul, for sure she suffered terrible."

My sympathies did not attend this story very closely. I remember I was cruel enough to ponder over a certain picturesque character suggested by it, and mentally to paint the scene with an impressive juxtaposition and contrast of the dazzling white snow-drift, and the poor old woman's scarlet cloak.

"Here's the master," said Kem, suddenly.

My uncle's footfall was heard without. He entered the kitchen. Briefly I informed him of all that had happened.

"Gone to the hall! Gone to the hall! Such a night as this! With Lady Overbury! Lady Overbury? It can't be, surely!"

I could only repeat my news. He had great difficulty apparently in comprehending me.

"Truckle's with her, you say?" He seemed more at ease on learning this. "You're sure? Well, well, we can but wait a bit. But if they're not back soon, Duke, we must go out and look for them. For Lady Overbury—I don't understand it. But your mother will explain all when she returns. I'm sorry I wasn't in when all this happened. But we've had a deal of trouble down in the meadows."

It was my uncle's way to let one subject engross him to the hindrance of all others. He could rarely distribute his contemplations. Just now the trouble in the meadows possessed him. So he put from him for the time my news, and spoke solely of an accident that had happened to one of his oxen (a broken limb it was feared, due to a fall upon some rotten ice), discussing as to what was best to be done, and as to whether the butcher should be sent for, or the cow-doctor of our district.

"One of my finest oxen, worth twenty

pound at least. The weather's cruel bad for the cattle. There's not a farm here-about that won't suffer for it this time. A wonderfully fine ox; the best I had; one of those red Devons I bought last year, you remember."

It was some time before he could relinquish this topic and take up with another. But presently I noticed an abstracted look upon his face, and heard him muttering, "Lady Overbury! Lady Overbury, indeed!" again and again. But he did not address me on the subject. He sat staring into the fire, drying his boots, and tapping his snuff-box. He was now occupied, however, with my mother's mission, and was plainly perplexed about it, and anxious for her return. Every now and then he turned in his chair to look at the clock. Meantime Kem placed his supper before him. He was wet and soiled with his labours, and, as was usual with him in such case, preferred to remain in the kitchen, rather than move to the parlour.

Every ten minutes I went out to gaze in the direction of Purrington, in hopes of seeing the returning cart. There was no sign of life or movement in the drear white landscape. Sometimes I followed the track for a hundred yards or so, listening for the sound of the wheels ploughing through the snow. But I could hear nothing; all was very still. There was no wind, and the sky had lost the frosty clearness it had worn of late. It seemed as though there might be a heavier fall of snow before morning. It was less cold, I thought; or I was heated by my feverish fears and hopes. So some hours passed. Even my uncle, though he said little, grew uneasy and anxious, I noted.

At length I walked out towards the higher down, and discovered—a star? No, it was moving—the dim gleam of the lantern my mother carried, swayed about by the rocking of the cart. It seemed but a spark in the distance—now it grew brighter. The cart was returning in safety. I hastened to meet it.

The old chestnut was nearly dead beat. He moved along very slowly in a dense cloud of steam. Still the veteran toiled on gallantly. Truckle was much exhausted, and his temper had suffered.

"A nation hard job," he said. "Drattle the snow!"

"Is all well, mother?"

"All's well, Duke, thank God!" she answered, cheerily. But as I helped her down on the cart's arrival at the farm, I found she could scarcely stand, she was so

stiff from the cold. She was agitated; but her eyes were very bright. "Mind, Truckle, and give the old horse a good feed of corn. He's done bravely. It's been a hard night's work for all of us. And you'll come into the kitchen presently, Truckle, and have your supper and a mug of strong beer. You've well deserved it."

"You left her ladyship safely at the hall?" I asked.

"Yes, we saw her ladyship, as you call her, safely home."

"As I call her, mother? Is she not her ladyship, then?"

She was about to speak abruptly, almost angrily, I thought, but she checked herself.

"Well, well, let it be so. Call her what she calls herself—'Her ladyship.' What does it matter?"

"But she offered you proof of her right to that title."

"I declined to see it. It was nothing to me."

"But you, yourself, addressed her as Lady Overbury."

"And you addressed her as Rosetta."

"I knew her by no other name."

"You knew her? You had met her before, then? Where? When?"

I briefly explained. I had seen her first in the booth at the fair; and not again until I had found her in the plantation.

"At a booth in the fair? an actress?"

"A rope-dancer."

"I might have been sure of it."

We were now at the kitchen door. My uncle came out to meet us.

"Well, Mildred," he said, "what's all this been about?"

"Presently, Hugh, presently."

"Thank God! you're home again in safety. What a night for you to be out in. Come and warm yourself at the fire. No, not a word now. You can tell me all by-and-bye."

CONCERNING SOME ANCIENT ENGLISH CHORUSES.

ALL who are acquainted with the early lyrical literature of England, preserved in the songs and ballads of the days immediately before and after Shakespeare, must sometimes have asked themselves the meaning of such old choruses as "Down, down, derry down," "With a fal, lal, la," "Tooral, looral," "Hey nonnie, nonnie," and many others. These choruses are by no

means obsolete, though not so frequently heard in our day as they used to be a hundred years ago. "Down, down, derry down," still flourishes in immortal youth in every village alehouse and beershop where the farm labourers and mechanics are accustomed to assemble. One of the greatest living authorities on the subject of English song and music—Mr. William Chappell, the erudite editor of the *Popular Music of the Olden Time*—is of opinion that these choruses or burdens were "mere nonsense words that went glibly off the tongue." He adds (vol. i. page 223), "I am aware that 'Hey down, down, derry down,' has been said to be a modern version of 'Hai down, ir, deri danno,' the burden of an old song of the Druids, signifying, 'Come let us haste to the oaken grove' (Jones, *Welsh Bard*, vol. i. page 128), but this I believe to be mere conjecture, and that it would now be impossible to prove that the Druids had such a song." That Mr. Chappell's opinion is not correct, will, I think, appear from the etymological proofs of their antiquity afforded by the venerable language which was spoken throughout the British Isles by the aboriginal people for centuries before the Roman invasion, and which is not yet extinct in Wales, in Ireland, and in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Julius Cæsar, the conqueror of Gaul and Britain, has left a description of the Druids and their religion, which is of the highest historical interest. That system and religion came originally from Assyria, Egypt, and Phœnicia, and spread over all Europe at a period long anterior to the building of Rome. The Druids were known by name, but scarcely more than by name, to the Greeks, who derived the appellation erroneously from drus, an oak, under the supposition that the Druids preferred to perform their religious rites under the shadows of oaken groves. The Greeks also called the Druids Saronides, from two Celtic words sun and dhuine, signifying "excellent men." The Celtic meaning of the word "Druid" is to enclose within a circle, and a Druid meant a prophet, a divine, a bard, a magician, one who was admitted to the mysteries of the inner circle. The Druidic worship was astronomical, and purely deistical, and rendered reverence to the sun, moon, and stars as the visible representatives of the otherwise unseen Divinity who created man and nature. "They used no images," says the Reverend Doctor Alexander in his excellent little volume on the Island of Iona,

published by the Religious Tract Society, "to represent the object of their worship, nor did they meet in temples or buildings of any kind for the performance of their sacred rites. A circle of stones, generally of vast size, and surrounding an area of from twenty feet to thirty yards in diameter, constituted their sacred place; and in the centre of this stood the cromleach (crooked stone), or altar, which was an obelisk of immense size, or a large oblong flat stone, supported by pillars. These sacred circles were usually situated beside a river or stream, and under the shadow of a grove, an arrangement which was probably designed to inspire reverence and awe in the minds of the worshippers, or of those who looked from afar on their rites. Like others of the Gentile nations also, they had their 'high places,' which were large stones, or piles of stones on the summits of hills; these were called cairns (cairns), and were used in the worship of the deity under the symbol of the sun.

"In what manner and with what rites the Druids worshipped their deity, there is now no means of ascertaining with minute accuracy. There is reason to believe that they attached much importance to the ceremony of going thrice round their sacred circle, from east to west, following the course of the sun, by which it is supposed that they intended to express their entire conformity to the will and order of the Supreme Being, and their desire that all might go well with them according to that order. It may be noticed, as an illustration of the tenacity of popular usages and religious rites, how they abide with a people, generation after generation, in spite of changes of the most important kind, nay, after the very opinions out of which they have arisen have been repudiated; that even to the present day certain movements are considered of good omen only when they follow the course of the sun, and that in some of the remote parts of the country, the practice is still retained of seeking good fortune by going thrice round some supposed sacred object from east to west."

But still more remarkable than the fact which Doctor Alexander has stated, is the vitality of the ancient Druidic chants, which still survive on the popular tongue two thousand years or more after their worship has disappeared, and after the meaning of their strange snatches and fragments of song has been all but irretrievably lost, and almost wholly unsuspected. Some account of Stonehenge, or the Coir-mhor, on Salisbury Plain, the grandest remaining monu-

ment of the Druids in the British Isles, has already appeared in this journal.* Everybody has heard of Stonehenge, though few know that many other Druidical circles of minor importance are scattered over various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. In Scotland they are especially numerous. One but little known, and not mentioned by the Duke of Argyll in his book on the remarkable island of which he is the proprietor, is situated between the ruins of the cathedral of Iona and the sea-shore, and is well worthy of a visit from the hundreds of tourists who annually make the voyage round the noble Isle of Mull, on purpose to visit Iona and Staffa. There is another Druidic circle on the main land of Mull, and a large and more remarkable one at Lochnell, near Oban, in Argyllshire, which promises to become as celebrated as Stonehenge itself, combining as it does not only the mystic circle, but a representation clearly defined of the mysterious serpent, the worship of which entered so largely into all the Oriental religions of remote antiquity. There are other circles in the various islands of the Hebrides, and as far north as Orkney and Shetland. It was, as we learn from various authorities, the practice of the Druidical priests and bards to march in procession round the inner circle of these rude temples, chanting religious hymns in honour of the sunrise, the noon, or the sunset; hymns which have not been wholly lost to posterity, though posterity has failed to understand them, or imagined, as Mr. Chappell has done, that their burdens—their sole relics—are but unmeaning words, invented for musical purposes alone, and divested of all intellectual signification.

First among these choruses is "Down, down, derry, down," the English rendering of "Dun, dun, daragan, dun," signifying "To the hill, to the hill, to the oaks, to the hill," which in all probability was the burden of a religious chant sung by the priests as they walked in procession from the interior of the stone circle to some neighbouring grove upon a down or hill. This chorus survives in many hundreds of English popular songs, but notably in the beautiful ballad *The Three Ravens*, preserved in *Melismata* (1611).

There were three ravens sat on a tree.
Down-a-down! hey down, hey down.
They were as black as black might be,
With a down!
Then one of them said to his mate,
Where shall we now our breakfast take,
With a down, down, derry, derry, down!

The words come in without meaning; but were probably part of the original chant, to the music of which the modern ballad was adapted.

A second well-known and vulgarised chorus, "Tooral looral," has its origin in two Celtic or Gælic words, of which few or none have hitherto suspected the meaning. Tooral is the Celtic *tuail*—slow; and looral, in the same venerable speech, is *luathrail*—(pronounced *luarail*) quick, signifying a variation in the time of some musical composition or march. Tooral looral is thus akin in construction to the words more recently adopted from the Italian, to signify the harpsichord of our ancestors—the pianoforte.

A third chorus, which, thanks to the Elizabethan writers, has not been vulgarised, is that which occurs in John Chalkhill's *Praise of a Countryman's Life*, quoted by Izaak Walton:

Oh the sweet contentment
The countryman doth find.
High trololie, lollie, lol! High trololie, lee!

These words are easily resolvable into the Celtic; *Ai!* or *Aibhe!* Hail! or All hail! *Trath*—pronounced *trah*, early, and *là*, day! or "*Ai, trà, là, là, là*"—Hail early day! early day! a chorus which Moses and Aaron may have heard in the temples of Egypt, as the priests of Baal saluted the rising sun; and which was repeated by the Druids on the remote shores of Western Europe, in now desolate Stonehenge, and a thousand other circles, where the sun was worshipped as the emblem of the Divinity. The second portion of the chorus, "High trololie, lee," is in Celtic, "*Ai tra là, là, li,*" which signifies, "Hail early day! Hail bright day!" The repetition of the word *là* as often as it was required for the exigencies of the music, accounts for the chorus, in the form in which it has descended to modern times.

"*Fal, lal, la,*" a chorus even more familiar to the readers of old songs, is from the same source. Lord Bathurst, afterwards Earl of Dorset, wrote, in 1665, the well-known ballad, commencing:

To all you ladies now on land,
We men at sea indite,
But first would have you understand,
How hard it is to write.
With a fal, lal, là, and a fal, lal, là.
And a fal, lal, lal, lal, là.

Fal signifies a circle, and *là*, a day, and the words should properly be written, *fal, là, or fallà là*. The words appear in the *Invitation to May*, by Thomas Morley, 1595:

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. viii. p. 294.

Now is the month of maying,
When merry lads are playing.

Fal, la, là!

Each with his bonnie lass,
Upon the greeny grass,

Fal, la, là!

The Celtic or Druidical interpretation of these syllables is, "the circle or completion of the day."

"Fal, lero, loo," appears as a chorus in a song by George Wither (1588—1667).

There was a lass a fair one,

As fair as e'er was seen,

She was indeed a rare one,

Another Sheba queen.

But fool, as then I was,

I thought she loved me true

But now alas! she's left me,

Fal, lero, lero, loo!

Here fal, as in the previous instance, means a circle; lear (corrupted into lero), the sea; and luaidh (the dh silent), praise; the chorus of a song of praise to the sun when seen rising above the ocean.

The song of Sir Eglamour, in Mr. Chappell's collection, has another variety of the Fal, là, of a much more composite character:

Sir Eglamour that valiant knight,

Fal, la! lanky down dilly!

He took his sword and went to fight,

Fal, la! lanky down dilly!

In another song, called The Friar in the Well, this chorus appears in a slightly different form:

Listen awhile, and I will tell

Of a friar that loved a bonnie lass well,

Fal la! là, la, la, là! Fal, la, langtre down dilly!

The one version has lanky, the other langtre, both of which are corruptions of the Celtic. The true reading is Fal! là, lan—ri—dun—dile, which signifies, "The circle of the day is full, let us go to the hill of rain."

"Hey, nonnie, nonnie." "Such unmeaning burdens of songs," says Nares, in his Glossary, "are common to ballads in most languages." But this burden is not unmeaning, and signifies "Hail to the noon." Nin or noon was so-called in the Celtic because at midsummer in our northern latitudes, it was the ninth hour after sunrise. With the Romans, in a more southern latitude, noon was the ninth hour after sunrise, at six in the morning, answering to our three o'clock of the afternoon. A song with this burden was sung in England in the days of Charles the Second:

I am a senseless thing, with a hey!

Men call me a king, with a ho!

For my luxury and ease,

They brought me o'er the seas,

With a heigh, nonnie, nonnie, nonnie, no!

Mr. Chappell cites an ancient ballad,

which was sung to the tune of Hie dildo, dil. This also appears to be Druidical, and to be resolvable into Ai, dile dun dile, or "Welcome to the rain upon the hill," a thanksgiving for rain after a drought.

"Trim go trix" is a chorus that continued to be popular until the time of Charles the Second, when Tom D'Urfey wrote a song entitled Under the Greenwood Tree, of which he made it the burden. Another appears in Allan Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany:

The Pope, that pagan full of pride,

He has us blinded long,

For where the blind the blind does guide,

No wonder things go wrong.

Like prince and king, he led the ring

Of all iniquitie.

Hey trix, trim go trix!

Under the greenwood tree.

In Celtic treim, or dreim, signifies to climb, and gu tric, with frequency, often, so that these apparently unnecessary words represent a Druidical exhortation to climb often to the hill of worship under the greenwood tree.

There is an old Christmas carol which commences

Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell.

This is the salutation of the angel Gabriel.

Mr. Halliwell, in his Archaic Dictionary, says "Nowel was a cry of joy," properly at Christmas, of joy for the birth of the Saviour. A political song in a manuscript of the time of King Henry the Sixth, concludes:

Let us all sing nowelle,

Nowelle, nowelle, nowelle, nowelle,

And Christ save merry England and spede it well.

The modern Gaelic and Celtic for Christmas is Nollaig—a corruption of the ancient Druidical name for a holiday—from naomh, holy, and là, day, whence naola, the burden of a Druidical hymn, announcing the fact that a day of religious rejoicing had arrived for the people.

One more and a very remarkable example of the vitality of these Druidic chants is afforded by the well-known political song of Lilli Burlero, of which Lord Macaulay gives the following account in his History of England:

"Thomas Wharton, who, in the last parliament, had represented Buckinghamshire, and who was already conspicuous both as a libertine and as a Whig, had written a satirical ballad on the administration of Tyrconnel. In this little poem an Irishman congratulates a brother Irishman in a barbarous jargon on the approaching triumph of popery and of the

Milesian race. The Protestant heir will be excluded. The Protestant officers will be broken. The Great Charter and the praters who appeal to it will be hanged in one rope. The good Talbot will shower commissions on his countrymen, and will cut the throats of the English. These verses, which were in no respect above the ordinary standard of street poetry, had for burden some gibberish, which was said to have been used as a watchword by the insurgents of Ulster in 1641. The verses and the tune caught the fancy of the nation. From one end of England to the other all classes were constantly singing this idle rhyme. It was especially the delight of the English army. More than seventy years after the Revolution, a great writer delineated, with exquisite skill, a veteran who had fought at the Boyne and at Namur. One of the characteristics of the good old soldier is his trick of whistling Lillibullero. Wharton afterwards boasted that he had sung a king out of three kingdoms. But in truth the success of Lillibullero was the effect, and not the cause of that excited state of public feeling which produced the Revolution."

The mysterious syllables which Lord Macaulay asserted to be gibberish, and which in this corrupt form were enough to puzzle a Celtic scholar, and more than enough to puzzle Lord Macaulay, who knew nothing of the venerable language of the first inhabitants of the British Isles, and of all Western Europe, resolve themselves into "Li! Li! Beur. Lear-a! buille na là," which freely rendered, signify, "Light! Light! on the sea, beyond the promontory! 'Tis the stroke (or dawn) of the day!" Like all the choruses previously cited, these words are part of a hymn to the sun, and entirely astronomical and Druidic.

The perversion of so many of these once sacred chants to the service of common literature, and the street ballad, suggests the trite remark of Hamlet to Horatio:

To what base uses we may come at last!

Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
May stop a hole to keep the wind away.

The hymns once sung by thousands of deep-voiced priests marching in solemn procession from their mystic shrines to salute with music and song, and reverential homage, the rising of the glorious orb which cheers and fertilises the world, have wholly departed from the recollection of man, and their poor and dishonoured relics are

spoken of by scholars and philosophers as trash, gibberish, nonsense, and an idle farrago of sounds, of no more philological value than the lowing of cattle or the bleating of sheep. But I trust that all attentive readers of the foregoing pages will look upon the old choruses—so sadly perverted in the destructive progress of time, that demolishes languages as well as empires and systems of religious belief—with something of the respect due to their immense antiquity, and their once sacred functions in a form of worship, which, whatever were its demerits as compared with the purer religion that has taken its place, had at least the merit of inculcating the most exalted ideas of the Power, the Love, and the Wisdom of the Great Creator.

THE BEST BINS.

WHAT sort of wine it was that trickled from the purple grapes of Noah's primeval vineyard we can guess with tolerable certainty. There are not, it is true, nowadays, many vine-growers among the stony slopes of Kurdish or Armenian hillsides, but there is a strong family likeness among the rough, red, full-bodied wines of the East. Thick, rich in alcohol, and richer still in sugar, they bear transport with difficulty, and are not very attractive to European palates. Yet there are vintages among them that have deserved more honourable mention. The generous wine which Solomon sipped and praised was probably the dainty Vino d'oro of Lebanon, or some now forgotten growth of a sunny Syrian valley long left desolate. The frothing grape juice of which Hafiz sang in strains worthy to rank with those of his Ionian prototype had certainly seethed in the vats of Shiraz. But if there be truth in the proverb as to the toothsome character of stolen fruit, the maxim may not improbably hold good with reference to the life-blood of Bacchus, and the Mussulman Anacreon may have snatched a fearful joy from the fact that he was quaffing the precise liquor which the Prophet had forbidden to the faithful.

That the native home and cradle of the grape lay in Asia is a lesson that sacred and profane history unite to teach us. The conquering march of Bacchus is one of the most graceful myths that ever employed the fiery imagination of a Greek poet or the dexterous pencil of a Greek limner. High on his leopard-drawn car

the victor came westwards in bloodless triumph, flowers springing unbidden into life beneath the wheels of his chariot, music causing the very air to throb with a tempest of sweet sounds, art and science, plenty and prosperity, following in his train. There was nothing of cruelty, nothing of suffering, to mar that pageant. If a pointless spear appeared, it was girt around with clinging ivy; if a standard rose above the long array of harmless invaders, it was wreathed with vine tendrils from which the heavy grapes dangled temptingly. True, Silenus, drowsy and grotesque, was nodding on his long-eared steed, and goat-footed satyrs, and wild-eyed bacchantes, danced to pipe and tabor along the line of march, but the general idea was one of universal bounty, gentleness, and goodwill. The Greeks, like the Jews, seem to have received wine as one of the chief blessings of life; a temperate race by habit and constitution, they used it more than they abused it, and the allusions to the grape in Hellenic poetry are more decorous and respectful than those which stud the pages of the authors of self-indulgent Rome.

The Romans, fond as they were of wine, had but a limited area whence to replenish their cellars. The Falernian which Horace loved so well was perhaps their most expensive as well as their choicest beverage, but preferable to all the other vintages of Italy was the crimson grape juice that came in tall jars from Lesbos, from Chios, and the other sun-gilded isles of Greece. It was only some exceptionally delicate wine that was deemed worth the storing and sealing in those huge stone amphoræ which we may yet behold in the museum of Naples. Goatskins and pigskins, the leathern "bottles" mentioned in Scripture, were the usual recipients for the coarser growths, and these, as is still the case in Spain, yielded a marked and disagreeable flavour to the wine which they contained. There were grapes in the Spanish peninsula, even before the siege of Saguntum and the struggle for mastery between Roman and Carthaginian, and there were grapes in Gaul. But a Celtic population is usually more prone to brew beer than to go through the labours of pruning and pressing, and not much wine was made in the western provinces of the bloated empire until Roman colonists had taken the culture into their own hands. The frozen wine which unhappy Ovid, in his exile on the Danube, sawed into ruddy lumps and

thawed in hot water, was most probably an importation from Umbria or from Thrace. The Hungarian vineyards, the terraced rows of vines that clothe the sterile sides of the Rhenish cliffs, the acres of valuable plants that dower Champagne with a wealth beyond that of corn or oil, had as yet no existence.

The Norman Conquest found Europe, as regarded the growth, manufacture, and sale of wine, in a transitional state. Italy, in the vinous scale, attained to perhaps the highest rank, although Burgundian grapes already yielded their liquid ruby to fill the banquets of such knights and princes as dwelt between Loire and Rhine, while Aquitaine sent many a cask of Gascon wine to the port of London, before the landing at Pevensey, and the defeat of Senlac. But England did not depend entirely on Ypres or Bordeaux for her supply of wine. Old charters, the bygone names of half-forgotten vineyards belonging to monastic houses, prove that the cultivation of the grape, even up to the Roman wall and the banks of Tweed, was once by far more frequent than it now is. England was probably the most northerly of those countries in which vines were growing at the time of the great millenary jubilee, and that they flourished at all, is a proof how resolute were the monks to drink what the difficulties of land transport debarred to those who lived too remote from the coast. London and Bristol, Boston and Norwich, could pick and choose between the amber Rhenish and the crimson nectar from the Garonne, but a long stretch of dry land was a serious impediment to the carriage of so bulky an article of commerce. Meanwhile the vineyards of Lombardy, from one of which came that famous growth, the temptations of which, as commemorated in Ferrara by the emphatic words, "Est! Est! Est!" proved fatal to the bibulous German bishop, who on his road to Rome sent on a mounted servant to taste and note the best vintages at every inn, preserved their classic renown. But wine was all but an unknown beverage to the ale drinking Scandinavians, to Wend and Pole, Prussian and Muscovite, whose ordinary drink was black beer, with a horn of bright honey-distilled mead for high-tide and holiday. Spain contributed no wine to the markets of rich England and richer Flanders, for the miscreant Saracens had grubbed up the vines of Andalusia, and sherry continued to be almost unknown to foreign consumers, until the

final ruin of the Moorish empire on this side of the Straits of Gibraltar.

The political connexion, for so many years, between our island and the south-western provinces of France, no doubt helped to bring about the fact that when at coronation feast or thanksgiving for victory, our London fountains spouted forth showers of red wine to be thirstily swallowed by the shouting populace, it was Bordeaux that supplied the liquor. But even had our Gascon wine-growers not been subjects of the same sovereign as their English customers, there would still have remained the broad fact that a ship could unload at a Thames wharf the hog-heads that she had taken on board of her when lying beside a quay on the Garonne, while our wool and our silver were as welcome in Aquitaine as were the casks of claret to the vintners of London. Accordingly, long after the Plantagenets' possessions in France were limited to the single town of Calais, the consumption of French wines in London continued to be very great, until the taste for Spanish wines, and notably for that gold-tinted luscious compound of sugar, spice, and sherris, of which Falstaff speaks so lovingly under its familiar name of sack, rose to its apogee in the reign of Elizabeth.

King James the First took the trouble to import for his own drinking the strong Greek wines, strange to English palates of the seventeenth century, which had once been sufficiently abundant in the cellars of the Knight Templar. On the table of the Scottish Solomon might be seen dusty flasks of Cyprus, with its strong twang, due to the presence of tannin to excess, and yellow Malvoisie from Zara, and purple Chios, and that rough and red Tenedos with which British fleets of a later day have been supplied. The Puritans who dethroned and beheaded his successor, although by no means averse to ale, brandy, and Geneva, were no great patrons of wine, a liquor which was, indeed, held in one time in suspicion, as that in which malignants were wont in secret to pledge one another to the happy return of the Young Man. That long looked for event at length took place, and wine was once more first favourite. Sack was now no longer in fashion, and claret was the drink of polite England, though some of the more dashing young bloods about the king's court affected champagne, the merits of which Charles had probably learned during his Continental Odyssey, but at which it is

more than likely that the old Cavaliers who had fought under Rupert looked with some contempt. Champagne was not, under either the Stuarts or the early Georges, what it has since become. At the Regent Philip's famous suppers, the gorgeous lackeys uncorked a dozen flasks of Burgundy for every bottle of the sparkling grape-juice of Epernay.

The conclusion of the Methuen treaty brought port wine into fashion among our great-grandfathers, and claret was displaced to an extent which would have been mischievous indeed to Gascon wine-growers, had not the latter, fortunately for them, found a new market that made up for the partial loss of English custom. The Maréchal de Richelieu, sometime governor of Gascony, really believed to the end of his life that he owed the re-establishment of his health to the good wine of the district, and his praises of the southern growth, and his influence with Louis the Fifteenth, made Bordeaux fashionable. Up to that time the more costly wines consumed in France had come from Burgundy and from the Rhone, while a hundred petty vintages, thin and sour for the most part, supplied the demand for a cheap beverage. In England, on the other hand, port was a usurper that rose on the ruins of its older rival, claret. It came to be considered, economical questions apart, as a Briton's duty to stick to port. The punchbowl had assumed the dignity of a national institution, but wine was still needed, and it was thought better to buy it from our allies than to deal, through the agency of unscrupulous smugglers or suspected neutrals, with the natural enemies of our glorious constitution. Thus port, to the great encouragement and diffusion of gout and other ailments, came to be drunk to indiscretion amongst us, and claret gradually grew to be looked on as an expensive luxury, and to be charged for accordingly.

It was during Napoleon's long period of prosperity that champagne first acquired its world-wide reputation. The conqueror did not himself care much for any wine but Chambertin; but the banquets of the time were enlivened by the popping of innumerable corks, and wherever the French eagles were carried, there also appeared the glistening necks of a legion of plump bottles, decked with silver foil or pink tinsel, and yielding a sparkling fluid that bubbled and beaded in the tall glasses, and which the ladies of Europe at once took under their especial protection. It was in vain that

some haters of innovation protested, like Alfred de Musset, that the first duty of wine was to be red, and that other and more daring dissidents refused the vinous title to the frothing interloper. Champagne's victorious progress overleaped mountain and sea; it took precedence alike in St. Petersburg and in Constantinople, of all other members of the Bacchic family, and to this day the finder of a great nugget among the gold rushes of California or Australia celebrates his good luck by assembling half a score of red-shirted diggers to imbibe Gargantuan draughts of champagne, at prices that would seem preposterous to even the proprietor of the *Maison Dorée*.

Madeira, the only African wine that has ever taken a place in the foremost rank, was fortunate in finding a royal sponsor in George the Fourth. A kindred growth had been retailed, during the Tudor reigns, under the name of Canary, but it was not until the Regent's approval of Madeira had become notorious, that the importation into England became considerable. Then, indeed, the vogue of the new favourite knew no bounds. It was strongly recommended by the faculty, by bewigged old Sir Joseph Doublejee, by Doctor Buckram, with his portentous neckcloth and gold-headed cane, and by the other courtly physicians of the Corinthian epoch. "London particular" was voted a liquor worthy to have been served by Hebe at the banquets of Olympus, but West, and especially East, Indian Madeira, at ever so many shillings a dozen, was respectfully spoken of, and reverently drunk. It was an article of faith that this royal wine, like the young gentleman whose education received its final polish by the grand tour, improved by travel, and that the further it went the better. Some of the dearest Madeira of the post Waterloo period must have been able, unless the merchants who sold it were false knaves, to boast of as many voyages as Ulysses, and to have been to Calcutta and back was a very common experience for the generous grape-juice. At length it was accidentally discovered that wine of very inferior quality could be transmuted into nectar fit for an emperor's palate by simply leaving the cask for several months in a furnace-heated room, and that it was the high temperature, and not the knocking about on board ship, that so much enhanced the flavour of East India Madeira. But already fickle fashion was deserting her late idol, and the British

public, weary of the coarse and ill-made imitations which the Cape furnished, threw over Madeira, and the reign of sherry began.

The history of sherry, its rise, and its decline and fall, would of itself expand into a volume. Ever since the Moors were once fairly done with, Cadiz had been the seat of a great export trade; but all Andalusian wine is not sherry, and there are other provinces which grow grapes in even greater profusion. The various ill-starred attacks on Cadiz that have been ordered by different English governments have generally failed because the troops, breaking into the vast warehouses near the landing-place, drank themselves into a disgraceful oblivion of discipline and duty. But even when Charles the First's disorderly recruits rioted among the enormous cellars of Port St. Mary, the pipes and hogsheads that they staved in with hard blows of their musket butts were not all filled with honest sherry. Already Teneriffe wine, Murcian wine, wine of La Mancha, had been mixed and doctored into a counterfeit of the rarer product. And when sherry came into its full popularity in the great English market, the days of its excellence were numbered. It had never been very cheap. But, until very recently, the customer who was willing to pay a fair price, had the pennyworth for his penny. So highly prized was a delicate appreciation of the best vintages, that there were worse positions than that of the salaried taster to some rich Cadiz firm of exporters. He received from four to five hundred pounds a year as his retaining fee, and his only hardship was abstinence from the beloved cigarette, since it was thought of vital consequence that the critic should be not only a Spaniard, but one who had ceased to blunt the natural subtlety of his gustatory nerves by the use of tobacco.

It is probable that real Pasarete, genuine Manzanilla, and even Amontillado guiltless of imposture, may still be bought at a high price from exceptionally high-minded vendors. It is certain that at a less cost a nutty sherry of reasonable quality can yet be had. But it is scarcely to be expected that an average wine worth five shillings a bottle, or thereabouts, as it mellows in cask at Cadiz, can be sold for three shillings, half a crown, or two shillings, in London, carriage, duty, glass, labour, retail profit, advertising, and delivery, all included. Yet a beverage of some alcoholic strength, and that shall

look, and taste, and smell somewhat like the wine it professes to be, is in request at low prices, and must be had, somehow. Wherefore the alchemist of the cellarage is called in with his unholy arts, with his umber and burnt sugar, his Cape, and his Mountain, with malt brandy, and fiery potato spirit, and fusel-oil, and water from the rivers Elbe or Thames, according to the site of his necromatic operations, and hey, presto, the paying public has its glass replenished at a charge less than that of the winegrower at the gate of his vineyard. Port, a cordial of the utmost value, ought scarcely to be counted in the list of natural wines. Our Lisbon diplomatic staff write word, now and then, to the Foreign Office, that port contains as much juice of elder-berries as it does of grapes, and the information is printed at the national expense, but it never comprises as many unattractive details of the process of manufacture as may be learned, in moments of confidence, from any retired wine merchant who has spent a few years in Portugal. Still, we could ill spare port, and it lends itself in a less degree to adulteration than does its cousin-german sherry, since, if too much tampered with, it is apt to be rendered not merely deleterious, but nauseous into the bargain. Its merits in some cases of illness are indisputable; it often forms the sheet-anchor of the parish doctor who sees half his poor patients shivering with ague, and Boards of Guardians who are liberal on this score find that their open-handedness has in reality proved itself a wise economy of the rates. Comet vintages, on the other hand, that priceless '20 port, which is more often met with in fiction than in fact, and the produce of other years only a little less famous, are merely the toys of rich amateurs whose numbers death thins annually, but whose costly whims are still as a gold mine to those eminent dealers, Messrs. Beeswing and Sloe. There are still sold a few cases of that "loaded" claret, which used to be made expressly for the English market, but a butler of George the Fourth's reign would hardly recognise the genial fluid that now passes under that familiar name.

There are some wines which very few people drink, not only because they are scarce and dear, but because they have a smack that is not to the general taste. *Lacrima Christi* is sipped by travellers at Naples, but how many flasks of it do British cellars contain? The white wine of Jurançon, sacred to the memory of the

kings of Navarre, and always loved by Henry the Fourth of France, cannot be bought. Every drop is bespoken, years before, by far-sighted Legitimist consumers. It is hard, even at Vienna or Presburg, to buy one of those quaint bottles, of white glass and bulbous shape, that hold an imperial pint of imperial Tokay. It is dearer, bulk for bulk, than any wine in the world. It is almost as strong as French brandy, almost as substantial as a syrup, and is in fact only a very superior raisin wine, luscious and cloying. But it is a Porpherogenite, born to grandeur. Those who grow the grapes are princes, whose Hungarian territories are administered by prefects and councils, and those who buy the wonderful wine are kings and kaisers, whose august demands leave only a handful of flasks to be scrambled for by the outside public. So, in a less degree, with Prince Metternich's Cabinet Johannisberg, monarch of Rhine wines, the best of which scorns to find purchasers not commemorated in the courtly Almanac de Gotha, but pseudo specimens of which, at about two napoleons a bottle, are to be had at Rhineland hotels and Paris restaurants, in quantities that would make a thoughtful man marvel at the fertility of the few stony acres of the historical vineyard. Constantia, the sweet strong wine which the Dutch governor of the Cape named after his dead wife, is now, like Malmsey, Madeira, Frontignac, Hermitage, and Rive-satte Lunel, chiefly employed to give flavour to other wines, and the Stein vines need to be as tall as Jack's enchanted beanstalk in the nursery tale, if the pale juice of their transparent grapes fills all the sturdy bottles which bear the name of that celebrated convent.

Some of the best champagne in the world, and some of the very worst, gets into the London market. The old classification, by which the highest quality was reserved for Russia, the second for France, and number three for English use, is long since obsolete. It may more truly now be said that there is good wine for those who have long purses, and who combine with an accurate sense of taste the resolution not to buy trash hawked under the forged brand of some famous maker. Of course *Veuve Clicquot*, *Rœderer*, and the rest, are as blameless for the vile turnip-juice, spoiled Moselle, and decoction of rhubarb that masquerade under their well-known names, as are the *Farina* family for the scented turpentine that does duty for *eau-de-*

cologne. It has long been a recognised truth that anything, from a white country wine at six sous the litre, to mere sugar and water, will pass muster as champagne, and that silvery necks, rose-coloured foil, or seals of gold-specked resin guarding the precious store within the bottles, are matters by far more important than the composition of the contents. There must be a sparkling effervescent fluid, and it is better not to inquire over-curiously into its origin. Champagne, like sherry, illustrates the fact that demand is pretty sure to be followed by its faithful handmaid supply. Just as high duties evoke the smuggler, so does a cry for wine of a renowned sort at a cheap rate call into activity the fraudulent concocter of sham vintages. The imps of the cellar, gnomes who may well blush for the dark doings that they hide under ground, are especially busy when the London party-giving season is approaching. At a ball supper ingenuous youth, heated with dancing, and thinking ten times more of bright eyes and soft speeches than of probable headache on the morrow, will swallow anything. So will some who are old enough to be wiser, and who have not the same excuse of a brain dizzy with waltzing and flirtation. After all, the girls and boys know no better than to imbibe a compound of gooseberry-juice and carbonic acid gas, but who shall excuse the householder who, under the guise of hospitality, thus imperils the constitutions of his mature guests! No one can well believe that Eastern France can furnish, carriage, customs; and middleman's profit comprised, wholesome champagne at about three shillings a bottle. Any landed proprietor of the neighbourhood of Rheims and Epernay could tell the too credulous Briton that decent wine, grown within a league or two of his own door, costs him at the least four francs by the time it is fit to drink, and when bought from the grower direct. It is a wine that needs care, patience, and the daintiest manipulation, and must be fined, and racked, and recorked, and made to stand upon its head like an acrobat, and be heedfully mellowed in cool vaults, before it is ready to leap forth, beading and foaming, and loosen the tongues of men.

It has been plausibly said that a good razor is an accident, and much the same may be averred as regards good claret. The higher crus—tracing their well-authenticated genealogy to Chateaux Margaux and Lafitte, and other spots dear to

the Gascon Bacchus—deserve all the commendations which their delicate perfume and the velvet of their soft touch, as they tickle over the palate, justly elicit. But in the instance of wines that are expensive but not genuine, mere vinous charlatans under borrowed names, the bouquet, the flavour, the very softness may be due to the cunning of the chemist. Coal-tar yields, among other products, a light oil that ennobles poor and thin wine mightily. The essences of various fruits give scents and after-tastes to humble vintages that it needs practice to detect and account for. A dash of raspberry vinegar, a little water, some beetroot sugar, and a modicum of the coarsest alcohol, so disguise a light claret that its foster-father, the vine-grower, would not know it if he sipped it. Some so-called Bordeaux is no true Gascon, but simply the thick strong wine of Aragon or Roussillon, watered until its alcoholic standard is reduced to the usual level of inferior Médoc growths, and sophisticated with sugar, sliced quinces, and logwood.

It should never be forgotten that good wine, like a good horse, can always command its price. It is quite possible for an experienced judge of vintages, at any great seat of the wine trade, to pick up a cask or two, here and there, that needs but a little keeping to make it worth double the original cost. Wine, in a wine-growing district, is the cheapest of all articles of household consumption. The poorest day-labourer, who looks on coffee as a luxury, and whose dinner is of dry bread and raw cloves of garlic, can yet get his two or three daily quarts of local grape-juice at a nominal cost. But this is because the worst of the must produces a fermented liquor, that can neither be kept nor carried to any distance, and when we come across wine with a high-sounding name, and at prices alluringly low, we may be pretty sure that it is but as a daw in peacock's plumage, and has no sterling right to occupy the Best Bins.

A SUMMER NOON.

A DELL knee-deep with flower-sprinkled grass,
Grand, stately beeches, on whose silvery bark
Deep-cut are lovers' names; tall feathery ferns,
Wherein the rabbit crouches—nodding cups
Of myriad harebells, wealth of orchid-blooms,
Lie 'neath the warm glow of a summer noon.

The lazy sun-gold flickers on the leaves,
And in the blackthorn-thicket, voiceless, mute,
Couches the blackbird, resting until eve,
When he again may tune his mellow pipe.

Nature is hushed, and her siesta takes.
Beneath the ardent sun-rays—all is still!

The wearied waggoner—his face on arm—
Lies slumbering on the hay-cart, moments brief
Of swift forgetfulness, quick-snatched from toil,
And doubly sweet the theft. The crickets rest
Amid the ripening wheat; the grasshopper
Has ceased his amorous chirp; the very reeds
Scarce care to bend them in the river breeze,
For all creation seeks a brief, sweet rest.

Drowsily in the passion-flowers hum
Brown-banded bees, and on the unripe peach
Marauder-wasps settle in pirate swarms,
Eager for plunder. From the green leaves peep
The ripening nectarines and apricots;
The jargonelle hangs reddening on the wall,
And the first purple hue of lusciousness
Tinges the mellowing plum; the sovereign quince
Is burdened with her treasures; yellowing globes
Of apples bend the laden orchard boughs
Low to the rank, tall grass; rich mulberries
Colour apace, and the green hazel-nuts
Begin to change to russet, bounteous gifts
Of God-directed nature unto man!

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE FORTY-FOURTH ("THE TWO FOURS").

IN 1739, when war was proclaimed with Spain, two regiments of marines were raised, and one of them was numbered the Forty-fourth. In 1741, during the war of the Austrian succession, seven additional infantry regiments were raised, and one of these, the Fifty-fifth, became in 1748, on the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the present Forty-fourth.

The Fifty-fifth, as it was at first called, took part in the battle of Gladsmuir, during the rebellion of '45, when the Highlanders surprised and completely routed Sir John Cope's force, cutting down four hundred men and taking twelve hundred prisoners. The facings at this time were yellow, and the regimental colour yellow silk.

In General Braddock's unfortunate march, in 1755, over the Alleghanies to attack Fort du Quesne, the Forty-fourth joined, Colonel Halkett in vain urging his brave but rash general to use Indian scouts, and to beware of ambuscades. With only six hundred men, Braddock still pushed on, heedless of all remonstrance, and proudly contemptuous of his undisciplined enemies. In a place surrounded by woods, the Americans suddenly opened fire, and at the first discharge only twenty-two men of the advanced guard of the Forty-fourth, under Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Gage, were left standing.

In 1756, Major-General Abercromby was appointed colonel of the Forty-fourth regiment, and in 1758 it joined in the unsuccessful attack on Ticonderoga, when, by great rashness in not waiting for our artillery, we lost five hundred and fifty-one men. The regiment helped to take

Fort Niagara in 1749, and took part in several engagements that led to the final conquest of Canada. It was engaged again in the American war, arriving in 1775 to reinforce the Boston troops under General Gage.

We find the flank companies of the gallant regiment next distinguishing themselves, in 1794, at the taking of Martinique, St. Lucia, and Gaudaloupe; and the regiment itself formed part of the Duke of York's army in Holland. In 1796, it helped in the second capture of St. Lucia, and, subsequently, in the harassing pursuit of the runaway slaves and Caribs. In 1800, the regiment joined Abercromby's army at Malta, and sailed for Egypt.

When the Forty-fourth returned to England in 1801, there is a tradition that the flank companies were represented by two men alone, Sergeants Mackrell and Donaldson, who, in 1814, were promoted to commissions, and subsequently died as lieutenants in the regiment. In 1803, a second battalion was added to the Forty-fourth.

Colonel Burney, who served as a subaltern at the capture of Malta and Procida, affords the following description of the uniform of the Forty-fourth, on his joining it in 1808. The officers wore large cocked-hats, leather breeches, and long boots above the knees, like dragoons, with powder and long tails, the curl of which was generally formed of some favourite lady's hair, no matter what the colour might be. The evening dress was grey cloth tights, with Hessian boots and tassels in front. The facings of the coat were buttoned back, and every one was powdered and correctly dressed before sitting down to dinner. For duty, officers and men wore white cloth breeches, black cloth leggings or gaiters, with about twenty-five flat silver buttons to each, and a gorget, showing the officer was on duty. At Malta, as in other garrisons, officers for duty were regularly examined, that their buttons and swords were quite bright; if not they were turned back, and the one in waiting brought forward. Members of court-martial were sent back by the president if they had not their gorgets on, and their duty dress and hair properly powdered. To appear out of barracks without being in strict regimentals and swords, was never dreamt of. The poor soldiers ordered for duty were excused the adjutant's drill, as they took some hours to make themselves up to pass muster for all the examinations for guard-

mounting, with pomatum (sometimes a tallow candle), soap, and flour, particularly the men of flank companies, whose hair was turned up behind as stiff as a ramrod. The queues were doomed by general orders from the Horse Guards, dated 20th of July, 1808. The officers wore flashes, made of black ribbon, instead of a tail, attached to the collar of the coat behind, to distinguish them as flankers. This costume has been for years preserved in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

The second battalion of the Forty-fourth embarked for the Peninsular war in 1810, and at the siege of Cadiz supplied reinforcements for the fort at Matagorda. The Forty-fourth then sailed for Lisbon and joined the army at the lines of Torres Vedres. They fought at Sabugal, and the light companies were actively engaged at Fuentes d'Onoro, where Captain Jessop commanded.

At the siege of Badajoz the Forty-fourth, under Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable George Carleton, was told off to make a false attack on the Pardaleras, and a real assault on the bastion of San Vincent. After breaking down the palisading and entering a ditch, the regiment was exposed to such a murderous fire of grape and musketry, that no ladder could possibly be raised. Lieutenant John Brooke at once sent Lieutenant Pierce to the reserve, and two companies were sent up under Captain John Cleland Guthrie, who, from the glacis, soon silenced the guns and musketry. The ladders were then raised, and the stormers entered, followed by the brigade, and the colours of the Forty-fourth were planted on the bastion. A bugler of the Forty-fourth sounding the advance, Lord Wellington, who was waiting anxiously for news, exclaimed, "There's an English bugle in the tower!" The Forty-fourth, on this occasion, lost two lieutenants, two sergeants, thirty-eight rank and file killed, and about a hundred men wounded. Of the light company alone above thirty men perished. Next morning Lieutenant Unthank was found in an embrasure dying. The chaplain of the division came up just in time to administer the sacrament to him as he rested on Lieutenant Pierce's knee. Lieutenant-Colonel Carleton had his jaw broken by a bullet, and Captain Jervoise died of his wounds. The word "Badajoz" on the regimental colours commemorates these services of the Forty-fourth.

At Salamanca the Forty-fourth were

chosen to attack the enemy in front, and they took the eagle of the Sixty-second regiment. The French officer was just secreting the eagle under his grey great-coat, when Lieutenant Pierce made at him, assisted by several private soldiers of the Forty-fourth. A French soldier driving at Lieutenant Pierce with his fixed bayonet, was shot dead by Private Bill Murray, and Pierce divided twenty dollars among his four assistants. The Forty-fourth also took a French drum, which was kept as a trophy till the regiment embarked for the Mediterranean in 1848. Ensign Standley was killed, carrying one of the colours of the Forty-fourth. The regiment lost in this victory, Captain Berwick, Ensign Standley, and four rank and file, while twenty-two men were wounded.

In 1812, Wellington finding the second battalion of the Forty-fourth so reduced in numbers, formed it into four companies. The remaining six companies returned to England. They had earned in Spain the title of "The Little Fighting Fours," being small men and fond of blows.

In 1814, the second battalion, sent to Belgium in 1813, joined in the unfortunate attack on the strong fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom. The Forty-fourth lost above forty men in this catastrophe. A soldier of the Forty-fourth, named M'Cullup, who had received nine hundred lashes within nine weeks, and on the night of the assault was a prisoner, begged to be released, saying he had never been out of fire when the regiment had been engaged since his joining, and although he knew he was a bad soldier in quarters, yet he was a good one in the field. The man had his wish, and being an excellent shot, managed to kill the first nine sentries that were met with; he was killed, however, during the night.

At Waterloo the Forty-fourth (with Pack's brigade) performed one of the bravest feats ever executed by British soldiers; being suddenly assailed by lancers in rear when already engaged in front, and having no time to form square, they actually received the cavalry in line and defeated it, as Alison proudly records, by one single well-directed volley of the rear ranks, who faced about for that purpose. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamerton knew his men well, or he would hardly have risked such a desperate measure. A French lancer, says Mr. T. Carter, gallantly charged at the colours, and severely wounded Ensign Christie, who carried one of them, by a

thrust of his lance, which, entering the left eye, penetrated to the lower jaw. The Frenchman then endeavoured to seize the standard; but the brave Christie, notwithstanding the agony of his wound, with a presence of mind almost unequalled, flung himself upon the flag, not to save himself, but to preserve the honour of the regiment. As the colour fluttered in its fall, the Frenchman tore off a portion of the silk with the point of his lance; but he was not permitted to bear the fragments beyond the ranks. Both shot and bayoneted by the nearest of the soldiers of the Forty-fourth, he was borne to the earth, paying with the sacrifice of his life for his display of un-availing bravery.

Captain Burney of the Forty-fourth, in his narrative of the battle, says, "The French were in line, with skirmishers in the fields of rye, which was about five feet high. We advanced with the light company extended, but finding that the French had the advantage of seeing us, and picking off many, Colonel Hamerton called them in, and file-firing commenced from each company, to clear the rye as we advanced. After several movements the Forty-fourth were detached at double quick to a rising ground, where we found the French cavalry had driven our artillerymen from their guns, and had taken possession of, but could not move them, as the horses were gone; many of our artillerymen were sheltered under the guns. We were in quarter-distance column, and soon put our men in charge of their guns again. A German regiment then came up, and the Forty-fourth rejoined their brigade. Soon afterwards the division was in line on the plain; the roar of artillery was awful. The French cavalry repeatedly charged, and we formed squares; on the third occasion I was wounded." Captain Burney was then carried to the rear, wounded in the head and leg. A bullet was soon after extracted from his head, without which operation the doctors agreed he would have died mad.

A repeater watch was taken on the 18th at Waterloo, by Ensign Dunlevie, of the Forty-fourth. When the regiment had reformed line from square, a French cavalry officer found himself the sole representative of his squadron, and hemmed in between two lines of our troops. Whereupon he threw off his helmet, disguised himself in his cloak, and, being splendidly mounted, charged the rear centre of the Forty-fourth (first line), making a great grasp at the colours. The sergeants called

out, "Here is a staff officer, open out;" on this, Ensign Dunlevie—who held one of the colours (and which the French officer made a snap at as he rode through)—stabbed the horse in the stomach; the animal staggered and fell about twenty yards in front. Dunlevie and two soldiers hastened on, and the Frenchman was bayoneted whilst disengaging himself, pistol in hand, from his saddle. His watch and gold chain fell into their hands, and were afterwards purchased by Lieutenant-Colonel Burney for thirty napoleons. Ensign Dunlevie subsequently took this repeater to a watchmaker in the Palais Royal, who recognised it, and at once claimed it and locked it up, only half the purchase money having been paid. There being an order from the duke not to dispute with Frenchmen, Dunlevie quietly asked the man to let him compare the watch with his time, and on gaining possession of it put it in his pocket, and with a polite "Bon jour," walked away. On the 16th of June the Forty-fourth had fourteen killed, and one hundred and fifty-one wounded. Lieutenant Tomkins and Ensign Cooke were killed. The second battalion was disbanded soon after Waterloo.

In 1825, the Forty-fourth had an active share in the Burmese war. In 1841, shortly before the breaking out of the Afghan war, the regimental strength consisted of twenty-five officers, thirty-five sergeants, fourteen drummers, and six hundred and thirty-five rank and file, nearly all of whom were destined to perish in the ravines of Afghanistan. On the 2nd of November, 1841, the storm broke out at Cabul, and our political agent, Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother, and Lieutenant Broadfoot, perished in their burning house. In a repulsed attack on the Rika Bashee Fort, Lieutenant-Colonel Mackrell was sabred, and Captain M'Crea, of the Forty-fourth, cut to pieces. The treacherous assassination of the British envoy, Sir William Macnaghten, was followed, on the 5th of February, 1842, by the retreat from Cabul of four thousand five hundred English soldiers, with about three times that number of camp followers, women, and children. Heavy snow had fallen, and the Afghans were in full pursuit. At the Little Cabul Pass confusion, slaughter, and plunder began. The Sepoys were so benumbed with cold that the Afghans wrested their firelocks from them in many instances without resistance. Whenever a European fell the

mountaineers chopped him up with their large knives, as if he had been a dead sheep. Once the Forty-fourth charged, and drove the Afghans gallantly back, bayoneting many, but the relentless pursuit still continued. The road was strewn with dead. At the Tezeen Pass there was more fighting, but Brigadier-General Shelton halted the Forty-fourth, and averted immediate destruction. Here fell Major Scott, Captain Leighton, and Lieutenant White of the Forty-fourth. At barriers thrown up near Jugdulluck, many of the Forty-fourth were killed. The officers slain here and in the pass were Lieutenants William Henry Dodgin and Francis Montessor Wade, Paymaster Thomas Bourke, Quarter-master Richard R. Halahan, and Surgeon John Harcourt.

Paymaster Bourke, says Mr. Carter, had been nearly forty years in the service, which he entered as paymaster in 1804. He had joined the Forty-fourth in 1823, and served with the regiment in Arracan. Some of the officers of the avenging army recognised the remains of the poor old man, from there being a small portion of his silvery grey hair still adhering to the skull. Many valuable papers were lost with his effects; the funds of the regiment, which were unusually flourishing, were in his hands, and some of them were altogether lost. What appeared to be a piece of dirty paper was picked up in the Tezeen valley, and proved to be an order for three hundred pounds, belonging to the officers' mess-fund. The amount was recovered by the regiment.

Quarter-master Halahan had been lieutenant in the Eightieth regiment, but was placed on half-pay on the reduction of the army in 1817. He was appointed quarter-master of the Forty-fourth in 1822, and served with the regiment in Arracan. He was of great strength, and was known to be the most powerful man in the regiment. He carried a musket from Cabul, and fought with the ranks, killing many of the enemy. He fell while crossing the barrier in the Jugdulluck Pass, and had been wounded at Cabul, at the Commissariat Fort.

Lieutenant Dodgin had lost a leg near Peshawur, when on the march to Cabul, in the following unlucky manner. He was at tiffin in his tent with Quarter-master Halahan, when a cry was raised in the camp of "a man running a muck." Dodgin stepped out to see, and it turned out to be a Syce he had discharged that

morning, who was making straight for the tent, brandishing a sword as sharp as a razor. Dodgin called to Halahan, who came out with a thick stick and felled the man lifeless with a single blow; but not in time, however, to aid poor Dodgin, who, in attempting to step out of the fellow's way, stumbled over a tent rope, and received from him so severe a wound as to occasion amputation of the leg. He was also killed at the barrier in the Jugdulluck Pass.

"Shortly after daylight on the 13th of January," says the regimental biographer, "the exhausted survivors found their progress arrested by a numerous body of horse and foot, in a strong position across the road, whereupon they ascended a height on their left hand, and, reaching the top, waved a handkerchief; some of the Afghans then came to them, and agreed that Major Griffiths (Thirty-seventh Native Infantry) should proceed to the Chief of Gundamuck to make terms; whilst he was gone, a few of them gave the men some bread, and possibly gaining confidence from this, the enemy yielded to their usual propensity to plunder, and endeavoured to snatch the arms out of the soldiers' hands, when an officer exclaiming, 'Here is treachery!' words came to blows. The Afghans were instantly driven down the hill; firing was then recommenced and continued for nearly two hours, during which these heroic few kept the enemy at bay, till their numbers being reduced to about twenty, and their ammunition expended, the Afghans rushed in suddenly with their knives. An awful scene ensued, and ended in the massacre of all except Lieutenant Thomas Alexander Souter, Lance-Sergeant Alexander Fair, six soldiers of the Forty-fourth, three artillerymen, and Major Griffiths, Thirty-seventh Native Infantry, whose lives the Afghans, with unwonted humanity, spared. In this last struggle Lieutenant Thomas Collins, Arthur Hogg, Edward Sandford Cumberland, Samuel Swinton, and Doctor William Primrose, assistant-surgeon, all of the ill-fated Forty-fourth, were killed."

Of the one hundred and two officers killed at Cabul and in the retreat, twenty-two belonged to the Forty-fourth. Of six hundred and eighty-four men of the Forty-fourth, six hundred and fifty-eight perished, nine were prisoners, seventeen survived the last brave stand at Gundamuck, and of these fourteen died in captivity.

In one of the last fights Lieutenant

Souter, seeing the peril, tore the regimental colours from the staff, and wrapped them round his body. The Queen's colour Lieutenant Cumberland handed to Colour-Sergeant Patrick Carey, who wrapped it round him; but Carey was killed, and the colour never seen again. The first colour was more lucky. Lieutenant Souter, in a letter to his wife, from his captivity near Sughman, in the hills, not many miles from Jellalabad, thus wrote: "In the conflict my posteen flew open and exposed the colour. They thought I was some great man, looking so flash. I was seized by two fellows (after my sword had dropped from my hand by a severe cut in the shoulder, and my pistols had missed fire); they hurried me to a distance, took my clothes from off me except my trousers and cap, led me away to a village by command of some horsemen that were on the road, and I was made over to the head man of the village, who treated me well, and had my wound attended to. Here I remained a month, seeing occasionally a couple of men of my regiment who were detained in an adjoining village. At the end of a month I was handed over to Akbar Khan, and joined the ladies and the other officers at Sughman. I lost everything I possessed. . . . My wound, which is from my right shoulder a long way down my blade-bone, is an ugly one, but it is quite healed. The cut was made through a sheepskin posteen, under which the colour was concealed, lying over my right shoulder, that thick Petersham coat I used to wear at Kurnaul, a flannel and shirt. I then threw my pistol upon the ground, and gave myself up to be butchered. The man I tried to shoot seized me, assisted by his son-in-law, and dragged me down the hill; then took my clothes, the colour, and my money. I was eventually walked off to a village two miles away. This same man and his son-in-law, whose names are Meer Jaun, came afterwards to the village where I was, with my telescope, to get me to show them how to use it. Afterwards the son-in-law and I became thick; he brought me back the colour (though divested of the tassels and most of the tinsel), to my agreeable surprise."

Both the colours had for some years been mere bundles of ribbons, and the colour thus saved was eventually placed in the church of Alverstoke, Hants. Colonel Shelton was killed in 1845, by a fall from his horse in the square of Richmond Barracks, Dublin.

In 1854, when the Forty-fourth embarked at Varna for the Crimean war, the regiment's strength was thirty officers and eight hundred and ninety-nine men of all ranks. After the battle of the Alma, Doctor James Thomas, of the Forty-fourth, and Private Magrath, a soldier servant, for four or five days volunteered to remain behind, and alleviate the sufferings of seven hundred wounded Russians; subsequently the doctor took three hundred and forty of them to Odessa, and died on his return to Balaklava, of cholera, a victim to his generous exertions. The Forty-fourth particularly distinguished itself in the attack on and occupation of the cemetery at the head of the Dockyard Creek, the day Pelissier was repulsed at the Malakoff. Our men had the dangerous task of pulling down barricades of stone walls while under fire. The Forty-fourth swarmed into the advanced houses, and kept up a continuous fire on the embrasures at the head of the creek. The brigade was altogether eighteen hours under fire, and got, for the first time, actually into the town of Sebastopol, although exposed to a plunging fire from the Redan and Barrack batteries. Five hundred and sixty-two men were the total casualties of the day. Colonel the Honourable Augustus Spencer, who commanded the Forty-fourth, was wounded, and Lieutenant-Colonel Staveley succeeded to the command. Altogether the Forty-fourth lost in killed and wounded, one hundred and thirty-three men. Of six captains who went into action, four (Fenwick, Agar, Mansfield, and Caulfield) were killed. Colonel Spencer and Lieutenants Logan, Haworth, and Hoskins were wounded. The Victoria Cross was afterwards given to Sergeant William M'Whiney. The Gazette of the day says M'Whiney "Volunteered as sharp-shooter at the commencement of the siege of Sebastopol, and was in charge of the party of the Forty-fourth; was always vigilant and active, and signalised himself on the 26th of October, 1854, when one of his party, Private John Keane, Forty-fourth regiment, was dangerously wounded in the Woronzoff road, at the time the sharpshooters were repulsed from the quarries by overwhelming numbers. Sergeant M'Whiney, on his return, took the wounded man on his back and brought him to a place of safety. This was under a very heavy fire. He was also the means of saving the life of Corporal John Courtenay. This man was one of the sharpshooters, and was severely wounded in the head on the 5th

of December, 1854. Sergeant M'Whiney brought him from under fire, and dug up a slight cover with his bayonet, where the two remained until dark, when they retired. Sergeant M'Whiney volunteered for the advanced guard of Major-General Eyre's brigade in the cemetery, on the 18th of June, 1855, and was never absent from duty during the war."

In 1860, the Forty-fourth sailed for China, the emperor having refused to ratify the treaty of Tien-Tsin. On the 6th of August, the regiment landed on the banks of the Pehtang river, and advanced to attack the Tartar posts at the Sin-ho entrenchments. The roads were so bad that it cost the troops two hours' hard labour to march two miles. The tremendous Armstrong guns, then first used in actual warfare, astonished the Tartar horsemen, who nevertheless streamed out and enveloped Sir Robert Napier's force, who was taking the position in flank. The Tartars were soon put to flight, but again broke out in swarms, and threatened the artillery. They were driven off by four companies of the Forty-fourth, who wheeled up and fired volleys. The rear guard also received and repulsed a charge of Tartar cavalry. After taking Tangken, Sir James Hope Grant determined to reduce the North Taku Forts, near the mouth of the Peiho. On the 21st of August, a storming party was chosen from the Forty-fourth, to be led by Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick William Macmahon, a wing of the Sixty-seventh, and some marines, who carried a pontoon bridge for crossing the wet ditches. The magazines in both forts having exploded, a breach was commenced near the gate, and a portion of the storming party advanced to within thirty yards and opened a musketry fire, which the Chinese returned with interest. The resistance was so vigorous that the French, having crossed the wet ditches, were unable to escalate the walls. Nor could the sappers succeed in laying the pontoon bridge, thirteen of the men being knocked down in succession, and one of the pontoons destroyed. Moreover the troops had to wade through deep mud, swim three wet ditches, and clamber over two belts of pointed bamboo stakes. At this crisis Napier ordered up two howitzers to within fifty yards of the gate, and soon created a breach sufficient for one man to enter. In like terriers the stormers went in single file; Lieutenant Robert Montessor Rogers of the E company, then Private John Macdougall of the Forty-fourth, and Lieutenant Lenon of the Sixty-

seventh were the first Englishmen inside the walls of the North Taku Forts; they climbed up the embrasure by sticking bayonets in the wall, and so earned the Victoria Cross, which was also conferred on Lieutenant Burslem, Ensign Chaplin, and Private Lane of the Sixty-seventh. The Chinese, driven back foot by foot, were at last hurled through the opposite embrasures into the muddy ditches. About an hour after all the forts hoisted flags of truce, yet still defied the allies. Eventually the allied infantry, pushing on to the outer North Fort, scaled the walls, and made prisoners the garrison of two thousand men. Towards evening the Chinese evacuated the South Forts. The loss was severe. The Forty-fourth had Captain Ingham and Lieutenant Rogers severely hurt, fourteen men killed, and one drummer and forty-five men wounded. Captain Gregory was one of the first in the Taku Forts after those who obtained the Victoria Cross; Brigadier Reeves, who commanded the troops for the assault, was severely wounded in five places. The words "Taku Forts" are now borne on the colours of the Forty-fourth regiment.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER V. BY THE LEETHE.

THE excitement, in which there had been a strong element of bitter sorrowful disappointment for Harty, was over. She realised that it was over the instant she awoke the morning after the party. Realised it with a pang in spite of that aforesaid element of bitter disappointment. At any rate, it had been a real genuine excitement, and anything was better than this dead dull level of monotony on which she was condemned to dwell.

The repulse of her hand, the rejection of the olive-branch by Claude Powers, had been very cruel, pitifully hard to bear, but it had acted as a stimulant for the time, and forced her into the display of an eager vivacity that deceived herself even. Catching sight of her own face in the glass, she felt a momentary surprise at seeing the face of a happy girl, a momentary conviction that the happiness was a reality. But the excitement was over now, and she knew that the happiness had been a sham, and that memory and feeling would combine to give her plenty of pain and sorrow, plenty of monotonous hopelessness in the future.

The first result of the reaction from the

overwrought condition of the previous day was that her nerves were thoroughly unstrung. She shrank from the idea of quitting the sanctuary of her bed, and going down to bear her share of the burden and heat of the day. Everything would be harder to do and to bear during the coming hours, she felt sure, than they had ever seemed. The tension of her nerves was such that the mere sound of her stepfather's voice, raised in its ordinary household tone of fretful fault-finding, made her shiver back from the door, with a feeling that she was in some measure to blame about something unknown with which the atmosphere was highly charged. Notes of domestic discord sounding from the kitchen made her wince. All her fearlessness, all her bright elasticity was gone, and she had a conviction that Mr. Devenish would achieve a series of easy victories over her this day, and crush her spirit in the dust.

She had never before faltered away from facing the personal disagreeables of their poverty-stricken state. But it made her shiver like an aspen, when this morning she had to take her coffee to the music of a lamentation Mr. Devenish was pouring out with fretful fluency, as to the exorbitant amount of meat which must be consumed in that household judging from the butcher's-book. It was a favourite and frequent pastime of his, this of bemoaning the bills at breakfast and dinner. It always depressed his wife and Mabel to the degree which he deemed a fitting tribute of sympathy to his own despondency. But Harty generally contested the question with him if she took any verbal notice of it; contested the question of unnecessary expense bordering on wasteful extravagance, and proved with perspicuity and zeal that, owing to her mother's skill in housekeeping, they subsisted on the minimum allowance of absolutely essential viands.

But in the present exceptional state of her nerves, the sound of the odiously familiar words, "books, and bills, and money," broke her down. A future had spread out before her once in which these things would have had no power to distress her, and that future had been marred by the querulous, complaining man at the opposite side of the table. The tears came into her eyes in a sudden rush of self-pity, and her infinitely distressed mother saw by the quivering of her lips that there would be a convulsive breakdown presently.

"And if I say a word to my poor child, Edward will fancy that I am reflecting on him; he is so sensitive, poor fellow!"

The man whose tender sensitiveness would have been outraged by the mother showing sympathy for her daughter, marked that daughter's agitation presently, and resented it.

"I see that, in addition to everything else which I have to bear, I am treated to a lachrymose exhibition of temper if I make an attempt to check, or even presume to point out that there is lavish expenditure going on in this ill-regulated family. Where the money goes I can't tell; my habits are inexpensive enough I am sure. However, there'll be an end to it some day."

"Thank Heaven there will be an end to it some day," broken-down Harty sobbed out; but, as Mrs. Devenish and Mabel felt, there was no ring of defiance in the words such as would have portended a speedy rebound from this despair. She was overthrown, and her tone told in its plaintive wail that she was only helplessly anxious that the end should come.

The head of the house would not have missed such a golden opportunity of forging fresh fetters for his wife for the world. So now he rose up, fractiousness (and how powerful that same fractiousness in a man is in quelling the hearts and spirits and happiness of the wretched women who dwell with him, none can tell but those who have watched its force increasing) stamped on every lineament, expressed in every limb and gesture, pervading the whole man in a soul-sickening way.

"I am going to sit in the garden, my dear," he said to his wife; "it's very odd that I can't have a chair kept out there, with a couple of lazy servants in the house, to say nothing of—however, it doesn't matter, I'm accustomed to it; and you must speak to the servants about the row they make, I will not submit to that any longer; like a pot-house, screams of laughter from the kitchen directly my back is turned; they're a couple of wasteful, idle, extravagant, giddy women, and will take us to the workhouse at a quicker pace than we should go without them."

Having said which, and being anxious to read his newspaper, Mrs. Devenish's lord and master betook himself to the garden, followed by Mabel with all the cushions and cloaks she thought he might possibly want.

And Harty sat there still, twisted round on her chair, with her head reclining on the back of it. Doing what she hated herself for doing, crying simply, in a drear, kind of way that would have maddened her in another woman.

"Harty!" her mother began, going up to the girl and taking the wan brown head home to her heart the instant they were alone; "Harty, tell me! tell me, dear; did you hope still, until you met him again, last night; is it that, my child?"

"No, it isn't that," Harty said, shaking herself up; "hope, no, I've never had any hope of Claude's being my lover again, if you mean that, mother; but he won't see that I'm right about something, and so that makes him seem a little cruel, and——"

"Cruel! cruel is no word for his monstrous conduct, I think, Harty. He behaved to poor dear Edward last night in a way that makes me blush to think that I ever liked Claude Powers; cut him, cut Edward dead, shamefully; what would you have done if you had seen it, my poor child? At least you were spared that sight."

"I think I could have borne it," Harty said, philosophically, rousing herself, and drying her eyes, and then looking in the glass and mercilessly examining and enlarging upon the effect the unwonted fit of weeping had had on her personal appearance. "Goodness me! look at my lips, they're swollen, and the tip of my nose is red; hateful result of nature having its own way——"

"But, Harty!" Mrs. Devenish interrupted, "I don't think I understood you; why Mr. Powers should cut poor dear Edward because he has broken his engagement with you, I can't understand; he can speak to me and to you, it appears; it is so invidious to vent his annoyance on poor Edward."

"Oh! you poor, dear, mistaken darling mother," Harty thought, "how your loving heart would be divided if you only knew the truth," but she only suffered herself to say aloud:

"Don't let us concern ourselves about Mr. Powers and what he does, and why he does it, mother dear; he won't about us." Then for the sake of pleasing her mother, of giving her a few crumbs of comfort, she constrained herself to add:

"I am very sorry that anything happened to hurt papa, last night; it was unfortunate, for he doesn't get over things."

"It was unfortunate, dreadfully," Mrs. Devenish responded, heartily, "it was cruelly unfortunate; it robbed him of his rest, and when that is the case he gets irritable naturally, and can't eat his breakfast; there, you see, he has left half that sweet-bread."

"He pushed the other part back in a

pet, when I couldn't help crying," Harty laughed. "Yes, mother, he did, really, pushed it away in a pet; we all have our little weaknesses, and an utter inability to stand the sight of another person's downheartedness is one of Mr. Devenish's, I should say."

"He has had so much to try him, so much to rob his nature of some of its original brightness," the loving, self-deceiving woman went on; "if you could but remember him as I do, Harty, playing with you two children, making himself a self-sacrifice to your little caprices, thinking nothing a trouble that he did for you, you'd lament the change as deeply as I do."

Mrs. Devenish brought her sentence to a close with a sigh that was full of faith in and love for her husband, and Harty had not the courage or the cruelty to speak the truth which would have tripped off her tongue readily enough if Mr. Devenish only would have been hurt by the utterance of it. As it was, she said:

"Do you believe in our having guardian spirits about us, mother; good angels who guide and direct us?"

"Yes." Mrs. Devenish did believe in the vague, abstract kind of way in which people do believe a vast number of things about which they know absolutely nothing.

"So do I, whenever I think of you and Mr. Devenish, mother; you're his guardian angel, if ever a man had one." And Harty thought, almost regretfully, that there were times when she had it in heart to wish that her mother was not quite so adroit in the interposition of the shield of her affection between the man she loved, and some rebuffs that he well deserved.

"Ah!" the wife said, "he is the guardian spirit, the good angel of my life, dear; but it's no use trying to make you understand that yet, until you meet, as I pray you may, with such another."

Then Mrs. Devenish went away to order dinner, and to tone down, as well as she could, the exuberant mirth of the two callous creatures who dared to be glad when Mr. Devenish decreed sadness should reign.

"I ought to go and put away that tattered, mutilated grey bundle of mere shreds, about which fond memory clings in a most ridiculous way," Harty thought; "but I hate the thoughts it will conjure up, and the vision of the twirling noodle I made myself for the sake of giving Mr. Ferrier the exercise he thought needful for him-

self. I am not likely to want it again, so I'll let it repose in its rumples, and go down to the Leeth instead."

There was something attractive to her fancy in the idea of an hour or two on the banks of the slow, silent river, that ran along so darkly. It was not a beautiful river, the Leeth. It has no bright beauty of cascade and boulder, no charm of silvery ripple, no dashing little waterfalls. But it has a sombre, steady, subdued charm of its own, as it sluggishly rolls along between straight banks that are well planted with rows of trees whose boughs almost sweep the ground, affording the very best shelter that the heart of man can desire between himself and the sky. A lovely, light, lime-tree ceiling, full of fissures and cracks, through which splashes of heavenly blue, and flakes of sunshine came flickering down, deluding feebly confiding passers-by, or passers-under rather, into the belief that the world is full of warmth and beauty.

"Oh, dear!" Harty thought, as she made her way through the meadow that intervened between their garden and the river, and stood at last under the shade of green trees on its bank, and watched the dark quiet water flowing on, "how soft, and soothing, and satisfying it seems to be just now; I wonder if the Leeth ever had an angry thought to ruffle its surface in its existence; I wonder if the same sort of thing has gone on happening at intervals on its banks? I wonder if ever a girl stood here before, like me, who laughed over a baffled love, and cried tears of blood over a butcher's book? I wonder—no, I don't wonder a bit more about you, stupid Leeth, I'm sick of you already," she wound up with, in a burst of passionate truthfulness.

"Emblem of my life!" she cried in a rage, casting herself down on the bank in impotent, childish fury. "Mocking, everlasting emblem! How dull, and dark, and slow you are! I wonder if Claude has got hold of you, if you pass through his grounds? If you do he will dam you up in one place in order to make you unnaturally bold and bright in another; he'll try to control, and fetter, and curb you, in order to see what you'll do and dare, in order to see how you'll destroy yourself, in order to be amused by your idiotic efforts to seem free and unrestrained when you're chained and hedged in, and tied down on every side, and in every way. Don't I know it all—all he can do and may do, and don't I think it all so right, so right because it's Claude."

This recollection of her love, and her love-troubles, was the only one she thought of indulging in, she cared to indulge in, now that she was away from the stifling home atmosphere, in which she had to take short hazardous breaths, and walk as though she were treading on hot plough-shares. The vile, fractious ill-temper, and peevish irritability of the head of the house, the one who possessed within himself the proud power of making the whole household uncomfortable, was beginning to tell with frightful force on Harty. The girl might have been driven down to any depths of degradation and sin by it. To a refined and sensitive and noble nature, there is nothing so demoralising as contact with a fretful, peevish, narrow, and ill-tempered one. In this case, for example, Harty longed so to escape from the everlasting sound of the eternal whine of complaint about something or somebody—the eternal whine, the eternal look of dissatisfaction in the clouded eyes, and drawn in nostrils, and the discontented droop of the mouth. She so longed to escape from this special phase of facial power as portrayed by Mr. Devenish, that she went straight away into the opposite extreme of yearning for smiles and amiability, no matter from whom, without any regard for or dread of the danger she might brave if her yearning were gratified. "Give me a smiling demon any day, rather than a scowling saint," she thought this morning in her utter disgust and loathing for that futile ill-humour which breathes like a noxious vapour through the lives of so many wretched human beings. Almost as the thought flashed into her strained, harassed mind, Jack Ferrier came strolling along, contrasting vividly with the dull, dank river, and the dark unsmiling home.

Jack Ferrier came strolling along sunnily, looking like a beam of radiance, by contrast with that dusky-visaged, temper-corroded Mr. Devenish, the recollection of whose meanly inquisitive, fretful, suspicious, pettily domineering face was weighing her down at the moment. She turned as a sun-flower turns to the god of day as the fair-faced man, with happy eyes, came lightly into her presence, and she threw off a goodly portion of her deadly gloom with the words:

"I came down here to enjoy the river, just because it is water, and moves, and has something like life. Now I am so glad to see you, because you're so utterly unlike the Leeth——"

"Do you mean that, as you see me, I

have neither movement nor life," he laughed. "I shall hurl that statement in Mr. Powers's teeth whenever he asserts, as he does, on an average, twice a day, that my excessive vitality overpowers him."

"No, no! hear all I have to say before you quote me to suit your own ends. The Leeth has about as much movement and life as a tortoise when it first wakes up. Now you came 'leaping like a merry brown hare' into my solitude a minute ago."

"Much to your annoyance?" interrogatively.

"Much to my delight," she answered, frankly. "I can have the companionship of the torpid river any day, but you're quite new, and I shall probably not have your companionship very often?"

Jack Ferrier's experience of women was wide, but he was a little puzzled now. His judgment refused this morning to indorse the hasty conclusion to which he had come the previous night respecting her. He could no longer look upon her as a shy country girl. But he could not make up his mind as to whether she was daring from indifference or design, whether she was playing a part in order to storm him into thinking about her, or merely suffering herself to be seen by him just as she was, out of carelessness as to whether he thought about her or not.

He had seated himself on the green bank of the river by her side now, and he was taking in her three-quarter face as the sun flickered down upon it, and she bent it slightly to avoid the glare.

"A plain little thing seen by the morning light," he thought. "Why doesn't her sister, who is a pretty girl, teach her how to do her hair better?"

"What are you thinking about?" Harty asked, suddenly, as his thoughts culminated in this rather derogatory question concerning her. "What are you thinking about? Me?"

"Well, at that moment I was, if you must know," he answered, determined to take her on her own ground of frankness, and try whether or not he could disarm her. "I was thinking about you; there's nothing either complimentary or the reverse of complimentary, you know, in my doing so, considering you're well in my line of vision, and there's no one else here."

She laughed a genuine, musical laugh.

"Will you mind telling me what you were thinking about me?" she asked, coaxingly; "say out, nothing extenuate; I know I needn't ask you to set down nought in malice."

"No, that I swear you needn't about yourself," he said, warmly. But somehow his thoughts of her had been tinged with another hue during the last few moments. He no longer thought her either very plain or a little artificial. The sudden gleams of animation were genuine things. So were the clouds of absent gloom that mingled with them. On the whole he deemed it more sagacious not to tell the girl what he thought of her just then, and, as judging from her next remark, her interest had veered away from the subject, it was easy for him to carry out his resolution of reticence.

"Do you know, your friend Mr. Powers and you are as utterly unlike each other as two human beings can be?"

"Yes. But why should we be other than unlike?" Jack Ferrier asked, laughing. "I tell you now what you meant, Miss Carlisle: not so much that Powers and I are unlike, as that I am hopelessly inferior to him in most things. I know that; I know very well that he is one in a thousand—there are many duplicates of me."

"He's obstinate, I should think, and you're not," Harty said, slowly searching his face keenly as she spoke; "but you're right, he is very clever."

"You soon made the discovery. I didn't see you talking to him very much last night; but he has the art of giving one the clue to the topic that's nearest one's interest at the time very quickly, as I told you."

"Yes, he gave me the clue to the topic that was nearest my interest last night very quickly indeed," Harty said, with a little dry laugh; "so quickly that it confused me; it was conversational conjuring."

"Did he now?" Jack Ferrier asked, with unfeigned, admiring simplicity.

And Harty felt even more at her ease as she reflected, "Claude has not told him anything of our story yet."

"Do you ride?" Mr. Ferrier asked at this point, suddenly and irrelevantly cutting into her meditations. "I suppose you do; all girls do in these days."

"Well, let me see. How I shall answer that question, concisely and veraciously, is beyond me. I don't ride because I have no horse; but I did ride once when I had a horse—lent me. Perhaps I may have forgotten all about the noble art; perhaps I might ride as well as ever if I were put to the test. Why?"

"Why I asked I think because you look like a girl who could ride. You have go,

and grace, and suppleness, and you look as if you'd enjoy it. I hope you will."

"Hope I will. Why?"

"Because Powers is going to fill his stables as well as he can, as soon as he can; and we must all aid him in exercising his horses. I am going to be master of the horse, and I'll take care that you have a good mount."

"Thank you; when I ride one of Mr. Powers's horses probably he will take care that I have a good mount. Oh dear, what folly we are talking! How remorseful I shall feel about it in about half an hour when I'm sitting down at early dinner, with no appetite, and the consciousness that there is nothing in the rest of my life to justify me in having ventured to enjoy this little scrap of it."

He was on the brink of uttering a platitude about the probability of the real state of the case being that her surroundings were all so silken and so soft that the merest crumple in a rose-leaf disturbed her, when there was an expression of such impatience with what was, of such a yearning for something else, as never flits over the face of one to whom fate is even moderately tender. And before he could substitute another form of words, Mabel was seen coming towards them across the meadow, looking like a blossom in the freshest of muslins, with peace on her brow and goodwill in her heart, and contentment in her mind, even with that order of things which had chained her to Mr. Devenish's chariot wheels all the morning.

Mr. Devenish had been in one of what may be described as his most despicably discontented of moods. He would have none of anybody's care, consideration, or kindness; at least, he had all these things, but he took care to portray vividly that he did neither solicit, desire, nor deign to be grateful for them. Truly, it was an exasperating mood for a man to take shelter in, the while he prepared to take aim at other people's inoffensive foibles.

Mabel made the real state of the case manifest to Harty in perfect unconsciousness this morning when she joined the pair on the river bank.

"Poor papa has been finding the atmosphere this morning dreadfully trying," she began, in tones of solemn sympathy. "Mamma and I haven't been able to persuade him to take anything this morning either; he's looking dreadfully weak."

She turned a face full of warm, kindly explanation of Mr. Devenish's current suffering towards Jack Ferrier as she spoke, and he admired her infinitely, and felt his heart expand with pity of an indefinite and not too harrowing order for the lightly sketched malady of the unknown man. He thought Mabel a pretty, kind-hearted girl, with whom Harty contrasted unfavourably just then. For Harty was allowing her face to assume its most unsympathetic, most doubtful expression.

"She's harder and more selfish than her sister," he told himself: "the sort of girl who theoretically would sacrifice everything in the world, herself included, for any one she loves, and who practically would sacrifice everything in the world, including the one she loves, to herself." Then filled with a strong sense of the truth of this unjust conclusion to which he came concerning Harty, he turned impressively to her sister and said:

"I was very much struck with Mr. Devenish's appearance last night, Miss Carlisle; he has one of those refined, sensitive faces that speak of a very high organisation, and that unconsciously plead for gentle usage and tender consideration."

Mabel's eyes flashed gratefully, Mabel's soft, tender face softened and grew more tender still, in her perfect womanly appreciation of his sentiments. She was about to eagerly indorse his view of Mr. Devenish's case, when Harty interposed.

"You will be gratified to hear that Mr. Devenish gets all his face unconsciously pleads for, Mr. Ferrier." Then she felt sorry and ashamed of herself, and added, "For my mother and sister are very different to me; they're good and unselfish, and can bear to be put out of their way, and given a little trouble without thinking themselves ill-used and generally put upon."

Then while Jack Ferrier's opinion of her was veering round again to that point from which he had first started, while Harty, with her elbows on her knees, and her chin resting on her hands, and her eyes riveted on the sluggish stream, was looking like a little crumpled up figure of humble meditation, and saying, "Good gracious! what a mercy it is for men that more women are like mamma and Mab than like me," they saw Claude Powers coming down a meadow path that led from the Court to the town close on the opposite bank of the river.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXIII. FOOTSTEPS IN THE SNOW.

I WAS leaving them.

"You're not going out again, surely, Duke," said my mother.

"I promised to meet Reube at the fold, the last thing at night. I'd almost forgotten it. He'll be waiting for me."

"I'd forgotten about Reuben, too," observed my uncle. "I've been in such a caddle down in the meadows about those oxen. One of them pretty nigh killed, I fear, Mildred; the finest Devon. Twenty pounds out of my pocket, and more. But there's no help for it, I suppose."

"Must he go, Hugh? Such a night as it is?"

But my uncle did not observe her appealing tone and looks.

"See if he wants any more straw, Duke. You'd better tell Truckle to take half a load down to-morrow morning in any case. Reube must have all he wants. Those poor sheep are well nigh perished with the cold. But tell him to be careful. I've no more straw than I know what to do with. And I don't want to be buying any with prices what they are."

"Must he go, Hugh?" my mother repeated.

"Well, I'd go myself; but I'm fairly tired out. It won't take him long, and it will cheer up Reube, perhaps, to see some one. There's no danger, Mildred. Still, if you're set upon his not going——"

My mother withdrew her opposition.

So I went out. It was part of my practical education as a farmer.

I found Reube without difficulty. He was just leaving the fold to go home for an

hour or two's rest. He seemed quite worn out with fatigue and anxiety. Yes, he wanted more and more straw. Things were "desperd bad." Still Reube thought we'd got through the worst of it, and that the cold was "giving" a bit. He'd made up the fold pretty comfortable; the sheep couldn't harm much for awhile; they were "howed for." And the wind had gone down. Well, he didn't mind if he did have just a toothful of brandy. How it warmed a man! Why, 'twould bring un back to life though a' were "stwon dead." Good night, Reube! Good night, Master Duke! And I was alone.

I determined to carry into execution a wild project I had conceived. I would go to Overbury Hall; visit once again the Dark Tower!

It was absolute folly, as I knew. I had but the vaguest end in view. I did not hope to see Rosetta. I scarcely even wished to see her. It seemed to me unpardonable presumption to think of such a thing. But to be near her—to see the roof that sheltered her; her home, as I must now consider it—I promised myself contentment if I could achieve so much, or so little.

Beyond this I had determined nothing. But I was restless, and troubled, and I felt that this wild journey through the snow to Overbury, that movement of any kind, was preferable to returning home and vainly seeking sleep. I knew that there was no repose for me that night.

I convinced myself that I must go, let the toil or even the danger—although that I derided—be what it might. The thing appeared to me absolutely imperative. How irrational and absurd all this was, I need not say.

The night would have been dark but for

the snow. The wide-spread field of white reflected and multiplied greatly all the light there was. I found the track without difficulty. I could even trace the wheel-ruts dug by the covered cart going and returning. All was very silent. The striking of the church clock had something unusually solemn about it, gaining volume in the prevailing stillness, and finding strange echoes over the down. The village lay before me, a dark cloud. Not a light burned in any of the cottage windows.

No sound save a startling crackle of the ice in the sheep-pond as I neared its edge, and crisp whisperings of the snow-drifts here and there, and the noise of my own steps as I crunched along.

I was now at the park palings; now groping my way through the dark tortuous avenue that led to the hall. It was a ghostly sort of mission I was bound on. Memories of my long-past juvenile journeys to the Dark Tower, and the fancies and trepidations thence ensuing, crowded upon me. What a child I was still! My heart beat strongly and rapidly. I was tempted to wish I had never set forth. Surely it had been better to have stayed at home! I went on, however; but abashed somewhat, and with declining courage.

I emerged from the dusky avenue, and, with a start I could not control, found myself close upon Overbury Hall.

Greatly to my amazement, I perceived that a light was burning in one of the rooms upon the ground floor. It was the room in which I had first seen the satyr.

Cautiously I advanced towards it, the snow muffling the sound of my footsteps, and, as I had done years before, I mounted to the window-sill, and peered in.

For some moments I could distinguish nothing, the panes were so coated with the mist of frozen breath and the steam of the warmth within. Then I made out that a fire was glowing in the grate, a lamp was alight on the table, and that two persons occupied the room—Lord Overbury and Rosetta! I could scarcely restrain a scream of surprise.

A sofa was drawn in front of the fire. Lord Overbury was reclining, asleep apparently, with a coloured silk handkerchief half covering his face. Rosetta occupied a low stool close by; her head, leaning back, rested upon his shoulder. Her profuse hair hung down loosely, and one of his dark hands seemed entangled in its coils, as though he had been toying with her tresses when sleep had overtaken him.

Her eyes were open; she was contemplating the fire with a calm, contented expression. The burning coals awoke quivering reflections in her face, touched with radiance the jewels she wore, and rimmed with red light the folds of her light silken dress. She was perfectly happy, as I judged. It was a scene of domestic comfort; husband and wife! If there had been enmity between them, it was over now. Peace reigned again; they were thoroughly reconciled. Yet what a pair they were!

There was a look of home-comfort about the room, due perhaps to its small dimensions, and to its crimson fire, for it was still but scantily and shabbily furnished. Decanters of wine stood upon the table, and I could even perceive his lordship's large gold snuff-box resting within reach of his hand.

For some time I remained gazing at this strange picture, as though fascinated by it. Yet it distressed and pained me acutely. An unreasonable anger and jealousy possessed me. That Rosetta could be no more to me—was lost to me for ever—I could, as I thought, endure without repining. But that she should thus, after all she had said, accept her fate—almost, as it seemed, proud of it, rejoicing in it—this was hard to bear. For how could I pity her now? My love I had been content to yield, since there was no help for it, to lock within my own heart, and subdue and stifle as best I could. For it was plain my love was a folly and a sin. But my right to pity—I had clung to that—must I abandon that also?

Rosetta's head turned. Her eyes were moved from the fire to the window. But mechanically; for though she seemed to be now looking at me fixedly, I felt sure that she could not really see me. Suddenly she started, however, disengaged her husband's hand from her hair, gently, so as not to disturb his sleep, stood erect, and moved towards the window. She had seen me!

I stepped down hurriedly from the window, noiselessly retraced my steps, and hid myself in the dark shadows of the avenue. I was ashamed of having come, of what I had seen. I wished to escape unrecognised. My heart seemed on fire. I wished never to see her, never to hear her speak again.

She opened the window slowly and gently, and looked out. "Duke, Duke!" she called, softly. Then she murmured, "How cold! What a night!" Again she cried, "Duke, Duke!"

Should I go to her? It was torture to turn a deaf ear to her voice. Yet I was in the mood to find a sort of pleasure in torture, self-inflicted. I held my peace, and remained motionless in the avenue.

"I'm sure I saw him," she continued, in a subdued, musing, musical tone. "I could not have been dreaming. Duke! my Duke! Yes, and there are footsteps in the snow!"

She left the window and then promptly returned to it, holding the lamp high above her head. How beautiful she was! So I thought, even in my bitter vexation and anguish, Hero must have looked when awaiting Leander, and raising a beacon flame to light him on his way to her across the Hellespont. But I answered not.

She called to me again; then I heard from within his lordship's voice, loud, angry, swearing at the cold and the draught. She closed the window abruptly, and all was still. I turned homeward.

There was a mist over the down, floating in white wreaths. The air was damp. Reube had been weather-wise. The cold had given; a thaw had come. The snow was melting; and with it my love.

It still lived, but it was grievously hurt. In part I had crushed it by my own efforts; in part it had been stricken by another, and by circumstances. How long could it survive? It had yet vitality enough to perplex and wound me sorely.

I passed rapidly by the village. I was soon on the open down. Then I suddenly discovered that, absorbed by my bitter reflections, I had wandered from the track. I was plunging through untrodden snow. All was white mist before me. I could define no objects far or near that might be to me as landmarks. If I could but see a hayrick or a dungheap, I should be probably able to tell to what part of the down I had wandered.

I thought of Kem's story told me over the fire but a few hours back, though it seemed months since. "Lost in the snow. Buried in a deep drift—within sight of home!" Yet I assured myself that I ran no greater peril than that of being a wanderer on the bleak down until morning broke. I was satisfied I had not deviated very far from the track. If the mist would but lift a little! A stumble; then a sudden plunge. I was up to my waist in snow; only to extricate myself with great difficulty.

I had been walking some time, as I knew by hearing the church clock strike again. It was behind me; it afforded me no further

clue to my whereabouts. I should be near home now as a mere question of time, and the ground I had travelled over. I was terribly fatigued. I felt that I must in any case keep moving on, wakeful and watchful. But it was trying work.

There were dark objects before me, and I could hear a murmuring, rustling, gently swaying sound. I was among trees! The boughs were dropping snow upon me. A moment to reflect. Yes, I was in Orme's Plantation; there were no other firs near. I stood where I had seen Rosetta in the afternoon. Here I clasped her fainting in my arms. Here she had fallen in the snow. How much had happened since! I must find the track even though I went on my knees and groped for it with my hands.

"Thank God!"

It was found at length, and slowly and laboriously I followed it, very careful not to quit it again, and presently I stood looking down upon the hollow in which was reared the farm-house. The mist was now less dense than upon the higher land—had floated over it apparently. There was a light burning dimly in the kitchen window. Steadily I made my way towards it.

The door was on the latch. It was often left so all the night through. We had no fear of intruders or marauders; and robberies were events almost unheard of in our district. I entered. The fire was still alight, though sinking fast into dull, red ashes. I threw myself upon the hearth. I was thoroughly exhausted.

"Duke!" cried a voice.

Was I dreaming? Was Rosetta's cry from the window of the Dark Tower still sounding in my ears?

"Duke!"

CHAPTER XXIV. CHANGE.

My mother stood in the doorway.

"Duke! my boy! Thank Heaven you're safe home again! I could not sleep for thinking of you. But how late you are! You are not ill? You're sure?"

"No, only very tired mother," I answered, faintly. "I missed the track, somehow, and had trouble to find it again."

"You went beyond the fold?" She came to me at the fireside.

"Yes, beyond the fold, some distance," I said with hesitation.

"My boy, how cold your hands are, and how you tremble."

I could see that her dark eyes were bent

upon me, and that there was an expression of anxious inquiry upon her face. Yet she forbore to question me further. At a word from her I should, I think, have told her all: my love and my folly, and my bitter mortification. Perhaps she already divined all this; or, suspecting it, shrank from having her fears confirmed by direct confession of mine. It was enough for her at that time to know that I was worn out with fatigue, and suffering cruelly.

She was very gentle with me, as though constraining herself to be calm that in such wise her presence might impart to me some feeling of repose; that I might be soothed, as it were, by contact with her tranquillity. She sat down beside me in front of the fading fire; her arms were about my neck; she smoothed away my dry crumpled hair, and tenderly pressed her cool palms upon my burning forehead. She chafed my chilled hands in hers; my head rested upon her shoulder, and she gently swayed to and fro, rocking me to rest as years before she had lulled me to sleep, a tiny child upon her bosom. To her I was a child still. I was little more to myself. I was so helpless, weak, wretched.

It was upon her kindly arm I leant as I tottered up-stairs to my room; my limbs yielding under me, my strength gone, my heart terribly oppressed. Still she had not questioned me. Rosetta's name had not again been mentioned between us. At the sound of it I knew I should have broken down completely. The mere thought of her brought tears to my eyes, in my state of exhaustion and miserable despondency. Did my mother note all this? She affected to know nothing of it.

With all my weariness I slept but ill, disturbed by fearful dreams. I was haunted by visions of grievous calamity, and death in frozen regions. All I had read in times past of forlorn adventurers upon arctic voyages, came back to me, assuming vivid form and substance, and blending curiously with the occurrences of the last few hours. I could see ships wrecked upon icebergs, and groups of gaunt famished men preying upon each other in their desperate need, perishing of cold and hunger, dropping dead one by one so rapidly that I could never correctly reckon the number of the living. There were wretched tents and hovels, constructed out of the fragments of dismantled ships, and throngs of muffled Esquimaux, and sledges with jingling bells, and packs of starved wolf-like dogs that glared wickedly upon me

with their flaming eyes, as they licked their rapacious jaws. Yet the scene was somehow strangely like our down between the farm-house and Overbury Hall! And I could plainly see Rosetta wearing my mother's scarlet cloak, a brilliant speck of colour in all that waste of universal white, waving her shapely arms despairingly, beckoning, crying to me for help, as she stood upon a block of floating ice, borne far from me upon a rapidly flowing stream of sea in the direction of some hideous beast of prey, crouching upon a ragged promontory of rock, and prepared to spring upon her when she had been carried sufficiently near. And this creature was Lord Overbury! He was miles away, yet through the bleak transparent air I could plainly discern his satyr face, and the satyr form that now he wore. There was savage glee in his eyes, and his yellow teeth were bared with a grin of triumph. She cried to me, but I was powerless to assist her, for I was tossing in a deep snow-drift, sinking deeper and deeper as I struggled to extricate myself, the cold striking to my very bones, deadening every limb. I could not save her; I was myself perishing. The snow was rising above my head, was suffocating me. I could but cry to her in a choked, agonised voice, "Rosetta! Rosetta!"

And then I was awake. It was broad daylight. The gleams of a wintry sun were feebly filtering through the steam-clouded panes, and painting pale yellow patches upon the walls of my room. And there was the dripping sound of the snow melting from the eaves and the window-sill. The thaw had really come.

My mother stood by my bedside.

I sought to rise, but my strength had gone; my limbs were stiff and swollen. I had been seized with rheumatic fever. It was thought advisable to send over to Steepleborough for Doctor Turton. I had no power, even if I had inclination—and I had not—to oppose this step being taken. The doctor was in attendance upon me forthwith.

Then followed many weary weeks of close confinement, of shattered health, of acute suffering. But my physical infirmity had this good effect; it hindered my mind from morbid dwelling upon its troubles. I was powerless to think or to remember. My weakness drove me to apathy. All seemed vague and dreamlike about me. I relinquished of necessity effort of every kind. I was content to lie torpid, mindless, half dead. I was at times delirious, I

learnt afterwards, but I remained throughout unconscious, or nearly so, of mental anguish.

Doctor Turton was a frequent visitor, and did not spare his skill or painstaking. At all hands, indeed, I was the subject of most tender solicitude. My mother's devotion to me knew no bounds.

The fiercer pains of my malady abated, I entered upon a state of languid and indolent convalescence, slowly, very slowly gaining strength and moving towards health. A certain listlessness and inactivity both of mind and body clung to me some time after the doctor had ceased to attend me, except intermittently, when chance brought him in the neighbourhood of the farm-house. I was myself conscious that I had undergone a change; that I had lost energy and fervour; that I no longer viewed the world about me as formerly I did. Yet I was far from satisfied that this alteration was in truth amendment.

At an early stage of my recovery, I had questioned Kem as to her news of the great house. Were Lord and Lady Overbury still there? No; they had departed long since, immediately after the breaking up of the frost; they had gone none knew whither, and had never since returned. There was no talk of their return. I asked no further questions on this head. I sought, indeed, out of weariness as much as indifference, to put the past away far from me, as something done with so far as I was concerned—an account closed for ever in the ledger of my life.

It was genial weather now; the trees richly decked with blossoms; the soft air scented with the sweet breath of spring flowers, and melodious with the chorusing of birds; the fields bright green with the young corn; the lush meadows alive with frolicking lambs. The farm was thriving; its future seemed full of hope and promise; my uncle was thoroughly content; Reube, laborious as ever, was not dissatisfied; his flock could compare favourably with the flocks of neighbouring farms. His pains and trials had not been unavailing; his lambs were perhaps more "farrard" than could have been expected.

Harmony prevailed, yet in my heart were discordant notes. I seemed for the time to have lost all power of sympathy. I was not self-engrossed, however. I was indifferent to my own fate as to that of others. I was careless what might happen; my life had lost object and hope. In the affairs of the farm I no longer affected to concern

myself. I was excused from active exertion on the score of my infirm health. I took advantage of this pretext for inertness, long after it had ceased to have warrant in fact.

"The young squire goes lopping about with a's hand in's pockets," I overheard Reube say on one occasion; "there, I can't bide for to zee un. Why don't a' take to pitching hurdles or zummat. 'Twould do he all the good in the world. 'Taint no manner of use doing nothing but stare about un, gaping at sheep and never axing a question as to how's um getting on. But 'tis no business of mine I suppose."

I wrote no more verses; such small poetic faculty as I had ever possessed seemed to have departed. Some few random studies in my sketch-book, feeble and incomplete enough, were the only efforts that varied the monotony of my months of convalescent lethargy.

I became conscious that I was the subject of frequent consideration to my mother and my uncle. Although they did not question me I felt that they observed me narrowly. Often I found my sudden entrance disturbed their conversation. They ceased abruptly, and pretended to occupy themselves with indifferent matters. I knew that I had been the subject of their speech. I judged also that they differed in opinion concerning me.

I discovered, moreover, that counsel had been sought of Doctor Turton, and that he had, after much hesitation, recommended "change." It was as a new, almost an empirical medicine in our part of the country. The prescription was viewed with much misgiving, it was so entirely out of the ordinary course. As a rule, our practitioner plied his invalids with physic until they recovered or expired. For change of air or of scene, such a remedy seemed vain and extravagant. What air could be more satisfactory, people asked, than the air that blew so freshly over our plain? Who could desire change of scene that had our panorama of open country stretched out expansively before him? The doctor diffidently expressed an opinion that, for certain constitutions, reduced by illness to a delicate condition, the air of our downs might possibly, for awhile, be found too bleak. Change of scene, he admitted, stood in his mind, in relation to the present case, as representing increase and variety of mental occupation, which, he said, would possibly be more advantageously secured at a distance from the home of the patient. In short, he held, though he did not openly

avow as much, that there were times when it was as expedient to slacken leading strings as to unwrap bandages, in order that greater liberty of action might be secured, and nature permitted a chance of remedying herself.

My uncle found an opportunity of private converse with me. He spoke with some embarrassment and hesitation. He was generally ill at ease, indeed, upon such occasions, for words did not come very readily to him. His manner was not unkind, yet it conveyed a sense of disappointment.

"You're weary of the farm, Duke," he said, "and you don't take to farming. That's pretty plain, anyways. I don't blame you for it, my lad. I'd have had it otherwise if I could; but I can't, it seems. There's no help for these things. I'm fond of the farm myself. I've grown to it, and it's grown to me, till somehow it seems to be part of my life, and that I couldn't get on without it—nor it without me. That's but fancy, perhaps; for I must go some day, when God pleases, and the land will be left to be tilled by another, and to thrive fairly in his hands, likely enough. I'd thought it might some day come to you to do this, Duke, rather than a stranger. The land's been held by the Ormes, father and son, for many a long year now. I've lived single, as you know; wife and children have been for others but not for me. You've been to me as a son always, Duke; that's how I've thought of you, though perhaps I've never said as much before, for it's not my way to talk of what's in my heart. I never could give tongue to my thoughts, somehow, without seeming to spoil them, and feeling shame at doing them injustice. But, as I said, you don't take to the farm, so all that's over now."

I murmured that I was sorry; but I could not question that he had truly stated the case. He nodded his head. He was not looking at me as he spoke; we were leaning over the farm-yard gate, and he was raking the straw with his walking-stick, hardly conscious, I think, of what he did. His voice had been somewhat tremulous; and he was plainly discomposed, perhaps by the unwonted task of speaking so continuously.

"Still, you know, Duke," he continued, "it does not do to be idle. We're in the world to work, or to be of some use to those about us, I suppose. It's time you were doing something towards earning your own living; if not on the Down Farm, why, then, somewhere else. Heaven

knows I don't wish you to leave us, still less does your mother, poor soul. It will try her hard to part with you, I need not say. But she feels as I do about this thing. She didn't at first, perhaps; 'twas hardly to be expected of her; but she does now. She was never one to spare herself, or to think of herself when there was right to be done or the good of others to be cared for. She'd have said all this to you herself, and she'd have said it far better than I can say it, but her heart was very full, and I'm glad to spare her what trouble I can. She's had her full share of troubles already. Poor Mildred! So we've been thinking, Duke—I'm making but a bungling story of it, but this is what it comes to—that you'd better quit home for a while, and look about you a bit, and see to winning your own bread by your own labour, in a way that may seem pleasanter to you than staying here idle and weary and moping about the farm. I'm not fault finding, Duke. But I can't but see that things are as I've said. Your home isn't to you now what it was once. Leave it awhile, then; likely enough it will take its old shape once more again when you've left it behind you. It isn't really changed. And come back to it when you may, my boy, please God, you'll find it standing still, and your mother knitting or what not by the fireside—I'll not speak of myself—only too pleased and proud to welcome you back again, and make much of you, and love you still. She'll never cease to do that, I think, and I wouldn't have her cease, let you go where you may or do what you will."

He paused for a moment. There was a tear trickling down his weather-beaten cheek. But he took no heed of it.

"I'd almost forgotten what more I had to say," he went on, presently. "But we've seen that you're given to books and learning. You've had advantages in that way such as I never had, or other folks hereabout, and it might be well you should turn them to account. So we thought of your going up to London."

My heart gave a great leap of surprise and joy as he said this, and I could not but echo his words, "To London!"

"Yes, it's a long way off, I know, and we had thought at first of Steepleborough, as being nearer. But old Mr. Pounceby isn't the man he was, people say; though I give him credit for getting those poachers convicted at last assizes; he managed that cleverly enough. Besides, his office is full. He couldn't take another clerk, it seems,

though we wanted him to, and he wanted to ever so. So I've been turning over in my mind about an old friend I had in London long years ago—James Monck his name is. He was reckoned a very clever lawyer then, and he's a younger man than myself. He was bidding fair to rise in his calling, and I don't doubt he's done so. Well, I wrote to him as to taking you as his apprentice, or what they call articulated clerk, and I've had an answer."

He took a letter from his pocket, and studied it through his double glasses.

"Lawyers are formal people, and this isn't his handwriting—some clerk's work, I suppose—but it's his signature, I'm pretty sure, though it's more shaky and straggling than he used to write. He was busy I dare say (London lawyers generally are), or he'd have written me a more friendly kind of letter. But that's of little moment. He's not forgotten me it seems. And he states here very precisely the terms upon which he would receive you into his office. They're heavy, and the charge for stamps, &c., seems high. But James Monck would only do what was fair and right, and I don't complain of his charges. I can afford to pay them, and more if need be. The question is, will this suit you, Duke? If I've done wrong I've done it for the best, with a hope of serving you, my boy. There's no need for hurry as to answering. Take time to think it over. You're fond of books. Well, here's a calling—a profession, as they say—which seems to me pretty nearly all books. You can't read too much or know too much for a lawyer. Can you give your mind to it, Duke? Can you be happy—for that's what we want you to be—happy as a lawyer? Will it suit you better than farming?"

My uncle quitted me; he declined to hear my answer then. But my mind was already decided. I would quit the farm, journey up to London, and become a lawyer. A new world was opening to me, a new life. I thrilled at the thought. My listlessness and languor fell from me; I was stirring and alert once more.

OLD COURT LIFE IN FRANCE.

No one who reads the history of France for some generations before the Great Revolution, can much wonder at that outbreak. The seigneurial laws were beyond measure oppressive and inhuman, and justice was a word that had neither power

slaves born into the world for the sole pleasure of their masters; there was no protecting law, no human consideration of any kind for them; and the *raison d'être* of the toiling millions was held to be that of feeding the extravagant luxury of the idle hundreds.

A seigneur of the old French school was omnipotent on his estates, and had the power of life and death over his serfs. The infamous laws which gave over the people body and soul to their masters, and which make one blush for one's kind, were not taken off the statute-book until the revolution. One of these laws was, that a lord might order a serf to be ripped open, so that he might warm his cold feet in his body. It is almost incredible; but it is true all the same. And it is of no good to say that this was a law never acted on. The fact that it existed at all proves its possibility, however rare its practice. Other rights, too, were hereditary with the lands and title of a seigneur of old times to which we cannot do more than allude. One very common form of luxurious oppression was connected with the bull-frogs of the ponds. These frogs do certainly make an unearthly noise through the night; and when a seigneur honoured his estate by visiting it his peasants had to whip the ponds all night, so that the croaking of the frogs might not disturb the rest of my lord marquis, fatigued with his revels and excited with high play. There was no thought for the poor serf who had to toil all day and watch all night. My lord must sleep let who would wake; and the frogs must be kept in the good manners of silence at any cost of plebeian humanity. In a word the whole system of seigneurial domination was one of the vilest and most oppressive that the world has ever seen; and the people lived in a slavish debasement that took all the manhood out of them if they submitted, or maddened them to fiendish frenzy if they rebelled. At last the nation arose in its might, and revenged itself on priests, lords, and sovereigns, with the fierce retaliation of the guillotine.

And with this hideous state of things, inhuman and barbarous, existed a cynical confession of immorality wherein was no rule but the one of personal pleasure, no law but the law of kingly liking. Mrs. Elliot's book, *Old Court Life in France*, is really a history of the royal favourites of both sexes who swayed the destinies of the foremost nation in Europe, and sat as uncrowned monarchs by the side of the sovereign from the time of Francis the First to that of Louis the Fourteenth. In

this book we see the reason of that tremendous political cataclysm which shook society to its centre, and the last throbs of which have not yet subsided. And if we have not studied this page of history before, we can understand better after reading Mrs. Elliot's book how the revolution came about, and how it was more the Nemesis than the Typhon of society, the avenger rather than the oppressor.

The sixteenth century was one of those stirring epochs which seem to form and vitalise the future generations for all time. Art and literature, speculation and science were in full activity, and even war itself had its favourable side. "At this period three highly educated and unscrupulous young men divide the power of Europe," says Mrs. Elliot. "They are Henry the Eighth of England, Charles the Fifth of Austria, and Francis the First of France. Each is magnificent in taste, each is desirous of power and conquest. Each acts as a spur to the others both in peace and in war. They introduce the cultivated tastes, the refined habits, the freedom of thought of modern life, and from the period in which they flourished modern history dates. Of these three monarchs Francis is the boldest, cleverest, and most profligate. The elegance, refinement, and luxury of his court are unrivalled; and this luxury strikes the senses from its contrast with the frugal habits of the ascetic Louis the Eleventh and the homely Louis the Twelfth." Francis was an art lover as well as a warrior, a politician, and a notorious squire of dames. He introduced the Renaissance, brought Cellini, Primaticcio, and Leonardo da Vinci from Italy, "and never wearied of their company," establishing this last at the Château de Clos, near his own castle of Amboise, where the aged painter is said to have died in the arms of his royal patron; and he built beautiful palaces, quaint and rich, where his predecessors had erected grim and frowning fortresses. The most famous of these structures is Chambord, "created like a fairy palace amid the flat and dusty plains of Sologne"—Chambord, where the double staircase, representing a gigantic fleur de lys in stone, allows those who ascend to be invisible to those who descend, where doors are concealed in sliding panels behind the arras, where there are many double walls and secret stairs, much beauty and flowing ornamentation, but also grave cause for reflection, and a little inlet for understanding.

There was much in the life of Francis that necessitated secret stairs and sliding panels. If his own hands were not always clean, he had enemies whose sense of moral purity was no more advanced. Plots were met by counterplots, dissimulation by treachery, and oppression by treason, till the world was full of fear and suffering; and the only strain of softness running through the relations of society was love of that questionable kind known as royal favouritism. To be sure there was beauty of appearance as well as cultivation of the intellect; but with learning, poetry, wit, and intellect came luxury and boundless extravagance. "Brantôme speaks as with bated breath of the royal expenditure. These are the days of broad sombrero hats fringed with gold and looped up with priceless jewels and feathers; of embroidered cloaks in costly stuffs—heavy with gold or silver embroidery—hung over the shoulder; of slashed hose and richly-chased rapiers; of garments of cloth of gold, embroidered with armorial bearings in jewels; of satin justaucorps covered with rivières of diamonds, emeralds, and oriental pearls; of torsades and collars wherein gold is but the foil to priceless gems. The ladies wear Eastern silks and golden tissues, with trimming of rare furs; wide sleeves and Spanish fardingales, sparkling coifs and jewelled nets, with glittering veils. They ride in ponderous coaches covered with carving and gilding, or on horses whose pedigrees are as undoubted as their own, covered with velvet housings and silken nets woven with jewels, their manes plaited with gold and precious stones. But these illustrious ladies consider gloves a royal luxury, and are weak in respect of stockings. Foremost in every gorgeous mode is Francis. He wears rich Genoa velvets, and affects bright colours—rose and sky-blue. A Spanish hat is on his head, turned up with a white plume, fastened to an aigrette of rubies, with a golden salamander as his device, signifying 'I am nourished and I die in fire.'

In those days a man's enemies were emphatically those of his own household; and the life of Francis the First of France was no exception to the rule. There was that bold and handsome Charles de Montpensier, Duc de Bourbon and Constable of France, who first troubled his luxurious repose. Bourbon stood too high to be well liked by the sovereign. Besides, there had been a boyish difficulty between the

two over a game at maille not many years ago—for the king's age is only twenty, Bourbon's twenty-six—at Mrs. Elliot's opening scene. And the difficulty had rankled; the king having challenged Bourbon, but not having fought him, which this last resented as an affront to his honour. Greater troubles, however, than not getting "pinked" by the royal rapier, awaited the handsome young constable; for he and the king's sister, Marguerite d'Alençon, were in love with each other—though she was another man's wife; and Louise de Savoie, the king's mother, was in love with him. Louise had certain claims on the inheritance of the constable's late wife, Suzanne; and these claims she offered to consolidate by marrying Bourbon—just fourteen years her junior. He refused; and made her his enemy for life. At last the court intrigues and state plots growing up everywhere, like mushrooms in a night, culminated in his open rebellion and the transfer of his sword and service to the enemy of France and Francis, Charles the Fifth of Spain. Many of the first nobles of the time followed the constable; among them the Comte de Saint-Vallier—for whose life his daughter, the beautiful Diane de Brézé, better known as Diane de Poitiers, wife of the Grand Seneschal of Normandy, besought the king on her knees. Her beauty gained what justice and mercy alike would have denied; and she bought the grace she sought—at the price of which all history is cognisant.

Then came the war between Francis and Charles the Fifth, with our cousin Bourbon fighting under the banner of Spain; the battle of Pavia, and the famous letter of Francis to his mother, "Tout est perdu fors l'honneur;" his imprisonment and illness in the Alcazar at Madrid; the arrival of his sister Marguerite, his true friend, and her entreaties to him to save his life and gain his liberty by assenting to the terms proposed by Charles: namely, the cession of Burgundy, the renunciation of all interest in Flanders and the Milanese, the payment of a ransom that would beggar the country, his marriage with Elinor, Queen Dowager of Portugal, the sister of Charles, and the delivering up of his sons, the two young princes, the Dauphin and the Duc d'Orleans, as hostages till these conditions were fulfilled. To all of which Francis swore assent—for the time: and perjured himself.

After this we have the return visit of

Charles to Francis, and the well-known anecdote of Triboulet, the court fool. The debate between Francis and the Duchesse d'Etampes, the reigning favourite, which Mrs. Elliot has imagined, is on the subject of how Charles is to be received. Francis says that he will go to meet him at Tourraine, then attend him at Loches and Amboise. The duchess advocates treachery and the oubliettes. The king holds fast by the honour of hospitality and persuasion, not force, in the matter of that treaty of Madrid. Triboulet, who has been shaking the silver bells on his parti-coloured dress with suppressed laughter, pulls out some ivory tablets to add something to a list he keeps of those whom he considers greater fools than himself. He calls it his "journal." The king looks on the tablets and sees the name of Charles the Fifth.

"Ha! ha! by the mass! how long has my brother of Spain figured there?" asks he.

"The day, sire, I heard he had put his foot on the French frontier."

"What will you do when I let him depart freely?"

"I shall," said Triboulet, "rub out his name and put yours in its place, sire."

The visit however went off, as we know, with no greater calamity than a little love-making between the favourite and the guest; part of the process of which was the presentation of a ring by Charles to the duchesse when she held the golden basin for him wherein to wash his hands, with the subsequent popular belief of her having betrayed Francis. It was the way these favourites had. Bought by the greed of gain, the love of pleasure, or the lust for power, they were ready to sell to a higher bidder the so-called love and service they had already bartered; and when Francis wrote with his diamond ring on the window of his closet at Chambord,

Souvent femme varie
Bien fol qui s'y fie;

he had had reason enough in his own life to know how true his first line was, and how oft repeated his second.

Henry the Second, the son of Francis, husband of Catherine de Medici and father of Francis the Second, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, likewise the open and confessed lover of his father's discarded favourite, Diane de Poitiers, a woman of thirty-five when he was a mere lad and his bride only fifteen, did not enjoy his kingship very long. Eight-and-

twenty when he began his reign, he finished it A.D. 1559, when forty years of age, and after only twelve years' rule. Who does not know the manner of his death, how, on that bright summer's day—when Elizabeth his daughter, and Marguerite his sister, were married, the one to Philip the Second of Spain, the morose husband of our own Mary Tudor, the other to the Duc de Savoie—after having successfully mastered his opponents in the jousts, Henry met the Scotchman Montgomery, who, by some mismanagement, did not succeed in giving him the best of the shock, as was the rule, but shook his feet out of the stirrups. The king in his golden armour, his sword-handle and dagger set with jewels, and wearing the colours of Diane de Poitiers—white and black—insisted on a second tilt. They met. Montgomery held his lance straight and firm. It broke the king's vizor and a splinter entered his eye; and after lingering a few days in agony he died. But even before he drew his last breath, Catherine sent an order to her hated rival to quit the Louvre on the instant, to deliver up the crown jewels, and to make over the possession of the château of Chenonceau, in Lorraine, to herself.

"Chenonceau was Catherine's 'Naboth's vineyard,'" says Mrs. Elliot. "From a girl, when she had often visited it in company with her father-in-law Francis, she had longed to possess this lovely woodland palace beside the clear waters of the river Cher. To her inexpressible disgust, her husband, when he became king, presented it to the 'old hag,' Diane, Duchesse de Valentinois." Diane, sitting lonely at the Louvre, turned upon the messenger, asking: "Is the king then dead?" Hearing that he was not, she sent a defying message to the queen; but the curtain drops on her in a few hours after; and Diane de Poitiers, Duchesse de Valentinois, passes away into an obscurity from which it would have been better for both France and humanity had she never emerged.

Catherine de Medici, as queen-regent, had her hands full. Grant any amount of fringe, pare off all possible margin of exaggeration, and still enough remains behind to stamp her one of the most cruel and the most astute, one of the vilest and the cleverest women of her own or any generation. Among the crimes of which she is accused, yet of which the verdict is not proven, stands that of poisoning Jeanne, Queen of Navarre, mother of Henri the Fourth, by a pair of gloves; also that of

poisoning her brother-in-law, the Dauphin, in a cup of water, by which Henry the Second and herself came to the throne. She planned and executed the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; and she systematically degraded the virtue of women and the honour of men, that she might make her account out of their passions and weaknesses. "My maids of honour are my best allies," she said significantly, speaking to the Duc de Guise.

"She imported ready-witted Italians, actors, and singers," says Mrs. Elliot, "who played at a theatre within the Hôtel Bourbon, at Paris; saltimbanques and rope dancers, who paraded the streets; astrologers, like Ruggiero; jewellers, like Zametti; and bankers, like Gondi. These men were ready to sell themselves for any infamy; to call on the stars for confirmation of their prophecies; to benefit spendthrift princes with ample supply of ready cash; to insinuate themselves into the confidence of unwary nobles; or to serve their royal mistress as spies. A woman of such powerful mind, infinite resource, and unscrupulous will, overawed and oppressed her children. During the three successive reigns of her sons, Francis the Second, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, Catherine ruled with the iron hand of a mediæval despot. Yet her cruelty, perfidy, and statescraft, were worse than useless. She lived to see the chivalrous race of Valois degraded; her favourite child Anjou, Henry the Third, driven like a dog from Paris by Henry de Guise; and son after son go down childless to a dishonoured grave."

As for her daughter, la reine Margot, or Marguerite of Navarre, wife of Henry the Fourth and beloved of many more, Catherine never even pretended to love her. Such women as she seldom care for their daughters, and not often for their sons. So long as the gay life of this pleasure-loving woman only outraged morality, but left the queen-regent's ambitious schemes and state intrigues alone, she was content. It was only when la reine Margot's excesses became dangerously notorious that she remonstrated; but even then it was for the sake of expediency, not virtue; for the safety of the royal power, not for the worth of a royal example. This woman reigned, and this state of things continued, for twenty-nine years; and then the cruel queen died a fortnight after the foul murder of le Balafre—which murder alone, were anything else wanting, would have

heaped infamy for ever upon the reign of Henry the Third. Murder indeed was the order of the day all through these times; murder, whether by secret poisoning or by open butchery; and we cannot wonder if the terrible fate to which the queen and her sons had dedicated so many others fell at last on one of themselves. Henry the Third died by the hand of the assassin Jacques Clément, and Henry the Fourth—Henry of Navarre, once the Protestant leader, became now the Catholic king. But he at least was free from the stain of blood-guiltiness, and if his life was not too pure it was not cruel.

Not too pure, indeed! Good-natured and frank, his character had certain popular qualities which threw his vices into the shade. But he was vicious all the same; and the man who wished that every peasant in his dominions might have a fowl in his pot on Sunday was the man from whom every father of any degree would most carefully keep his daughter, every husband his wife. "Brave to a fault, he rode hither and thither like a knight-errant, regardless of his personal safety, accompanied only by a few attendants. Although a warrior and a statesman, Henry was a true child of the mountains. Born under the shade of the Pyrenees, he would as soon encamp under a hedge as lie on a bed of down; would rather eat dried ham spiced with garlic than dine sumptuously at Jarnet's Palace, at the Marais, or at 'Le Petit More,' the polite *traiteur* of that day; would quaff the *petit cru* of his native grape with more relish than the costliest wines from the vineyards of Champagne or Bordeaux. Henry was not born on the banks of the Garonne, but a more thorough Gascon never lived; his hand upon his sword, his foot in the stirrup, his gun slung across his shoulder, the first in assault, the last in retreat, ready to slay the wild boar of his native forests, or, lute in hand, to twang a roundelay in honour of the first *Dulcinea* he encountered. Boastful, fearless, capricious, his versatility of accomplishments suited the changing aspects of the times. He was plain of speech, rough in manner, with a quaint jest alike for friend or foe; irregular in his habits, eating at no stated times, but when hungry voraciously devouring everything that pleased him, especially fruit and oysters; negligent, not to say dirty, in his person, and smelling strong of garlic. A man who called a spade a spade, swore like a trooper, and hated the parade of courts; was con-

stant in friendship, fickle in love, promised anything freely, especially marriage, to any beauty who caught his eye; a boon companion among men, a libertine with women, a story-teller, quaint in his careless epicureanism, and so profound a believer in 'the way of fate' that, reckless of the morrow, he extracted all things from the passing hour." If such a man was one of the better sort, what could the worst have been!

Pass on to the minority of Louis the Thirteenth when Marie de Medici was regent, and Richelieu her minister; to his majority when Anne of Austria was his wife, and the whole court was torn between the factions of the two rival ladies, with Mademoiselle de Hautefort as the king's *confidante*—in all honour—and the Duchesse de Chevreuse as the queen's. Richelieu however kept the helm of the state vessel straight enough for his own policy. He was the government; "I and the king;" and "after me the deluge." After him indeed the deluge, so far as poor, weak, timorous Louis was concerned; for he survived his great minister only five months. Wearied of life, disgusted with power, he gave up the struggle; and on the 14th of May, 1643, laid down to die, when only forty-two years old, more because he would not than because he could not live.

France passed now under another regency. This time Anne of Austria was the nominal ruler, with Cardinal Mazarin as the guide and master, and, finally, secret husband of the weak and self-willed woman. Again, the old round of wrong goes on. Court intrigues and court immoralities fill up the time of all who live in that fatal atmosphere. Without, wars and rumours of wars; profligate expenditure and gripping poverty; the noble, a man of a higher human calibre apparently than the peasant, and holding himself superior to the Decalogue and all other laws, human and divine, when the whim took him; everywhere the privileged class outraging justice, defying God, oppressing man, with the lower orders writhing under their feet, too weak to resist, too broken to combine.

Then came the reign of the Grand Monarque, Louis the Fourteenth, one of the greatest historical humbugs of modern times. With him too the nation meant only the two classes of those who worked and those who enjoyed, with himself the *deus maximus* at the head of the *dii minores*. There was still no question of

mercy, justice, humanity, or morality. Taxes were laid on the people till the heaviest toil would scarcely give food for the toiler; men with names and purses bought justice openly on the bench; thousands of lives were sacrificed for the "glory" of this blatant posturing French Turveydrop; nowhere was reverence paid to any of the first principles of right, of freedom, of Christian living; everywhere only vice and oppression, only bloodshed and starvation. Louis the Fourteenth might have been the Grand Monarque in his own way; but it was a way which led to la Carmagnole, and the tumbrils laden with the innocent condemned.

To build Versailles and nearly ruin the already impoverished country for the cost; to go to war with Flanders, with Holland, with Spain, and come off victorious and renowned; to concentrate all his faculties on questions of precedence, on the mode of being "incensed" at church, when they were not employed in making love to women who were not his wives; to be a martinet in the question of wigs, and an autocrat to the court tailor; to prove his love for God by his hatred to men of another faith than his own; to take up arms again against Holland, and this time to fail; to take up the cause of Prince Charles, and again to fail; to die as he had lived, a hypocrite and a libertine—this was the life of Louis the Fourteenth—the grandfather of one of the most infamous of all the list, Louis the Fifteenth, the lover of De Pompadour, Du Barry, and many others less notorious if no less guilty.

What marvel then that the revolution came? Louis the Sixteenth was moral truly, but wooden-headed and dull; Marie Antoinette was brilliant, brave, and fascinating, but not to be trusted, and more lovely than beloved. Had they been the first of their bad line they would not have fallen as they did. But they came as the culmination of generations of misrule, of centuries of crime; and they suffered for their fathers according to the text. The time for retaliation had come; and the revenge that was taken was equal to the wrongs that had been wrought. We should never forget this when we speak of the French revolution of '89. Whatever the crimes that defaced that struggle, they had been prepared for in the crimes of the past ages. Oppression had brutalised the people, and suffering had maddened them. It was an awful time; and no apologist can deny the terrible wickedness com-

mitted then; but neither can the most passionate condemner deny the infamy that went before—the cruelty, blood-guiltiness, and immorality of the old court life of France that paved the way for the Goddess of Reason, the September massacres, and the Reign of Terror.

THALATTA! THALATTA!

Brave North Sea, bright North Sea,
Send your freshness and strength to greet
We toilers beneath the inland heat.
The great trees droop with their weight of leaves,
The roses cluster on cottage eaves,
Jasmine, and myrtle, and mignonette,
And tall white lilies in order set,
Load the slow airs with their rich sweet scent.
And the lime, with its odorous branches bent,
O'er its busy court of murmurous bees,
Pervades with its perfume the July breeze;
We turn for succour and breath to thee,
To thy broad blue waters, oh, great North Sea.

Brave North Sea, bold North Sea,
He heard the call from the slumberous dales,
He heard the sigh from the fair hushed vales,
On the rocky coast, on the cliff-girt strand,
He flung his answer on dune and sand.
He tossed his crest, all glittering white,
In gay defiance to noon's keen light;
He dashed his breakers upon the shore,
He chanted in full resounding roar,
"Come to me, rest by me, plunge in my waves,
In the strong salt water that rains and saves,
'There is cooling and help in my arms and me,"
Sang the Isles' bright girdle, the frank North Sea.

Ah, glorious sea, ah, grand North Sea,
Well may we gaze on thy sparkling breast,
Well may we hail thee as truest and best;
Best guardian for friend, best shield from foe,
Let the Island Empress her glory know.
Let the sufferer seek for healing there,
Let the mourner pause in the sobbing prayer,
And hear the solemn music sweep,
From the full-toned harp of the mighty deep,
Breathing, "Hush, hush, sad human heart;
From my ebbing and flowing learn duty's part;
Wait His leisure who guides my strength and me,"
Sings the beautiful ocean, the brave North Sea.

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS.

THE SIXTH DRAGOONS (INNISKILLINGS) AND THE
CARABINEERS (SIXTH DRAGOON GUARDS).

THAT most distinguished regiment, the Sixth Dragoons, was first enrolled in 1688, on the news of the landing of the Prince of Orange in Devonshire first reaching Ireland. The Protestant part of Ireland, deeply moved by the news of a Protestant succession, and the expulsion of their old enemy James, resolved to do their utmost to help forward the good cause, and, foremost of all, the city of Londonderry drew its sword.

This staunch city, which derived its name from the Londoners who had settled there in the reign of James the First, was prompt in action, nor was there much time to lose. Lord Mountjoy's regiment, which

had many Protestants in its ranks, was soon ordered to march to Dublin, and it was to be relieved by a newly-raised corps of the Earl of Antrim's, which was all Catholic. A Protestant town-guard was therefore enrolled, and on the appearance of the Earl of Antrim and his men the city gates were slammed in his face; two companies of Sir Thomas Newcomen's regiment were also refused admittance at Inniskilling, and a determined resistance was organised by David Cairne, Esquire, of Knockmany, and other brave Protestant gentlemen. These two towns at least were snatched out of the fire for William of Orange. Gustavus Hamilton, Esquire, was at once elected governor of Inniskilling, and colonel of the new-levied companies of horse and foot, and Thomas Lloyd made lieutenant-colonel, while Colonel Lundy took on himself the defence of Londonderry, fifty-five miles distant from its sturdy little ally.

It was full time the Protestant swords were ground sharp, for the day after the Prince of Orange was proclaimed King of England (March the 11th, 1689) King James landed at Kinsale with five thousand armed Frenchmen at his back. At the first flash of the Jacobite swords the scared country people came crowding into Inniskilling with their cows and horses. Crum Castle, with Bible and crown blazoned on its flag, soon after drove off James's troops, and a party of his dragoons were snapped up at Armagh. Some Protestant horse gallantly saved Monaghan Castle, and the Jacobite Irish were mown down at Ardtray Bridge.

On the other hand, the Protestants, too, had their cloudy days. Captain Hunter and his band were surprised and cut down near Comber, and a party of Inniskillings were destroyed on the banks of the Aughacane.

King James moved on Londonderry, and commenced a siege on which Macaulay has thrown so brilliant a light that it needs no mention here. The Inniskilling men were, in the mean while, untiring in their attacks on the enemy. They seemed to live on horseback, and were quick as swallows, and tormenting as gadflies. Colonel Lloyd made a dash into the enemy's quarters, and, burning the fortifications of Augher, swept back into Inniskilling a great haul of Jacobite cattle. He killed one hundred of King James's troopers at Belleek, taking thirty prisoners and two guns, threw a relief into Ballyshannon, took the castle of Ballynacarrey, in county Cavan, and carried

off from the Omagh pastures two hundred horses, with which he quickly mounted three more troops of Inniskillings.

Nor did the Inniskilling men, in the midst of their success, forget the half-starved Protestants of Londonderry. They advanced to their relief, but Sarsfield threatening Ballyshannon, and Sutherland Belturbet, they turned back, half reluctantly, to defend their own town, on which the enemy now seemed closing in with circles of steel and fire. Lloyd attacking Belturbet, the Jacobites fled, leaving a few dragoons stranded in the church. They however soon surrendered when the musket-barrels began to gather thick in the churchyard, and with them were taken eighty troop horses and seven hundred muskets, which helped the Inniskillings to raise some fresh companies of zealous Protestants.

Londonderry was not yet relieved when King James's generals made a determined effort to crush the Inniskillings, and three divisions were sent against them. The first division, under Sarsfield, Colonel Lloyd, by a forced march, surprised at night, putting numbers to the sword. The Duke of Berwick did better, for he destroyed two companies of Inniskilling Foot, but dared not venture to attack the town, and retired to Londonderry. Major-General Justin M'Carthy (Viscount Mountcashel) came forward next with more men than his predecessors. But the Inniskillings had the instinct of victory in them, and no superiority of numbers could alarm them now. They first routed his advanced guard, and slew two hundred men; the same day, at Newton Butler, boldly crossing a dangerous bog, they got at the main body of James's men, killed two thousand, drowned five hundred, and took five hundred prisoners, including Colonel Anthony Hamilton and the luckless Mountcashel himself. They also captured eight guns, an armful of standards, and the whole of the enemy's baggage.

It was on this occasion that Sir Albert Cunningham was allowed to embody six hundred of the unregimented Inniskilling men into a dragoon regiment of twelve troops, which now bears the title of the Sixth, or Inniskilling Regiment of Dragoons. The very day the great blow was struck at Newton Butler the Protestant vessels forced the boom at Londonderry, and James's dispirited generals raised the siege (July the 31st, 1689), which had continued one hundred and five days.

The month after, Marshal Schomberg arrived, with ten thousand men, to drive James out of Ireland, and began by besieging Carrickfergus. The brave Inniskilling Dragoons are thus described by Story, the historian of these wars, who states, "I went three miles beyond the camp, where I met the Inniskilling horse and dragoons, whom the duke had ordered to be an advance guard to his army. I wondered much to see their horses and equipage, hearing before what feats had been done by them. They were three regiments in all, and most of the troopers and dragoons had their waiting-men mounted upon garrons (small horses). Some of them had holsters, and others their pistols hung at their sword-belts."

Our regiment had hitherto been considered a useful but still irregular yeoman force, but in 1690, William the Third, grateful for its service, added it to the regular army. They soon after proved the justness of the distinction by helping to take Belturbet, and routing the Duke of Berwick's cavalry at Cavan, and in this Kaffir-like war they were congratulated on having scoured the country, and brought into Belturbet a thousand head of cattle. After helping to capture the castles of Killeshandra and Ballinacargy, they had their ample share in the great battle of the Boyne, and in that medley of English, Dutch, Brandenburgers, Danes, Swiss, and Frenchmen, they carved themselves out a red road to glory. Schomberg, with the centre and the right wing, had already plunged into the Boyne, when William, always heroic at great moments, drew his sword, and placing himself at the head of four troops of the Inniskillings, told them he had often heard of their bravery, and now he should see it. The four captains in vain begged the king, already wounded, not to cross the river within shot of the enemy, but he replied, "Yes, I will see you over." As he crossed a dragoon was shot dead, and a bullet struck one of the king's pistols. On the opposite bank the king pulled off the bandage from his wounded shoulder, and brandishing his sword, led the Inniskillings against a body of Jacobites three times as numerous as themselves. The enemy fled, but fresh forces drove back the Protestants. Again William charged and overthrew the enemy. The Duke of Berwick was struck down and nearly killed. The Inniskillings had scarcely time to reform, before they had to line the hedges to cover the retreat of

some of Ginkill's Dutch dragoons, and again, in a final and general charge, they routed the discomfited Irish.

The regiment it is believed lost about one hundred troopers in this battle, and they left forty-two men on the field of Aghrim, when the death of the French general, St. Ruth, as he came riding down Kilcommoden Hill, cast James's army into confusion. While blockading Sligo, a detachment of the Inniskillings were surprised by James's men, who killed about twenty of them, including Colonel Sir Albert Cunningham. As he stood among the prisoners an Irish sergeant came up, and said, "Albert is your name, and by a Halbert you shall die." And instantly slew him. This was in 1691, and the fall of Limerick in that year terminated the war.

In 1715, the Earl of Stair became colonel of the regiment, and the same year they fought against the Pretender's men at the doubtful battle of Sheriffmuir. They were at that period called the Black Dragoons, it is supposed from their being at the time mounted on black horses.

In 1742, George the Second (who had now numbered the regiment the Sixth) sent the Inniskillings to Flanders to the aid of Maria Theresa. At Dettingen they cut to pieces the flower of the French horse in repeated daring charges, and they gained especial glory by overthrowing the French cuirassiers, with the loss of only two men and eighteen horses. At Fontenoy they also fought gallantly to cover the retreat. At Roucoux, in 1746, they distinguished themselves against the infantry of Marshal Saxe, and at Val, in 1747, they tumbled over squadron after squadron of the French. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the regiment was reduced to two hundred and eighty-five, officers and men. In 1751, the uniform was scarlet, faced and lined with yellow; the waistcoat and breeches were yellow. The cocked hats were bound with silver lace. The boots of jacked leather reached to the knee. The cloaks were of scarlet cloth with yellow collar. The horse furniture was yellow, the castle of Inniskilling being embroidered at each corner. The light troop added to the regiment in 1756 were called Hussars, then a term little known to us.

At Minden, in 1759, the Inniskillings were led by Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Harvey, being brigaded with the Blues and First Dragoon Guards. They soon after the battle surprised Frischer's corps of two

thousand men near Wetter, and took four hundred prisoners, Colonel Harvey attacking Frischer's brother and slaying him with his broadsword. In 1760, the Sixth distinguished themselves again by routing the French cavalry, near Liebenau, and chasing them across the river Dymel. The Marquis of Granby especially praised their gallant behaviour on this occasion, and Prince Ferdinand declared they had performed "prodigies of valour." The same year they drove the French through the streets of Zierenberg with great loss. They did well at Campen, where they unsuccessfully tried to surprise the camp of the Marquis de Castries, and they drove back the French infantry at Kirch Denkern, where they forded the river Asse, but the thick woods and marshes of Westphalia prevented their free action; in 1762, they surprised the French camp at Groebenstein.

On the peace of Fontainebleau in 1763, the light troop was disbanded, and Colonel Harvey was succeeded by Major Robert Rickart Hepburn.

In 1793, on the war with revolutionary France, the regiment was augmented to nine troops, and sent to Ostend, to join the Duke of York just as he had taken Valenciennes, in French Flanders. They were then sent to cover the siege of Dunkirk, into which place the French were hurrying soldiers, in every coach and waggon they could obtain. These desperate men soon attacked the covering army, and the Inniskillings, dismounting, formed as infantry. Losing their way in the retreat near the village of Rexpolde, the regiment repulsed the red-caps, but lost their sick men, women, and baggage. The duke soon afterwards raised the siege. They defeated a sharp attack at Cateau in 1794, and were victorious against the republicans at Tournay, when thirty thousand French fought under Pichegru. They joined in the great charge with the Scots Greys and Bays, and lost only three men. In 1795, they crossed the Rhine on the ice, and suffered much in the winter retreat that followed the Duke of York's hopeless attempt to face an army of enthusiasts.

In 1797, General Johnston was succeeded in the colonelcy by the Earl of Pembroke, who commanded the regiment for the succeeding thirty years. In 1802, the regiment was reduced to five hundred and fifty-three men, and augmented again at the war with France in 1803. For the two next years the Inniskillings lay at Brighton ready to repel Napoleon's threatened in-

vasion, and during the Peninsular war they remained in Ireland fretting for battle. All that happened to them memorable was that they changed their cocked hats and feathers for brass helmets, and their high boots and breeches for cloth trousers and short boots. At last came the eagle flight of Napoleon from Elba to Paris, the trumpet blast of war sounded in the ears of our dragoons, and off they sailed, four hundred and fifty of them, under command of Colonel Joseph Muter, eager to cross swords with these French sabreurs they had heard so much of from our Peninsular men. The Sixth was brigaded with the Royal Dragoons and Scots Greys, under the command of Major-General Sir William Ponsonby, K.C.B., and the men were reviewed on May the 24th, 1815, by the Prince of Orange and the Earl of Uxbridge, and on the 29th inspected by the Duke and Blucher. They had been for six quiet weeks in Belgian cantonments when, on the morning of June the 16th, the bugle sounded the assembly, and they were soon mounted and on the road to Quatre Bras, where Ney had fallen on our outposts; and our brave Highlanders, shoulder to shoulder, were abiding the terrible onset. Marching by Enghien and Nivelles, the Sixth arrived at Quatre Bras before midnight, and bivouacked in a corn-field on the left of the Charleroi road. In the retreat to Waterloo the next day the Inniskilling Dragoons helped to cover the army.

On the morning of the great battle the Royals, Greys, and Inniskillings were formed on the left of the Brussels road, supporting Picton's Division which crowned the heights. After the failure of the ceaseless attacks on Hougoumont, and the repulse of the cuirassiers by our centre, twenty thousand French infantry rushed on the left, where the Inniskillings were formed. As the French bayonets glittered upon the crest, the Earl of Uxbridge ordered the three eager regiments to deploy and charge. Allowing our retiring infantry and guns to pass through their nine squadrons, the horsemen, with one resolute shout, bore down with increasing speed, and bore irresistible as the whirlwind, on the French columns. Our dragoons cut to pieces or forced back the heads of the columns, and sabred the French grenadiers as they fled or as they tried to rally. The Inniskillings in particular cut off and made prisoners a large body of French infantry. As usual with English cavalry, too impetuous and too little kept

in hand, they pierced to the rear of the enemy's position, and, going too far, were charged when in disorder, and much cut up by the French lancers. On Ponsonby's fall, Colonel Muter, of the Inniskillings, took command of the brigade, and Lieutenant-Colonel Fiennes Miller of the regiment. Miller had already had a horse shot under him, and had received several bayonet wounds. Later in the day (five p.m.) he was again wounded, and left the regiment under the command of Captain Madox. Half an hour later Colonel Muter was wounded, and the command of the brigade then devolved on Lieutenant-Colonel Clifton, of the Royal Dragoons. In the final charge the Sixth again distinguished itself. In this hard day's fighting the regiment lost a lieutenant and adjutant, two troop sergeant-majors, three sergeants, six corporals, one trumpeter, seventy-five privates, and one hundred and sixty-four horses, while more than one hundred men were wounded.

Colonel Muter and Lieutenant-Colonel Miller were both made Companions of the Bath, and Captain Madox became major.

In 1827, the Honourable Sir William Lumley, G.C.B., succeeded the Earl of Pembroke as colonel, and in 1840 was himself succeeded by Lieutenant-General Sir Joseph Stratton. Sir Joseph, dying the same year, was succeeded by Lieutenant-General Sir G. P. Adams, K.C.B. In 1842, the regiment furnished escort to the Queen on her visit to Edinburgh. This regiment's deeds of prowess in the Crimea we need not refer to, as we incorporated them lately in our article on the Scots Greys, and the charge of the Heavy Brigade. The first squadron of the Inniskillings, commanded by Captain Hunt, seem to have gone straight as a rifle bullet at the centre of the enemy.

The Sixth Regiment of Dragoon Guards (the Carabineers) were originally raised by Baron Lumley and other loyal gentlemen on the first outbreak of the Monmouth rebellion. In July, 1685, they were constituted into a regiment of cuirassiers, with Lord Lumley as colonel, and ranked as the Ninth Horse. Its colonel, having been in Charles the Second's reign master of the horse to Queen Catherine, it received the title of the Queen Dowager's Regiment. The men rode long-tailed horses, wore scarlet uniforms faced with sea-green (Catherine's favourite colour), wore back and breast pieces, and carried broadswords,

pistols, and carbines. The troopers had sea-green ribands in their broad-brimmed hats, and at the heads and tails of their horses, and their standard was also sea-green.

The Carabineers first blooded their swords in the battle of the Boyne, where, with green twigs in their hats, they followed Schomberg against the Irish Jacobites; and it was woe to the James's man, with the strip of white paper in his helmet, who came before their fell swords. At the siege of Limerick (1690), later in this ruthless war, an advanced picket of the regiment, under Major Wood, cut its way through crowds of the enemy, and, finally, aided by some Dutch and Danish horse, slew two hundred of the enemy under the very cannon of the town.

Against the Rapparees, those savage freebooters who adhered to the cause of James, the Carabineers were relentless, perpetually surprising and cutting them down, and recovering the cattle they had stolen. On one occasion, Major Wood with thirty-four troopers, and one hundred and ten fusiliers, overthrew eight hundred of the rebels, killing one hundred, and taking about one hundred prisoners, and all this victory with the loss of only one poor corporal, and three men wounded. At the siege of Aghrim, two abreast, they forced a difficult pass (their apparently certain destruction being lamented even by the enemy), and charging along the edge of a bog, bore down all before them. They lost seven men and five horses in this fight, and Major Wood and fourteen troopers were wounded. The next day they took the castle of Banagher, and to "bang Banagher" is, as our Irish readers well know, the climax of everything. By these acts of valour, and such as these, the regiment won from King William the title of "The King's Carabineers," a title suggested by Louis the Fourteenth's name for his select regiments of horse.

In 1692, the regiment, jealous of the Dutch troops, and the favour shown them, mutinied at Charing Cross, and refused to embark for the war in Flanders till their arrears were paid. Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, however, soon awoke their patriotism, and persuaded them to sail. They fought well at Neerlanden, covered the retreat by the bridge of Neer-Hespen, and three times broke the ranks of the French cavalry.

In 1704, the Carabineers joined Marlborough's army, and were highly useful

at Schellenberg in driving the retreating French into the Danube. At Blenheim, "that famous victory," the Carabineers formed one squadron of the advanced guard, when the three squadrons were attacked by five French. Colonel Palmer, of the Carabineers, scattered the enemy, and killed twenty of them, which so vexed Marshal Tallard, that it is said he gave all his after orders in hurry and confusion. The Carabineers next broke up the French musketeers, and helped in the final charge. The regiment lost many officers in this battle. In 1705, when piercing the French lines, the Carabineers rode down the Spanish and Bavarian horse-guards; but at Ramilies they gathered their fullest harvest of laurels. Seven hundred of our horse were led against one thousand Bavarians and Spanish cavalry. The Spaniards, everywhere beaten back, threw down their arms, and the regiment took four officers and forty-six men prisoners, captured several guns and mortars, and seized the colours of the French Royal Bombadiers.

During the campaigns, from 1702 to 1706, the Carabineers, like the English horse, served without armour; but in 1707 they were again supplied with steel breast and back pieces. At Oudenarde, in 1708, they passed the Scheldt on a pontoon bridge, supported the infantry in their advance, helped to drive the French musketeers from hedge to hedge, thickset to thickset, and assisted in the pursuit along the Ghent road. In November of that year they forced the passage of the Scheldt, and helped to relieve Brussels. At Malplaquet the Carabineers repulsed the French gendarmes, were driven back in disorder by Bouffler's grand charge of the garde-du-corps, light horse, and horse grenadiers of the household, yet, nevertheless, finally drove Louis the Fourteenth's favourite horsemen from the field. In 1711, they were surprised in a night attack near Douay. The troopers rushed out in their shirts to attack the French, while others crept under heaps of saddles. Eventually, some of the Buffs, half-dressed, drove off the enemy. The Carabineers in this affair lost Major Robinson and fifty-seven horses, several men were killed and wounded, sixty Frenchmen were left dead, and the allies lost fifty men and had eighty wounded. The proclamation of peace soon recalled the regiment to England.

On the accession of George the First, the regiment's facings were changed from sea-green to yellow. In 1751, they seem to

have worn silver-laced cocked hats, and scarlet cloaks with yellow collars.

In the French war of 1756, the Carabineers served with distinction, particularly at Warbourg, where they carried slaughter into the French ranks, astonished the Marquis of Granby, and won commendation from the hereditary Prince of Brunswick. At Groebenstein they joined actively in the pursuit of the French, and in the subsequent war of posts earned a full share of glory. In 1768, their facings were turned to white, and their second and third standards were to be of white damask. In 1793, their number was fixed at five hundred and seventy-two, and some short men on small horses were turned into light troops. In 1794, under the Duke of York, they broke the French right flank, and chased the enemy over the Margue. Our subsequent retreat before the French, left the Carabineers little opportunity of gaining fresh laurels. In 1798, it was a picket of the Sixth under Lieutenant De Passey, which fled before the French who had landed at Killala. In a subsequent action the Kerry, Longford, and Kilkenny Militia retired in confusion, and the Sixth Dragoon Guards had three men killed and five wounded, and lost all their troop baggage.

In the miserable affair at Monte Video, in 1807, the Carabineers were also sufferers. They had to charge a battery in one of the streets, and lost thirty-nine men, and Lieutenant-Colonel Kingston and Captain Burzell were shot dead.

In 1812, the regiment's cocked hats were exchanged for helmets, and in 1815, the jacked leather boots and breeches were replaced by blue-grey cloth trousers and short boots. In 1823, helmets with bear-skin crests were issued, and in 1828 they resumed wearing gauntlet-gloves, which had been laid aside about half a century. Three troops of the Carabineers were on duty in 1838 at Her Majesty's coronation.

The regiment has since ennobled itself at Sebastopol and Delhi.

WHY BLACK ?

How comes it that an idea of mirth is more or less associated with the calling of a mute or of an undertaker? and that even the functions of the sexton and the grave-digger excite a certain amount of risibility? Witty men are generally of a melancholy temperament, and melancholy subjects, especially if the melancholy be

exaggerated or insincere, have a natural tendency to produce laughter. It is possibly the feeling that the solemnity of the mute is overdone, that causes people to smile at him. The grief depicted on his countenance is so evidently a sham as to make the man ridiculous, and suggest the not very distant period when he will relax the rigidity of his features, smoke his pipe and drink his beer at the public-house, or tell funny stories to his brothers in business. But it is not only the grave-digger and the mute that suggest the ludicrous, but the grave-stone itself. The wit and humour of the tomb would fill volumes. The comic epitaph, half-memorial, half-epigram, sometimes suggested by the defunct himself, or prescribed as a dying request to his survivors, abounds in the grave-yards; but possibly more in those of England than of any other country. In spite of the theory that death is a very dreadful business, the fact is, that nobody so regards it. Death to the noble mind is preferable to dishonour. Death to other minds is preferable to the loss of the mental, or even of the bodily faculties. Life would in fact be intolerable, if death were not at the end of it.

I know a worthy man who never uses the word death. He talks of the year when his father died, as the year when his father went "home." I like this expression, which robs death of the dismalness which people usually attach to the word. And to the truly good and wise man, if such a paragon of nature ever existed, death ought never to appear as a disagreeable subject of contemplation. Neither ought death to be represented as a negative of life, or of light, but, on the contrary, as an affirmation of greater life, and more brilliant light. It is illogical, that black garments should be worn as a sign of mourning, and that death should be described as "The King of Terrors." If we are Christians, death ought not to be a terror, but a hope. And even if we are not Christians, true wisdom ought not to be afraid of that which it knows to be inevitable. Of course it is of no use to preach or to moralise on this subject, and men and women will grieve when death enters into the midst of them, though they grieve rather for the loss which they themselves suffer by the departure of the beloved object, than for any harm or evil which they imagine can have befallen it in the new world to which it has travelled.

It is curious to reflect that the trap-

pings and suits of woe, which Quarles the poet enumerates as "death's-heads, graves, knells, blacks, and tombs," are peculiar to Christian nations. The "skeleton," as the elder D'Israeli observes, was invented in the Middle Ages, as the personification of Death, and was wholly unknown in that sense to pagan antiquity. "The ancient artists," he says, "so rarely attempted to personify death that we have not discovered a single revolting image of this nature in all the works of antiquity." A modern poet, who was by education and sympathies a pagan, the late P. J. de Beranger, drew a picture of death, such as death ought to appear to every one who truly believes that death is but a necessary step in the infinite progression of immortality. In his fine poem, *Treize à Table*, or thirteen at table, a conjuncture which, according to a prevalent superstition, forebodes the death of one of the party before the expiration of the year, he beholds Death rise visibly before him, not in the shape of a hideous skeleton, but of a young and lovely woman, with a garland of flowers amid her hair, a rainbow over her head, and a sleeping infant nestled in her bosom. The beautiful apparition addresses the poet in eloquent words:

Vois! me dit elle, est-ce moi qu'il faut craindre,
Fille du ciel, L'Espérance est ma sœur!
Dis-moi, l'esclave a-t-il droit de se plaindre,
De qui l'arrache aux fers de l'opresseur?
Ange dechu, je te rendrai les ailes
Dont ici bas te depouilla le sort.

This stanza has been imitated, or freely rendered, rather than translated, by the author of *The Hope of the World*:

Why! said the spirit, why should mortals fear
Their only friend and best protector here?
Why should the weary and the slave complain?
I send one rest, and break the other's chain,
And give weak man, ungrateful for my love,
Immortal wings to waft his soul above.
Thy soul, O man, imprisoned here below,
Crawls in the mire a prey to every woe,
But freed by me on angel pinions borne,
Shall visit worlds beyond the gates of morn,
Shall soar to spheres where sorrow is unknown,
And see the Godhead on his sapphire throne.

And more in the same strain, amid which the Christian spirit appears through the pagan form with which it suited the poet to clothe his idea. Here there is nothing black, nothing gloomy, nothing disagreeable. And this is as it should be, if we could but disencumber ourselves of the superstitious fears instilled into us by tradition, and the old bogie-ism of the nursery and the school-room.

It is nothing but fashion that compels the

black garb as the sign of a grief, that may be more apparent than real. In this respect many of the Oriental nations are more poetical than we, for they adopt not black, but yellow, as the colour to be worn by those whose friends have preceded them to the grave. They do this, because yellow symbolises the entrance of the departed spirit into the great yellow light of the rising dawn of eternity, a day that is to be, where there shall be no such thing as night or darkness.

The compulsory wearing of black among Christian nations may be a small matter to the rich when one of their family or friends departs to a better world; but to the poor it is a serious business, and adds a new terror to the death which they deplore; the terror of an expenditure which they cannot afford without depriving the living of that which is necessary to their life; and crippling their resources for many months, or it may be years, of painful abnegation. The luxury of woe, to the men and women of ten thousand a year, may be as attractive a luxury as any other, and the black attire may be made as coquettish to the female eye and mind, as the gaudiest colours in which it may please Beauty to bedizen herself, or Respectability to make herself look more seemingly respectable. But to the woman in the middle or lower class, with possibly half a dozen children to fit out with suits of the prescribed colour of death, the question of mourning, which fashion forces upon the observance of rich and poor alike, is one that may sometimes be too closely connected with insolvency or the pinching of the stomach, to be agreeable to the contemplation of the head of the family, or of her who claims to be more than half the head and the whole heart of the establishment.

There has lately been an improvement in the fashion of mourning. The widow's cap has been made less flagrant and aggressive than it was in former years; and the ladies generally—aided, or more likely prompted, by the purveyors of fashion in these ingubrious matters—have begun to mingle violet, blue, and white with the black, in a manner that deprives their mourning of half the usual suggestiveness of misery. But the expense remains not only undiminished, but increased. To wealth, it is of no use appealing for economy. But to poverty, it is worth inquiring whether it would not be much better to abolish mourning altogether than

to persist in following an idle fashion, which does nothing more than proclaim to a world that cares nothing about the matter that a relative has paid the debt of nature. If the fact has to be proclaimed, why should it not be swiftly announced by letter, or by oral information, to all who are likely to be interested, and not by a change in the garb, which those living at a distance, who may be more interested than anybody else, may never perhaps see? Those who wear the picturesque Highland dress, as well as the officers and rank and file of the army, when in military costume, notify that they are in mourning by the simple expedient of tying a piece of black crape around the arm. If the poor would only take courage to set the fashion of richer people at defiance by imitating this inexpensive mode of paying respect to the observances of society, many a humble home, which had been deprived of the light of a living and beloved countenance would be rendered less fearful of the irruption of death into the flock than they are, or ever can be, when death taxes not only the heart as much as the heart can endure, but taxes the pocket far more than the pocket can bear.

But to end as I began. If men must mourn for the dead, why should they mourn in black? The blackness of death is an idea that, if introduced into the world for the first time in our day, would be pronounced vulgar, unphilosophical, and unchristian. If any colour be more suitable and appropriate than another for the Christian, or that which ought to be the Christian, idea of death, it is white; the whiteness of innocence and immortality, the light of the eternal day into which the happy soul has entered, to know darkness no more, for ever. Would mankind but so consider it, they would find the philosophy of life and death in the biblical story of King David and his child. When the infant was at the point of death, and the disconsolate monarch feared above all things that the darling of his heart would be taken from him, he sat in sackcloth and ashes, and refused to be comforted. When the child died, and all his hopes were dashed to the ground, he ceased to weep or to complain of the irretrievable, raised himself from the ground, washed, clothed himself in his ordinary attire, and refrained from indulgence in a grief that he felt to be useless and unworthy. If I have fallen somewhat into the strain of a sermon, let me be forgiven.

Like Burns, when he wrote his admirable Epistle to a Young Friend—an epistle full of the most touching wisdom—I did not know in commencing it, whether the “subject theme” might turn out to be “a song or a sermon.” It is certainly not a song. I think it is not a sermon, but possibly a piece of simple truth upon a question on which the modern world holds unphilosophical, if not irreligious, opinions.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “DENIS DONNE,” &c.

CHAPTER VI. “BE TRUE TO ME—AND TO YOURSELF.”

MR. POWERS was acting on an impulse that had arisen out of a conversation he had this morning been holding with his aunt. The instant he caught sight of his friend Jack Ferrier lounging there on the opposite bank by the side of Harty Carlisle, Mr. Powers repented himself of that impulse, and would have turned back to his tents without delay, had he not shrunk from the idea of appearing annoyed about that which had no right to annoy him.

The conversation had been very meaningless and unsatisfactory, according to Mrs. Powers’s ideas. Very full of hints as to possibilities in the past and the future, according to his. She had questioned him closely concerning the Greylings’ party, questioned him about things of which she did not care to hear, in truth, until she worked herself round in circles close to the point upon which she really did desire information. Then she darted upon it in this wise:

“The Devenishes and their daughters were there, I suppose?”

“Yes, they were there,” he said, hesitatingly. Utterly repugnant to him as was Mr. Devenish, and all concerning Mr. Devenish’s character, he would have cut his hand off rather than utter a word that would be detrimental to Mr. Devenish, in this place. For through the utterance of it Harty would surely suffer vicariously.

“You knew them before, I believe?” Mrs. Powers went on. Having once fairly lighted on her point, she would not be driven off it.

“What makes you think so?” Claude asked, quickly; “do you know them? Have they ever spoken of me, to you?”

“Yes, I know them; one of the daughters I have seen several times, and they have spoken of you to me.”

“Why did you never mention them to me?”

“I had no idea you would be interested in hearing about them; I didn’t get the notion from them at all that you were intimate; were you?”

He passed over the question, and only replied to the insinuation conveyed in her remark.

“What sort of notion did you get from them, I wonder?”

“That you were the merest acquaintance of theirs,” she said.

“And was it from the daughter you see most of that you received this impression?”

“No, she has never mentioned you,” Mrs. Powers said, bluntly; “it was from Mrs. Devenish herself; she said her husband had been in the —th with you.”

“Ah!” he tried to say it all very carelessly. “I dare say Mrs. Devenish would remember me longer than the others. I used to think her a very dear woman, and liked her very much; which daughter, by the way, is it you have seen a good deal of—that sweet-looking eldest girl?”

“No, not the sweet-looking eldest girl,” Mrs. Powers answered, sharply, remembering all Harty’s most charming attributes keenly on the spot. “No, not the sweet-looking eldest girl; I wish it had been her; she is not half as likely to turn round and make me repent having been civil to people out of my sphere as that mixture of the serpent and the dove—her sister.”

“You like Har—her then, do you?” he asked, glowing.

“Yes, I suppose I like her; but I wouldn’t advise you to do it; she’s most uncomfortable as the merest acquaintance; but if it came to friendship or anything more, she would be like a nervous fever to one, Claude; you were intimate enough with them to know her christian name I perceive?”

“Her own family were intimate enough with her to call her ‘Harty’ before me.”

“Oh! to be sure; but you two didn’t know much of each other? that was it; the step-father was your friend, I suppose? Certainly, I never heard her say anything about you.”

A well-marked vein of curiosity ran through the old lady’s treatment of the subject. But Claude was very circumspect. All he said (and Mrs. Powers thought it was too little, and he feared it was too much) was: “I’m glad you like her. I think she is a girl to be liked—changeable as she is.”

“How do you know she’s changeable?” the aunt asked quickly, and the nephew replied:

"How do you know that she would be a nervous fever to any one who liked her very much? We are both tremendously at sea about her probably."

"It strikes me" (Mrs. Powers could not help letting her tongue run against the dictates of her judgment) "that Harty Carlisle has a very unhappy home."

"Poor little thing!" he ejaculated.

"The mother and sister are all sweetness and nice feeling; but Mr. Devenish! my dear Claude, when I see him I always think of a cuckoo; and that weak, affectionate fool of a mother sees him stretching his languid form out for his own ease until the young ones are nearly pushed over the edge of the nest, and only hopes they won't 'let him exert himself too much!' I see it, and Harty feels it more than the other one.

"Poor little Harty!" he thought, passionately. This, indeed, was a terrible sketch of her present position, made for him by a person who unquestionably had no desire to bias his pity and inclination towards her. He almost made up his mind, as his aunt's last words rang in his ears, that he would seek Harty at once, and if she would make a slight concession, he would make a great one.

With this view he resolved to defer looking after the horses till another day. True, he had made an appointment with a dealer for this morning, but it had always been the habit of Claude's life to defer things. In short, he had a procrastinating man's natural aversion to taking any decisive step about which he had just given himself time to think a little. On the other hand, he was much given to acting on sudden impulses. He did it this day, and the result was that he found himself arrested midway in his progress to Harty's home, by the sight of Harty herself sitting on the bank of the river with his friend, Mr. Ferrier. Sitting there talking freely and earnestly, apparently, with a well-developed look of intimacy stamped upon the little group that was not justified by an acquaintanceship that only dated from last night. The whole aspect of the affair was repugnant to him, and he bitterly repented him of having brought himself there to see it.

"Flirting! absolutely flirting within a few hours after the sight of him (Claude) must have reawakened such memories as ought to have taken all desire for any foolery of the kind out of the heart of a woman deserving of a thought." It never occurred to him that it might be the

"sweet-looking eldest girl" who was helping Jack Ferrier to weave one of those light chains, which he was in the habit of making and breaking with equal facility. Harty being there, Claude argued like a jealous lover that it could only be Harty with whom his friend had entered into temporary partnership in the business of flirtation.

However bitterly as he repented himself of having come, thoroughly as he renounced the intention with which he had started, it was too late to go back now, for he had been seen. Therefore he crossed a little wooden bridge and joined them almost before the echo of Harty's last words had died away.

"Hallo! we thought you were miles away, Claude," Jack Ferrier began, identifying himself with the two girls in a way that was specially grievous to Claude. It is grievous, irritating, depressing to the last degree to many human beings to see their own familiar friends bracketed together in familiar friendship with a third person to whom only the other day they were strangers. It is a mean and ignoble grievance; but essentially a human one. Even to see your pet dog divide his allegiance, and wag his tail, and smile with his eyes as kindly at another as at yourself, is hard. My own impulse would be to have done with that dog for ever from that moment, unworthy as may be the spirit of monopolisation which such a measure would indicate. Happily dogs worth having never put you to the test in this way, it is a triumph reserved for those of our dearest friends who stand erect upon two legs.

Claude took his hat off, and shook hands with the two girls before he answered. Then he said, looking at Harty:

"What made you think I was miles away?"

"I've been thinking of you as up at the Court the whole morning," she said, softly; "telling your aunt what you think—how little you think of the Dillsborough people; and I doubt if my sister has thought of you at all. Mr. Ferrier speaks as a crowned head or a special correspondent, when he says 'we.'"

"You did give me hopes about those horses, and I know they're miles off," Jack Ferrier said, laughingly; "Miss Carlisle"—he looked at Harty as he spoke, and saw that Harty coloured—"Miss Carlisle and I have been planning riding parties. Just a few of us, enough to keep Powers's horses in exercise," he turned and ex-

plained carelessly to Mabel; "our only difficulty is a married woman to matronise the party."

"How delightful it would be to ride again," Mabel said, shyly, feeling that everything was intensely awkward, and everybody at cross purposes one with another. But Harty maintained an angry silence, wondering within herself how Claude could be "such a fool, such a forgetful fool! as to believe that she had contemplated such a course with a stranger, and to look hurt about it." While, as for Claude, he was in such an atmosphere of doubt, and distrust, and mortification, that he could scarcely constrain himself to speak at all; and utterly failed in the effort he made to address his flippant, fickle, old love, and the friend who was deliberately, for his own idle pleasure, seeking to supersede him in the frail, changeable fancy of the girl whom he despised, and yet could not forget.

But he found words for Mabel; about her there was no guile, no shadow of turning, no frivolous, contemptible craving for the passing, half-contemptuous admiration of every man. He did like her so thoroughly, as he looked at her standing there in her affectionate womanly unquiet about them all. He did like her so thoroughly, and she so entirely failed to interest him away from harrowing thoughts of her sister.

"I shall have an incentive to spur me on to the task of filling my empty stables, now that I know you will think it delightful to ride them."

He checked himself abruptly, for Harty had turned her head swiftly to look him full in the face, as he stood above her on the bank by her sister's side. It was a reminding, reproachful look. It seemed to beseech him not to be too kind to another woman just yet before her eyes. It was a look that only a woman who loves a man can give him, and only a man who loves her can read aright.

He could not help responding to it, angry as he was with her, foolish as he felt himself to be for being carried, for a moment, by a girl who could so far forget what was due to herself and to him, as to previously flirt with his friend. So he sat down by her side at last, and asked her, in a very low voice:

"Do you remember how cleverly you taught my little bay mare to behave herself? I have never forgotten the way she learnt all about a habit, and a woman's skill, under your auspices."

"What a good memory you must have," she said, quietly, with all the reminding, reproachful, beseeching look fading out of her eyes, and a laughing, mocking light one superseding it.

He could remember her clever riding, but he had forgotten her perfect love apparently, when he could imagine her guilty of flirting with this stranger.

"A good memory do you call it? I assure you that I have a keen recollection for everything that happened during that time. I have thought of little else for the last four years."

He had lowered his voice considerably; but still the words, "I have a keen recollection of everything that happened during that time," fell upon Jack Ferrier's ears distinctly, and caused him an uneasy feeling. He could not define what it was. It hardly amounted to suspicion. And still it was an uneasy feeling of being kept in the dark about something. "Was it possible," he found himself conjecturing, "that this girl could know anything of the cause of Claude's self-expatriation? If so! well, he unquestionably had no right to be annoyed about it; but certainly her manner had been designed to mislead him into the belief that she knew nothing whatever of Powers."

He had no right to be annoyed with either the girl or his friend. But somehow or other the sight of the two sitting there, "almost whispering," he told himself, angrily, irritated him beyond the bounds of passive endurance. "Shall we take a stroll along the bank?" he asked Mabel, hastily; "your sister and Powers have resuscitated the memory of a mare, and are growing gloomy over it; shall we?"

Mabel hesitated. She longed with all her power of longing to give Harty and Claude an opportunity of speaking together unfettered by the presence of others. She knew that such an opportunity as this might never occur again. But she also knew that dinner must be ready by this time, and that it was a dinner that would spoil itself utterly if kept back, and that Mr. Devenish was in that specially self-denying mood which would cause him to insist on waiting for them, and then make him refuse to partake of food at all if it were in the least over-dressed. The difficulty may seem a slight one to the great majority who are not in the state of loving bondage into which this girl had entered. But to her it was a harrowing one, and her pained perplexity painted itself legibly in her face.

"A country prude!" Jack Ferrier thought, impatiently, "deceiving herself with the notion that I mean something, probably. Won't you come?" he asked aloud.

"I should like to—but—Harty, I'm sure that dinner is ready——"

"Oh! dinner's always ready," Harty replied in a sudden outburst of hot anger against all these insignificant antagonistic influences. And then Mabel was miserably convinced that poor Harty would far rather that Mr. Devenish went dinnerless than that this interview with Claude should be curtailed.

If anything could justify the almost criminal indiscretion of upsetting Mr. Devenish's appetite, it would be the possibility of a fair understanding being brought about by the means between Harty and Claude. Mabel nerved herself to the task of taking a definite step by a timely remembrance of this truth, and thus spoke:

"Perhaps, as you're so tired from last night, Harty dear, you would rather stay here now? I'll go back and tell them not to wait for you; you must have high tea by-and-bye."

"Do let every hour bear its own reasonable burden, and don't talk of 'high tea' at two o'clock in the day," Harty answered, ungratefully. The fact was, that she was tingling all over with excitement and impatience to hear what Claude would say as soon as Jack Ferrier ceased to play the part of sulky guardian-angel over them. It was impossible to be grateful for kindly forethought concerning tea.

"Let me walk as far as your garden with you, Miss Carlisle," Mr. Ferrier asked. And then he took his hat off to Harty, nodded farewell to Claude, with the words, "We shall meet at dinner I suppose, Powers?"

"And so, Harty," Claude began the moment the others were out of ear shot, "you are not unwilling to be alone with me again?"

Harty made a loop of her arms and clasped them round her knees, and looked up the river and down the river in order to make him think that her heart was not swelling with hope to such a degree that it pained her, before she answered.

"No; if I had been unwilling I should have gone into the dinner that is ready, I suppose; besides, there is no reason why I should be unwilling, and I am never unreasonable."

"You feigned to question the truth of my statement that I have a vivid remem-

brance of the lightest incident connected with you," he said, his flexible, refined, sensitive face working as nervously as a woman's the while; "it was only feigning, was it? You don't really doubt me, do you?"

"I don't doubt your having thought of me sometimes—often; how could you help thinking of a girl who—but your thoughts have never been sufficiently gentle to make you surrender your point."

"My thoughts of you not gentle, not tender! how little you know me after all; I've thought of you until I have cursed the obstacle that came between us. I have tried to forget you; and between them, memory and attempted forgetfulness have made the last four years ghastly ones for me.

"Remembering you, can all the earth
My easy peace restore?
Forgetting you, what find I worth
Remembering any more.

"O gentle tone, O tender word,
That I might have my will,
Then had ye been for ever heard
Or else for ever still.

These lines have been ringing through my mind from the moment you spoke to me last night; do they speak to you at all? Do they make you understand how closely you are twined in with every thought and feeling I have? Let us be as we were long ago, Harty; you should not only have your mother to stay with us whenever she would, but you should come to them as often as you pleased."

"Would you ever come to Mr. Devenish's house," she asked, laying her hand lightly on his arm, and he lifted it to his lips and kissed it, as he answered:

"I'd go there once for my bride; you would never ask me to do it again, darling."

"And you think my mother would come to your house under these circumstances? No, Claude, I should be as lost to my mother as if I were dead, if I married you now. What his fault—or worse—is, we don't know; but I feel sure you're right in standing out as you do, and I feel sure that you know all about him. But my mother loves him, and little as she needs me, I can't lose her."

"Your mother cannot be so unnatural as to prefer a scoundrel to her own daughter's happiness?"

"Ah! you put it speciously; mamma would pray me to give her up, to give everything up, and to marry you to-morrow; but I know what it would be; her sad life would be sadder than it is now

was much busied over my wardrobe, mending old garments and carefully marking new ones, in the hope of frustrating the fraudulent arts of London laundresses, whom she held in severe distrust. My proposed departure was viewed as a most important event in the neighbourhood. It was some time before people could be induced to credit that it was a matter of absolute fact. The thing was almost without precedent in Purrington. "To London!" farmer Jobling had been heard to say. "Well, neighbour Orme be taking his pigs to a pretty market—going to make a London lawyer of that boy of Mrs. Nightingale's, so folks tell me. There, they'd better by half take and send un to Botany Bay at once; 'twill save trouble in the end." Yet I remember, when I called upon the farmer to say good-bye to him—I made a series of visits to our small number of friends and neighbours with this object—I found him very hearty and kindly indeed. He plied me with his oldest and strongest ale until I tingled all over, my eyes grew dim, and my brain dizzy; and he withdrew me out of hearing of Dame Jobling, as he wrung my hand with distressing cordiality, and hoarsely whispered, "Bless'ee, my lad; luck go with ye. And, hark'ee; that London's a terrible wild place. I was there myself for two days thirty years gone, and it nearly drove me mad. And young chaps can't hardly keep out of mischief there; 'tisn't perhaps to be expected of 'em, with such nation-strange doings going on all round 'em. Well, look'ee, my lad; if you get into trouble there, that money can get you out of, and you wouldn't have the old folks know about—as it isn't fit, perhaps, they should know everything—you send a line to me—d'ye see?—and I'll help you; you see if I don't. Trust old Jobling, and he'll see you safe, never mind what the sum may be. I say what I mean, for certain sure, Master Duke; 'tis my way. So bear it in mind, my lad. And bless'ee again; and, as I said, luck go with ye." He accompanied this speech with a variety of nods, and winks, and nudges in the side; and, indeed, I think was already so impressed with a sense of the wickedness and temptations of London, or possibly with a suspicion, almost amounting to certainty, of my capacity for error, that he desired then and there to empty his pockets for my benefit, that I might be duly prepared for the vague "trouble" he was confident I should get into sooner or later.

I met nothing but kindly sympathy on

all sides; with genuine expressions of regret at my departure. I felt that I had done little indeed to merit these. But Purrington was in earnest as to all matters of a "neighbourly" kind. It was thought strange and wonderful that I should elect to quit the district. I was regarded rather as a strayed ox or sheep, which it behoved men to rescue from danger, and see safely bestowed—for what was another's case to-day, might be their own to-morrow. But since my resolution was fixed there was nothing for it but to wish me God-speed on my way, an element of admiration at my courage blending with surprise and regret that I should be, as they judged, so headstrong and mistaken.

There were many private consultations in my regard between my mother and my uncle, continued far into the night, long after I had retired to rest; for early hours were urged upon me in consideration of my recent illness. But I did not sleep very well, or court my pillow very earnestly. I was too much occupied with preparations for my journey; arranging my little stock of books and drawings, studying the straps and fastenings of my new portmanteau, folding and unfolding my store of clothes. Of certain results of the nightly deliberations in the parlour I was duly informed, however. I was to reach London by the early coach that passed through Dripford from the west. I was to remain for the night at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, the destination of the coach. In the morning I was to present myself at the office of Mr. Monck, in Golden-square, who would be duly advised of my coming. Further arrangements as to my securing lodgings in London were to be postponed until after I had seen Mr. Monck, and obtained his advice upon the subject. I was to be supplied with a monthly allowance, that seemed to me of a liberal amount enough. I was to write constantly, and I was assured that any suggestions I might make as to my future comfort should be promptly and attentively considered.

My uncle had originally designed to accompany me to town. But he was not loth, I think, to change this plan. He was still suffering from rheumatism, and he was reluctant to quit the farm. It could ill spare him, he said, then or at any other time. Somehow things had a way of going wrong if he but turned his eyes away from them but for half a moment. And he was anxious about sickness in the stables—one or two farm horses were in a bad way.

Altogether he thought, if I could spare him, he'd rather stay at home.

I took kindly leave of all my friends among the farm servants. They were very hearty with their "Bless'ee, Maester Duke! Moind and coom back zafe and zound to we!" And they all viewed London distrustfully, as "a main caddling place, from all they'd heard tell about un." Renbe, carefully wiping his fingers upon his smock-frock as a preliminary, gripped my hand hard, and gave me a large clasp-knife, by way of memento of him, cautioning me that the biggest blade was "nation shaip"—he'd bled a sheep with it only that morning. From Truckle I received a dozen plover's eggs, and a curiously shaped stone, said to be a thunder-bolt, he had found upon the down.

Kem presented me with a red silk pin-cushion, fashioned by herself into the form of a heart, almost as big as a bullock's. It was moist with her tears, to the danger of rusting the pins, when I received it. With the gift came numberless resonant kisses.

I began to feel, with all my eagerness to quit it, that the Down Farm was very dear to me.

It was but just daybreak. The time had come for me to turn my face towards London. I was to be driven over to Dripford by Truckle in a light cart.

My mother was up to make breakfast for me. She had not slept, I'm sure, throughout the night. I could eat nothing.

My uncle drew me on one side.

"I'd many things to say to you, Duke; at least I thought I had. But somehow they've gone out of my mind, now. It doesn't matter much, perhaps. All I'd say but comes to this. Don't forget the Farm House. Don't ever bring discredit upon it. But you won't I'm sure. Be steady; and careful of yourself. Think always of your mother. I'll not speak of myself; think only of her. You're very dear to her; almost all she's got to care for now in the world. Her hopes and prayers will ever go with you, my lad. You'll not forget that. Believe that she's always beside you. It may help and shield you, perhaps, to think that, when temptation comes to you, or trial, or trouble—they come to every man in turn, and they'll come to you, my lad, do what you may to avoid 'em. But be true to her, and to yourself; be brave and honest always, and, please God, you'll come safe through. And write to her—not to me but to her—it will so cheer

her poor ailing heart to hear from you. The postman that brings news of you will be her best friend henceforward. Write to her, whenever you get a chance, and tell her all; hide nothing from her; she can't hear too often from you, or know too much of your doings, and she'll never love you less, do what you may. She'd tell you this herself, but I can see, poor thing, her heart's too full, and she'd break down altogether if she tried to say a kind word. But she means all I've said, and more. She's loved you always, and always will. God bless you, Duke. I'd more to say, but I can't hit on the right words just now. Only this. Here's a pocket-book—a little present. There's money inside, not much, but it should last you some while, and a letter." He paused for a moment, checking his emotion; there were tears in his eyes, and his voice had been much broken. But he continued in a firmer tone. "A letter; never heed the name on it now. It's addressed to—to a person in London—a sort of relative. You've never seen him, nor he you. But it's right, perhaps, that going to town, you should find him out; not presently, but by-and-bye, when opportunity comes. I've talked the matter over with your mother, and that's the conclusion we've come to. You understand? And so—God bless you. You'd better be starting soon. I doubt if our clocks are quite Dripford time, and you musn't miss the coach."

My mother scarcely trusted herself to speak. In this way she retained her self-command, and to all outward seeming was calm and composed enough. I noted that her hand did not tremble as she poured wine into my flask, and packed up for me such refreshments as she judged I should need upon the journey. She was mindful of everything to the last. But her fond eyes followed me unceasingly. And I observed that she found pleasure in allowing her touch to rest upon me, in smoothing my collar or fastening a button of my coat, or tying a scarf round my neck. Her fingers lingered yet long after these little offices had been accomplished. In such-wise she seemed to assure herself of my presence, and to postpone as long as possible our separation. She had strained me to her heart and kissed me tenderly, bidding me God-speed, yet still, even after I was seated in the cart, she was holding me fast by the hand, the while she saw to the proper disposal of my luggage and wraps, and instructed old Truckle to be

heedful how he went. She yielded, however, on my uncle's gently touching her hand, and stepped back to let the cart pass on its way.

"God bless you!" they all cried.

As I looked back I could for some time discern the figures standing at the farm-yard gate, my mother and my uncle, and Kem, with her apron raised to her eyes.

High upon the down towards the Dripford road, I observed Renbe, in the far distance, up to his knees in cabbages, pitching hurdles as usual. He waved his hat, and I could hear the dim murmur of his far-away shout. I shouted back, in turn waving my hat.

So I quitted my home and made for London.

CHAPTER XXVI. LONDON.

It was pleasant enough to be sitting on the top of the bright yellow-painted Defiance coach, bowling along to London as fast as four horses could hurry us. Pleasant to rattle through a stone-paved town, and win admiring glances from its denizens; our appearance was so splendid, our pace so rapid, our air altogether so triumphant and jocund; and then our destination was London! Could they think of that and not applaud us, even though something of envy might mingle with their homage? It was pleasant to wind along the white roads, climbing open breezy hillsides, careering over high down lands, and then to dart down into shady and secluded valleys in which nestled cheery villages with trim parsonages and grey, ivy-patched church towers; to listen to the soft murmuring music of running streams, and the bright firm notes of the blacksmith's anvil; to dash past the cosy roadside inns a gleam with polished tankards and chequered door-posts, and crimson window curtains, chambermaids smiling from the garret casements above, and jocose ostlers gesticulating merrily at the horse-trough below; to overtake vehicles of less pretence and importance, the gigs of commercial travellers, the slow-going coaches of county families even, drawn up to the hedge sides, their near wheels almost sunk in the ditches, waiving their dignity for a while to allow of proper space for our passing them, the loaded carts of farmers, the heavy-hooded waggons of carriers. And now we were scaring a drove of full-uddered cows; now cutting our way through a flock of bewildered bleating sheep, amid the barking of angry dogs, and the cries of startled

shepherds, until we seemed buried to our axle-trees in a fleecy sea. We had left our thin-soiled, chalky, pale green country far behind, and had reached more bountiful districts, the land rich and marly, with high hedge-rows, luxuriant woods, and abundant water. Houses now drew nearer together; the homesteads wore a wealthier look; the corn-stacks were of vaster size, and more numerous; churches hemmed in by grey headstones and daisy-sprinkled green mounds, seemed to abound; on all sides the landscape was enriched by the signs of more liberal culture and denser population. We were miles and miles from Purrington Down. And ever accompanying our progress sounded the music of the jingling harness, the harmonious beating of iron-shod hoofs upon the firm road, and the "clicking" of the coachman as he produced the mystic inarticulate utterances which urge horses on to increased exertion.

Pleasant all this, and yet after awhile I wearied of it. Time was permitted me to grow sad, to feel the uncertainty of the future, to be infected by the sorrow of those I had left behind me. In my haste and eagerness for the journey townwards, I had suppressed every other thought. Now reflection awoke within me. I was disturbed by the ever-changing scene I was hurrying through. It was all somewhat too new and strange to me. I longed for rest. Often as I passed some swinging gate, opening on to ploughed uplands or wooded pasture through which a rush-fringed brook serpentine and rustled, how I wished I could alight, and rest, and ponder but for a little over the happy peaceful life I had abandoned, the new stirring world to which I was hastening!

And I grew cramped with sitting still so long on the hard, narrow ledge behind the coach-box. I felt chilled, and my feet became numbed, although the sun was shining and the genial breath of summer was in the air. How eager we all were to descend to stretch our limbs, and stamp upon the ground when another stage was completed and we paused for a minute or two to change horses! "Now, William, look sharp," was always the coachman's cry, as he studied certain mysterious papers he carried in his hat, presumably relating to the parcels and passengers he was charged to deliver at particular stations upon the journey. Meanwhile there were the many inscriptions upon the coach for us to read, the list of important towns (including

Dripford, I noted) through which it passed, with "Defiance" emblazoned in gold letters upon the door of the hinder boot, and the magical word "London" in large letters upon the side panels. That had something exhilarating about it certainly.

It was a relief too, almost in the nature of an excitement, when, at a special point in our journey, a new coachman took possession of the whip and reins. The duties of our first driver, it appeared, had terminated; he had seen us safely half-way upon our road. He received donations from us on this account, I remember, with an affability and readiness which yet were largely leavened with dignity. I began to think that stage-coachmen were by far the most important personages I had yet encountered in my experience of the world. Their box-seat was as the throne of an absolute monarchy. They were peremptory with ostlers and the indescribable underlings invariably attached to stables as though they were something in the nature of gaitered human fungi; rather sharp with the guard; benign to landladies; almost wickedly arch in their attentions to barmaids and in recognising the glances of housemaids seen for a moment at upper windows, bed-making possibly, as we rattled past; but gracious and communicative in a grand way to passengers in the neighbourhood of the box-seat. They freely imparted information concerning the parks and country seats we approached and left behind; and had concise tales to tell now of this, now of that landed magnate, knowing well their political sentiments respectively, their views as to the preservation of game, the amount of their income, the acreage of their properties, and how far these were encumbered, and generally discussing, with charming frankness, their merits and demerits. Did they rehearse all this kind of agreeable talk day after day, like players playing parts, to a new group of auditors? Probably; yet they manifested no sign of weariness, were always alert and bright, seemed indeed to enjoy the sound of their own voices, and the familiar subjects of their speech. And they had much to relate to inquirers concerning the cattle they drove, and had a dainty way, as they spoke, of applying the lash to some chosen spot on the flank of the particular horse under mention, intent on hitting the precise mark, and no other, quite to a hair's breadth, and invariably succeeding as it seemed; there

was something of the subtle art of fly-fishing, it struck me, about this operation. There was little difference except in the matter of dress between our two coachmen. Both were middle-aged, portly, rubicund, with iron-grey whiskers and curvilinear, parenthetic legs, as though in youth they had ridden the horses they were now promoted to drive. Both wore scarlet geraniums in their button-holes, stout tan-coloured gloves, and tight-fitting drab cord trousers, and both smoked full-flavoured cigars. But the first coachman boasted a white beaver hat, a checked cravat, and a bottle-green coat with flat brass buttons; the second wore a low-crowned, broad-brimmed black hat, almost of an ecclesiastical pattern, a blue silk neckerchief peppered with white spots, and a mulberry coat adorned with bright basket buttons. Each sat upon an amazing pile of great coats and wraps until he towered above us all as though ruling us, like some ancient chieftain elected to sovereignty by his tribe, on the score of his superior stature. "Going through, sir?" asked the second coachman of each of us in turn on assuming his lofty station, as indeed his predecessor had previously inquired when we first came under his control. This question satisfactorily met, the second coachman took up the theme of discourse much where the first had quitted it, and proved himself not less informed or less willing to impart his information.

With a strange thrill I perceived a growing, congealing cloud in the east towards our front, and knew that London was near at last! And as I gazed my heart bounded, for there came a sudden rift in the swarthy canopy of smoke, and I caught a dim glimpse of the massive blue-grey outline of St. Paul's. There was a certain grandeur and solemn significance, I thought, in this ceaseless shroud of dense vapour overhanging and robing the city of the world. It had its picturesque value too; for I noted that the sun, now sunk behind us, had tinged with ruddy hues the wreathing haze, lending it transparency, and relieving its monotone of sombreness. Already the dusk of night was drawing over, outlines were becoming blurred and obscure, the air seemed thickening and darkening. Yet in the mist brooding over London could be seen opaline lights and flashes, contrasting, here and there, streaks of vivid tint with rolling masses of impenetrable shadow.

Soon after entering upon our last stage

for changing horses (Hounslow, I think), it seemed to me that the Defiance lost its glory, ceased to be an object of interest to any one, became but a commonplace and every-day sort of thing. We were gradually being merged and lost in the immensity of London. We joined a stream of other vehicles, and our individuality and importance departed from us. None came out now to view us, to greet, to admire. We passed on unobserved, unvalued. The roads were now paved, and we jolted painfully along, keeping our seats with difficulty. The coachman grew silent; he could scarcely hear or make himself heard for the general confusion and tumult. Depression and weariness afflicted us all, and a feeling, I think, of responsibility amounting almost to awe. It was our own doing; but we had sought the giant London, only to be devoured and swallowed alive.

It was quite dark when the Defiance drew up at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, and its passengers alighted one by one, and went their several ways. I never saw one of them again. I entered the coffee-room, and ordered dinner and a bed for the night. It was an old-world commercial inn in those days, with a quadrangular stable-yard, and offices, hemmed in by galleried buildings. The air was close and dusty, and seemed to have been carefully bottled in the inn, until it had gained much in point of body and bouquet. My bedroom had the smell of a cupboard that had remained unopened for a generation. A sort of musty fluffiness pervaded it. A massive four-post bedstead, heavily curtained and festooned, had taken possession of it, consuming its air and space. It appeared to be ventilated solely by means of the key-hole, and that was half choked with rust and flue. Still I was only to occupy it for a night. My first in London.

It was vexatious to hear myself described by a pimpled waiter, wearing very down-at-heel pumps, in a hoarse but audible whisper to a sallow ringleted lady, who sat in the bar before a large book, almost as though she were reading the lessons in church, as "a regular yokel." I was not the better treated by the Golden Cross on that account. And unfortunately it was true. I was, and knew myself to be, a "regular yokel."

I stood at the inn door waiting for dinner, conscious, by comparison with the passers-by, that I bore a pronounced rural look, that my clothes were not of London form, that

my boot-soles were unduly thick, that my speech had a country accent. The lamps were lighted, the streets were crowded, the noise I thought something prodigious. It was all very dream-like. Whither was all this endless procession of people wending? They hurried past me without sparing me a glance, in adroitly interweaving lines proceeding to and fro, careful not to jostle or molest each other, bent upon mysterious missions and purposes, a secret to all but themselves. It was very strange to me to see so many faces, and not one that I knew—to hear so many voices, and yet all unfamiliar to me in every tone and inflection. How far away I was from Purrington! I was as a stranger suddenly landed alone upon a foreign country. I could not but feel a sense of solitude and desertion creeping over me, perplexing and saddening me. I was so lonely, so young, so completely inexperienced. Yet I was braced by a certain adventurous spirit, cheered by a sentiment of enthusiasm. Life and the world were to be no longer closed books to me. At least my hands were on their clasps and fastenings, and I meant to open them with firm fingers and a stout heart. That was my view of the situation—especially after I had dined.

CHINESE FORTUNE-TELLERS.

IN nearly all lands and all ages fortune-telling has, in some form or other, been highly popular, from the instinctive desire of the human race to become acquainted with the hidden and unknown. Every schoolboy knows how greatly divination was held in honour amongst the ancient Greeks and Romans; has heard of the power which the "medicine-man" wields in the Indian village; and has perhaps dreamed of the black-eyed gipsy, who with seductive smile might some day accost him in a quiet shady lane, and offer, for a slight consideration, to tell him of coming luck. In our own prosaic times and matter-of-fact country, however, gipsies and other professors of the art of reading the hidden decrees of providence seem to have fallen on evil days, and when they venture on too obtrusive a practice of their vocation, find themselves an object of extreme solicitude to the myrmidons of the law; but in China the case is different, for throughout the length and breadth of all the eighteen provinces of that vast and populous empire fortune-telling flourishes, and is quite a matter of every-day life.

The Chinese being an eminently superstitious race are naturally eager to pry into futurity, and consult their favourite oracle upon almost every conceivable occasion. A Chinaman can neither be married nor buried, nor enter upon any business of the least importance, without the aid of one of the fortune-telling fraternity, so that it is no wonder that with them the craft is prosperous.

Mr. Doolittle, in his interesting work on the Social Life of the Chinese, to which we are indebted for some of the following information, tells us that in Far Cathay six modes of fortune-telling are in vogue, and these we will now proceed to describe as briefly as possible.

Probably the most popular method of telling fortunes is by the eight characters, which give the exact time of a person's birth—two representing the year of the cycle, two the month, two the day, and two the "period" of the day at which the event occurred. Many of those who follow this branch of the profession are blind; they are led about the streets by boys, and have commonly two ways of proclaiming their calling, one being by means of two small bamboo clappers, with which they make certain well-known sounds, and the other by a yue-ting, which is a circular piece of copper hung by two strings to a stick, a second stick being hung between the strings; this pendulous stick when struck against the copper produces a peculiar noise, which any one who has ever been in a Chinese town will at once call to mind. The peripatetic fortune-teller is nearly always blind, and he is said by the Chinese to "calculate fortunes," for which he gets about a penny—while those who, not being afflicted with loss of sight, establish themselves in shops and wait for people to come and consult them, are said to "see fortunes," and being a somewhat superior class, they charge a double fee. They all make their predictions by reference to books, which teach them how to interpret the combinations of the horary characters, and whether they should deduce a propitious or unpropitious conclusion therefrom; of course, the blind man labours under considerable disadvantages in having to trust much more to his memory than is the case with his brother professor. To this class of fortune-tellers generally belong those who, when negotiations for a marriage are being opened, are consulted to determine whether the eight characters of both parties are sufficiently in harmony

for them to become husband and wife; also those who choose lucky or propitious days for the transaction of important business. The aid of these soothsayers "is invoked by the builder and proprietor of houses and hongs, and by the head men in the erection of temples, &c. In the case of temples, the ages of the elders and head men of the neighbourhood are made known to one who is able to divine what month, day, and hour will be lucky for the performance of the several kinds of labour connected with the erection of the proposed temple. In the matter of building a house or hong, only the age of the owner and proprietor is made known to the fortune-teller. He applies the rules of his art to decide on the precise hour which will be favourable for beginning to "move the earth for the foundations; for putting up the ridge pole in its place; for hanging the great or main door of honour; for digging the well and making the fireplace in the kitchen."

A very popular, and at the same time the cheapest kind of fortune-telling, is by means of a bird and slips of paper. The professor of the black art, who adopts this method of divination, and is willing to satisfy the inquiring mind for the modest remuneration of about a farthing of our money, "traverses the streets in search of employment. He carries in one hand a piece of the small end of a cow's horn and a bamboo stick. These two are tied together loosely at one end, and he manages to strike or clap them together, so as to make a peculiar sound. In the other hand, or suspended from a front button of his coat, he has a small cage, containing a little bird of a particular species. He always takes with him on these professional excursions sixty-four small sheets of paper, on each of which is sketched a figure of a god, bird, beast, &c., and on every sheet is also written a short verse of poetry, usually four lines, each of seven characters. These sheets are folded up in such a manner that the pictures and the poetry are not visible. When any one applies to have his fortune told, he arranges the sixty-four pieces of paper on a table or on the ground, and places the bird-cage near them. He then opens the door, and the bird hops out and picks up one of the sheets with his beak. This the wise man opens and explains to the applicant."

Another class of peripatetic fortune-tellers devote themselves to inspecting the physiognomy; they are to be known

by certain characters that are inscribed on a satchel which they carry with them. They select a favourable and convenient spot in the street, where they can spread out a chart, which they consult in reference to the personal peculiarities of their customers. They carefully inspect every feature of the person who wishes to look into futurity, and compare together what they term the "five governors"—that is, the ears, eyes, eyebrows, nose, and mouth—to see whether they are in harmony, and whether the combined expression is good or not. They note the way in which the applicant walks and sits down, and so foretell his future. Furthermore, they examine the length of each finger, and pay particular attention to the lines or creases in the palm of the hand, taking careful note of its colour and thickness.

Yet another mode of gaining an insight into the decrees of fate is by dissecting the written character. Those who practise this branch of the art take up a position at the side of some frequented street, where they spread out a cloth, and arrange their writing materials. They also have with them a box containing a number of pieces of paper folded up, on which a single character is written; their fee is but small, being usually about a half-penny. The inquirer into futurity chooses two of these pieces of paper, which the fortune-teller opens; he then dissects the characters on them, writing out their various component parts. He next talks over the matter, about which his customer is anxious for information, working in the meaning of the fresh characters, obtained by the subdivision of the two originally selected at random, often increasing the number by skilfully adding strokes to, and thus changing the meaning of, the characters. Upon the materials thus got together he founds an oracular response as to the coming events about which he has been consulted.

Those who profess to reveal the secrets of futurity "by the use of the tortoise-shell and three ancient cash, have shops or offices where they may be consulted by those who prefer this method of ascertaining their fortunes. The cash commonly used are a certain kind coined during the Tang dynasty (some twelve hundred years ago). They first light incense sticks and candles, placing them before the picture of an old man, whom they worship as the deity who presides over this kind of divination. They then take

the cash and put them into a tortoise-shell, which they shake once or twice before the picture, invoking the aid and presence of the god. They then empty the cash out, and taking them in one hand, they strike the shell gently three times with them, repeating at the same time forms of incantation. The cash are again put into the shell, and shaken as before three times, when they are turned out upon a plate, and careful observation is made of the manner in which they have chanced to fall. After noting how many have the reverse side upwards, the same cash are put into the shell, and a similar operation is repeated once and again. At the conclusion of the third shaking, and the third observation of the relative positions of the coins, the fortune-tellers proceed to compare the diagrams with the "five elements" according to the abstruse and intricate rules of this species of divination. After a tedious process of observations and comparisons, they pronounce judgment on the matter under investigation.

What is termed "geomancy," in so far as it has to do with the selection of a fortunate burial place by a critical examination of the earth and scenery, comes fairly into the category of fortune-telling, for the Chinese consider that the future prosperity of the family of the deceased depends greatly upon a lucky place of sepulture being chosen. The Chinese expression for this is Fêng-shui, that is, wind and water, and whatever, in the opinion of the wise man, interferes with the Fêng-shui, is looked upon as very unlucky. It may be interesting to mention in passing, that this superstition with regard to the Fêng-shui is one of the great obstacles to the introduction of telegraphs, railways, &c., into the country.

The man who "looks at the wind and water," armed with a compass and other implements of his art, accompanies a near relative of the deceased to some spot in the hills, which is thought suitable for a burial place, and he then proceeds to make his observations *secundum artem*. He notes "the nature of the ground, the colour of the soil, its relative position to surrounding hills, valleys, streams," &c. If large rocks are found in the earth, or if the spot prove to be wet, it is at once condemned, and a fresh search has to be made for a place where the soil is dry and of a yellowish colour. This species of fortune-telling is the most tedious and expensive of those which we have described, but the Chinese attach extreme importance to it.

Besides the foregoing methods of fortune-telling, Sir John Davis informs us that the Chinese have in some parts a mode of divination by certain pieces of wood, in shape the longitudinal sections of a flattish oval. These are thrown by pairs, and according to the mode in which they turn up, a judgment is formed of any future event by consulting the interpretation afforded in a Sibylline volume, which is hung up in the temple. If the throw, however, happens to be unlucky, they do not mind trying their chance over again, until the answer is satisfactory.

ANCIENT NEEDLEWORK.

A LITTLE cluster of ladies, some of them of the royal blood, have been hunting up, and sorting out, and cataloguing, a most valuable collection of Old Needlework for the South Kensington Museum; and any number of clusters of ladies, whether of blood-royal or not, must have found great advantage in a near study of it.

First and foremost, for beauty and universal utility and facility combined, were the specimens of quilting, for which needles and silks, and thimbles and ingenuity were at work in the seventeenth century. This has especial mention, because it could have complete and most praiseworthy imitation to-day. Take, for example, and carefully examine, the exhibited quilts, or counterpanes. Every young girl hopes to want counterpanes, in some coming blissful day; every married woman does want counterpanes; and as their dear great-grandmothers made counterpanes, as well as nestled themselves snugly to sleep under them, let there be a lesson learnt as to how they are best and most beautifully to be manufactured. Those exhibited are (chiefly) of fine white linen; not calico (where was it to come from?); not silk; not satin. They are real home-spun; or, possibly, imported Irish. Each has been, say, a fine white linen sheet, of full large square size; this has been spread upon a thick layer of level wadding and the lining; and then the fair seamstresses have taken white or yellow sewing-silk, and have stitched the whole together, edge to edge, and all over the surface, with the best and closest back-stitching, in a strong stout trellis-work, the diamonds of which are about half an inch across. The whole is a firm, shield-like, handsome piece of housewifery at once; it looks like an heir-

loom; and it certainly will last to be scrutinised by eyes two centuries to come, just as well as it was scrutinised and gloried over by eyes of two centuries ago. Now, what is the difference between this "quilting" and the quilting of the present generation of wives and daughters?—leaving out of the question, of course, the work executed by the sewing-machine. The quilting of 1873 means a piece of anything lightly run; to run being—to make it explicable to masculine ears—to pass a thread straight along, by the simple means of going down and up. But this is not back-stitching. Women know the important and industrious difference. To back-stitch—again to make it explicable to masculine understandings—is to put the needle so far on that the thread shall make a background for another stitch, and the second movement shall take it back to make it join on perfectly to the stitch that was complete before. It can be understood how solid this is, how stiff, how satisfactory. But the ladies of sixteen hundred odd were not satisfied when they had done this much to their huge squares of linen, with their white or yellow sewing-silk. They took it only as a basis for further and far more elaborate operations. To understand this, a reference must be made to a specimen in the South Kensington Museum, lent by the Countess Brownlow. All over the perfect and neat trellis runs a beautiful chintz-like embroidery, of birds and leaves and flowers. These are worked in pink, and red, and brown, and various greens, all silk, and they are stitched in that close tight button-hole manner that will never fray away, and never run the risk of puckering and spoiling, by catching and getting dragged out. Another counterpane, on precisely the same plan, belongs to the Baroness Willoughby de Eresby. The home-spun of it is coarser, and necessarily so; for the flowers that cover it are magnificent floral impossibilities of five inches in diameter, as bright in their reds and pinks and greens, as if they had been dyed to-day; and they want something strong to hold them; but the same skill and industry are to be noted, the same delight is given by rich colour and dainty taste. A little variety to these two is gained in five others, Nos. 625, 629, 637, 638, and 641. They stand out prominently, from being worked altogether in yellow; that yellow already mentioned that is a fine amber, and that—it must be recollected—is the pure undyed colour of the silk-fibre,

just as it leaves the silkworm. They stand out prominently, also, from being worked on a different design. The quilting that is the foundation of their elegance and dignity is no longer a plain trellis. It is still the closest back-stitching; but it is close rows of it, so close they are only a quarter of an inch apart; and they go in and out, and pointed and round, up and down, and zig and zag, forming leaves and twirls and curves, and other geometric vagaries and eccentricities very difficult to follow. Then the embroidery enriching this already rich stitching is not a trail chintz, spreading everywhere alike. It is in the form of a wide border, with stretching corner-pieces, and a handsome centre stud. Let No. 629 out of this group of five—it is part of the furniture of a baby's bed—be particularly noted. It is the property of the Countess of Caledon, and it was worked two hundred years ago for Frances, Lady Blount. Very noteworthy also is a counterpane lent by Mr. P. W. Elsted. It is worked entirely of silk, spun by silkworms of the worker's own keeping. Is there not almost the fragrance of mulberry leaves, and the radiance of blistering sunshine in the idea? Fortunately, the name of the fair lady who moved about among these, and who loved the little insects under her fostering care, has been retained and recorded. It is Anne, daughter of John Whitfield, of Ives-place, Maidenhead. To no dyer's did this good Anne send her silk-skeins after she had delicately unwound them from her cocoons. How could she have been certain-sure of the self-same silk being sent back to her, if it had once left her thrifty and sunny home? No; Anne kept all the strength and sheen of her silk by resolving to use it in its own lovely amber colour; and there it is, uninjured and beautiful, to this day. And this notable and tasteful Anne took a new design for her exquisite quilting, that was neither the trellis, nor the all-over intermixed tracing described after it; and she took a new stitch. Her stitch is the button-hole; her quilting-pattern that called coral, branching out shortly from slender stem to stem; and on it she has put an overlaying of embroidery (still all her pure amber) of wreaths and scrolls and flower-baskets, holding her monogram, A. W., twined. For even a better groundwork still, attention must be called to counterpane No. 622, lent by Mr. G. P. Boyce. It is a delicious geometric pattern, formed of triple circles, three inches across, interringing one another with nicest accuracy,

and each one holding as its centre piece a diamond stud. To see a linen sheet transmogrified into such a queenly quilt as this, by a young lady of the present hour, might indeed be hailed enthusiastically. Quite enough contentment could be had out of the yellow silk geometric design alone, without another stitch upon it. There would be no need for the large corner and centre pieces that this specimen possesses, in colours, representing fine lop-faced oval-eyed ladies in imitation of Chinese. There would be no occasion, either, for the addition of the knotting linen fringe that is hanging from this magnificent piece of needlework; it is too primitive and irregular for any direct copying. A better example of fringe could be had in No. 640, a counterpane lent by the Countess of Shrewsbury. The fringe is gold; the tassels at each corner are gold; and there is a large monogram in the centre worked with gold thread also. The quilting of this is stitched, in another fine geometric pattern, in green. A word should be said perhaps of the size of these counterpanes. One is measured, that there should be certainty. It is No. 622; the one with the knotting fringe. Its dimensions are six feet five inches by five feet eight inches; goodly enough; and calling up notions of a sufficiently massive four-poster.

There are some sets of curtains quilted after the exact manner of these coverlets. A very striking pair is No. 630, worked by the Ladies Leslie, of the seventeenth century, and lent by their relative, Lady Elizabeth Leslie Cartwright. The fair embroideresses have sown their trellised linen with beautiful bouquets of coloured flowers, roses, pinks, and others from their own imagination or conventional tuition; in the centre of some of these flowers are the ladies' monograms; and they have bound their work all round with crimson silk galloon. Then there are pillow-cases; little dainty pincushion-covers more, measuring twenty inches by twelve inches; although one (the property of Countess Brownlow) extends to twenty-eight inches by twenty inches, and is nearer to the size in use now. And there are toilet covers; and some curious large pieces for shielding entrances and keeping the draughts away from doors, called portières; and, amidst other sorts of needlework besides quilting, there are such articles, done in various materials, as valances, wall-hangings, bed-hangings, robes, hangings for a semicircular mantelpiece, table-cloths, banner-

screens, pocket-handkerchiefs, table-napkins, sashes, aprons, scarves, shaving-cloaks, mantles, badges, shoes, pocket-books, pin-cushions, saddle-holsters, chair-backs, chair-seats, covers for divan-seats, waistcoats, cushion-covers, square pieces (used as covers for presents, or what not), chalice-veils, altar-fronts, cushions for seats in galleys, sofa-backs, caps, purses, gauntlets, alms-bags, riding-gloves, gants de cérémonie, tobacco-bags, pictures, portraits, orphreys, dalmatics, chasubles, and every other ecclesiastical finery priests would put on, or the fingers of pious ladies suggest. There are some pretty articles, too, loaded with gold thread and embroidery, called wedding-sachets, and others called vide-poches or semainiers. They are much the same things as for ultimate use; being, both, flat pockets, or envelopes, into which a handkerchief or a letter could be put. But the sachets are double, to fold up, front to front, like a book, for the pocket; and the vide-poches are to hang from a wall, like watch-pockets to a bedstead, or like card and letter racks fixed up each side of a chimney-glass. These last came by their other name, semainiers, because they were usually made in sets of seven pockets, one for every day in the week; the seven being unequally divided on two strips, one containing three pockets, and the other four.

Doubtless, another form for the display of needlework has been in the minds of everybody—samplers. They are not going to be forgotten; especially as there are some thoroughly good specimens of them in the South Kensington collection. But will the young ladies of to-day, first of all, recollect what a sampler was? It was, literally and in effect, an example, a pattern, a model; it was, absolutely, a piece of linen—homespun—on which the Lilians and Mabels and Madges of the Stuart period learnt how to make the stitches and florations with which they were afterwards to adorn their husband's pourpoints, and to make into beauties and treasures their own stores of lavendered linen and ruffles, and slashed sleeves. As a consequence, samplers, of two hundred years ago, as shown in the Museum, are not worked on white or gamboege canvas, with holes large enough and loose enough to be used almost by the blind. They are solid pieces of white linen, on the contrary; they have rows of mimic cut yew-trees upon them; they have incipient pinks and trails and roses; and they have pretty schemes of stitching to be afterwards

brought into notable and flourishing use. A certain Anna Bockett worked the sampler numbered 269. Her own date, in her own neat silk figures, is upon it. July 12th, she says, Anno Domini, 1656; put by error on the label 1658. No. 270 in the collection goes, at a stride, a whole century later. The comic worker of it says on it, in her neat silk letters and figures, Jane Hillier, Hur Sampeloor, finished June 17, 1761. Naughty Jane, as can be seen, did not know how to spell. In addition, Jane was forgetful. When she picked out her christian name on her square of home-spun, she only picked out J A N. The E had to be stuffed over the A afterwards, petulantly and comically; as though readers might please themselves as to where they put it. But Jan was a good soul, and was ambitious. She put texts on hur sampeloor, besides the alphabet; and she put some rhyme.

Lord, give me wisdom to direct my ways,
I beg not riches nor yet length of days.
My little children come to me
And learn the A B C,

she stitched out, coming in rather short, like a stumble, at the end; and from this a gleam is gained of another possible use to put a sampler to, as well as the one of instruction how to do marking and embroidery. In those days of scant books and dear ones, and of horn criss-cross-rows or A B C's, it is possible the linen sampler was a ready means for teaching the alphabet, and that its use thus was the direct forerunner of the linen books prepared for the little folks of to-day. Samplers framed were not so available, evidently. One exhibited is of regal origin. Katharine of Braganza, the Queen of Charles the Second, worked it; and her pretty continental idea was to stitch on it a loving little English posy:

The 21st of May
Was our Marriage daye.

Pity her sombre-faced consort did not remember this date when his eyes fell on it, and prove faithful to the vows then made! But probably Katharine kept her sampler and other youthful treasures hidden; and only looked at them when her heart was full.

Patchwork is another candidate for honourable mention. A piece, by a lady as noted as the last, but who would have been scorned and passed over by her haughtily, is at the Museum for any eyes to see that like seeing, and for any clever heads to copy; 94 is the number of it; Anne Fleetwood, once Anne Ireton, eldest

daughter of Oliver Cromwell, was its worker. She literally patched, in the sense of patchwork of to-day. She cut diamonds; and recut them into four pyramids or cones; and then she neatly sewed them all together, her conglomerated diamond being about three inches square. The materials she applied her scissors to, though, can have no copying. They were gold and silver brocades; with amber ground, and pink ground, and blue ground; and whether for king's wife now, or protector's daughter, these have scant manufacture. Other examples of patchwork differ from this of Dame Fleetwood's. They are cut pieces of chintz, cut round the flower edges, or the scrolls, whatever they may be; and then laid on to pieces or patches of white twilled cotton. To give these appliquéés pieces richness, a linen cord, or bobbin, was traced all round the edges, and firmly sewn there over and over; and to give the white twilled cotton they were applied to richness, this was itself in all sorts of odd shapes, and, twill meeting twill, a very effective diaper was produced. This same white twill is used as the material for some curious crewel curtains, Welsh work of the seventeenth century, lent by Lady Watkin Wynn. Crewel was a worsted of a tight twist, of bright rich dyes; and it must have been plentiful in Wales, judging by these eight curtains of Lady Wynn's. The flowers are laid on as thick as a rug; the flower-stalks are like tree trunks; and crewel is sewn upon crewel often, to make stamens and other ornaments, and to satisfy, no doubt, some sturdy Welshwoman's notions of art and durability. As the very opposite to the obesity and firmness of this, comes a case full of baby-linen, the property of Countess Brownlow. It consists of eighteen pieces; all coming out of a tiny, battered, drab paper-box, only a size larger than one volume of an ordinary novel; and the pieces are, chiefly, little thin strips of the finest linen, carefully stitched all round, the use of which must be left to the decision of the initiated. The practical Queen Elizabeth herself was the worker of this queer little intility, it is stated (though there is no hint as to the authority). It is the last object in the collection that would have been attributed to her; in spite of one positive little garment, the diminutive of a real man's shirt, and one little white satin head-cover, the diminutive of a jockey's cap without the peak; but then the great Tudor queen worked

this Child-bed Linnin (as it is written on the box), when she was nobody, only a princess; and that may account for it. Besides, she worked it for her half-sister, Queen Mary, when the queen was said to be going to require it.

It would be tedious to enter fully into every notable number in this collection of ancient needlework. It is enough to say the star is here, embroidered in silver thread on red velvet (about eight inches square), worn by Charles the First on the scaffold, and presented there by his forlorn majesty to Captain Basil Woodd; that some pieces of tambour and appliqué work are here, from the fingers of Queen Charlotte; and that, probably, the oldest piece in the collection is No. 561, the date of it 1553, belonging to Monsieur Achille Juvenal. It is a strip about half a yard long, and a quarter of a yard wide, consisting of four pieces of equal size, the joins showing; and embroidered with silver thread. The material, according to the label attached, is pink satin; but close inspection, there can scarcely be any doubt, will prove it is not silk at all, but wool, of a texture exactly in anticipation of the satin-cloth of to-day. With the exception of this one number, which is probably French, attention has only been called here to needlework of English hands. It is very easy to see what at once made the difference between Oriental and home embroidery. The Eastern nations—the lands of silk—took satin squares for their backgrounds, yellow satin, violet satin, faint-hued satin, instead of homespun; and there they were. Rich specimens have been treasured up that are Indian, Persian, Indo-Portuguese, Spanish, Sicilian, Venetian, Chinese, Dutch, French, Italian, German, Turkish, Algerine, Genovese; and this will be found the master-key to most of their splendour. Englishwomen were not behind their foreign contemporaries in deftness, and colour, and beauty; it was only that English climate grew flax-plants instead of having the power to fatten silkworms, and English art had to use the material ready to its hand. No one doubts the super-excellence of the tapestries of Gobelins and Bayeux; but the gallery of (apparent paintings) the needlework of Miss Linwood, who was a schoolmistress at Leicester, must not be suffered to fall entirely into oblivion. There have been many other Englishwomen, too, celebrated for dexterity at their needles. One was the beautiful Mrs. Knowles, the

Quakeress, apt to get into theological discussions with Doctor Johnson. She sewed a portrait of George the Third, and was so well known for her sewings, that Johnson's brilliant hostess, Mrs. Thrale, grew femininely jealous of her celebrity. What business had Samuel Johnson, LL.D., to invent a new adjective for Mrs. Knowles's pieces of work, and to call them sutile pictures! Mrs. Thrale would be even with the pair of them. Aided by the long lisp-ing s's of the period, and her own sharp wit, she changed the long initial s to f, and declared that Doctor Johnson's word was futile! Needlework is woman's work indubitably; and so, perhaps, is a sharp sally of the sort thus effected by saucy Mrs. Thrale!

BEREFT.

She heard old ocean's hollow roll
And wash of wave upon the sand,
The while a breeding twilight stole
By dim degrees o'er all the land,
"O sea," she said, "give up your dead!
Give back my sailor boy to me!
What worth is left in life?" she said,
"My one love lies beneath the sea!"

A loose wind wander'd through the leaves,
And came and went about the place;
It whisper'd round the cottage eaves,
And last it touch'd her on the face.
"O wind," she said, "my boy is dead!
And if ye come from yon dark sea,
Bring back, O wind," she, weeping, said,
"Some tidings of my boy to me!"

Slowly the dull night wore away,
A new day trembled to its birth,
The sun broke through the eastern grey
And drove the shadows from the earth.
"Once more," she said, "the night has fled,
Dawn widens over land and sea,
But never will it come," she said,
"The dawn that brings my boy to me!"

WEST RIDING SKETCHES.

INTRODUCTORY.

It is, no doubt, a proud boast to be able to say, "I am an Englishman," but still prouder is the boast if the Englishman can add, "and a Yorkshireman." Of course, no sooner have I said this than appellants on behalf of all the remaining counties rise up and indignantly protest, but, for all that, being a Yorkshireman myself, I venture (with all due respect to the Lancashire witches, the Lincolnshire fens, the Cumberland lakes, the Derbyshire peak, Bow bells, Gog and Magog, and all and whatsoever else there may be in other parts of this "merrie England" of ours to give pleasure and delight) to designate the patriotic Yorkshireman, with his stalwart form and beaming face, as the most birth-

proud member of the human race. Whether the Yorkshireman is justified in this high self-appraisal or not is another thing. Certainly he has for a long time been credited with the possession of a greater amount of shrewdness and cunning than his fellow-countrymen, but this has been due, I imagine, more to the falsifications of the drama and of fiction than to anything else; for, much as I have seen of Yorkshire wariness and Yorkshire caution, I have not found the denizens of Middlesex or of Lancashire at all behindhand in these matters.

The stage Yorkshireman, with his grins and guffaws, his outlandish dialect and variegated garments, has no counterpart in real life, and, many as have been the actors, from the elder Mathews downwards, who have won a reputation for portraying Yorkshire characters, they have none of them succeeded in giving anything like a truthful impersonation. The dialect most commonly adopted by these character delineators is that of *Zummerzet*, very much tortured, to which is added a dash of the Irish brogue; but of the real, weighty, Chaucerian English, of the hearty, nervous pronunciation, which form the distinctive features of the language of the Yorkshire rustic, I have found but little trace in the speech of the numerous theatrical representatives of Yorkshiremen whom I have hitherto seen.

It is probable, I think, that the Yorkshireman's pride in his native place indirectly proceeds, in a great measure, from the fact that the county to which he belongs is the largest shire in the three kingdoms. So extensive a province is able to enclose within its inner limits a people who are so far removed from the outer world as to enable them to cherish their ancient characteristics, and preserve them from being thoroughly effaced by the rush and roar, the polish and affectation of modern progress. In the North and East Ridings specially is this the case, for commerce has been chary of carrying her screaming railway whistles, her manufacturers, her speculators, and her armies of workmen amongst the wolds, the hills, and the moors which constitute so great a portion of these ridings, and consequently still retain much of their primitive beauty and peacefulness. The tall, broad-shouldered, Saxon-faced farmer; the happy-eyed housewife; the ruddy-cheeked farm-lass; and the honest, simple-minded serving-man (all as fresh and as real as if they

had stepped out of the pages of Henry Fielding), live their lives out in these remote Yorkshire regions much as they did in the middle of the last century. Their surroundings have been but little altered, their characters, therefore, have not suffered any great change either.

In the West Riding, however, the old and the new clash together so indiscriminately, the prose and the poetry intermingle so curiously, that it requires one to be "native and to the manner born" to distinguish the lines of demarcation. Taking the town populations of the West Riding as a whole, we meet with a strange mixture of ancient simplicity and modern veneer, original characteristics and distinct innovations, both of manner and speech; but in the midst of these hybrid components there stand out in bold relief a number of primitive-minded souls who are as unalterable in their natures as the undarwinised tiger of the Indian jungle. They were Yorkshire to begin with, and Yorkshire they will remain to the close. Wave after wave of change may pass over them; but they will stand firm and immovable in their adherence to the traditions and customs of their forefathers. The vernacularisms of their parents are retained in their daily conversation, and words common enough in the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Fairy Queen*, but totally obsolete in the English literature of to-day, are "familiar in their mouths as household words," varied here and there only in the breadth of the vowel sounds. Le Follet may come forth month after month, changing the fashion of a lady's outward adornments if it likes, but Mrs. Dorothy Maydew will keep faithful to her print gown for week days, her stuff gown for Sundays, and her white frilled cap for all days, through every mutation. The tailors may, if it pleases them so to do, exhibit their wonderful pictures of uncomfortably dressed gentry staring idiotically into vacancy, as inducements to their customers to adopt another cut of costume, but old Mr. Cosyface will still insist upon wearing his knee-breeches and his ancient Prince-Regent swallow-tail. He will not, you may be sure, think of coming within half a century of the present style. His children may approach the latest style within a quarter of a century perhaps, if they strongly desire to do so, but he will never consent to their donning the new-fangled whimsicalities of attire which fashion so rigorously prescribes to her truest votaries.

But this West Riding life is invigorating, though so varied, and the dash and spirit of the new order receive such substantial support—ballast, so to speak—from the steady, plodding spirit of the old, that there is little wonder that prosperity so largely prevails. The whole of the civilised world is represented in miniature in the West Riding. As an industrial centre it is almost unparalleled in the variety and extent of its operations. Leeds is the head-quarters of the woollen trade, and Bradford the head-quarters of the worsted trade, and the large villages which cluster round both boroughs are all busily employed in one trade or the other. Then, there is the immense coal district; there are the two famous ironworks of Low Moor and Bowling; and there are the towns of Halifax, Huddersfield, and Dewsbury, famed respectively for carpets, tweeds, and shoddy. In the West Riding there are towns with forests of factory chimneys vomiting forth smoke, and thousands of looms and spindles, revolving, panting, and humming; there are towns swarming with colliers and foundrymen, black and grimy; there are towns nestling in quiet valleys, looking as quaint and picturesque as if the wonders of steam were unknown there; and there are miles and miles of splendid scenery, where mountain, glen, wood, and river charmingly alternate. These, and much more, are amongst the present characteristics of West Riding life. The towns are thronged with bustling traders from all parts of the world, and not a few of the regular residents are people who have migrated thither from continental countries. Here and there are quiet nooks where fertility and beauty of landscape combine with the antiquated habits of the people to produce a picture which it is both pleasant and instructive to contrast with pictures of more populous places. From the lonely life of the shepherd amongst the remote Craven hills to the monotonous, confining toil of the factory worker is a great step, but both extremes, with all their intermediate gradations and fillings-in, are to be found in the West Riding.

It is fitting, I think, on this brief showing, that an attempt should be made to paint some of the different phases of existence, some of the various scenes, which this important district presents to our study. I, therefore, propose to officiate as limner of one or two scenes of Yorkshire life, scenes which may perhaps serve as a

contrast to the numerous pictures of London life which have been so plentifully (and, indeed, so welcomely) scattered over our literature during the last two or three decades.

BINGTON.

“Deep in the shady sadness of a vale” lies the town of Bington, but in what precise wapentake, division, or liberty need not be further particularised. Suffice it to say that Bington comprises within its parish boundaries all the chief characteristics of West Riding life, ancient and modern. Some portions of the town, and some portions of its people, retain the quaint picturesqueness of the drowsy, jog-trot past; while other portions (of town and people) are fully abreast of the age and participate to the utmost in its advantages and its follies, its intense earnestness and its insane frivolities. In describing Bington, therefore, I am enabled to group together in antithetical array most of the different features of existence which the West Riding can present.

Bington was a thriving town hundreds of years ago, when many of the mushroom cities, which have sprung up and expanded into greatness within the last half-century, were but obscure hamlets. Its situation is one of peculiar beauty. The main street is the high road on which the High-flyer and Rockingham coaches were accustomed to travel in the days when Mr. Squeers used to escort his newly-caught pupils to the attractions of Dotheboys Hall. This street is a narrow, undulating thoroughfare, and is bordered on each side by a most incongruous assembly of buildings. Entering the town from the Woolborough side—Woolborough is a large, smoke-hued, densely populated town a few miles away to the east—we first come upon a row or two of rude, stone cottages, tenanted chiefly by families of factory workers; then we drop down to a bit of level road, on one side of which there stands a batch of large, plate-glass windowed shops of the latest pattern, while on the other side of the road the houses stand with their gables all awry, looking discontented and miserable beside the great staring shop-fronts of the upstart buildings opposite. Two or three ancient hostleries certainly attempt to shine down the shops by dressing up their crumbling walls with plenty of clean paint and plaster, and exhibiting at their doors and windows their typical landlords and landladies, rotund, jovial, and rubicund; but some of the old

houses, erst inhabited by the gentry of the district, lie about in a most straggling fashion, with fronts looking into backs, and backs into fronts, and with outbuildings, corners and jagged arms of wall jerking out in the most zig-zag and provoking manner. Further down is an old mansion converted into a bank; opposite that is the new Mechanics' Institute; and further down still is the railway station, approached by a lane, at the top of which stands, with an inviting stone front and four rows of scrupulously clean windows, the principal hotel in the town. The proprietor of this great addition to the hotel accommodation of Bington is none of your antique, long-pipe-sucking, bluff landlords, such as are found higher up the town; he is a keen man of business, who knows the value of pretty barmaids, and gives the cold shoulder to the lolling, lounging toppers who get drunk cheaply and sleep, and get drunk again, without ever leaving the premises. He believes in serving his liquors over the counter, where imbibition is rapid and change of visitors frequent, and, despite the new Licensing Act and the sneers of his slow-going rivals, he will probably make his fortune in a very few years. A short distance beyond this new hotel we find the old parish church, with its ivy-mantled tower, its hoary walls, and its crowded graveyard, where the monuments and mounds rise up in thick confusion, like the half-remembered memories which they were erected to keep green. In this church repose the remains of mediæval knights and squires, whose ancestral mansions are still retained by their latest successors. A vicar, of very quiet-going religious views, who lives out by the river in a handsome house generously presented to him by his flock when the old vicarage fell to decay, directs the spiritual concerns of the parish in a most comfortable and good-natured way. True, there has appeared a ritualistic firebrand at the new church of St. Betty's, who froths and fumes and endeavours to frighten the people into penitential exercises, but the old vicar's serenity is undisturbed; he still (either by virtue of his comfortable doctrines, or by the mere attraction of the ancient church itself) contrives to keep nearly all the best families of the neighbourhood within his fold. Then, there are numerous conventicles at which the Dissenters worship—devoutly and honestly enough in the main, I have no doubt, but without gathering to themselves that

amount of display of costume and magnificence which throngs to the parish church. These dissenting chapels are mostly hidden away in back streets or thrust into spaces of waste ground, but when the fine summer weather makes its appearance their congregations turn out into the streets with their hymn-books, their ministers, and their deacons, and chant a rousing strain, and pray with all the vehemence of their lungs on behalf of the ungodly multitude which lingers in idleness in the highways and byways, gossiping at gable ends, or leaning over walls, staring with bovine tenderness at the cows in the pastures.

After the main street has got to the old church, it gives a somewhat rude turn, as if determined to avoid making the entire circuit of the churchyard, and shoots off in a straight line through clusters of suburban villas and past nice rows of houses erected for the special preservation of the town's gentility, when it could no longer breathe freely, or comport itself with its accustomed dignity, as it became hemmed in by encroaching regiments of factory workers, smelling of oil, bedaubed with oil, and wearing a black and seared aspect.

Having traversed the principal—indeed, the only—street of the town from end to end, the sketcher lets his eye follow the configuration of the surrounding country. Four parallel lines intersect the valley. One of these is the main street, which we have already travelled over; a second is the river, which is spanned by a triple-arched bridge, at one end whereof rises a flour-dredged corn-mill; the third is the railway; and the fourth is the great Leviathan canal. The canal and the river belong essentially to the past; the main street has an eye to past, present, and future; but the railway seems to point to the future alone. From the side of the valley which is bordered by the river, there rise a succession of fertile woods, "like cloud on cloud," and, in a green expanse beyond, there stands the ancestral mansion of the squire of the parish. On the opposite hillside, that slopes up to a purple ridge of moorland which boldly defines the western horizon for a great number of miles, the green of the pastures and meadows is dotted with palatial residences of merchant princes and manufacturers. Thus, the representatives of the old and the new confront each other, and try to stare each other out of countenance; the one backed up by a sense of prestige

which is the outcome of high birth, the other emboldened by a feeling of superiority engendered by the knowledge that wealth can even outbuy the advantages of birth and station. There is no love lost between the two orders of men. The squire manages to enlist under his banner all the remnants of ancient gentility which have survived in the neighbourhood, while the money-made seigniors command the sympathies of the migratory hordes who have found their way to the town to assist the steam-god in his great work of filling the world with new garments. Now and again, the squire and the merchant meet on the magisterial bench, when a poacher has to be tried; but their sympathies are at variance even there, often, it must be admitted, to the decided advantage of the poacher.

Circling round the main street, in the spaces between the parallel lines before-mentioned, are to be found those huge, oblong, gaunt factories which have wrought such a transformation in Bington during the last half-century; and, jammed in on every available ledge and corner of land that could be found in their immediate vicinity, are the dwelling-houses of the poor, standing in alarming disorder, rising tier upon tier, overlooking each other's roofs, and defying sanitary and architectural laws with a freedom and an audacity which local boards and medical officers have evidently been powerless to control.

Turning from the physical nature of things Bingtonian to the characteristics of the people, we find that they consist of about as many different types as are to be met with in any other community of Englishmen, only that some of the types are more pronounced and distinct than elsewhere. The great distinctive feature of Yorkshire character—thorough heartiness and good fellowship—is present in a marked degree in Bington. The original Bingtonian is a guileless, unsuspecting creature, who works hard, sleeps well, and does not require exciting amusements. His dialect is broad—full of oh's and ah's—his figure is broad, his wit is broad, and his patience is broad. He is a very Rip van Winkle in his easy-going nature; but outwardly, perhaps, he is the most perfect representative of Punch's John Bull that is now extant. Go where you will in Bington—into the factories, the public-houses, the shops, the cottages, or the mansions—you will see some of these fine-limbed, broad-featured men, recognisable everywhere as

the most substantial examples of the Saxon type of humanity. In too many instances, however, you note that these distinguishing features are gradually fading into feebleness before the pressure of unhealthy toil, and you see forms at the loom and at the spinning-frame which tell you that they started in life with a good prospect of reaching the full Saxon standard, had not the exigencies of their position brought them under enervating influences. The Bingtonians who get their living away from the factory are a stalwart and a sturdy race; but the foreigners from the agricultural districts and from Hibernian shores possess less magnitude of proportion, although it is only fair to add that the wiriness of the foreigner's nature makes him physically able to endure almost as much as the more bulky Yorkshireman, and so long as he can avoid being struck or sat upon by the native, his chances of existence are not much smaller than those of his rival.

The language to be heard in Bington, and, to a much greater extent, in the more populous towns of the riding, would puzzle a Max Müller or a George Borrow. The factories and workshops have proved veritable Babels. They have produced the Cockney-Yorkshireman, the Irish Yorkshireman, the Welsh-Yorkshireman, the Scotch-Yorkshireman, and the south and west county-Yorkshireman. Unless a factory immigrant is old, and has become confirmed in his own local speech, he is sure to imbibe something of the accent and peculiarity of language of the great body of his fellow-workers; but, on the other hand, the native catches up a little of the foreigner's lingo, and thus, amongst them, is produced such a medley of sounds and expressions as sets the stranger's teeth on edge. The most wonderful product of this association of peoples and races, however, is the Continental-Yorkshireman; the Frenchman, Swiss, or German, who so far forsakes his nationality as to confuse his foreign accent by interlarding his speech with the most outlandish of Yorkshireisms. This is doubtless done at first as a mere whim, but by-and-bye the whim grows into a habit, and the result is a lingual absurdity which is much more curious than it is entertaining.

Tennyson's Northern Farmer so nearly approaches in speech the ordinary Yorkshire dialect, that no Yorkshireman can fail to understand it; and Mrs. Gaskell, in her *Sylvia's Lovers*, has given something of

the dialect of North Yorkshire; but exceedingly little has been done to reproduce with anything like truthfulness the language of the native of West Yorkshire. Of late years, however, there have been issued from the local press a large number of almanacks and comic pamphlets written wholly in the dialect, but the real dialect-speaking West Yorkshireman has yet to be introduced into English literature. Dialect almanacks, witty and racy though they often are, are not adapted for the uninitiated reader; they can only be appreciated by the people who belong to the soil where they have been produced, and therefore can never be accepted into the literature of the country. Of course, there are many obstacles in the way of the novelist who desires to introduce a Yorkshire character into a work of fiction, for to be faithful in the one matter of speech would probably prove fatal to the acceptability of the novel by the non-Yorkshire public. What is to be condemned is the repeated introduction of Yorkshire characters in fiction and upon the stage, and the palming them off as the genuine article. Let writers and actors acknowledge that they are unable or unwilling to reproduce the true Yorkshireman, and no fault can be found, but do not let them in their representations say, "Here is the picture of the real, living man," when Yorkshiremen themselves are unable to recognise him. Charlotte Brontë was successful in local portraiture to a certain extent, but she was evidently afraid, courageous as she was, of thoroughly filling in her outlines.

After turning back and reading over the last few sentences, I begin to think that, to use a homely phrase, I have "put my foot into it." For have not I undertaken the task of depicting the real Simon Pure? Have not I written at the head of this paper the title *West Riding Sketches*? "True, true," myself answers myself. "But then," interposes a third self, "you have already said that a faithful reproduction would not be understood by the general public, so you had better give us as much description and as little dialogue as possible." Acknowledging the justice of this conclusion I leave the question of dialect, and proceed to tell my readers something of the way in which the Bingtonians amuse themselves, for people are never more natural than when giving themselves up to enjoyment. Allow me, then, to introduce

THE BLETHERHEADS

to your notice.

It is the middle of summer; a period when darkness is almost unknown to those who go to bed betimes, as the Bingtonians do. Indeed, the bridge of darkness is so short that the twilight and the dawn are almost able to shake hands across it. During this delightful season the Bingtonians, when the day's work is over, lounge on the river bridge, go haymaking into the fields, row on the river, watch the canal boats through the locks, loiter about the railway station, or ramble through the woods. But, above all, they are fond of indulging in practical jokes. If they can induce a greenhorn to fetch a "pennorth o' strap oil" from the grocer's, or the second edition of Cock Robin, from the bookseller's, their delight is unbounded. Occasionally they will get up a spelling tourney on the town bridge, when a wiseacre in solemn tones will perhaps demand to be informed what is the longest word in the English language, and great will be his joy if no one can answer him, thus affording him the opportunity of displaying his own orthographic powers by drawing out, in his tortuous, backward and forward style, the following little army of letters—magnificandanjuality—and his hearers will probably be so overawed by the loud-sounding word as to forget to ask whether it has any meaning. The Bingtonians are also addicted to cutting clothes-lines, tapping water tubs, tying ropes across the lanes, and making ghosts, but when Bletcherhead time comes round they eschew all minor amusements and unite in a grand Bletcherhead carnival.

The word bletcherhead (to speak learnedly) is derived from the Yorkshire, and signifies empty-head or noodle. Bletcher is Yorkshire for bladder, hence the word bletcherhead and its significance.

I have already said that it is summer and that the weather is beautiful; I now beg to add that it is Saturday afternoon; that the factories are all closed, and that there is nothing to prevent an out-door celebration being carried out with the most perfect success. The main street is crowded with people, all of whom appear in exuberant spirits. It is a thoroughly Yorkshire crowd, in which boisterous laughter bubbles up at every point, and in which all the seven ages of man (and woman) are represented. The throng thickens into a positive crowd in front of the Dog and Dragoon, whose windows, up-stairs and down, are thrown wide open, revealing an excited gathering

of mysterious figures, Chinese, Hottentot, Patagonian, Red Indian, Black Indian, male and female, partaking of the flowing bowl, while a band of music, with Brobdignagian instruments, composed mostly of tin, is stationed in front of the house.

A startling placard, plastered upon the ancient butter-cross, and on sundry stable and barn-doors, has already told me that the Bington Bletcherheads will hold their grand annual festival in the Royal Albert Park that same afternoon. It has further announced that the loyal Bletcherheads will be attired in full costume, and will proceed in procession from the Dog and Dragoon to the park at three o'clock, there to partake of a stupendous banquet.

At five minutes to three the head of a South American planter stretches out of the Dog and Dragoon window, and commands "the musicianers" to "play up or give us wer (our) brass back." At this, the big drum wakes up with a few thundering bangs, and the trombones give a long wailing yawn of discontent. The conductor—who, as to his hat, is a brigand, as to his jacket, a hussar, and as to his terminations, a trooper—tosses off a foaming tankard, gives one or two of his men a poke with his hand-brush bâton, and then there rises upon the summer breeze such a combination of sounds as never mortal listened to before. When Orpheus took his lyre to the nether regions he could never have known anything about a Bletcherhead band, or he would assuredly have proceeded differently. The tootle-tootle of the life finds its antithesis in the blatant roar of the serpentine tin instrument which coils four times round the body of the stoutest performer; the clear, ringing tones of the cornets are well contrasted by the angelic squeaking of a dozen penny trumpets, and, clinching all, in emphatic fervour, can be heard such a beating of drums, tin cans, pots, and frying-pans, as could not be surpassed even by the regimental bands of the wild tribes of Central Africa. What the tune is I cannot make out. Now it sounds like a donkey Miserere, now like an Ethiopian break² down, now like the Old Hundredth, and now like Dinorah's Shadow Song, played in half a dozen different keys.

The band is still playing in front of the Dog and Dragoon, the crowd surging and shouting around it, when the before-mentioned South American planter stalks out, and commands the band to form. Obedient to the order, the band staggers a dozen yards forward into the street, and

then there come out of the front entrance of the public-house all the distinguished foreigners before observed in the up-stairs room. They come out in couples, as if they were stepping out of Noah's Ark.

Two gaily caparisoned steeds, probably more accustomed to coal-carts than gorgeous processions, await the foremost pair, the king and queen of the Bletherheads. The king is brilliantly accoutred; brass rings, garlands of straw, can-lid medals, and other royal insignia adorning his stalwart figure. His consort is a gushing, six-foot bride of nearly as many stones weight as summers. This Amazonian fair is attired in robes of innocent white, and wears across her swarthy brow a wreath of dandelions. Her voice sounds singularly masculine as she beseeches the admiring crowd to "get aht o' t' gate" (get out of the way), while she leaps on; and her leaping on is a feat which would put to shame many a professional equestrian. It may be also mentioned, as a further token of her masculineness, that there is a decided evidence of moustache on her upper lip.

When the royal pair have got fairly seated on their steeds, an escort of banditti, Allemanni, and Zingari gathers round them, the band strikes up a triumphal roar, and the procession marches off amidst the tempestuous salutations of the crowd. On they go, down the main street, past the old church, and out over the bridge and on to the rural lane leading up to the park.

What an impressive procession it is! All the gipsy tribes of the world, and even of the heathen mythology, must be represented. There are Brahmins, Fakirs, Ancient Druids, Turkish Giaours, Knight (not Good) Templars, Corsairs, pirates from the Archipelago, Maories, grand bashaws, Mussulmans, Cossacks, Irish peasants, Scotch Highlanders, harem queens, Ashantees, Hottentots, and heathen Chinese. There are Apollos, Jupiters, Junos, Pans, Gorgons, and Hydras. Young Endymion is there, so is grey-haired Saturn. Meg Merrilies is there, with her staff and her mysterious eyes; the inevitable Claimant is there, supported by his counsel and the captain of the Bella; Brian de Bois Guilbert is there; Ivanhoe and Rebecca are there; and Old Parr and Henry Jenkins are there, apparently on the look-out for Mr. Thoms. For head-gear, sugar-loaf papers and saucepans are patronised; indeed, there seems to be every possible style of hat worn except the regulation

chimney-pot. The faces of the processionists are painted red, blue, and green, and their garments vary in colour and texture from the saucy Dolly Varden gown and hat to the tattered and torn habiliments of the Donnybrook Fair rioter.

On the procession goes in gorgeous array, up the steep hill, arriving in due course at the park, a barren tract of enclosed moorland. On a level plateau the Bletherheads pitch their tents, light their camp fires, and set their soup pans on to boil. Here, Old Parr, attired in a wool-sorter's pinafore, dismounts from his chariot; here the potato locomotive brings up the rear of the procession; here gingerbread and hot pie-stalls are speedily erected; and here the Bletherhead troupe of musicians prepare to discourse sweet sounds; for, when the banquet is ended, certain light fantastic performances are promised.

Presently the soup boils, and the Bletherheads feed in a very primitive style. Then the band takes up its position in the orchestra and begins to play a waltz. The leading instruments are two immense guitars, the bodies of which instruments bear such mysterious inscriptions as "Thorne's Trinidad Cocoa," "Colman's Mustard," "prime quality," and the like. The leading guitarists see-saw in such delicate style as to bring out the half and quarter tones with remarkable effect. It would be ungenerous not, at the same time, to acknowledge the efficient playing of the tin whistles, the crumpled horns, the penny trumpets, the pots and the pans. A frying-pan solo by a South Sea Islander, and a penny-trumpet duet between an Egyptian mummy and a pale-green Indian, are also really exquisite performances.

But the dancing eclipses everything else. Sir Roger dances with Azucena, Ivanhoe with Meg Merrilies, the Scotch Highlander with an Ancient Druid, Old Parr with an Indian squaw, Endymion with the heathen Chinese, &c. The king and queen, however, frisk it by themselves, refusing to be separated.

And so the revels proceed, and Bington gathers there her beauty and her chivalry as spectators, people come even from the neighbouring towns, and the Bletherhead festivities are acknowledged to be an immense success. So they go on, dancing, capering, eating and drinking, until sundown, when the procession reforms, and wends its way back to the Dog and Dra-

goon, where the Bletcherheads see the night out, and the Bington carnival is at an end.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER VII. IN THE BALANCE.

It is weak, but only natural, to feel fonder of a person than you ever felt before, immediately after having expressed a readiness or a resolve to make a sacrifice for that person. Harty Carlisle went home this day heartfelt of kindly feeling towards Mr. Devenish, and loving her mother more than she had ever loved her before. And this in spite of the perfect faith she felt in the truth of that statement which Claude had made relative to Mr. Devenish being a scoundrel, and Mrs. Devenish being morally weak, if not morally wrong, for remaining with him.

She had parted with Claude on this understanding, that if her mother accepted his terms with anything resembling real satisfaction, she would gladly abide by them. She had been very outspoken on the subject, telling him with careless frankness, that any aversion which his aunt, Mrs. Powers, might show to the marriage would be powerless to affect her, if once her mother gave a cordial consent to it. "For of course I want to marry you, Claude," she added; "there's nothing, nothing on earth but the fear of hurting that poor tried heart of my mother's more than it is hurt already, would keep me from you; you need not fear that I shall let Mrs. Powers's wishes outbalance my own."

She made this statement by way of reply to that remark of Claude's to the effect that he would write to Mrs. Devenish before Mrs. Greyling had time to "chatter to his aunt." It seemed to Harty to be a matter of such minor moment, this chattering, if the great deed were to be done at all. And if it all came to nothing again, to blank dreary nothing, what matter what any outsider said, or thought, or suspected about it?

This meeting with her lover, and finding him so faithfully and fondly her lover still, had cheered and softened the girl to such a degree that she went into the gloomy home atmosphere like a gleam of sunshine. Dinner was over, and Mr. Devenish had dined sufficiently well to be conversational. He was reclining at ease on the drawing-room sofa, his wife sitting near him at

needlework, and Mabel hovering about uneasily. She was longing to get herself away, before it occurred to him to ask her if Harty were alone or not. And she dared not do it, for his conversation was partially addressed to her.

His theme was an essentially unpleasant one to these two poor women. It was a jeremiad against habits of idleness and loitering about, just enough in the abstract, no doubt, but which they intuitively felt was most unjustly directed against the absent Harty. It was flowing on fluently enough when Harty came, looking bright and pretty, looking so bright and pretty that Mabel thought "all must have come right," and breathed a sigh of relief for that the question relative to companionship had not been asked and answered, and Mr. Devenish "put out" by the reply.

The hope, the high, bright, natural hope which Claude had re-kindled in her heart, rendered Harty impervious to the influence of the fog of cold gloom in which Mr. Devenish enveloped himself the instant she appeared. She began descanting with the volubility of old, on the warmth and glory of the blue unclouded weather, on the soft sweeping lines of the meadow lands that environed the river, and on the harmonious effect a sluggishly flowing river has on the human mind. She was so like the enthusiastic, easily wrought upon, and quickly carried away Harty of old, that even her mother looked at her in amazement, and a vague suspicion entered into Mr. Devenish's mind.

"I always used to think when I was a girl that there was nothing like several hours in the open air for restoring one after a dance," Mrs. Devenish said, in an explanatory tone, and in reply to these words Harty said:

"Oh, mother, it is such a lovely world, who can help feeling better for being out in its open air?"

And Mr. Devenish added:

"The loveliness of it hasn't seemed to afford you much pleasure for the last few years; when we were in the midst of really beautiful scenery you refused to go out and enjoy it; it must be an extraordinary combination of circumstances, or your natural love of contradiction and desire to seem unlike other people, which makes you go into ecstasies over this flat, utterly unpicturesque country."

"Such sun-bursts as we're having to-day put colour into everything—into the flattest fields and blackest rolling rivers," Harty

answered, refusing to be checked or cast down. She was moving restlessly about with happy elasticity, moving about with her arms uplifted and clasped over head, as was her wont when in a state of restless joyfulness. As the echo of the words in which she vindicated the justice of her zeal for the day died away, Mrs. Greyling was announced, and that excellent woman and neighbour entered "to inquire for them all after the fatigues of her little gathering last night." And Harty's heart fell down, and her face paled, and a sense of coming worry robbed her in a moment of every atom of that happy elasticity which had been her portion a minute ago.

The sight of the pair whom Mrs. Greyling had so fondly hoped to keep apart, down there alone together on the river bank, on terms of friendly intimacy apparently, had filled her motherly heart with bitterness. The ambition which she had nourished and cherished, the ambition which had been fed by a daily observation of her daughter Agnes's developing charms, might be hindered, if not absolutely baffled altogether, by this interloper; this girl who was not even good-looking an hour together. Intuition told her this, and forced her to acknowledge to herself, that in some subtle way Harty had the winning grace. In her wrath she declared to herself that a girl who could so outrage decorum as to strike up an acquaintance with a young man at a friend's house without an introduction, and meet that young man alone in a secluded spot the very next day, was no fit companion for her daughters.

"I shall take care to let her parents know of it without delay," the watchful woman resolved; "and if they have the slightest sense of decency they'll put a stop to these very compromising meetings, before poor Claude has time to get infatuated about the sly, bold, designing little witch who can't hold a candle to Agnes." She was really awful in wrath and breathlessness, as she loomed upon her children when she went in to recover herself, previous to going over to the house at the corner, and exposing the youngest member of it. So awful in her British matronly indignation that Agnes unwarily remonstrated—and did her favourite Harty harm by the means.

"But, mamma, you don't know—we don't any of us know; they may have met before. I feel sure they have, for last night I heard him call her Harty."

"Some girls are bold enough to make

such advances to a man the minute they meet him, that the man is justified in calling them anything," Mrs. Greyling answered, fiercely; and Agnes clung to her colours and said:

"Not a gentleman such as I think Mr. Powers is, mamma; you have no right to condemn her—we know nothing of the matter. I am only sure of one thing, and that is, that Harty is not a girl to run after a man the minute after she meets him, or at all as far as that goes; don't go over there while you're angry, please don't."

But her partisanship was of no avail. Mrs. Greyling had a righteous antipathy to the wicked flourishing like green bay-trees, if their special form of wickedness was likely to be antagonistic to any of her projects. So now she went over the way like an avenging whirlwind, and Harty was nearly swept away at the first blast of her.

"I hope you have got over the exertion you did me the favour of making to come to my house last night, Mr. Devenish," she said, giving that gentleman's hand an emphatic squeeze. "You left so early that I had no opportunity of introducing you to our friend and neighbour, Mr. Powers. But probably you knew him already? I think I saw this young lady enjoying a confidential chat with him down by the Leeth just now."

She gave Harty an exaggerated smile that was meant to express friendly amiable amusement to the rest, but that revealed a goodly portion of the venom and motive of their visitor to Harty, who, though she most bitterly bemoaned the premature mention which might breed so much mischief, rose up to meet it freely and fearlessly enough.

"Yes, Mrs. Greyling, you did see me down by the Leeth having a very confidential chat with Mr. Powers; why do you look so angry about it?"

"Oh! well, my dear"—Mrs. Greyling was making frantic efforts to speak lightly, but her voice quivered, and her lips shivered as only an angry woman's can—"oh, well, my dear, if you and your parents think such sudden and close intimacies right with young men in Mr. Powers's position, of course I have nothing to say about it; but—" she made an expressive pause and gazed at the ceiling.

"'But' what?" Harty asked, quietly, though she was sorely shaken by the sight of a burning blush on her mother's face, and of a smile that spoke all manner of "I told you so's" on Mr. Devenish's.

"But Dillsborough will talk. I tell you that candidly. Dillsborough will talk; and I must say, to be quite sincere, I think with admirable Mrs. Chapone, that more discretion in the formation of friendship between young people of the opposite sexes would be a most desirable thing."

"Who's Mrs. Chapone?" Harty said, frankly admitting her lamentable ignorance. "I don't know her, and as to 'more discretion being shown,' oh! what nonsense it is to talk in that way, when so often the friendships of years founded in the coldest blood, turn out to be as treacherous as the bog of Allen; there's no provision to be made against being humbugged, Mrs. Greyling; I've found that out long ago—don't fear for me."

"Miss Harriet Carlisle is an able exponent of the abominable modern art of teaching one's grandmother how to suck eggs, you see," Mr. Devenish interposed. "She needs, and will accept of no guidance, no advice, no hints as to her conduct; gratitude, on her part, of course is out of the question; but on behalf of Mrs. Devenish and myself, allow me to thank you for what you have said; we at least promise that with our consent there shall be no repetition of this sort of thing. On behalf of Mrs. Devenish and myself, allow me to state that we have no knowledge of, and will have no knowledge of Mr. Powers."

Mrs. Greyling's mouth had opened in a series of gapes, as Mr. Devenish made this exposition of his views. Now, on his statement drawing to a conclusion, Mrs. Greyling's lips came together with an angry, surprised snap, as Harty struck in:

"Mother! can you bear this, can you bear this—this perversion of the truth? Claude disowned by Mr. Devenish! Claude put in the place——"

"Harty!" her mother appealed in an agonised whisper, and

"Claude! you call him Claude," Mrs. Greyling cried, with a screaming cadence that was as disagreeable as a railway whistle. Then she went on with malicious warmth:

"I really regret that I should have said anything by accident to bring about this very unpleasant ebullition of feeling; but, really, well, under the circumstances, perhaps it is as well; at any rate, Mr. Devenish, I will take care that Mrs. Powers, if she hears anything about it, shall hear of the very straightforward and admirable course you have taken; I shall take care that Mrs. Powers understands that. I shall

be careful that she is under no misapprehension on that point."

Mrs. Greyling quivered and shivered again as she spoke, and Mr. Devenish smiled his peevish smile of unwilling acceptance of justice that had been so long denied to him that he did not care to avail himself of it now that it was ceded to him, too late; and Harty felt herself being consumed by a burning fire that would, probably, blaze out soon, and astonish them all. What had she ever done, what action had she ever committed in her innocent, hard-pressed, unspiteful life, that could warrant the pouring out of these vials of contemptuous wrath upon her? But these questions are futile! She had been too well liked by men, and too well slandered by women, for the meanest types of the latter not to kick her whenever they dared.

She was stung into unadvised, truthful speech by the full knowledge she had of all these things. She was driven into a corner by such contemptibly mean pursuers that she could but turn at bay. Under generous censure she would have been so generously silent. But goaded in this way by gad-flies, who can wonder that she spoke as she did?

"Tell Mrs. Powers a few more truths at the same time; one is, that her nephew is going to marry me, and the other is, that I care very little what Mr. Devenish, or she, or you, or all Dillsborough think or say about it."

Her outbreak had an astounding effect upon her audience. Mr. Devenish sat up suddenly erect in his utter surprise—in his earnest hope that through Claude's love for Harty all things would be made smooth and comfortable for him (Mr. Devenish) in the end. Mrs. Greyling gasped out:

"Upon my word, I really—no one could have supposed anything so sudden—but really, I beg pardon if I have been instrumental in bringing about a premature dénouement."

And Harty's mother only said piteously, "Harty, my child, can it be that Claude is——"

"Just what he always was," Harty interrupted with a quick, passionate stamp. "Don't surmise, and suggest, mother dear, dearest; leave that to Dillsborough; there'll be enough of it after this."

"Then have I your authority for announcing the engagement, or for not contradicting it if I hear it gossiped about?" Mrs. Greyling asked, with stiff suavity,

and Harty answered with indiscreet candour :

"Oh, who cares what is said, or announced, or contradicted—what does it matter? Mother, don't look as if the end of all things were come, and I was condemning myself to everlasting agony. What does it matter what's said? It won't alter a single fact, it won't—" She was going to say, "it won't smooth our path or make it harder according to my idea," but she was checked by Mrs. Greyling rising up with virtuous precipitation, and saying :

"I am sure I meant it in the most friendly spirit, and that my visit should have been so inopportune is a matter of the deepest regret to me. I shall take the earliest opportunity of congratulating Mr. Powers on the—happy event. Good-bye," and she pressed the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Devenish with fervour, and went out of the room in a little agitated bustle with Mabel, leaving Harty to fight her battle alone, with the conviction strongly upon her that she had made an honest fool of herself.

As their visitor's footsteps died out with a fierce prance in the passage, Mr. Devenish relapsed on to the sofa with that air of utter abnegation which is so soul-wearying to lookers-on.

"It's just as I expected," he muttered, "just as I expected."

When this sentence is uttered to them, why have not the poor patient heart-torn hearers of it the pluck to say, "Then be precious glad that you have realised your expectations," instead of being idly, simply sorry and sympathetic, as Mrs. Devenish was on this occasion?

"Edward, dear, we don't know yet what explanations, what excuses Harty may have to offer to you; don't be distressed, dear; don't agitate yourself about it; I'm sure Harty will tell you that she has been——"

"A fool," Harty struck in, vehemently. "Oh, mother, such a fool!"

Then she turned to Mr. Devenish with sudden humility, recognising as many as she could of the claims her mother recognised, and said :

"May I ask mamma to come away with me? May I tell my mother of my folly alone?"

And he answered promptly, as a man with a debased, Heaven-wronged nature would be sure to answer :

"See her alone if you both desire it, but I have a contempt for these confidences, and a suspicion of them."

At which Harty determined with angry,

foolish precipitation, that she would make no confidences, since they only would bring more soul-worrying contempt and suspicion upon her—that she would keep her own counsel—that she would let events take their course, and make no effort to save herself from misery by telling the truth to and pleading with her mother.

"Very well," she said aloud, "I have nothing more to say, Mr. Devenish; it would be a vain refutation probably, so I'll not tell the story of the last hour or two." Then she remembered all she might eventually lose through this man who was so cruel to her, and went away to her own room, that he might not have the triumph of seeing her in tears.

To her own room, where Mabel came weeping supinely over the untoward revelation that "poor Mrs. Greyling had so inadvertently made."

"Inadvertently!" Harty roused herself from her despondency to reply contemptuously. "If ever a cat advanced upon one designing to scratch, Mrs. Greyling did upon me to-day." Then she told Mabel a portion of what had transpired down by the Leeth. A portion, but not all. She narrated the bare facts of the case as it now stood, but she refrained from portraying Claude's ardour; and so Mabel was sympathetic to a certain degree, but sisterly also.

"I'm afraid, Harty dear," she said, shaking her head sagaciously, "that there's more love on your side than on his; it's hard for me to say it, but I shouldn't be dealing truthfully with you if I didn't tell you what I think; there's absolute cruelty in that suggestion that you should relinquish us all for ever for him?"

"He never made such a suggestion," Harty said, indignantly; "he only stipulates that he himself can hold no communication with Mr. Devenish, and I feel that Claude is right."

"Oh! Harty, how can you? Think, if he is so unforgiving about some slight offence from dear papa, how unrelenting he would be if you ever offended him," Mabel exclaimed, effusively. And Harty shook her head slowly in melancholy helplessness and bewilderment as she answered :

"I can't 'think' about anything, Mab; I'm past thinking. I can only feel that I don't know what to do, and that you're a ten thousand times better girl than I am. I don't know what to do. Something must happen soon, for Claude will write to mamma, and then I wonder! I wonder!"

It was all constraint and suppression in the Devenish household for the remainder of that day. Mrs. Devenish dared not go after the girl and speak any of the words of loving comfort which she was longing to offer to poor Harty, for fear of arousing any of the sensitively selfish suspicions of her husband, and Harty, after that one burst up in her own room, grew strangely calm, as one does grow while anticipating a strong convulsion of circumstances that must utterly upset all existing conditions.

By-and-bye, late in the evening, a letter was brought in and handed to Mrs. Devenish, who took it with as much trepidation as she would have taken up a loaded pistol. She had few friends to write to her, and the few who did write her husband disliked, therefore the receipt of a letter from any one of them was more a source of woe than of joy to her. She took this one up now, and placed it with a tremulous hand in her work-basket, hoping that its advent had escaped her husband's observation. This, not from any desire to deceive, but from a natural longing to evade further fuss. A moment before Mr. Devenish's eyes had been closed; but now, when she looked at him, they were wide open, and bent on her.

"What's that?" he asked.

"A letter, dear," she answered, nervously.

"Why hide it from me? Why am I deceived and kept in the dark about everything? Why not open it at once, and see from whom it is?" the fretful accents rang out. And Harty felt that now would waves of sorrow be made to roll over her devoted head, when her mother obediently did as she was desired, and answered, with faltering tongue, that the letter was from "Claude Powers."

"Read it out," the puerile autocrat commanded. And again Mrs. Devenish was on the point of obeying him when Harty interrupted.

"No, no; that letter is for my mother's sight only. It is to my mother about her own child. You are not my father, Mr. Devenish; you have no fatherly feeling for me. It would be cruel to us all to make my mother read that letter until she knows its contents herself."

She had risen up, and was standing now with her hand on her mother's shoulder, with a look of such defiant disdain on her face for the puny tyrant on the sofa that

Mr. Devenish felt himself quelled for the time.

"Thank Heaven I'm not your father; you're no credit to him, let me tell you," he grumbled. And then he rose up, and got himself away out of the room, and Harty was left alone with her mother and sister, with the feeling growing stronger each moment that the worst was to come.

She was resolved to leave all the persuasion, all the pleading, to her lover, but just one small appeal for justice, if not mercy, she did make.

"Mamma, did you ever love my father?" she said, softly. "If you did, remember that I am his child when you read that letter."

"Harty!" was all Mrs. Devenish could say. Her feeling for the husband of her youth, the father of her children, the tender, true gentleman who had worshipped and surrendered his own will and way to hers on every occasion, was as water unto wine compared with the slavish, enduring devotion she felt for her present master. But she could hardly tell her child this fact in so many words. And she could not bring herself to utter a lie. Accordingly she merely murmured "Harty!" most piteously, and then with trembling fingers opened the letter that had come like a fiery brand into their midst.

There was dead silence in the room as she read it. Harty flung herself on the sofa that was usually held sacred to Mr. Devenish, and covered her eyes with her hands. Instinct told her that the expression of her mother's face, as she gradually mastered the contents of Claude's letter, and realised what Claude's opinion of Mr. Devenish was, would be a trifle too much to endure quietly. So she covered her eyes with her hands, and waited until the end.

It came at last. The letter was thrown on the table, and Mrs. Devenish began to speak.

"Do you know—have you——" Her voice shook so that she had to pause and steady it, and Harty sat up, her earnest eyes bent steadily on the face of the one into whose hands she had placed her destiny. "Do you know the contents of this letter?" her mother asked.

"Yes," Harty said.

"I shall never speak to, or touch, Claude Powers's hand in friendship again, Harty. Warny him if you wish, but it will be leaving me for ever."

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXVII. A LAWYER'S OFFICE.

NOT that my dinner was by any means a good one; it was, indeed, detestable: raw, greasy, gristly, and half cold. But I was very hungry. On the journey my appetite had lain in abeyance; I had scarcely touched the abundant packet of provisions my mother had supplied me with. I had only applied to my flask once, when the dust of the road had become unendurably choking. But I was now prepared to devour almost anything; which was fortunate, as it happened. I even emptied a small decanter of sherry, a curious compound, in which fire and acidity struggled for ascendancy, both, with good reason, claiming the victory. The pimpled waiter eyed me inquiringly, but rather with amused contempt than with genuine sympathy, I suspect, as I drained my glass. Possibly he was expecting me to fall mortally stricken by the unwholesome draught, and desired to witness that catastrophe. I survived, however. I was "a regular yokel." And I had the supreme digestive powers of youth.

The "boots" of the Golden Cross, upon my summons, relieved me of my boots, chalking the number of my room upon their solid soles, and equipped me with slippers of enormous dimensions. It was a gymnastic and terpsichorean feat, mounting the stairs to bed and retaining these vast receptacles upon my feet. Often I was wrecked from them, as it were, and had much difficulty in getting aboard them again. While I was thus engaged I encountered a laughing chambermaid. It was to conceal her mirthfulness, perhaps, that she proffered me "a pan of coals" for my

bed. I declined the proposition, but vaguely comprehending it.

I slept very soundly, losing consciousness almost immediately after I had extinguished my candle, and groped my way to my massive mausoleum of a bedstead. It creaked and groaned ominously as I entered it. Then I sunk deep into a feather bed, as into a mound of newly-turned earth. A sense of dampness, a smell of mouldiness, a feeling that the sheets were of an unaccustomed material and texture, and then—I was asleep.

I awoke early. There was much noise. The rattle and patter of harness and hoofs, the hissing of ostlers, the thunderous rumbling of an early coach passing beneath the archway of the inn, a babel of voices. It was daylight. I tried to open the window, but it resisted all my efforts: I doubt if it ever had been, or could be, opened.

After breakfast, under the supervision of the pimpled waiter, who looked more pimpled than ever by daylight, perhaps owing to his very sallow complexion, I sallied forth. The waiter had besought me to order dinner, but I declined to commit myself to that proceeding. He was not very civil. And washing would no doubt have benefited his appearance. And if he had brushed his threadbare black coat he would perhaps have looked rather more tidy, or less slovenly.

I bought a map of London, and felt then fortified on the subject of losing my way, or incurring danger, possibly suffering death even for mysterious surgical purposes. I had been much exercised for some time past by considerations of that sort. And I had my hair cut. I had observed that my locks were longer and more straggling than appeared to be the fashion of town.

"From the country, sir, I should say?" remarked the hairdresser. "I thought so. They've always such a knife-and-fork way of cutting 'air in the country. I can always tell by a gent's 'ead where he's 'ad his 'air cut. You'll excuse me, sir. We'll soon get it in nice order for you. Wonderful thick you hair grows to be sure, sir. But it's too dry. Likely to come off in patches by 'andfuls, I should say, before long. Dear me! They must have cut it with a chopper or a sickle where you come from, sir."

I blushed. The Purrington barber was rather a rude practitioner. Besides operating on human hair, he was in the habit of clipping horses, at times, even, of trimming and shearing sheep. But I came to the conclusion that the Londoners were not very respectful, and were unpleasantly inclined to personal criticism.

I felt, however, that I left the hairdresser's hand with a smartened aspect. I wished all the same that the pomatum with which he had anointed me had been less powerfully odorous. Throughout the day I was conscious, especially whenever I removed my hat, of a sort of atmosphere of greasy scent attending me whithersoever I went. I was inconvenienced, moreover, by the weight in my pocket of a heavy jar of the same unguent, of which I had become possessed upon the urgent invitation of the hairdresser. He had besought me, indeed, to expend quite a small fortune in the acquirement of a selection from his wares. I had evaded his solicitations, I thought, rather cleverly by saying that I would try the pomatum first, and if I found that fulfil his account of it, I would certainly return to make further purchases. He could hardly contest this view of the case, without manifesting inconvenient distrust of the virtues of the commodity he had so commended to my notice.

With some difficulty I found my way to Golden-square. Mr. Monck's house had but a side view of the enclosure, and could only by courtesy be described as pertaining to the quadrangle. On this account, perhaps, the letter A was added to its number, proclaiming it an appendage in the nature of a redundancy. The name of "Monck" was inscribed in large letters upon a tarnished door-plate. A smaller plate fixed above a bell-handle in the door-post bore the word "Office." The house was of considerable size, and boasted a certain respectability of aspect, in spite of its exceeding dinginess. It seemed encrusted with soot, its window-panes clouded with dust, its iron

railings rusty, its woodwork almost bare of paint. The door was spotted with blisters, and was shedding its outer skin in strips and patches. I pulled the bell. The knocker I found to be secured by an iron staple. There was the clicking sound of wirework moved by a sluggish spring, and then, the door swung slowly open by invisible agency. I stood alone in a narrow feebly-lighted hall or passage. Then I observed, in large letters upon a black board nailed against the wall, "Please to shut the door." I obeyed this direction.

After a moment's hesitation I proceeded along the passage, and, passing two doors, each marked "Private," arrived at a third, bearing upon it the word "Office." I knocked.

"Come in," cried a loud voice.

I entered a spacious room built out at the back of the house, and lighted by a skylight.

"Is Mr. Monck in?" I inquired.

There was but one person in the room, an elderly man, with iron-grey hair, combed into a peak on the top of his forehead, and projecting thence like the horn of a unicorn. He was sitting on a high stool, writing at a desk with brass rods rising above it for the support of books and papers. He thus surveyed me through a frame, as it were, or from a window.

"In one moment," he said. And he continued to write.

I glanced round the room. It was very bare of furniture, and the ceiling was black with smoke. A little stove stood in one corner with a long funnel springing from it, taking zigzag forms, and then suddenly darting through the wall. The uncarpeted floor was much blotched with ink, and very gritty to walk upon. I have known smoother gravel paths. There were other desks and stools, a pile of tin boxes, a deal press, with pigeon-holes and shelves, crowded with discoloured papers and books, and an iron safe, painted green, with a brass handle. Tattered, fly-spotted almanacks, notices, and lists hung awry upon the grimy walls. Near the stove was an engraved portrait, in a black frame, of a judge in his wig and robes, but the glass was so dimmed and dusty I could scarcely trace out the design. Suddenly I observed that, while I was taking note of the room and its contents, the man at the desk had ceased to write, and was eyeing me intently. He then solemnly and deliberately took a pinch of snuff from a tin box.

"You wish to see Mr. Monck?"

"Yes."

"Particularly?"

"Well, yes, I may say particularly."

"He's engaged at present."

"Will he be disengaged shortly?"

He looked at a large thick silver watch, extracted from his fob by a steel chain with much effort.

"I can't say I think he'll be disengaged very shortly."

"Had I better call again, or shall I wait?"

He climbed down from his high stool slowly and laboriously, with something of the action of a bear descending its pole, and approached me.

I then perceived that he was of very low stature, and that this was mainly due to the disproportion of his lower limbs. His shoulders were broad and high, his head large, and his arms unusually lengthy, but his legs were so short and unsubstantial that they seemed to be a sort of misfit, and to be at discord with his other members. He shuffled somewhat as he walked, craning his head and bowing outwards his back. He had hard aquiline features, a deeply-lined face, a snuff-stained upper lip, and thick bristling eyebrows, beneath which his sharp grey eyes glittered shrewdly. He spoke with an air of watchful cunning and suspicion, but his manner otherwise was not discourteous. He wore a thread-bare olive-green coat, long in the tails and sleeves, and high in the collar, buttoned across his chest; a brooch adorned his rather soiled shirt-front, and a black silk cravat was loosely wound round his neck. He dispensed with shirt-collars. He carried his tin snuff-box in one hand and held streaming from the other a stringy, faded, yellow silk handkerchief.

"Mr. Monck is engaged," he said. "But perhaps I may be able to do as well. May I ask your business?"

"My name is Nightingale," I began. A curious smile seemed to star his face all over with dints and wrinkles.

"Precisely," he interrupted. "I thought it might be Mr. Nightingale. Take a seat, please." He handed me a battered, wooden-seated chair. "I hope you find yourself quite well, Mr. Nightingale, and have recovered from the fatigues of your journey. From Purrington, I think? I'm from that part of the country myself. I thought, from your way of speaking, if I may be permitted to say so, that you might be young Mr. Nightingale of Purrington. Precisely. We have been expecting you, Mr. Nightingale."

"You know Purrington, Mr. —"

"Vickery, my name is—Mr. Monck's manager. Yes, I know Purrington, but not very well. I was not born there, though not very far from it. I've not been there for many years. But I may say I know Purrington. Lord Overbury has a place there, I think? Precisely. Yes, Overbury Hall. Glad to see you in London, Mr. Nightingale. We'll make you as comfortable as we can. There's no necessity whatever for your troubling yourself about seeing Mr. Monck. We were expecting you. All arrangements have been duly made and settled. And you left your uncle, Mr. Orme, I think, quite well? Precisely."

There was something cat-like, it seemed to me, in his way of eyeing me from under the shadow of his bristling brows. He appeared to watch the effect upon me of all he said, and to be not less heedful as to the nature of his utterances. He was friendly and polite after an old-world fashion, yet there was an air about him of suspicion and craftiness, and almost of mystery. I attributed this to his calling. Connected with the law, doubtless, for many years, he had become the depository of secrets without number, and was bound to maintain strict guard over himself. In the same way he had acquired distrust of others—was influenced by a perpetual fear lest he should be over-reached, and his hidden knowledge brought to light by some adroit manoeuvre on the part of his interlocutors. But if he disclosed little he was bent upon learning much. By his ingenious system of questioning me, and of risking statements, and then, finding himself uncontradicted, assuming them to be facts, and treating them as a basis upon which to found further inquiries, he soon possessed himself of all I had to tell, and had arrived at distinct conclusions as to my character and intentions, and generally as to the condition and views of my relatives. Upon my entrance he had affected to be much occupied, but he made no attempt to resume the labours I had seemed to disturb. He stood beside me chatting, as though he had ample time to spare, taking snuff freely, and busily flourishing his handkerchief.

"A wonderful study the law, Mr. Nightingale, as you'll find out for yourself very shortly. Arduous, no doubt, and intricate, and dry—so I've heard people say, but that is not my experience. You're not much acquainted with the subject, yet? No. So I had judged. Not read a single law book,

I dare say. No. It was not to be expected. You're young, you see, and, as you have said, brought up alone in the country—in a solitary farm-house. Precisely. You were not likely to make the science of law one of your studies. Of course not. But you've done well to come direct to London, the head-quarters of law. I am not myself a solicitor; as I said, name of Vickery, Mr. Monck's managing clerk—I pretend to be nothing more—and I wouldn't be thought wanting in respect to country practitioners—very excellent men, many of them, no doubt—but their offices are not a good school. The cream of their business comes to London. Conveyancing they have, of a sort, and assize business, vestry meetings, turnpike trusts, and so on. A confined sphere of action. You were quite right to come to town direct. Your uncle, Mr. Orme—I know the name—was an early friend of Mr. Monck's? Knew him intimately, at one time, I think you said?"

I explained that so far as I was informed my uncle had known Mr. Monck well in times past, how intimately I could not say, but certainly that they had not met for very many years.

"Precisely," Mr. Vickery went on. "That was how I understood the matter. No. They have not met for very many years; of course not. Mr. Orme has had little occasion, happily, for legal assistance. Rarely visits London, probably? Mr. Monck rarely quits it, he is so much engaged. I will see that you are made comfortable here, Mr. Nightingale, and are put into the right way. As Mr. Monck's manager, he being so much engaged, that duty usually devolves upon me. We will have that desk in the corner cleared out for you, Mr. Nightingale; you'll be snug there, out of the draught of the door. You'll soon feel yourself at home. Precisely. All does seem very strange at first. And you're new to London? Your first visit? So I had judged. And you are staying at—"

"At the Golden Cross."

"At the Golden Cross. You'll be glad, no doubt, to move from there as soon as possible. You will take lodgings?"

I said that it was upon that subject I had been enjoined to seek Mr. Monck's counsel.

"Precisely," said Mr. Vickery. Then, after a pause, he resumed: "But perhaps it's hardly necessary to trouble Mr. Monck upon such a matter. Lodgings are easily met with, of all sorts, at all prices. You would wish to be moderate in your expendi-

ture? Precisely. One gentleman articulated here, some years ago now, lived at Islington, but that's rather distant; another, I remember, lodged in Featherstone-buildings, Holborn. That might do, Mr. Nightingale, if you're really without choice. Featherstone-buildings, a central situation, quiet, respectable, comfortable, and not too expensive. I think you might find Featherstone-buildings suit you."

I said I thought so too; never having heard of the place before.

"If it doesn't suit, you can easily make a change; a week's notice is all that's required. You'll be glad to see about the matter at once perhaps? Precisely. And as you're new to London, you may care to look about you a little before taking your seat here. There's much to see in London—especially to a young gentleman visiting town for the first time—very much to see. I am sure of Mr. Monck's concurrence when I say that there need be no hurry about your setting to work in the office. You've five years before you, you know. A day or two is no great matter. You're going? Good morning, Mr. Nightingale. Happy to make your acquaintance. And, if you should happen to be writing home, I am sure you may present Mr. Monck's best remembrances to your uncle, Mr. Orme; say, indeed, anything becoming and respectful of that sort that may occur to you. Good morning!"

So I left Mr. Vickery, taking snuff with grave composure. Long after I had quitted Golden-square, I seemed to feel his scrutinising, suspicious eyes fixed upon me with curious intentness.

HEALTH IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

THERE is no fact more clearly disclosed by the figures, from time to time published by the Registrar-General, than that the population of towns is rapidly and uniformly increasing, whilst the people of the rural districts are almost stationary, or, in some cases, diminishing in numbers.

Not a few of our readers may imagine, at first sight, that the relative health of town and country has long since passed beyond the field of controversy. There is an impression abroad, that any given person residing in any town has a less chance of health and long life than any other person living in the country. Still more confident is the impression that the occupier of a smart suburban villa has necessarily a

better prospect of surviving to a good old age than his cousin who is doomed (as he may think) to pass most of his nights, as well as days, in the middle of a town.

In so far as the suburban resident may plume himself upon his better location, the interests of truth may compel us to impart to him a few shocks which may seem rude, however gently intended. In so far as the relative health of town and country may be practically inquired into, a broad glance may be usefully cast over the interesting figures at our disposal.

The year 1872 was one of such exceptional good health, especially in London, that it could scarcely be taken as a criterion, even if we had all the figures before us. Lest such figures should lead us into erroneous conclusions arising out of their exceptional character, it is perhaps as well that we cannot get them in full, and that we should be compelled to fall back upon those of 1870, that being the latest year for which the detailed returns have been completely published long enough for careful examination.

In 1870, then, we are told that in towns the mortality was at the rate of 24.7 per thousand, whilst in the country it was only at the rate of 20.6 per thousand. The towns included are London and all the places returned as of the greatest population, descending down to an arbitrary line drawn between the greater and lesser towns. That mode of proceeding seems to imply that the greater the extent and population of a town the unhealthier it must be.

The fact that towns are enormously increasing in population as compared with country districts is one about which there can be no dispute. Whether for good or for evil, it is an incontrovertible fact. The tendency of population thus disclosed is also beyond the power of immediate control. Whatever the tendency may be in the far future, there is no prospect of any check likely to operate very soon. Such being the case, and considering that the increase of towns appears inevitable for a long time to come, if we are to take the above bald figures as conclusive, they are truly deplorable, and the prospect is most gloomy.

If it is to be granted, without further parley, that mortality is excessive in proportion as towns are larger, the continued increase in the magnitude of towns must result in a further increase in the excessive death-rates. We have only to go on as we have done for another century or so, and,

upon that presumption, these islands must be entirely depopulated.

Fortunately, however, for our peace of mind and future prospects, the above figures, taken in conjunction with others from the same source, land us in a curious paradox. The Registrar-General, whilst marshalling his figures so as to exhibit towns at a disadvantage, simultaneously admits that, notwithstanding the increase of towns, mortality is steadily diminishing, in direct defiance of the theory of rural salubrity.

Further investigation proves that a town is not necessarily fatal to health in proportion to its magnitude and population, for, of the very largest towns, London, the largest of all, is by far the healthiest. Its mortality, including all its unhealthiest districts, is very much lighter than that of most of the other greatest towns. Thus, in 1870, the mortality of London was at the rate of 24.1* per thousand against 29.4 at Leeds, 31.2 at Manchester, 31.6 at Bristol, and 39.1 at Liverpool.

We observe that the Registrar-General's summary is too tenderly considerate of the reputation of the most unhealthy places, and by way of qualifying it, combines the unhealthiest districts with the less unhealthy adjoining. Thus, he gives the figures for Bristol, after diluting them with those of Clifton, and Manchester with Salford. In like manner, by running in West Derby with Liverpool, the figures of the latter are plausibly put down at 32.9, whereas they are really 39.1, as before stated.

Furthermore, it comes out that the unhealthiest district of London is a shade healthier than the healthiest sub-district of Liverpool. Unfortunately for the reputation of Chelsea, it is the unhealthiest district of the metropolis, its figures being 28.2 per thousand, whilst the sub-district of St. George, Liverpool, though the healthiest locality of that town, gives us figures of 28.3.

During the same year some of the unhealthiest districts of London were healthier by far than the aggregate of smaller places. For instance, the notorious and despised districts of Bethnal Green, figuring at 24.5, Whitechapel at 25.3, Shoreditch at 25.7, and St. Giles's at 25.9, compare very favourably with the above figures obtained from Leeds, and the other black spots enumerated.

We thus learn that neither the magnitude

* These figures for London are those stated by the Registrar-General, our calculation gives only 23.8.

of a town, nor its density of population, nor the remoteness of its centre from the open country, is any fair clue to its probable health. St. George's, Liverpool, is comparatively a suburb, with a population of only nine thousand, including more than an average of well-to-do people, living in good houses, by no means crowded, and within an evening's stroll of a splendid park, and an entirely rural district. St. Giles's, London, on the contrary, has a population of over fifty-three thousand, with an extreme preponderance of intensely poor creatures, densely packed in cramped-up dwellings, abutting upon lanes and alleys, which are a standing opprobrium to the metropolis, and the terror and eyesore of passers-by. At the same time, this population is so far from country air and rural scenes, that the distance in a straight line between it and the nearest corn-field can only be computed by miles. Those who roughly assume that town life is necessarily unhealthier than suburban and country life, will find it difficult to explain why the death-rate of the Liverpool St. George (28.3) is considerably in excess of the London St. Giles (only 25.9).

It is necessary to remark, with reference to districts and sub-districts of London, and sub-districts of Liverpool and other places, that the primitive figures published do not afford a precisely correct criterion of comparison, on account of the deaths in hospitals and other public institutions. Some districts contain many such institutions, which go to swell the death-rate, and others contain none, so that their primitive returns exhibit a low death-rate which, if adopted without qualification, would deceive. In order to get over this discrepancy, it is necessary to adopt a system of equation, so as to distribute the deaths in institutions according to the average of other deaths in the districts or sub-districts concerned. In all our figures such an equation has been resorted to before stating the rates.

With this proviso, some more minute comparisons will be found interesting and valuable. Amongst the returns which are called into requisition by the Registrar-General in order to show the apparent unhealthiness of towns, figures are derived from many places where the mortality is comparatively appalling. Having ascertained that the average of London is 24.1 per thousand, we find that the sub-district of south-east Leeds exhibits a mortality of 36.2; Ancoats, Manchester, of 36.8; St.

James's, Bristol, of 46.5; and Howard-street, Liverpool, of 47.9; the last-named locality being the unhealthiest in the British Isles.

As the mortality in London is little more than half that of the localities just named and many others, it is a misleading course to lump all the large towns together in one category. What we understand as properly implied by the word "town," is a place where beneficent art has been introduced for the purpose of mitigating, not aggravating, the thousand ills that flesh is heir to. The unhealthiest of the unhealthy places are not so because they are towns, but because they lack all the conditions necessary to render them worthy of the name.

The sub-district of Howard-street, Liverpool, is skirted by an entirely open expanse of country, close to the coast, and having all the advantages of the sea-breezes blowing from the west. The excessive mortality is not owing to density of population, for the whole people of the district only number a little over eighteen thousand. The evidence is conclusively furnished by this case, as compared with St. Giles's, London, that to draw a line between town and country, and to say the former is necessarily unhealthy in proportion to its isolation from open country and fresh air, is delusive.

Additional facts go to show, that a well-ordered town ought to be, and is, healthier than the country. The average mortality in the rural districts is 20.6 per thousand, and the lowest rate of the counties obtains in Huntingdonshire and Westmoreland, which, both alike, figure at 18.7. In contradistinction to that, we turn to Lewisham—certainly not rural—where (after adding a share of hospital deaths) the figures are 19.3, and (with the like proviso) to Hampstead, where they are only 17.8, so that these two London districts are lower than the average of rural districts, and the latter lower than the lowest.

Proceeding to a still more minute inspection, we discover that the mortality in the sub-district of Hanover-square is only at the rate of 16.8; May-fair, 15.5; and St. John, Paddington, 14.8; town figures which put the most boasted rural districts into the shade. Indeed, if we deduct the deaths at institutions which are properly ascribable to adjoining neighbourhoods, the actual mortality is only 12.7 in St. John's, and but 13.1 for the three sub-districts taken together. Their united popu-

lations are close upon seventy thousand, whereas the population of Westmoreland numbers only sixty-five thousand, and Huntingdonshire but fifty-eight thousand. Here, again, we have a marked reversal of the notion that density of population, within reasonable bounds, is inimical to health. Another way of stating it will, perhaps, exhibit this more clearly. The town population of seventy thousand gives us (sinking the institutions) only nine hundred and twenty-one deaths, whilst the county district of only sixty-five thousand in Westmoreland suffers a loss of one thousand two hundred and twelve, and Huntingdonshire, out of fifty-eight thousand people, has to mourn over one thousand and eighty-six fatalities.

A few more comparisons, instituted between districts of the metropolis, prove fatal to the notion that suburban residences necessarily command a superior state of health. The five healthiest suburbs of the metropolis are Hampstead, Lewisham, Hackney, Kensington, and Islington, in the order of their enumeration; the first being put at 17.8 and the last at 22.0. As compared with most other localities they are relatively healthy; but when tested by the figures of the most fortunate sub-districts before mentioned, they lose reputation by the contrast. The returns show that Hampstead is not exceptionally healthy merely because it is a suburb, but because of other conditions. If St. Giles's and Hampstead, remaining in all other respects as they are, were merely transposed in their respective positions, there is reason to believe that the returns would be pretty much the same. Hampstead would then be another central seat of good health adjoining that of Hanover-square, and St. Giles's a disgraceful suburb.

Those who still feel disposed to insist that the comparative good health, for instance, of Hackney (20.6) is owing to the fact that it is a suburb, must be called upon to explain why the district of Greenwich (quite as suburban as Hackney) is unhealthier than Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, and only an inappreciable shade better than St. Giles's. Still more difficult will any one find it to reconcile some of the figures elsewhere with the theory of suburban salubrity. For instance, there is Chelsea, comparatively a suburb, with a mortality of 28.2, whilst no other entire district of the metropolis suffers to the extent of more than 25.9. But the most startling shock to the prevalent suburban theory

proceeds from an examination of the returns of sub-districts still further west. Hence we find that the mortality of Fulham is 28.0, or several degrees unhealthier than St. Giles's; and the sub-district of St. Peter, Hammersmith, proves to be the blackest spot within the metropolitan area, having a mortality of 32.4: and, though we make an exceptional allowance, and deduct half the deaths recorded against it in respect of institutions, even then the mortality comes out at 29.2, and its unenviably notorious position remains unchanged. Some may seek to explain the excessive mortality of South-West London, extending from Westminster to Fulham, by those to lowness and flatness of the site, but the theory must give way before the remarkably favourable returns from Portsmouth, one of the flattest and lowest sites in England, placed in the midst of very numerous and extensive inlets of the sea, abounding with mud and exhalations apparently inimical to health.

Leamington affords one of many illustrations to be derived from the provinces, that suburbs and rural outskirts everywhere are no better guarantee of salubrity than in the metropolitan district. The recorded mortality at Leamington in 1870 was 18.3, and, if we sink the few hospital deaths as properly assignable to the county at large, the true figures are only 17.7, in a town population of about twenty-three thousand; whereas the mortality in the adjoining truly rural districts is as high as 20.0. It may be remarked that there are many worse rural districts, and though there is no better example of what so considerable a provincial town may be, there is still room for such an improvement there, as to show still more vividly what it ought to be.

All these figures, taken together, and fairly digested, prove the fallacious nature of prevalent ideas concerning suburban versus urban residences. If the City merchant or professional man makes a clean breast of it, and says he lives in a suburb because he likes to do so, we will commend him for his candour, and freely accord to him his right of choice; but if he seeks to justify the expense and loss of time by appealing to considerations of health, there is some ground for suspecting that he is labouring under a popular delusion.

The truth of our position in this respect has been dawning for some years, and has found expression in official comments, where we read that, "while the town mortality is kept down within its old limits, the mortality in the small towns, suburbs

of large towns, and villages, is rapidly increasing." Since those very weighty words were written there has been a marked improvement in the health of large towns, so that the mortality is not only "kept down," but very much reduced, in London especially, beyond all precedent; and, though that may be assigned in some degree to inevitable fluctuations, the official opinion, based upon prolonged observation, is, that a portion of the improvement "is permanent, and is the result of the general awakening to the importance of sanitary measures, which has been so conspicuous in the last few years."

It is important, therefore, to accept the lesson of these experiences, and its teachings are to the effect that the proper course to take towards further improvement in the health of towns is to make them more compact; to abolish as far as possible the crooked streets and higgledy-piggledy courts and alleys, and eccentric plans and buildings, which all add to the difficulty of rendering complete and efficient those sanitary measures which have hitherto proved so beneficial. In contradistinction to such a wise policy, it is a delusion and a snare to seek sanitary improvement by the creation of straggling suburbs. Such a course has seriously increased the difficulty and expense of local management, and the note of warning has already been struck that it is a sanitary mistake, pregnant with a future accumulation of disastrous consequences.

Turning once more from the narrower boundaries of city and suburb to the broader line of demarcation between town and country, we get but a continuation of the same lesson. The rough-and-ready figures of the Registrar-General, which seem so unfavourable to the health of town life, have a growing tendency to re-adjust themselves to the contrary conclusion.

It must be borne in mind that there is a constant flow of population from the rural districts to the towns. The strong, most capable, and most fortunate migrate because they choose to do so, and of such stuff is the energy and prosperity of the nation made. But the weak and less capable, and the unfortunate, are very reluctantly forced away from their native places, and compelled to seek the forlorn hope of existence in strange towns and amid strange scenes. These latter outnumber the former in the proportion of at least a hundred, or perhaps a thousand, to one. In the metropolis they and their

puny children are legion. No one who has had opportunities of judging of the lower strata of the London labour market can doubt that a large proportion of these migrate only to die, or otherwise to drift into slow starvation and a premature grave. This course of events must be constantly operating to diminish the death-rate in the country and to increase it in London and all the largest towns. It is only fair to suggest that the extraordinary mortality at Liverpool is probably owing in a great degree to the constant arrival of waifs and strays of humanity, impelled thither in the indulgence of the vague and vain notion that they may possibly get a free passage to some colony, for which they are less adapted than for their native place, and hence their lack of success, probable starvation, and speedy death.

For causes of this kind, and others of a more complicated character, the broad comparison drawn by the Registrar-General between town and country requires to be modified. If we place a due proportion of the deaths in towns against the country districts whence the real causes have sprung, such a course will go far, if not all the way, towards equalising the rates of mortality in town and country. We are fortified in this suggestion by well-known facts concerning the ravages of virulent diseases in villages. Numerous painful experiences, remembered with a shudder in nearly every rural hamlet, prove that isolation and exposure to "fresh air" affords no guarantee of immunity as compared with towns. There is scarcely a country valley that has not been decimated by visitations of extraordinary epidemic. Consistently with this, the Registrar-General has stated in a recent report that "fever frequently shows the greatest proportional fatality in the small towns and villages, and the present return affords many examples of the truth of this fact."

Finally, there is another element to be taken into account in the comparisons before us. It is not so much where a man lives as how he lives that governs the probabilities of his health and long life. A little reflection upon this will increase the significance of the statement made by the Registrar-General, that the excessive mortality roughly ascribed to towns, as such, is most conspicuous and unsatisfactory in the manufacturing districts, especially in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. Here we have a clear admission that the undue proportion of deaths is not

owing to residence in towns, but to the circumstances and habits arising out of particular occupations. This must apply more or less to all towns as well as to those expressly designated as of the manufacturing order. It is almost exclusively in towns that we find persons of both sexes, and often of tender age, employed amongst poisonous ingredients, or engaged in pursuits which are chemically or mechanically prejudicial to health. The exigencies of business and the hurried enterprises which most obtain in large towns, compel thousands to take service, not only in trades of an essentially unhealthy character, but in others under circumstances which render them inimical to personal well-being. Close and badly lighted factories, dilapidated and draughty workshops, dark and dismal warehouses, extremes of heat and cold, crowding and other discomforts of a thousand kinds, hasty and ill-digested meals, and the painful anxieties of thousands out of work through the constant fluctuations of trade, all operate, more especially in towns, to break the spirits, undermine the strength, and destroy the health of many individuals, and to impair the constitution of their children. These things are independent of locality, and will always operate in defiance of town and country, and regardless of the greater or less salubrity of either urban or rural atmospheres.

There was a time when a great city was simply another name for a plague spot, arising out of the ignorance and incapacity of other days in reference to healthful arrangements. But the sanitary problem is now fully solved, and it is proved that the health of the people is simply a question of sanitary wisdom. The health of towns has most marvellously improved during the present century, and the scale is so evenly balanced now that it rather turns than otherwise in favour of the greater salubrity of towns as compared with the country. And it must be so. Arrangements can be made in towns, with a view to systematic sanitary government, which are impossible amongst a scattered population. The consequent advantage is beginning to be fully recognised, and wise perseverance in wholesome works and wholesome discipline promises the most gratifying results. A little more appreciation of the compactness before mentioned, and a bold raid upon the smoke nuisance, will tend more and more towards the time we look forward to, when to live with perfect impunity in the centre of the city which their enter-

prise has helped to raise, shall be the proud boast of the greatest of our manufacturing and merchant princes.

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MONSIEUR CHOSE.

X. THE WHITE MICE.

THERE are mice and mice—but there are no red mice. I laid this down, I may say it without incurring the charge of vanity, in the most successful manner, at one of the early meetings of our club. "Just," I continued, "as there are black, and brown, and grey, and tan dogs; but red, none—except those which the dyers disfigure." Then I drew a comparison between the field-mouse, the mouse that lives in our wainscots, and upon our bread and sugar; and the white mouse, speckless, dainty, and much given to comfortable quarters of cotton-wool. I was much applauded for the deductions I made from the arrangements of Nature in the — to the shallow—unimportant matter of mice. And my proposition, with which I concluded, that our club should be called the White Mice, was carried with two dissentients; and these, I am grieved to say, were my own friend and nominator, Tonnerre, and Patin, my neighbour and rocer.

Patin maintained that mice, whether white or grey, were a predatory tribe. They were thieves, and with all the instincts of thieves, from their noses to their tails; cowardly, with sharp teeth; hungry, and yet industrious only at a flour sack, or in the corner of a cupboard.

Tonnerre was of opinion that they were simply ridiculous creatures, fashioned by Providence, no doubt, for some very sound and sufficient reason; but for a reason still undiscovered by man. Therefore he could not perceive either the wit or the *à propos* of my idea. He could understand the Lions, the Tigers, or the Eagles. At the mention of the noble bird, Patin indulged in a gesture of disapprobation that moved the wrath of the captain.

"Sir!" said he, "when the eagle falls from his eyrie, he falls like a thunderbolt, and your faces grow white behind your counters. What does the rat do? He runs away till the noise is over, and then crawls back—to nibble again. He will plant his teeth in the lips of Cæsar dead; feast while the house is in mourning; but let one in Cæsar's house be well astir, and he is off again, fat with the corruption he has swallowed. Your rats are feasting to-day."

Monsieur Patin retorted: "At least they are respectable rats."

"Respectable!—respectable, to push a claim upon a sick man! Respectable, to plunge their hands in the pockets of one just struck with paralysis! Respectable, to air their millions, and bring out their old liveries and middle-class ostentation, before France in tears! Respectable——"

But here the man of war was stopped. He had forgotten all about the mice, the rats, and the rest of the origin of the discussion, and would have drawn us all into a pretty quarrel, had I not recalled his attention to Rule Ten, which forbade party politics.

The White Mice were drawn together on a patriotic platform. We were essentially a bourgeois club. Our mission was to study the current of events, through a critical period of our beloved country's history; and to keep it clear of the demagogues. We were a band of anti-democrats. We regarded ourselves as superior intelligences, bound, by our very superiority, to do our utmost to save society. Hence we were the White Mice: natural leaders of the commoner tribes, or varieties. It was a rule that members should never be addressed as Monsieur, but always as Mus. In formally referring to, or addressing a member of our patriotic body, he was called "the Honourable Mus." Tonnerre vowed that it was absurd, illogical, and that it laid us open to the shafts of our enemies' ridicule; but he was silenced by an overwhelming vote at a general meeting. I asked him whether we should address one another as "citizen"?

"The first man who addresses me in that way," was his reply, "will have to give me a very good reason for his impertinence. But why not monsieur, as in the ordinary intercourse of gentlemen?"

Captain Tonnerre was a rough soldier, without the smallest imagination, or the faintest idea of the unities, or of the fitness of things. The quick, intelligent, sensitive mind has always delighted in quaint forms, and becoming ceremonies, that give relief to the humdrum of daily life. I insisted that when I was addressed as the Honourable Mus, there was a flutter in me; and I was stirred to remember all my obligations as one of the White Mice. I acted accordingly. I was removed from the common level of men; and felt that I was helping to drive my country in the right direction. Not that as a body we made much progress, or often took action. We

were all agreed—to a Mus—as to the desirability of stemming the tide of democracy; but some were for round plugs, and some were for square; some for a plaster over the mouth, and some for a gun-metal wall.

The absinthés panachés and pure; the grogs, American and otherwise; the choppes of beer of Lyons as well as of Bavaria; the hot wines and the cold wines; the vermouths and the cassis; the sugared water, and the barley water; the groseilles and the bavaoises, we consumed over our patriotic debates, were indeed many. I remarked on one occasion, in a moment of despair, that it appeared to me the only person we were solidly benefitting by our deliberations, was the honourable Mus Cruche, our worthy landlord and colleague. There was a good deal of laughter over my sally, in which Mus Cruche joined heartily; but I took occasion to observe afterwards to Tonnerre, there was matter for serious reflection in it as well. Events were succeeding one another with a rapidity only equalled by the repeated replenishments of Courbet's beer-mug; and there were we meeting day after day, talking over, and often quarrelling over, but never coming to, a resolution on which action could be grounded.

Every Mus comes away from business with a doleful account of his trading. Patin has become insupportable with his growling. Bibelot never fills his pipe without telling us that the country is going to the devil. We debate a national bankruptcy while the waiter is fetching a game of bezique. Between two cannons, Collet Montet asked me how long I thought we were from a general break up? And Titus Blanc observed, while he brushed his hat, that nothing could save us now from the canaille. "Decidedly," said I to Tonnerre at last, "the White Mice are degenerating."

"Not at all, my dear Chose," said Tonnerre. "I don't see the very smallest change. It's a little fresh to you, Chose, because until that day when you ceased to frequent the banks of the Seine, you had remained a sensible bourgeois, leaving your governments like your bread, to be made for you—only reserving to yourself the right of grumbling when the price got extravagant. But directly you, and thousands of your condition, began to dabble in constitution-making, you made fools of yourselves. Leave the bread to the baker."

"What! Tonnerre," I cried, "live like

a beast of the field, without a thought about the happiness of those who are to come after me."

"Those who come after you would gain by the arrangement. What do the White Mice want?" Here the captain swore an awful oath that he didn't know. "I have been a White Mouse to please you, my old friend; and I have assisted at your discussions; only to confirm me in my opinion that no reliance is to be placed in you. There are the canaille getting the upper hand. They turn the corner while you turn an epigram, and, usually, a very indifferent one into the bargain. Words! Speeches! Speeches! You could fill the Imperial Library once a year with your orations; but you have not a single wholesome movement to your back. On the voting days, when the canaille are crowding the mairies, the White Mice lie snug in their wool. You talk about order, but the only order you give is—to the waiter. What is the result? why that the Chief of the State is obliged to count with the rabble; and then when, through your poltroonery, there seems to be imminent danger of a democratic raid upon your shops and houses—we are called in. The Bourse becomes firm at the sound of the drum."

"But," said I, glad to catch Tonnerre upon his own ground, "even the drummers are divided. There are Cæsar's drumsticks, there are the drumsticks of Divine Right; and there are the dirty drumsticks of Nondescript Right—of Right gained by duplicity and family treachery, and by mean arts venerated with constitutionalism. A throne of cotton-backed velvet; a plated sceptre; a diadem glittering with cailloux du Rhin—with a large family of mediocrities quarrelling over even this shabby heritage—is a scandal and a shame to France. Rather give me the republic than the sound of the drummers of the National Guard—with no more authority behind them than is represented by the Hotel des Haricots."

"Ugh! They're scheming to get back the old shop—where their father made so much money. I'm glad, at any rate, Chose, you are not rowing in that galley, with the rest of the White Mice."

"With the rest of the White Mice, Tonnerre! You do them an injustice. There is an O, not as round as that of Giotto; and they know it—with the exception of a wretched little Mus or two, that should never have been admitted to our circle."

"The O you mean is a circle that has

been held up by saltimbanques, and has been broken, past repair, by the clumsy clowns who have jumped through it. Still some of the Mice are nibbling at the tatters."

"Never mind the few!" I cried, "think of the attitude of the many."

"Alas! my poor Chose, I only see the various attitudes in which men sip absinthe."

"An English poet has observed," I pursued, "that the best-laid schemes of mice and men may fail."

"Chose," Captain Tonnerre said, with much solemnity, "since you gave up gudgeon-fishing to prepare yourself to be fished for as a gudgeon, you have never shown a more dangerous symptom than I discover in your last observation. When poetry is brought to bear upon politics, it is time for the gendarmerie to saddle."

XI. THE LITTLE MAN IS STILL KICKING.

PETIT bonhomme vit encore! They have thrust him into a corner; turned his luggage out of the presidency; and helped him into private life with a few kicks. The bitter cup he filled some three years ago for other lips, is raised to his own mouth. The caricaturists whom he encouraged, when they were engaged upon his foe, are pouring acid over the grotesque outline of his own little figure. His day of darkness has come; and they are laughing the length of the Boulevards at his discomfiture. The paper for whose editor he was an illustrious statesman yesterday, to-day gives a merry anecdote of his concierge.

A fruiterer called at the residence in which the bonhomme took refuge when the Assembly gave him his congé. The fruiterer was bearing early peaches to "eminent" lips; and, impressed with the importance of his mission, was proceeding up the principal staircase of the hotel, when he was summoned to halt by the concierge. Why was he not ascending the servants' staircase? The tradesman replied that he was carrying some fruit to the great man, and had been requested to take it direct—by the main entrance. An altercation ensued, the noise of which drew forth an old gentleman in slippers and dressing-gown, who begged that the fruit might be at once delivered to him.

"Who is that issuing orders?" cried the indignant concierge.

"It is I, Monsieur Thiers."

The concierge answered with an expres-

sion of contemptuous refusal, and thrust the fruiterer to the servants' entrance.

Is it not vastly entertaining? and is it not encouraging for the bonhomme's successor? Yesterday he was on an equality with kings; and now watch him imploring in vain the good graces of his porter! Behold "the liberator of the territory" the object of a thousand calumnies! He whose catarrh lately made a panic on the Exchange, may die now as soon as he pleases: the sooner the better, if he desire the momentary honour of a public funeral. His secretary is guyed for remaining his friend. The reign of Adolphe is eclipsed; and as he fades from the public sight, there is hardly a word of regret, or of respect, or of thanks, for his many years of service, for his courage and his genius, of which he was prodigal in the hours of his country's peril. The author of many errors; the passionate partisan who helped to his very utmost to drive the Empire into a disastrous war, and who never spared his foe when that foe was vanquished and overladen with sorrow; the implacable hater of the Nephew whose Uncle he had made the means of his fame as an historian; and the enemy of England and of free trade—Adolphe Thiers was still an illustrious servant of his countrymen. I moved this as a proposition at a meeting of the White Mice which took place on the morrow of the first President's fall, to beg Captain Tonnerre to withdraw his resignation. But we passed to the order of the day without adopting it; and when I told Tonnerre of the fate of my proposition he vowed that, even if he risked my friendship, he would not again put his foot in the club-room.

"At last," said he, "we can go to bed in safety. We have stuck the radicaile to the barrack-gates, as you nail a barn-door owl to the barn door. We have a MAN over us who will not swing like a pendulum from right to left. It is not within our time that Belleville will emigrate to the Faubourg St. Honoré; or that Monsieur Gambetta will sway the destinies of France, with Rochefort for his Minister of Public Instruction.

"Good, good," said I. "Granted, Tonnerre. But, my dear friend, we are still in the presence of at least three régimes. Three equally short cuts to a political Elysium are sufficiently embarrassing."

"But how many have we disposed of—at a blow? Que diable!"

"That is quite true; but Madame Chose

was saying to me this morning she liked your soldier as a soldier; but who was to tell what he was as a statesman? She is not satisfied. We watch the public course of events. Women notice with whom our hero takes his soup. They know something, very often, of our hero's wife. The behind-the-scenes of politics, are not on palace back-stairs, nor in the antechambers of ministers, but in the boudoirs of ministers' wives. We have no great salons in our time; but the scattered women's gossip—if you could only collect it as the Indian does the attar of roses, with the leaf of a sword-lily—would give you a truer idea of the current of events than all the newspaper philosophers can convey to you."

"My dear Chose, I have once or twice warned you from a dangerous path. Roses and sword-lilies are the finery of gentlemen who inhabit the clouds—they are not wear for us, who have got to do with barricades and petroleum—the radical's material of war. Your bonhomme, about whom you have been giving the White Mice some delightful sentiments, no doubt, was a swift phrase-maker. If, with his intelligence, he had been born dumb, he might, perhaps, have moved the world. Nothing is powerful, that leaks."

"But I am moved by the spectacle of my country's ingratitude."

"And I am not," Tonnerre boldly replied. "If you pretend to put a man in the way of making his fortune, and you end by placing him in a poorly-paid and precarious clerkship, he will not be very grateful to you, although you picked him roofless and supperless from the streets. Your bonhomme exalted himself too much, and was ungenerous to all his opponents. He rejoiced, and held the corks, when the vials of the national wrath were poured upon innocent heads. The kindred of his foe he proscribed; while he welcomed back the children of his friend to plot against that very institution of which he was president. He snapped the eagles from our standards, and was ready to set up the cotton umbrella and blue pocket-handkerchief of feu Monsieur Smith. You say we have still three régimes before us; but who handed swords and cocked-hats, and got millions voted out of poor France's coffers to one, and that the least reputable, of these? Answer me, Chose, if you can—and then we will have our dominoes."

"You cut questions like a sabreur."

"And you peel them, and peel them, till all the fruit lies in parings at your feet."

It was useless to argue with Tonnerre that day, so I played dominoes with him. And I won my game.

THE ASH POOL.

THE wet wind sobs o'er the sodden leas,
And wails through the branches of leafless trees,
As mourning the seed in the fallows lost,
And the pale buds peeping to die in the frost,
When Winter asserts his lingering reign,
And his sceptre glitters on hill and plain.
Drearly meadows and uplands lie,
'Neath the low long sweep of sullen sky,
And sad and still as the hushed green Yule,
'Neath the straggling boughs lies the Great Ash Pool.

Black and cold, and stagnant and deep,
No silvery fins from its waters leap;
No brown wings flutter, no pattering feet,
Tell that life in its banks finds safe retreat;
No lily-buds to its surface cling,
But docken and nightshade around it spring;
The very trees that about it stand,
Are twisted and gnarled as by witches' hand.
And the ghost of a story of sin and dule,
Like a mist hangs over the Great Ash Pool.

When June's soft magic is on the earth,
And the rose and the violet spring to birth,
When the bright becks dance 'neath the bright leaves'
shade,

And the wild birds carol from glen and glade,
Not a sunbeam glints on its breast to play,
Not a murmur welcomes the golden day,
No children loiter beside its brink,
No shy fawn lingers its wave to drink;
The old trees' shadow is deep and cool,
Yet no lovers keep tryst at the Great Ash Pool.

Yet once by its waters wild vows were spoken,
In passion heard, and in falsehood broken,
Two bright heads over its margin bent,
When the moon to its depths soft radiance lent,
A little while and one face lay there,
With its blue eyes glazed in their last despair,
Eyes that stared upwards, through weed and slime,
With their story of sorrow, and shame, and crime.
So, in glory of summer, or gladness of Yule,
A curse hangs over the Great Ash Pool.

THROWN AMONG WILD BEASTS.

My worthy friend Sparrowshot is one of the most delightful and one of the most inconsequential of human beings. Therefore it was that, as we sat at breakfast the other day in his airy upper chambers in Raymond-buildings, with three young rooks balancing themselves on the long green bough that waved close to the window, I was not surprised when he suddenly ceased singing a snatch from *Les Brigands*, and said:

"I should like you to see a man who has just bought up twenty-four lions at one go."

I said I certainly should like it too, on which Sparrowshot inserted a long cartridge of toast between his lips, and leaping from his chair, snatched up a single-stick, and performed a sort of Shaw the

Life Guardsman's combat with four imaginary enemies, the result of the perusal of a page of one of Marryat's novels that lay open on the table.

"What a fellow Nelson was. There was a beggar," said my volatile friend. "Feel that muscle. Oh, you'd like to see my friend Dan'll's lions?—so you shall. I promised Bonsonby to meet him at the International, but he knows what sort of a fellow I am, and he's sure not to go. You've heard of Noah, well now you shall see his ark."

Sparrowshot is one of the most industrious idle men I know; he is always at your service, and executes more commissions for country friends than any one I ever met. I firmly believe that if you went in now and found him in the agonies of devilling for the Tichborne case, he would leave it all if you proposed it, and at once start on an expedition to go and chop up the North Pole for firewood to keep down the present enormous price of coal. But then, on the other hand, the odds are that before you got him to the North Cape, he would be led off by some passing acquaintance to accompany the enterprising aeronaut, who, with a one-horse steam-engine, is about to raise the wind by defying the Atlantic breezes. His mind is so mercurial, that it begins falling before it is well done rising, and it flies off so quickly at a tangent that his sentences seldom seem to reach their journey's end.

"You've heard," he said, suddenly emerging in shirt-sleeves from the inner room, into which he had a moment before retired to dress, working away, for his life, at his scrubby reddish hair with two enormous brushes, "you've heard, old boy, of the party who ordered two monkeys from Brazil, and the agent mistook the figures, and sent two thousand?"

I replied in the affirmative.

"Well, that party was a fool to Dan'll, whom we're going to see; he would not have been bothered by suddenly receiving two thousand monkeys; Lord bless you, he would have been delighted. Where has that old idiot of a laundress put my boots? I've told her twenty— Why, when I first called on him, he'd how many parquets do you think just come from Australia?"

I mildly guessed a dozen.

"A dozen! five hundred and twenty-two. What do you say to buying a rhinoceros for your uncle, the old party who said he thought my tobacco rather strong?"

'Strong,' said I, 'I rather flatter myself it is, for I always steep it for three weeks in brandy and gunpowder.' How he warned you about me afterwards! I'll kill that boy when he comes." (Clerk one hour behind time.) "I'll leave a torpedo in his desk, with an half-hour fuse—see if I don't."

"And where is this ark?"

"Why, in Ratchiff Highway, of course, to be near the shipping. What do you think was Dan'll's consignment the last time I went there to buy an elephant for my friend Slocum at the Salisbury Zoological?"

I could hardly guess, so I did not.

Sparrowshot totted it off on his fingers, the water dripping down his face, for he had just raised it from the washing-basin, and looked like a water god just landed.

"Three elephants, five boa constrictors, six Guinea baboons."

"That's cheap for a poor relation."

"Get out with you! Six Guinea baboons, ten alligators, twenty prairie dogs, ten rattlesnakes, fourteen cockatoos, twelve tigers—or were there eleven tigers, hang me if I— Now where the deuce is that collar?"

I did not venture to suggest the completion of the Dan'll catalogue; but I thought it right to suggest that Sparrowshot had been talking in my presence the night before of a consultation that afternoon in the case of Goodson versus Chattlebury, which Sparrowshot was devilling for that eminent Q.C., Bothrem.

"Oh, let 'em wait. I'm not going to lose a day like this grubbing over the Chattlebury pedigrees, and the right of turbary on Chattlebury goose green. I've worked quite enough over that case, and all I got is a snubbing from Bothrem, because I did not remember how many nephews an old Chattlebury of Queen Anne's reign had. I'd sooner spend a night in Dan'll's menagerie than get wigged again by old Bothrem. Just write a card, and put on the door, 'IMPORTANT BUSINESS—BACK TO-MORROW.'"

I believe that Sparrowshot was just that sort of fellow, that if he had had five hundred pounds in his pocket, and Dan'll had tempted him with an elephant newly imported, and recommended him as a serviceable animal "for single or double harness," Sparrowshot would have closed with him at once, and gone off delighted with the bargain.

We were soon on our way to the distant region beyond the Tower where Dan'll and

his twenty-four lions resided. On the way Sparrowshot discoursed much of a naturalist friend of his, one Strongitharm, according to Sparrowshot's account one of the most delightful and most eccentric enthusiasts of science, and certainly one of the most athletic. He had held down a lion at the Zoo while the royal animal had an eye-tooth drawn. He had thrown a young dragoon officer bodily out of window at Canterbury, for balancing a water-jug on an open door, and nearly fracturing his (Strongitharm's) skull. He had fought three fishermen in the north of Ireland for ill-treating a seal. He had sat up for nights feeding a sickly young rhinoceros.

"But it's no joke staying down at Strongitharm's," said Sparrowshot, with sudden gravity. "I've seen his little girl in bed with a snake round her neck and two monkeys on the counterpane. When my governor was living near town, down in Hertfordshire, the beggar was always sending us queer things to take care of, till we got the house choke-full, and the governor grew rusty. I remember at one time we had two large white rats, a badger that eat up half the furniture, and a monkey that bit every one. He then sent us a tame cobra, but the governor could not stand that, and there was a regular row." Here Sparrowshot opened the trap-door in the roof of the cab and asked the cabby, in a loud voice, whether he was ever hired for a funeral, and whether he thought he was going to be paid by the hour; he then made a sudden dig at the horse's flank with his umbrella, which sent us off with a jerk that produced a low mumble of oaths from the back of the hansom.

A clear bowl over the smooth asphalt of Cheapside, a flutter of green at the corner of Wood-street, a glimpse of stately Bow, and we were in Eastcheap, a narrow defile with bales descending into waggons, a block of carts, and the four pinnacles of the White Tower rising before us. A rattle of wheels, more mountainous warehouses, and we were in the amphibious world beyond the Mint. Every shop now seemed nautical; at nearly every door hung waterproof coats and sou'-wester hats; and ship biscuits, binnacles, and canvas, were apparently the chief articles in demand.

"Here we are," said Sparrowshot, suddenly, as the cab stopped with a jerk, and leaping out, was hurrying into the ark when the cabman with a "Hi!" suggested payment.

Our cabman strongly objected to Sparrowshot's theory of the distance from Raymond-buildings to Ratchiff Highway, and on eventually accepting his fare under protest, muttered something, and drove sullenly away.

"There's a beggar," said Sparrowshot. "That reminds me of a driving fellow at Naples who wanted to draw his knife because I didn't— But here, come along, here's the ark, and a pretty happy family you'll see in it—but what are these young covies looking at?"

There were half a dozen street urchins lying flat on their stomachs near Dan'll's cellar rails, and looking in with all their eyes.

"What's up, you boys?" said Sparrowshot, paternally.

"Why it's a lot of young halligators just brought in, mister; there's one by the window there in a box, you can see his tail. He's a venomous one, I know, ain't he, Bill," said the spokesman of the party.

"I don't want to make you nervous, old boy," said Sparrowshot, as we looked in at Dan'll's windows, "but Dan'll keeps his wild beasts in very rickety cages, so look out. I never go up-stairs there but I expect to meet a tiger on the first-floor landing, and a boa constrictor winding round the bannisters. He doesn't care what the creature is; I believe if he had his own way he'd keep them all loose."

"A nice republic there would be then," said I.

"I believe you," said Sparrowshot. "There was a fire close by Dan'll's yard, a house or two up, and I believe the way the tigers howled, and the hyenas laughed, and the monkeys screamed, was something not heard every day; but luckily none escaped, or we might have heard of a lion eating a policeman or a fireman or two, and have had a tiger-hunt in Wapping."

We found the long, low-roofed shop littered with cages and packing-cases, and full, as the magician's room in the Arabian Night's story, of cockatoos, polecats, love-birds, and other pleasant and unpleasant creatures. That scarlet macaw had perhaps been a vizir of Persia, that sullen falcon an Indian prince, and here they were after long and rough voyages in Dan'll's Noah's Ark, ready for shipment to any part of the world.

We found Jam, alias Dan'll, the head magician, in a little back room, wrapped in a dingy dressing-gown, a German smoking-cap adorning his head. There were

birds and beasts all round him, and a clothes-basket covered by a rug on one side of him. He had just received an order for six pumas and two caméléopards, and was giving directions to a piratical-looking workman whom he was perhaps ordering off to Africa at a moment's notice to scour jungle and desert.

"Well, Jam," said Sparrowshot, "and how's the world going with you?"

"Oh, round, round," replied the magician, in a strong foreign dialect.

"Just brought a friend to see you."

"Quite welcome," said the magician, waving his smoking-cap and pointing generally round with his pipe, "but stock rather short just now—sent off our last lion yesterday."

Just at that moment the rug lifted off the washing-basket at Noah's feet, and out stretched two red hairy arms and a round head covered with soft thin red hair. It was a young ourang-outang from Sumatra, and as we looked it drew the rug half over itself again in a sly cross way, and peeped out with cunning, frightened, yet malicious eyes.

"Take care of him," said Dan'll, "he bit a man badly yesterday."

"By Jove, did he though," said Sparrowshot, looking at our poor relation as if he were a barrel of gunpowder; "you ought to warn a fellow, Jam, you know."

Jam laughed gravely at this, as if the idea of Sparrowshot being bitten by his young protégé was the most exquisite of practical jokes.

"Ah! ah!" he said, like one of those Dutch goblins whom Rip Van Winkle revelled with on the Catskill Mountains, "you should see one of my yellows handle a basketful of cobras; why you ain't avraid of a rang-etang? he'll be as tame as a child in a week."

"Isn't it true, Jam, that you once had four-and-twenty lions at the same time?" said Sparrowshot, examining a seedy-looking, disreputable vulture who blinked at him from inside a very dirty cage.

"Vy, who told you so?"

"Who told me? why Harry."

"Very vell then, Harry ought to know. I can't keep all these things in my head. I know very well that there have been times when I should have been glad of fifty."

Harry, a short, swarthy, nautical, I may say piratical sort of person in a red shirt, here came up and asked the great magician whether he should take the gentlemen

down into the cellars to see the lot of young alligators "wot" had just arrived.

The magician expressing a certain gloomy approval as he scratched a black cockatoo's head, we descended some dark stairs to a sort of smuggler's cellar, where, after clambering over an alpine region of packing-cases, we reached a clear space by the window, where in long barred boxes the alligators were placed. The boxes seemed full of some bossy india-rubber substance, but on Harry stirring them up, the masses began to undulate and snort with repressed rage and vexation.

"Why they can't feed shut up like that," said I.

"Oh, they won't eat," said Harry, "nor will the snakes, not one in a dozen; but if they keep alive three months that pays their expenses for showing, and then they can be stuffed."

"Poor beggars," said Sparrowshot.

"Precious wishious that's what they is," said Harry, "and they've got teeth enough to stock a dentist, and yet you can't get 'em to eat no how. It's their temper, I s'pose."

"Enough to put out any one's temper being boxed up like that," thought I.

Harry now proposing to show us the "guvnor's" museum, we reclinced the stairs and ascended to the rooms above the shop. They were old rooms, with all the dusty furniture of the last occupant still there—dusty sofas, grimy mirrors, and dingy carpets, like a Dirty Dick's of twenty years ago. At first the place seemed to me like the cabin of a vessel, then like the bivouac of a tribe of South Sea Islanders, for the walls were hung with war-clubs, waddies, and spears, and weapons ferociously edged with shark's teeth, and sheaves of poisoned arrows. Then again it presented the appearance of a deserted curiosity-shop, the proprietor of which having been lost at sea, the motley treasure had never since been touched, for the dust, gross and palpable as pepper, lay thick in the china cups, and on the lacquered shields and Indian models; and as Harry prefaced every remark with "when I was in the Bight of Benin," or "last time as I was in Sumatra," the general result was that of going round the world in a heavy sea on board a Noah's Ark laden with curiosities to purchase wild beasts.

"I've just come from Bombay," said Harry, in reply to Sparrowshot's inquiry as to what he had been up to lately; "and am off next Tuesday to Cape of Good

Hope to pick up one or two things for the guvnor," and here he struck a gong spitefully.

We had now got into a sort of gallery hung with South Sea weapons.

"Take care of them arrows," he said; "they're every one pisened; you see that red mark on the club, that's human blood—bought that yesterday. The sailors bring everything here. You see this club" (pointing to a huge semicircular flat hatchet of wood), "they takes off heads with that."

Certainly, if bludgeons are any indication of ferocity, I should not select the Fiji Islands to go to as a missionary, for such skull-cracking monsters of clubs I never saw as came from that happy land. Fourteen shillelahs would not make up that enormous stop-thief that had the blood stains. Models of Chinese junks, Kaffir cloaks, New Zealand mats, Japanese fishing-rods, daggers, and swords, and guns of all sizes and bores, hung beside these trophies of our commercial enterprise, ready for Jam's queer customers—the naturalists, showmen, museum collectors, and odd people of Great Britain.

At spare moments Harry drew a sword or struck a gong, just to keep his hand in as the governor's showman.

"I knew a fellow once," said Sparrowshot, apropos of nothing, "who drove four deer in a pony carriage, and he got on very well till one day he fell in with the Duke of Beaufort's hounds, and that time they may certainly be said to have had a run. Indeed, if he hadn't bolted into a stable-yard just in time, and shut the door, I don't think there would have been much of him or his prancers left."

Harry, who was just beginning something about the Straits of Malacca, said that was a rum start as ever he'd heard, an approval which much pleased Sparrowshot.

We now proposed to go and see the animals which Jam keeps in various stables and yards in adjoining streets. We might, perhaps, pick up a lion cheap, or find a bargain in a knot of boa constrictors. We found Jam still in the back parlour, nursing that prematurely old young man, the "rang-etang," who seemed to regard his master with anything but filial regard.

"You come again ven our next sheep comes in," was the magician's parting valediction, "and then we shall have something to show, for we expect half a dozen of about the finest tigers in all Bengal."

"Did you ever hear the story of old Monson chloroforming the tiger, and taking out his eye-teeth?" inquired Sparrowshot of me. "You haven't? well, then, just you remind me at dinner-time. We'll have a fish dinner at Billingsgate after this, and some cold punch. Are you game?"

I replied that I quite thought I was, and that I was prepared then to endure any number of tiger stories; and might even, if pressed, swallow a snake or two, provided they were fresh.

"Oh, there's no gammon about Monson. Any one in Bombay——"

"Bengal, you mean."

"Well, Bengal; what the doose does it matter? Tigers ain't confined to Bengal. Monson was out with two famous she-karries, and had fallen asleep in a rock temple near Avadarah waiting for tiffin. I had two uncles in Madras——"

"Bengal."

"Well, what the——two uncles in the——"

Here Harry threw open the yard door.

"Our stock's very low just now, gents. I must apologise to yer for our last lion being sold two days ago; but we've one or two choice things." Here he pointed to some rickety dens with rather insecure bars that stood round the yard, which, by the way, a sensitive nose would have found "rather high." "Here's a black panther—rather scarce. Savage? I believe you; eat you without salt if he could get at you."

"Any bears?"

"Not a mortal one. Hyenas, leopards, vultures, Barbary rats, wolves, but ne'er a bear; not much asked for just now."

"By Jove! what a brute," observed Sparrowshot, as he poked the black panther with his umbrella, and it retreated sullenly, hissing spitefully, with closed teeth, like a mad cat, its eye-balls reddening slightly as the blood mounted to his head.

Above it were two leopards, agile and cruel; beautifully marked, and every motion instinct with a certain diabolical grace. Swift on an Indian pitcher-carrier I think I can see them dart, and my imagination can almost call up the screams through the jungle which mark where they drag the body, and the spotted cubs gambol and rejoice to see the mangled and bleeding prey!

"I'd buy that lot, Harry," said Sparrowshot, who assumed the air of a purchaser of vast wealth, "if I knew where to

keep 'em, but they wouldn't do in Gray's Inn, eh?" This to me.

I expressed an opinion that they scarcely would, unless he occasionally fed them with an old Q.C.

"No ostriches, I suppose, Harry; no cameleopards?"

"Not a shadow of one."

"I was afraid not," said Sparrowshot, in a mortified way, as much as to say, if there had been, then I'd have been the man for you. He had been rather distant with me ever since the chloroformed tiger story in the uncertain presidency. The beauty of some mouse-deer from Ceylon, however, made him relax a little.

"Did you ever see such dainty little beggars?" he exclaimed, turning back to insult the black panther for the last time.

They certainly were beauties, the deer minimised by climate till he did not stand higher than a toy terrier—deer that a rat would slay in open battle. I began to fall into a reverie, as we moved on to the coarse, low-bred, skulking, blackguardly-looking hyena, on the mighty power wielded by Jam. In all parts of the world, savage and unsavage, people to secure his guineas were hunting and trapping, as one of the most eloquent of the London papers said the other day in the most simple language, "From where the floating icebergs, like diamond mountains, drift before the fierce northers, to where the Bushmen warriors dance like armies of pigmies round the gigantic elephant, Jam's emissaries are at work, with assegai and kreas, with the keen Damascus blade, and the fatal blow-pipe," &c.

"Sparrowshot," said I, grasping his arm, as I quoted Keats, "'Are you prepared to go all naked to the ravening shark?'"

"Not if I know it, old boy," was the not unnatural reply with which my enthusiasm was rewarded.

"Very well, then, push on. Here's some white peacocks fit to draw the car of Juno—of Juno? nay, of Venus."

"By George! look at these spoonbills," cried Sparrowshot, from a rival cage. "Did you ever see such queer beggars in your life? There's a bill for picking up peas. I used to think fish the queerest beggars ever made; but, 'pon my word, when you look at the toucan's nose and the—— By-the-bye, what time is it by your ticker?"

"Only fancy those white peacocks," said I, reverting to the cage of those beau-

tiful birds, looking like brides in a state of metamorphosis, "with emerald eyes in their tails, and golden crests."

"Ah! you always want to embroider nature," said Sparrowshot, sarcastically; "and if you had your emerald tails, then you'd want opal eyes. There is no satisfying you."

"Last year," broke in Harry, who did not choose to remain in the background, and who evidently thought my peacock suggestion an absurdity, "when we was going through the Straits of Madagascar with some three dozen monkeys for the guvnor——"

"Have you got any kangaroos to show us, Harry?" said Sparrowshot.

"Well, we're just out of kangaroos now," said Harry, apologetically, "but we expect some in at the docks every day. They go so very fast, kangaroos does."

In nearly every shed in the yard, untenanted by wild beasts, into which I peeped, I saw rats peering about for provender, and darting back through small corner holes almost before I could well see them.

"Ah!" says Harry, "there's an uncommon lot of rats here; they come after the animals' wittals; but they make a mistake, sometimes with the vultures, and have to pay entrance fees pretty heavily."

Stopping to look at a large falcon, the very acme of cruelty and grace, we passed out of the yard into a large stable surrounded by cages and barred boxes.

"This hanimal," said Harry, pointing to an old forlorn-looking monkey, with one side paralysed, "this hanimal's mind's gone; he don't observe anything. It's not worth much, but the guvnor doesn't like to kill him, as he's been with us a long time, and we've got accustomed to him like."

The monkey had exactly the expression I have seen in human beings under the same double affliction. He looked at us with a vacant, stunned, suffering expression, as if he had been struck a blow and was expecting another. Our poor relation, indeed, presented a woe-begone helplessness that even the hardest heart must have pitied.

"There's an argument for Darwin," said Sparrowshot, who had shot off at a tangent to see a wild cat in a distant cage, and now returned; "you see he had a mind once, or else it could not have gone. Why, any fool can see he's got a tile off—poor beggar."

"A black fellow in Bonny River told me,"

said Harry, "that the devil made monkeys as a caricature of man, and that after that he made the nigger; but the nigger turned out so ugly that the old gentleman struck him in the face, and that flattened his nose, turned his face black, and curled his hair."

"Well done, Harry, that's not bad for Harry; but he's evidently not read Darwin, or he'd have more respect for his great-grandfather."

"Here's a mongoose," said Harry, rousing an animal out of the back of a long dark box; "one of the prettiest things to make a pet of. Kills snakes before you can say Jack Robinson, and never gets bitten to speak of. There's a law against taking them out of the country, so we has to smuggle them, or we should pretty soon get pepper, as my mate here will tell you."

The mate, a rough-looking fellow, who was cleaning out a cage, grunted assent, as much as to say, "Oh, you go on with your patter. I shan't get any fees out of the gentry coves. I haven't got the gift of the gab, I haven't, and I don't want to have. Patter away; the more lies you tell, the more they'll like you. I've got a job here, and I'm going to do it. Patter away!"

Harry now proposed an ascent into a loft, where he had some young boa constrictors to show us, and up we went.

"We had a fire near here," he said, "a month or two ago, and you should have seen the animals. We happened to have twenty lions or so in stock, and an elephant, and two or three tigers. We've been nearly cleared out since that. I never did hear such a noise in my born days; it would have frightened you gents who isn't used to it; monkeys screaming, lions roaring, tigers trying to break loose, paroquets (we'd got a room full of them) squalling. I tell you I wasn't sorry when things got a bit quieter, for I thought at one time they were all going stark staring mad together. It reminded me of a mutiny of coolies I once saw in coming back from Valparaiso. Our cages are rather old, too, some of them, and if they had given way—well, I shouldn't be here now, gents, a talking to you."

"I quite agree with you there," said Sparrowshot.

"Yours is rather a risky occupation," said I.

"Well," said Harry, wiping his forehead with a red strip of handkerchief which he took out of his cap; "but you see habit

is second nature, and like people who takes care of loonatics, and knackers, and others of that sort, I never thinks much about the danger. We knows what to do and how to handle 'em, and they don't get much chance of hurting us, or they pretty soon would, you may take your oath, for there's no coaxing some of them, they've that devil's own temper in them, and I suppose the keeping them shut up doesn't improve that. As for some of 'em, I'd sleep in their dens for all the fear I have. Jim."

Here he shouted down stairs.

"Come up, Jim, and give us a hand with these 'ere snakes, to show the gentlemen."

Jim shambled up, grumbling under his breath, and dragging out a huge chest, opened it, dived his hand among the blankets, and drew out two great spotted cables of snakes, holding their heads just below the air-gills, as gamekeepers hold ferrets, as I perhaps unjustly thought to convey an impression of the danger of their bite. It was Hercules grown up and struggling with the Hydra, but Jim had no sense of posing, and was evidently only meditating whether he should get anything for beer.

"You see," said Harry, "there's a steady demand for these 'ere snakes in the travelling shows. They must have 'em, whatever the price is, because country people who've never seen anything larger than a blind-worm, or a stray hadder or so, open their eyes at big fellows like these, and go home and tell everybody to go and see 'em. They'd put a nice grip on a fellow, even these young uns would, if they had a chance."

As he said this, Harry flung the great slimy black and yellow coils back into the box, and slammed down the chest as if it had been Pandora's casket, and all the blessings of the gods were escaping.

I had long felt a nightmare kind of diabolical wish stealing over me to overpower and bind Harry and Jim, and then to let out all their prisoners, to the terror of Wapping and the dismay of Rotherhithe. Boa constrictors, vultures, wild cats, my poor friend the insane monkey, black panthers, white peacocks, spoonbills, leopards, badgers, mongooze, and all. I should like to have emptied Noah's Ark and given them all liberty in one general grotesque emancipation. What right had Dan'll to set half the world to work catching the other; what right to sweep sea and rock, and sand and forest, to fill caravans with misery; was the lion, regal in his

strength and freedom, intended to be shown at a penny a head, or the bear to be deprived of his hermitage in the snow? Certainly not. Behold, then, in me your liberator, and when you are free respect your emancipator. Be gentle, be merciful, respect property—Vive la République Universelle—make good use of your liberty. Attack only the emissaries of Jam, wage war on Dan'll and Dan'll's men, even though just returned from the Straits of Madagascar!

"How long are you going to stand there, staring at that fool of a spoonbill?" said Sparrowshot, rudely breaking up my day-dream of freedom and universal republics. "It's time we were off. Harry has got to go to the docks about a rhinoceros and some more alligators, and we mustn't keep him."

Harry here remarked that many swells bought beavers, buffaloes, and what not, but that it was only the regular "Onner" who bought a rhinoceros.

We "backsheshed" the men, left Harry in the Bight of Benin with a cargo of cassowaries who wouldn't take kindly to their food, and started for a walk to Stepney to get an appetite for our fish dinner.

As we stopped at Dan'll's window to take a last fond look at the black cockatoo, Sparrowshot, after a moment's reflection, exclaimed:

"What queer beggars there are in the world!" A quarter of a mile further on he said: "I'll tell you what I mean to do, old man: I'll get an aquarium and keep whitebait, to see what they come to. It'd be jolly to have one now and then for luncheon, too, while the investigation was pending, eh? And by Jove, if I ever come into the money of that uncle of mine at St. Mary Axe, and get his place down at Bootleham, I'll be hanged if I won't buy two cameleopards. I can't fancy anything jollier than driving cameleopards tandem, can you?"

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER VIII. "HAVE YOU A BROTHER, MR. FERRIER?"

"You would give me up very easily, mother," was Harty's only rejoinder to her mother's last speech. And at this calmness when she had anticipated meeting with a burst of overwhelming emotion, Mrs. Devenish broke down, cast her arms round

Harty's neck, and with many sobs cried out that it was a cruel fate which compelled her to choose between her husband, her "poor injured, persecuted Edward," and her child.

"But you wouldn't lose me, mamma—no, Mabel, don't shake your head and look as if you knew better—you wouldn't lose me; Claude would welcome you always gladly, and I might come to you; you would have me still, and I" (the girl's voice broke here) "should have Claude."

"We shall never meet again, Harty, from the day you leave this house as Claude Powers's wife, until we meet—in—heaven," Mrs. Devenish gasped out, and Harty answered sorrowfully:

"You mean Mr. Devenish would never let you come to me, or me to you, mother; well, then, I shall never leave this house as Claude's wife; but, mother, you're a free woman; you could say, 'I will.'"

Mrs. Devenish bemoaned herself for a minute or two, looking nervously at the door the while. Then she blushed for the cowardice and the cruelty of it all and said:

"Harty, he has suffered too much for his wife to turn against him, or to hear others blame him for the cruel accidents of his life, which have robbed it of all hope, and made him what he is; but, Harty, in my first burst of anger at Claude's cruel injustice, I did not give myself time to think. Edward's heart is so good, his love for us all so true, that perhaps when I have told him all, he will sacrifice his own feelings, and make all smooth for us; but when he has done it, dear, you must never forget that it has been at the cost of bitter humiliation to himself."

She looked wistfully at Harty, hoping that she would become emotionally forgetful of all the "unintentional" suffering Mr. Devenish had caused her. But with all her faults Harty was not a hypocrite. All she could bring herself to say was:

"If Mr. Devenish does make any sacrifice of feeling for my happiness, I shall certainly never forget it, mother." Which was a way of recognising the faint possibility that struck Mabel as being especially hard and cold.

"I had better go to him now, and tell him all," Mrs. Devenish said, tremulously. In very truth she did shrink from facing her prized martyr with something that was very near akin to fear. Then she went on her bitter mission, promising to let Harty know the result of it after the girl had gone to her own room.

"I shall go to bed at once, Mab," Harty said as her mother left them. "I'm not fit to talk until I know whether or not Mr. Devenish is going to be moderately humane for once in his life; he might let our miserable mother have this one gleam of happiness in her darkened life; he might let her make one of her children thoroughly happy."

As Mabel was not ready with an answer, Harty did not wait to hear it, but went away at once to her room, where she sat going through every phase of the sharpest suspense, until she was joined by her mother. Then—the first look at Mrs. Devenish's face was enough. Mr. Devenish had not sacrificed his feelings, and so established an eternal claim on her gratitude.

"Poor mother!" Harty said, as her mother advanced wiping her eyes, and looking miserably unsuccessful. "You have not been able to do all you wished to do for me? I see that; tell me about it; can you?"

"Harty, my darling, I'll give you up; I'll not quench the light of your life; you shall marry the man you love—the man who has so faithfully loved you for so long; but we must give each other up, dear, for trouble has strengthened poor Edward's prejudices."

"Will he part us, mother, if I marry Claude?"

"Yes," Mrs. Devenish answered, hesitatingly; "he has been so wronged, so tried, you know, this last crowning insult has been too much for him; he claims the duty that I owe him as his wife, and declares that I shall never see my own child after she is Claude Powers's wife; we can't wonder at his turning, Harty," she went on, anxiously, "he has been so trodden down."

"I wonder if I shall ever get to feel like that for Claude," Harty thought; "I wonder if my love will ever make me abject."

"Well, mother," she said aloud; "it's no use saying any more about it now; we won't be parted, will we, mother? If Claude will only believe as I do, that time will make it all right, I can be very happy."

Then Mrs. Devenish did exactly as Harty had prophesied she would do, prayed and pleaded that her daughter would follow the dictates of her own heart, and insure her highest happiness at the cost of relinquishing all intercourse with her mother.

"I would bear it, Harty, without a complaint; we would get away from here, and no one would know that we were entirely separated," the poor woman urged, "and I should hear of you through Mabel."

But Harty only shook her head, and brushed away an indignant tear or two, and said:

"No, no; we must wait; some change will come, I'm certain of that; I must wait for it."

Claude heard of the fiat that had gone forth, and of Harty's determination to abide by it, with a good deal of heart-sinking, the next day. The intervening hours had not been too pleasant to him. For in addition to the natural soul-wearing suspense which he was called upon to sustain, there was the irritating knowledge that a feeling which had never existed before, had suddenly sprung up between Jack Ferrier and himself; when they met at dinner after that parting by the Leeth, each found himself avoiding all mention of the girls who had been their companions, and each found himself speculating as to the reason why the other did so.

Claude, with that morbid sensitiveness of his which had led him into error more than once in his life, thought that, perhaps, Jack Ferrier, his friend, was pitying him for his evident attachment to a girl who had, perhaps, been guilty of carrying on a double game. While Jack Ferrier, about whom there was nothing morbid, nothing akin to sensitiveness, nor suspiciousness, was thinking, "There's a screw loose somewhere, and it's that girl who has done it. I think I had better get myself out of this, for no woman shall ever come between Claude and me."

So about the same time that night, as Harty and her mother were having it out so unsatisfactorily, Jack Ferrier sounded the first note of separation.

Claude had written and despatched his terms to Mrs. Devenish, as has been seen, and in order to while away the time that must necessarily elapse before he could possibly get an answer, he proposed billiards. It was an unwary move, for it took them away from the restraining presence of Mrs. Powers. And neither man was quite in the mood this night to speak with perfect openness or moderate discretion.

"I'll give you ten in a hundred, and beat you," Jack Ferrier began, and Claude girded against the proffered favour, though

each was in the habit of giving similar ones to the other constantly.

"I don't want you to give me a point; I've no doubt you would beat me in most things, but at billiards we are just about equal, I think."

There was nothing in the words themselves, but there was a good deal that was chilling in the tone in which they were uttered. The chill smote Jack Ferrier's face like a sharp blast, and made his face flush.

"Come, old fellow," he said, "you know as well as I do that there isn't a single thing I could beat you in if I tried, excepting billiards and dancing," he added, with a laugh. Then, in his confusion, he made the most unhappy remark he could have made at that juncture. "That little girl—that Miss Carlisle—dances like a slipper; I'm sorry I shan't have another round or two with her; I find I must go and see my people soon."

"What's all this about?" Claude asked quickly, pausing before his stroke, and looking suspiciously at Jack Ferrier, who kept his eyes steadily fixed on the end of the cigar which he was trying to puff alight, and abstained from noticing Claude's "What's all this about?" "I never knew that you had any people belonging to you that you cared to see, now poor Frank is gone; and now you develop them in a moment, and contemplate smashing up our plans."

"Oh! I think it's the right kind of thing to do after being out of the country for so long, to look up one's people; they're not very near, and they're not very dear, to tell the truth—a set of aunts and cousins——"

"You never thought of one of them to-day," Claude interrupted. "Out with it, dear old boy; tell me what has put them into your head, and made you feel their claims so strongly suddenly?"

"Conscience has touched up my family feeling, I suppose," Jack Ferrier answered, laughing a little awkwardly. "You had really better let me go without saying a word more about it."

Claude walked to the other side of the table, where his face could hardly be discerned under the shaded lamp, before he spoke. Then he said:

"Are you afraid of losing your head, and going down before Miss Carlisle?"

"Yes, that's about it," Jack answered, bluntly. "I don't understand her, and I don't want to bother myself by puzzling about her; I had better go."

"You will understand more about her in a very short time," Claude said, in a low voice; "don't go, old fellow; you'll be all right, and we'll have those rides together with the Miss Carlisles that you planned this morning."

"What do you mean?" Jack asked, wonderingly.

"I can't tell you; you'll find out very soon; only stay; there's nothing for you to run away from; I can tell you that."

"He means that he won't interfere with me, if she is too much for me in sober earnest," Jack thought. "I'll risk it anyway; very likely, when I see her the next time, I shall not like her."

"I'll stay then, Claude, and my people must wait in vain for a sight of me a little longer," he said aloud. So it was decided that he should remain, and remain he did, under a misapprehension.

Mrs. Devenish's answer came the next morning. She gave him her daughter freely, if her daughter liked to go to him, she said. And then she told him of what would follow! She made no complaint of her husband for his decision; she acceded to it meekly, but the hand which traced the words, "I shall be parted from my child for ever in this world!" had shaken pitiably with the pain that was in her heart.

With a muttered execration against the combination of vicious cruelty and maddening weakness that was between Harty and himself, he turned from the perusal of this letter to one from Harty herself. It was very brief.

"DEAREST CLAUDE,—I pity myself more than I do you, because you can go away if you like and shake off the memory of me, while I must stay here, and nurse the thought of you—and all you might have been to me. I can't make my mother's lot harder; it would be putting a knife into Mr. Devenish's hands, which he would always be sticking into her heart. It's all over. But, if you stay here, we will be friends, won't we?"

"Yours ever,

"HARTY."

It was a crushing blow to him; for in his heart he had made sure of her now; he had made very sure that love would have made her mother strong enough to do open battle with that subtle cruelty of Mr. Devenish's which had constructed this ingenious revenge.

It was a bad blow to him, for he really

loved Harty, and there was no joy to him in that proposal of hers that he should stay on at the Court, that they should meet, and be friends. It was such a poor tame substitute for the relations he had striven to establish between them. But at length, after an hour or two spent in making resolutions to go to the uttermost ends of the earth, he determined that he would stay, that he would see Harty as often as he could, and that he would teach her that love was the lord of all, and make her rescind her resolve.

It was a bad blow, and it was followed so terribly soon by another. He saw when he went in and sat down to luncheon that there was something abnormal in Mrs. Powers's appearance. She had evidently been crying. She was evidently in a passion; for she was trembling, flushed, unable to eat or drink, and equally unable to conceal these marks of agitation from the two young men.

At last, after Claude had made the remark, "There's something amiss with you, aunt, you're not up to the mark, dear old lady," she responded to it with much additional flushing and trembling, and the words:

"I intended waiting to tell you of something that has annoyed me greatly, Claude, until we were alone, but I suppose I may speak before Mr. Ferrier: the people in Dillsborough are taking your name very much in vain already; Mrs. Greyling came here this morning and congratulated me, actually congratulated me, on your engagement to Harty Carlisle, and affirmed that she had it on the young lady's authority that you were going to marry her."

Claude winced, and contemplated pursuing an evasive course for a moment or two. Then all his manliness asserted itself and he determined to "put the girl in a good place at any rate."

"Harty Carlisle has altered her mind since Mrs. Greyling badgered her on the subject; I have had a letter of definite refusal from her this morning, if that is any satisfaction to any one. For all that, I like her, and mean to continue friendly with her if she'll have my friendship, and I'll cut any woman, and break any fellow's head, who speaks about it again, if I hear it."

Mrs. Powers heaved a long irrepressible sigh of relief, and a dead silence set in.

"He's telling me plainly that as he's tried his luck and failed, I'm free to try mine," Jack Ferrier thought, as he sat with his

eyes bent on the table-cloth, on which he was making a plan in crumbs of the bank of the Leeth, and the meadow lands adjoining. And then, as the silence lasted, he fell to wondering if it was because she liked him a little, that Harty Carlisle had refused Powers of the Court, the best match among the commoners of the county.

"We'll all agree never to say a word more about this subject, till I give the signal to start it again," Claude said, after a long time, and he said it in a sort of imperatively pleading way, that compelled them to assent to it at once. So their lips being sealed on the subject, all possibility of clearing away the mists of misapprehension was abolished, and Jack Ferrier was confirmed in his belief that Claude wished him to feel that the girl was as free to be won, as he was to win her.

"And you must ask the girls here just as usual," Claude said to his aunt; "any change would cause more confounded gabble, and I'll smash up the Court if I'm gabbled about; ask the girls here just as usual, and be kind in taking them, when they're asked, to other places. The old people won't visit, so there's no difficulty about them."

"Dear old thoughtful, unselfish fellow," Jack Ferrier thought, in a glow of affection and admiration for his friend who had been rejected, "he'll give me every chance if I care to take it; he's about the only fellow in the world who would do it." And Jack Ferrier felt as Saul for Jonathan. And all the time Claude had no thought of Jack in the matter; but was thinking solely of the best way of continuing to have unfettered intercourse with Harty. So the mistake took root, grew and flourished.

Late autumn found them carrying out those plans which had been organised in the summer. Claude had filled his stables very much to the satisfaction of himself and friends; and a married woman, about whom no man's tongue (nor woman's either) had ever wagged, had been found and secured, and persuaded to be the guardian angel of the riding parties. Inconsistent as it may appear, Mr. Devenish made no effort to crush the constant intercourse between the young people. His wife admired him for his patient tolerance, and did not know that he was patiently tolerant to the passing annoyance, because he thought that it would bring greater misery upon Claude and Harty both in the end.

For he hated these two; he hated Claude because Claude knew when to put his finger on the blackest spot in his life; and Harty because, unwittingly, she had brought this avenger upon him again. He was not a good man, this one whom Harty's mother loved and believed in; and if he could have brought sorrow, humiliation, and shame upon Claude Powers and Harty Carlisle, he would have done it with all the heart he had.

Accordingly he made it all very easy in a way. His own miserable health was a sufficient excuse for them to offer to outsiders for himself and his wife having no share in that much coveted intimacy which the two girls seemed to be enjoying. And Dillsborough was very little the wiser for that indiscretion on the part of Harty which had led her to avow that Claude "was going to marry her" on the occasion of Mrs. Greyling's call, for Mrs. Powers had seen that lady, and told her of that threatened "smash up of the Court" which Claude would make if there was "any more gabble about him."

There was no more gabble about him that they heard of at least. But there was a careful watch kept upon the puzzling quartette by all Dillsborough.

It happened one day that Mrs. Powers (always on the alert to please her nephew, and keep him from carrying that threat of his to break up the Court into execution) asked the two Miss Carlises to join at a shooting luncheon on the side of a well-wooded cover. These three were the only ladies present; but there were six guns out, and therefore it was easy enough for the four, who had grown to like each other so well, to get together a little apart from the group around Mrs. Powers. As is usual with girls who have no brothers, the Carlises were always ready to regret the fact of having none. "If we had one of us been a boy instead of a girl, mamma would have had something to totter against for support, and wouldn't have fallen so utterly prone as she has fallen now," Harty had often said. This morning, after looking for a long time at the fine stalwart-looking group of young sportsmen who were lounging around, she broke the silence by saying:

"I always wish we had had brothers; but I wish it more than ever when I see men hunting, or shooting, or riding races, or doing anything manly; have you a brother, Mr. Ferrier?"

Jack Ferrier's face saddened instantly;

but he answered with a certain reliance on her sympathy, which touched her infinitely:

"I had a brother—the dearest young fellow in the world; I'll tell you his story one day, Miss Carlisle! Poor Frank!"

"For Heaven's sake don't tell her his story," Claude struck in with "angry, uncalled-for energy," it seemed to Harty. And she, looking at him in surprise, saw that his face had blanched, and his brow contracted, to a degree that altered his face in a way she had never seen it alter before.

"Why, Claude?" she whispered. "What is it?" And then she drew a little nearer to him, and murmured, "You tell me, will you?"

"No, no, Harty; I hate repeating painful stories, when the repetition of them can do no good to any human being, and may possibly do harm. Jack is rather open-mouthed, good fellow as he is; don't you ask him to tell you anything about his brother, there's a darling."

Harty looked at him thoughtfully.

"If he doesn't mind telling me, why should you mind my hearing it; you have made me wish to know now so much. I can't promise, Claude, because I know I should break my promise, and say, 'Do tell me about your brother, do, do,' the instant I had the opportunity."

"I can't understand Jack liking to introduce the subject," Claude muttered, in an annoyed tone.

"Was he murdered?" Harty questioned, feeling utterly unable to resist the fascination of the mystery which Claude had most unwittingly and unadvisedly thrown over the subject. "Was he murdered? Frank Ferrier! what a pretty name."

"His name wasn't—never mind his name, or his story, poor boy; why should you," he continued unreasonably, "be interested in the fate of a man you never knew, when I tell you that you had better not hear it?"

"That's so unsatisfactory, Claude," she laughed; "and of course I'm interested in the fate of Mr. Ferrier's brother; how fond he must have been of him; did you see how that nice, bright face of his clouded and saddened in an instant when he spoke of him."

"Ferrier's the best fellow in the world," Claude said slowly and irrelevantly.

"I don't know about being the best," Harty responded, thoughtfully, they had sauntered a little away apart from the others; "but I should think he was one of the pluckiest, frankest, least selfish fellows in the world."

"You seem to have been studying his character, Harty," he said, in a slightly piqued tone.

"I suppose I have unconsciously," she answered, cheerfully, turning round under the shade of a tree to look back at the group lounging in the open. "I suppose I have unconsciously, for I seem to know all about him, and to understand him pretty well; look how earnestly he is talking to Mab, now; oh dear! supposing another complication should arise in our wretched family; supposing he should fall in love with Mab, and then have to sheer off because of Mr. Devenish; but somehow or other I don't think he would."

She muttered the last words very softly, her eyes still fixed on the fair frank-faced man now talking so eagerly to her sister. And Claude, watching her, felt a pang for which he did not care to account.

"Would what?" he asked. "Don't you think that he would fall in love with Mabel, or don't you think he would 'sheer off,' as you call it, because of Mr. Devenish?"

Just as he spoke, Jack Ferrier, catching Harty's glance, sprang up from the ground, and came over to join them, and Harty had only time to say:

"I don't think he would do either—I'm sure he wouldn't do the last." And again Claude experienced a pang, for which he was utterly at a loss to account.

He nearly traced the source of it, perhaps, as Jack came up, his gaze bent in eager admiration on Harty's face (it was one of her minutes of looking pretty), and his whole manner expressing that desire to be near her, which no man who really feels it for a woman can conceal.

"He is getting fond of her," Claude thought, in a rage. "And she tells me she is only faithful to me because she has not been tempted! She's too good to let him connect himself with Devenish, though, when once she knows the cause of poor Frank's death, and she'll get that out of him in ten minutes."

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII. AN ARTICLED CLERK.

AIDED by my map I soon found my way to Featherstone-buildings—a sort of isthmus connecting the thoroughfares of Holborn and Bedford-row—and there secured furnished apartments on the second floor of a house on the western side of the narrow street. They were rather dark rooms, and to me, accustomed to open spaces, seemed very confined in the matter of outlook; the opposite houses were so strangely near, and their tenants able in such wise to inspect all my proceedings so closely, that I appeared almost to be living in public. But I overcame this feeling in time, and soon found myself staring at my neighbours, with the same sort of cold complacency and idle interest they manifested in surveying me. The street was removed from the roar of Holborn, and was seldom traversed by other than foot-passengers. It was, therefore, tolerably quiet, though disturbed at intervals by the shrill cries and strange noises of itinerant traders and musicians. These amused me at first by their novelty; but they soon wearied me, and it was long before I became sufficiently habituated to them to regard them with indifference. Even now I remember with a shudder the screaming voice of one woman in particular, who sold water-cresses and bought hareskins, and incessantly paced the street; while a man in a dirty Highland dress, with tawny legs, who played the bagpipes twice a week just below my window, I still look back upon as one of the sworn tormentors of my early life in London.

The rooms were furnished with a sort of tidy shabbiness. They were clean after a

fashion, but they had clearly known nothing of re-decoration for many years. The pattern of the carpet seemed to have been fairly swept off it, exposing a surface of discoloured threads; the chintz that curtained the windows and covered the chairs was limp of texture and faded of hue; the paint was dull and rubbed away at all sharp corners; the quicksilver was vanishing from the looking-glass, and its frame retained only a very few streaks and patches of gilding. Still I was in the mood to be satisfied with everything, and I assured myself I should be very comfortable in Featherstone-buildings. When I had removed my luggage from the Golden Cross—after rewarding the pimpled waiter with absurd lavishness for services he had not rendered, by no means winning his esteem thereby, or changing his scornful view of me as "a regular yokel"—when I had arranged my little stock of books and ornamented the mantelpiece and walls with a few of my drawings, including, of course, sketches of the Down Farm and Purrington Church, I felt that my rooms had really a very cosy and agreeable young-bachelor sort of look. And it was pleasant to think of them as *my* rooms—my own peculiar rooms absolutely, so long, of course, as I paid rent for them and received no notice to quit from my landlady—a civil-spoken, attentive woman, she appeared to be, with yet that look of shrewd suspicion in her face which I began to think was an inevitable characteristic of Londoners. Her husband, she informed me, was "cutter out" at a fashionable tailor's at the West-end of the town—Stultz, I think the name was—and an excellent workman "when he 'ad his 'ealth," which I subsequently discovered to mean, when he was sober. She intrusted me with the key of the street-door—a precious

symbol of independence I accounted it—and expressed a hope, certainly superfluous, that I should be “steady.”

I made up my mind that Featherstone-buildings was just the place for me—that I had been, indeed, fortunate in obtaining Mr. Vickery’s advice—in the absence of Mr. Monck—and at once securing such admirable lodgings. I looked forward to the industrious pursuit of my law studies, so soon as I should have procured certain indispensable books, with intervals devoted, by way of relief, to general literature and the fine arts. I pictured to myself long winter evenings passed in my easy-chair in such commendable occupations. It will be seen that my aspirations, if of a simple, were of a worthy kind. I discovered with some disappointment, however, that my easy-chair was less easy than it looked. It had seen much service; had been occupied probably by many previous students, and bore their impress; was, indeed, suffering from callosities and bulges in inconvenient places that rendered it rather uncomfortable than otherwise. The sofa was in rather worse case. It was prickly from the tattered state of its horse-hair hide; sharp points made their way easily through the thin chintz cover with a most irritating effect. I philosophically decided, however, that these minor grievances must be borne uncomplainingly. I could not expect to have everything to my mind. I was paying but a moderate rent, though I ascertained afterwards that it was much in excess of the amount paid by any previous tenant of the apartments.

I wrote a long letter to my mother informing her of all my proceedings and adventures in town, so far.

I then bettered my acquaintance with London, its ceaseless turmoil, its interminable streets, its brilliant shops, its glare of gas, its buildings, crowds, and most wondrous life. How different to Steepleborough! Why, it was that cathedral town, which I had once imagined to be rather an important and impressive place, magnified and multiplied again and again till all powers of reckoning were completely distanced. For hours I was content simply to wander about gazing, and doubtless gaping, as I went. I took my precious map with me as a sort of sheet-anchor, and kept a watchful eye lest I should be relieved, by sharpers or pick-pockets, of such property as I carried with me. I had read of the cunning misdeeds of those desperadoes. And I avoided deserted

or murky districts—for stories had reached my ear of the entrapping of innocent country folk, and their disappearance from mortal ken for ever afterwards. I visited St. Paul’s, and was lost in surprise at its marvellous magnitude; bowed reverently before the shrine of Lord Nelson; watched with interest the swaying to and fro in one of the aisles of the dusty foreign flags captured in the great war, and listened awe-struck to the reverberating thunders of the whispering-gallery. A verger of practical mind often roused me from rhapsodical musings by his iterated demands for twopence to view more and more of the curiosities of the cathedral. I think I disbursed seven twopences in all. Then I stood upon the bridges—gazing at the brown waters of the Thames, the panting steam-boats darting hither and thither, the forests of masts in the Pool. I visited Westminster Abbey, a show of wax-work, the National Gallery, an exhibition of modern pictures. I was intoxicated with sight-seeing.

I dined, in my ignorance, most expensively, at a West-end hotel. It was a day or two I think, before I discovered, or was directed to, a most respectable establishment in Rupert-street, not far from Mr. Monck’s office, where I could obtain a modest dinner upon reasonable terms.

In the evening I went to the play. I will say no more of it now than that I was amazed and delighted beyond measure. The booth at Dripford Fair, in which I had first seen Rosetta, had insufficiently prepared me for the marvels of a great London theatre. I felt that poor Mauleverer had spoken advisedly upon the subject. I became an enthusiastic playgoer.

I increased my library by buying a second-hand copy of Blackstone’s Commentaries. I looked forward to studying that famous work with lasting profit and pleasure. With a view to my greater comfort as a bachelor living alone in London, I made other purchases, including some tobacco, which did not agree with me so well as I had hoped it would. Many other investments I made at this time did not prove much more satisfactory. Still I was living and learning, although I might be diminishing my small store of money, rather injudiciously.

I have mentioned Rosetta’s name. In the excitement of my new experiences I had almost forgotten her. Not quite; for now and then vague memories of her recurred to me. I thought of her lamentingly, even tenderly. Yet it seemed to me

that momentous events had come between us like some insuperable mountain. She pertained to a past state of things that was now very distant from me. It was as though long years had intervened between the time when I had last seen her with her husband at Overbury Hall, and the present. I was a child then; now I was a man—almost, and she—Lady Overbury. Yet I found myself inquiring at times, though comparatively unexcited by the question, What had become of her? Should I ever see her again?

I took possession of my seat and desk in Mr. Monck's office to commence my career as his articulated clerk. I found old Vickery at his post. He saw that I was well supplied with writing materials, and handed me a voluminous document to copy.

"We shall get on very nicely, I'm sure, Mr. Nightingale," he said. "I'm glad to see you're so punctual. I trust it may last." He said this as though he fully believed it wouldn't. "I think we had better make a practical commencement; that, I know, has always been Mr. Monck's way with young gentlemen articulated to him. I've always been in favour of practical measures myself. There's so much more to be learned in that way than from books. I've but a poor opinion of books myself. They're so confusing, I find. You needn't trouble yourself much about reading, I think." And I had been looking forward to diligent study of Blackstone! "I've not read many books myself, and yet I may say that I know a good deal of law. I ought to—precisely—seeing how many years I've been Mr. Monck's manager. I don't pretend to be more than that, of course. This is what we call a State of Facts for the Master's Office. It's in *Dobson versus Dicks*, a Chancery suit of long standing. Let us see if you can make a nice fair copy of it. You're not accustomed, of course, to writing what we call a law hand. Precisely. But you'll soon get into the way of it. There's no hurry, we're never in a hurry in Chancery matters; only write plainly and legibly without flourishes—we don't care about flourishes in the law—except perhaps just at the commencement of a deed at 'This Indenture,' or 'Know all men by these Presents;' then we indulge sometimes in a little ornament. And don't make the tails of your letters too long; it spoils the look of writing, to my thinking; and don't mind about putting in stops; we're not paid for punctuation in the law,

so naturally we do without it; we're paid by the word, or rather by the folio, so many words to a folio, you understand. Precisely. I'm sure you'll do your best. Now, this is the kind of writing we like. You might keep it before you as a model." He produced a second document, an affidavit, I think it was, very neatly written on blue foolscap paper. I recognised the penmanship at once. The formal letters received by my uncle at the Down Farm in reference to my being articulated to Mr. Monck, and signed by him, had clearly been written by the hand that had engrossed this affidavit, if affidavit it was.

"Is that your writing, Mr. Vickery?" I asked.

"No," he answered with some hesitation; "no, it's not mine. I can't write like that now; indeed, I never could, though, years ago, I could engross neatly and carefully enough. But my eyesight isn't what it was, and my hand is less steady. I'm getting old, that's what it is, Mr. Nightingale. Precisely. I call that writing really beautiful; so even, and regular, and legible; such proportion about it; each letter perfectly formed and no ragged ends, you perceive, or useless curves; all neat and simple. If you can only write like that, Mr. Nightingale, or come any way near it, you'll do. You'll become a first-rate lawyer. It wouldn't at all surprise me. With such a hand as that, a man might climb to the woolsack, even. Many Lord Chancellors I've known haven't written nearly so well."

So saying, he shuffled to his desk, leaving me to deal as best I might with the State of Facts in *Dobson versus Dicks*. I set manfully to work; but I found great difficulty in cramping my hand to the legal pattern, and the State of Facts was terribly dull reading. I could make nothing of it. If it had meaning at all it was lost in involved verbosity, in labyrinthine sentences, and confused and preposterous repetitions.

Silence prevailed for some time, broken only by the asthmatic ticking of the dusty-faced office clock on a ledge above the door. Mr. Vickery was busy writing, his head bent low, so that his conical horn of iron-grey hair nearly swept his desk. He paused at intervals to reinvigorate himself with a pinch of snuff from his tin box, but he rarely looked in my direction. I grew weary; my fingers became cramped, and a strong disposition to yawn and stretch myself possessed me.

"Is Mr. Monck likely to be disengaged, do you think?" I asked presently. I had to put the question twice before I could obtain an answer.

"No," Mr. Vickery said at length, very deliberately. "Not to-day, I think. You wish to see him?"

I intimated that such was my desire.

"You've something particular to say to him, perhaps?"

"No; nothing very particular."

"Precisely. Well, he happens to be very much occupied just now; so as it's nothing very particular it might perhaps stand over."

"He is in, then?"

"Ah! you're too sharp upon me, Mr. Nightingale. But it looks well for your success in your profession. I don't object to it. I didn't say he was in. But, as you make a point of it, and press me upon it, I don't mind admitting that he is in, but, as I said, particularly engaged. He would much rather not be troubled just now, unless it was about something very particular. But you've said it isn't that." Then, after a pause, he added: "Perhaps you thought of paying your respects to him, as his articled clerk? Very proper. But there's no real necessity for it. At any rate there's no hurry about it, Mr. Monck being so much occupied; any time will do for that."

"To-morrow, perhaps?"

"Ay, to-morrow, or the day after, or the day after that, or next week, or next month. It doesn't really press, you see. Mr. Monck is not ceremonious; he's the last man in the world to be punctilious about trifles; and it's but a trifle, you know, Mr. Nightingale. Not that you must think yourself neglected. Mr. Monck wouldn't wish that. But he has full confidence in me. I have been his manager some many years. I came to this office first quite as a boy, Mr. Nightingale; in the old gentleman's time, Mr. Monck's father, I mean. He regards me quite as his *locum tenens*, as we say. You know Latin? of course, precisely. I know a few formal terms, but not more than that. I don't pretend to, and more is not really necessary for all practical purposes; yes, as his *locum tenens*. I'll see that everything's done that's right, Mr. Nightingale. You may trust me. Though I say it, there's no one better qualified to give a young man a practical insight into his profession. You've got hold of the right end of the stick, as the saying is, Mr. Nightingale. It will

be the same with you as with the other young gentlemen who've been articled to Mr. Monck. They were all under my care, and they got on surprisingly. Knew all the courts and offices, and I may say the whole procedure of law, from a practical point of view. Any message you may have for Mr. Monck, of course I'll take care to deliver. Meanwhile, it would be as well, perhaps, not to disturb him. He doesn't like being disturbed. Few people do. That's my experience. I hope you're getting on nicely with that State of Facts. I'll come round and see presently."

I thought it strange, seeing that a considerable premium had been paid to him on his receiving me as his articled pupil, and that he had covenanted to instruct me duly in the mysteries of his craft, that Mr. Monck should be so little curious in my regard. It would have occupied little of his time, however valuable it might be, to have seen me and interchanged a few friendly words. If this was not due to me on my own account, I thought it due to my relationship to his former friend, my uncle. But my opinion was not very clearly defined on the subject—all was so new to me. For aught I knew to the contrary, this might be the ordinary practice of a lawyer's office in relation to articled clerks. Mr. Vickery had almost suggested as much.

Meantime I toiled over the State of Facts, making little progress with it. I calculated it would take me at least a week to complete the fair copy of it. It was dull work. The office hours were long in those days. We paused about five o'clock for some two hours or so, during which interval I dined in Rupert-street. Then we returned to the office as a rule, and sat at our desks until after eight o'clock. I was unaccustomed to this long confinement, and found it rather trying.

Few people ever came to the office. There seemed no other clerk but Vickery and an errand boy, who when unemployed out of doors, occupied his time in dusting, sorting, and tying up papers, in cleaning inkstands, spilling ink upon the floor, and blotting himself all over. He sat upon a little stool in a corner, and often, I noticed, dropped off to sleep, leaving a black impression of his head, as though it had been a lithographic stone, printed off upon the wall behind him. I asked him once why he went to sleep so often. He said he couldn't help it. He'd been up all night; he was up most nights, helping his

mother get through with her washing. He was not an interesting boy, and suffered much from an eruptive condition of the lower part of his face.

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

ON SOME BACKS OF HOUSES.

LOOKING out of window is a very general recreation in Italy. Considered as an amusement, it has several advantages. It is cheap. It involves no exertion of mind or body. And it is always at hand. I own to having adopted this Italian measure, subject, however, to such limitations and variations as result from my having been born in a country in which absolute idleness is not cultivated as a fine art.

Now, in looking at a great thoroughfare there is no time given you to enjoy the show thoroughly—I mean the human part of the show. It is like looking at a landscape from a railway train in motion. The pace is too rapid to allow you to distinguish the details. Only in this case it is the spectator who is stationary, and the spectacle which moves. The stream of people hurries by in a purposeful way. They are all bound somewhither, and are going to do something. It is true that this objection applies less to transalpine than to English towns. There are, in most cities of Italy, streets—crowded ones too—in which the respectable public lounges all day long. The lounge, the whole lounge, and nothing but the lounge, is practised in these favoured localities. But they do not afford the variety, and dramatic interest, which are the great charms of looking out of window. The performers are, almost exclusively, men, and almost exclusively men of similar social position to one another. They sit or stand outside cafés, or at club doors, or on the pavement, or in the middle of the road—for we do not trouble ourselves here about leaving free space for the circulation of vehicles, or of any eccentric persons who may be in a hurry—and talk, and smoke, and spit, and spit, and smoke, and talk, with a monotony which it is a little tiresome to watch.

But get a good commanding view of some backs of houses, with, if possible, a glimpse, obtained cornerwise, of a busy street beyond, and you have the most perfect position for a window to look out of. You see the out-door life of the people, which includes a very large number of hours out of the twenty-four, and as much of their in-door life as can be made out by

glimpses through wide open casements into sombre depths of comparative darkness—back-grounds of gloom, against which figures flit, and white curtains are “relieved,” so as to look dazzlingly clean. But this effect—to judge by all the white curtains which I have the opportunity of surveying, under circumstances of less favourable contrast—is probably a mere optical delusion.

I confess, not without some qualms of conscience, that, as I pass many an hour, cigar in mouth, and elbow on sill, looking out at my backs of houses, I consider myself peculiarly lucky in point of situation. There are two or three striking contrasts within a stone's throw of me, which furnish the quaintest combinations sometimes. Straight opposite to me, as I sit discreetly shaded from view by the half-closed persiane (those wooden blinds which we call, I know not why, Venetian blinds), is an establishment of Sisters of Charity, who keep a school for young children of the poorer classes. On my left is a row of dwelling-houses, occupied by Roman citizens of the lower middle class. On my right is a huge overgrown caravanserai, Heaven knows how many stories high, a tourist-frequented hotel, full to overflow, chiefly of transatlantic travellers, very smart in their attire, very energetic in their sight-seeing, rather more strident of voice than is pleasant to persons whose ears are sensitive, and going and coming all day long in an endless double procession, outward and homeward bound, of carriages and pedestrians. Between the caravanserai and the Sisters of Charity, there is a wide gap in the line of my backs of houses. The gap is occupied, first by the opening of a steep lane running up in the direction of the Mons Quirinalis, and then by the garden of the hotel on which I look down from my second-floor window. The gap allows me to see a large church opposite (it would be difficult to find a space of ground in Rome where you are not within view of a church), which is approached by a very broad and lofty flight of time-worn steps. The grass grows in the fissures of these steps, and there is a plentiful crop of weeds waving and nodding on the arch above the west entrance of the church. Close to the church is a series of artists' studios, with wide wooden doors to permit of the egress of large works of sculpture or painting. Add to all this the fact that the fronts of my backs of houses and the garden of the caravanserai border a long thoroughfare,

which leads to the chief railway station, and through which pass the bulk of the vast number of travellers of all nations arriving at, or departing from, the Eternal City, and it will, I think, be admitted, that what meets my daily view is a Roman Mosaic, compounded of very various and sharply-compounded pieces.

Behind the school of the Sisters of Charity, and consequently between their house and my window, is a playground for the children, and (walled off from it) a small kitchen-garden. The playground is to my eyes a dusty desert, divided down the centre by an open wooden paling which separates the boys from the girls; to the childish imaginations of the young Romans who are let loose into it twice a day from their close school-room, it is doubtless peopled with delights. They are, as a rule, neither handsome nor healthy looking, these poor urchins; sallow and coarse-featured for the most part, with frowsy mats of tangled dark hair, and clothes which look rather dirty and neglected, than shabby from long wear. Amongst the elder girls there are some fine creatures of fourteen or fifteen, looking as old as many English girls three or four years their seniors, with massive figures, and fine dark eyes. Possibly those elf-like, uncanny-looking little ones may grow into some sort of beauty. The boys are all quite small; none of them over ten years old, I should say. They have all, without exception, harsh, screaming, uncivilised voices, which they exercise, poor little things, in ceaseless yellings, during their hour of recreation. Except, however, that they are shriller, I do not think that the children are in this respect more disagreeable neighbours than a similar number of adult Romans of their class would be. Nothing strikes a stranger more unpleasantly than the hideousness of the Roman voices; especially of the female voices. Beautiful, or even fairly agreeable speaking voices are rare all over Italy, with the sole exception, as far as my experience goes, of Venice. But in Rome the maximum of discord producible by human throats appears to be reached. You are attracted in the street by a face of classic beauty (there are such faces, and of frequent occurrence too, among the population of the Eternal City), and whilst you are admiring the noble outline, lustrous eyes, and columnar throat of some young *contadina* or *popolana*, there issues from the columnar throat aforesaid a series of sounds which recal the

voice of an English navvy, who is getting quarrelsome in his cups. The girl may be making some simple and commonplace observation, she may even be bandying jests in high good humour with her companions, but the tone in which her sentences are uttered, might make all Billingsgate quail. Nor is this peculiarity confined to the lowest stratum of the population. The other day I entered a shop to buy a cravat. There was a respectable, neatly-dressed young woman there, bonneted and shawled, and apparently belonging to a tradesman's family. Whilst I modestly waited in the background of the shop until my turn to be served should arrive, this damsel was chaffering and haggling about the purchase of some white gauzy stuff for a veil. The man who was measuring out the material behind the counter, and making but a feeble fight of it, poor fellow, against the lady's strenuous demands for the reduction of three halfpence sterling on the entire price of the article, happened to fold the gauze a little crooked at the point where he was about to cut it. Instantly the young woman bawled out at the full pitch of her Roman voice (I can think of no epithet which would convey an idea of the sound to those who have never heard it, and to those who have, it will suffice to characterise it as Roman, *par excellence*). "What are you doing? Wait! Stop, I tell you! The stuff is crooked. *Diavolo! Non mi fate arrabbiare! Don't enrage me!*" And truly, if she were not already enraged, one would not have liked to enrage her; for the warning suggested yet latent powers of lung and throat in reserve for an emergency. For myself, I am not ashamed to own that I shrank back a step or two into the darkness of my corner, and modestly retired from notice as much as possible. And yet, to say the truth, the girl did not look like a virago, and when she left the shop with her purchase (and with the disputed three halfpence she had gloriously won in fair fight), she bestowed a good-humoured smile and nod on the shopman, who returned both with interest. But to return to my backs of houses.

On the ground floor of the school kept by the Sisters of Charity is an open arcade—a *loggia*, as it is called, in Italy—under whose shelter the children play in wet weather. In the girls' division of the playground grows a sickly young cypress-tree; in the boys' division, a plane, which looks flourishing enough, and is now (the first week of April) nearly covered with fresh

foliage. Round these trees the youngsters run, pursuing each other, and, in the case of the cypress, shaking the rickety-looking plant from summit to root as they swing themselves round its trunk by their hands. They certainly seem to be under no constraint in their hour of recreation, although they are never free from supervision. There is always a watchful "sister" in their midst, in her blue gown and white starched cap; or else one of the elder girls deputed to act temporarily as her lieutenant. Day after day I see the children—especially the very little ones—crowd round the suora when she comes among them, seize her hands, clasp her knees, and pull her gown with perfect confidence and familiarity. Yet these good women can give their charges a sound rating on occasions, and even administer schiaffi (boxes on the ear) to the refractory, as I have beheld with these eyes many times. In short, their treatment seems to be quite maternal, and by no means of the far-off, unapproachable sort either for discipline or kindness. And that the children like them, and are at ease with them, cannot be doubted.

At the windows above the loggia sisters stand ironing piles of snowy linen, or pass to and fro armed with great dusters, cleaning the tables and chairs, and the few religious prints which hang on the white-washed wall; or inspect the needlework of a class of elder girls.

Sometimes the sisters work in the kitchen-garden, weeding and thinning the plants; or they hang out newly-washed clothes to dry upon lines of ropes. They are always busy, and, so far as the material part of their labours is concerned, I doubt not that they are also always useful. Whether it be desirable to occupy a great part of the hours of instruction in making little children bawl out a succession of Ave Marias in a monotonous sing-song, uttered evidently without the smallest meaning being attached to the words, is a point which I am not called upon here to discuss.

One festa day—I think it was last Sunday—there was a grand game of play in the boys' ground. The children played at a church procession! Two little boys of about nine or ten years old headed the march, each holding a forlorn old birch broom in a vertical position with great dignity. The brooms were, of course, banners, or great candlesticks, such as are borne aloft in the imposing ceremonies of the Romish Church. Then came two

acolytes in fustian suits and checked pinafores swinging censers. That is to say, to the gross vision of adult lookers-on what they swung were broken flower-pots hanging by a string; but I knew well enough, having once upon a time had my eyes anointed by a kind fairy who lived in a green-and-gold volume of stories, and who thereby bestowed on me the precious gift of seeing sometimes as a child sees—I knew, I say, that these were censers, richly chased, and glittering with gold, and sending up clouds of perfumed smoke. The rest of the procession was made up of priests and dignitaries of the church, walking two and two with much solemnity. There were two or three of the dignitaries—notably one cardinal archbishop with a red hood on, and short socks and buff shoes—to whom, walking at all, was a recent accomplishment, and who consequently had a little difficulty in keeping up with the procession, and followed it non passibus equis, as *parvus Iulus* toddled along beside his father *Æneas*. Banner-bearers, acolytes in their pinafores of state, priests, and cardinal archbishop, were all vigorously intoning a chant in the Latin tongue. (Did I mention that the kind fairy had touched my ears also?) The procession visited several shrines, stopping for a short while at each. The first was the poultry-house, where the visitors were received with much emotion and a general cluck. The next was the plane-tree, which nodded, and answered the chant by a mysterious whisper all through its rustling leaves. Finally, the procession paused at a great stone step leading to a little postern door in the wall, and knelt before it as before a high altar. Here the chant swelled out in full force. The antiphony was thrown backwards and forwards from one phalanx of the choristers to the other like a weaver's shuttle. And the last glimpse I had of the ceremony—being called away just then to attend to some mundane affairs—was the chubby form of the cardinal archbishop in his red hood, short socks, and buff shoes, being hauled up from his knees by one of the acolytes, and set down square on his feet in a rather staggering condition.

The way in which these tiny urchins imitated the chanting of the priests, giving all the peculiar intonations, and the long-drawn two or three concluding notes of the "Amen," following a rapid gabbling out of syllables which sound as much like gibberish to the unaccustomed ear, as the

children's parody itself, was quaint in the extreme. I glanced at the suora on guard to see whether she disapproved of this kind of game. But she did not at all. She stood leaning against the wooden paling with folded arms, not smiling, but quite placid, and evidently considering the children's mimicry to be quite a good and pleasant and innocent way for them to divert themselves in. And no doubt, to the children, it was innocent enough; only I was a little surprised that she should have thought so!

The backs of the bourgeois houses adjoining the Sisters of Charity, are less interesting; but even they have their characteristic features. One of these is the frequent transit up and down, from the windows of each floor, of a tin bucket, which journeys downward empty, and journeys upward full of water. There is a well in the little garden adjoining the kitchen-garden of the sisters, and this well supplies all the various inhabitants of the different flats or floors of the bourgeois house. The first-floor family employs a serving-woman; a stout, portly person, who is probably the cook, and housekeeper, and general factotum. She comes out often on to the little balcony, and lets down the shining tin bucket, which goes clinking and jangling, with its wire handle bobbing from side to side, as if it were in a desperate hurry to reach the well. It disappears from my view before it gets to its goal, hidden by the garden wall; but presently is drawn up with regular hauls of the rope over a pulley, splashing out the silver water over its brim at every jerk. I could fancy that in the fierce hot summer time, when all vegetation is parched and thirsty, the passage of that dripping bucket to and fro must be looked for with eagerness by the weeds which grow on the sloping roof of an outhouse, over which its aerial course lies!

At the top of all, on the very summit of the house, is a flat terrace roof. Many flower-pots, and plants in long wooden boxes, are ranged on it. And here, morning and evening, walks a very old man, leaning on the arm of a woman who may be his daughter, although she is herself past middle life. I have settled it firmly in my mind that she is not his wife. I know his history quite to my own satisfaction, and I expect the reader to accept it with implicit confidence, unless he should chance to have any better theory to offer! The old man, then, is a retired tradesman who has seen

better days. He has not been prosperous, and lays the blame on widely different—and indeed contradictory and incompatible—causes. He is a stubborn laudator temporis acti, although the "good old times" have done nothing particularly good for him. He detests and despises the Italians, as the pure-bred Roman styles his fellow-countrymen born outside a limited radius round the city walls. He despises them none the less because he is uneasily conscious that these intruders with their new-fangled ways (especially, perhaps exclusively, the intruders from Lombardy, Piedmont, and the north) are elbowing out the old-fashioned local tradesmen, by dint of superior energy and business faculty. It does not affect him personally, to be sure. His race is run, his voyage is over, and he lies safe and obscure in his poor little haven among my backs of houses. Still he is bitter and sore when he sees the northern names over the shop-doors on the Corso, as he passes them to take his Sunday walk on the Pincian, and hear the band play. He is inclined to confound heresy, irreligion, liberalism, and prosperity in his mind, as convertible terms. And it is to be feared that his devotions—made very regularly, as being almost the only form of "distraction" now remaining open to him, for he cannot afford the café—in the neighbouring church with the grass-grown steps, are more remarkable for stimulating his abhorrence of the heterodox, than for distilling into his breast the dews of Christian charity.

And yet, poor old fellow, I never see him pottering about on his terrace in company with the sour-looking woman who attends him, without a sentiment of pity. These few square feet of brick-paved terrace, with its flower-pots and boxes, constitute all his domain. He has been rather pompous and autocratic in his day, domineering over his shop-boys, and yet easily turned and softened by a little adroit flattery. Now he has nobody to domineer over, for the sour-looking female is anything but meek, and he is, in fact, a forlorn old fellow, whose weaknesses and virtues, whims and fancies, likings and dislikings, are matters of importance to no one on this earth any more. And yet, and yet, he stands over his boxes of mignonette with a little air of pomposity. He straddles with his legs, and thrusts his hands deep down into his pockets, and shakes his grey head, covered with a black skull-cap, in a severe manner, as though he were asking the flowers what the

deuce they meant by it. He constantly alters the arrangement of the shabby, dusty pots and boxes. He insists very often on watering them with his own hands. Many a journey the clattering tin bucket makes over its bridge of rope, as the spring evenings lengthen out, and the old man is able to remain later on his terrace. The sour-faced woman offers her assistance to lift the full bucket on its arrival from the well, but is repulsed querulously. And the old fellow hooks it towards him with his crooked stick, detaches it from the line with difficulty, and spills half the water at one splash as he raises the brimming bucket in his trembling hands. He frowns portentously, and drags his flower-pots hither and thither, and pokes at the soil with the point of his stick, and makes a vast pother about pulling off a few dead leaves. But the flowers don't mind it. They flourish with a sweet contentment in their shabby homes, and sometimes send out such a delicious breath on the evening air, as softens the lines about the mouth of that sour-faced woman, and makes their old master wrinkle up his Roman nose with a sniff of pleasure.

Just below the terrace, on the second floor, a young woman is dressing her hair. She has brought a little bit of looking-glass to the window, and turns about this way and that way, so as to contemplate the effect of her coiffure in various lights. She is not a pretty young woman by any means, but she has a thick and long mane of black hair, which she is puffing, and frizzing, and piling up in a heap on the top of her head after the fashion of those fine ladies whom she sees in their carriages. At least on this point she can rival them. Her gown may be poor, her bonnet shabby, but her head-dress is quite as grotesque, quite as disfiguring and destructive of all grace as that of the fashionablest dame who ever paid a French hair-dresser. I fancy my young friend is going to a party to-night, for when she has reared a lofty pile, partly supported and supplemented by what look to me like small black hedgehogs, but which are in reality, I believe, rolls of fuzzy horse-hair, technically nominated frisettes, she crowns the edifice with a crimson bow of ribbon, and contemplates the whole in the glass with much apparent satisfaction.

The fat old cook of the primo piano comes out and leans her folded arms on the railing of the balcony, to pigliare il fresco—get a breath of fresh air, as we

should say, before going into the house for the night. A Sister of Charity in her white-winged cap begins to close the shutters, and draw down the great blinds of coarse matting which hang outside the windows of the school-room. The children are trooping out noisily into the street. I hear their voices rising shrill into the evening air. Up on the terrace, the old man and his daughter are transfigured in the light of a beautiful sunset. They look like two dusky mediæval saints painted on a golden background. I can see now a certain nobility and severity in the outline of that sour-looking woman, with her down-drawn Dantesque mouth, and spare upright figure. Rose-colour succeeds to gold in the western sky, and flushes deeper and deeper into crimson. I have a glimpse of two black cypresses above the confused mass of roofs on the horizon. And nearer at hand, between the church with the grass-grown steps and the house of the Sisters of Charity, a noble stone pine raises its spreading crest into the blue air from behind the walls of a convent garden.

Suddenly a little pale spark begins to twinkle in the second floor casement. The black-haired girl has lit a candle, finding the twilight insufficient to complete her toilet by. May she enjoy her merry-making! The church bells are all jingling and clanging the Ave Maria with sounds which are mingled and softened by distance into a pathetic chorus which seems to be the voice of a crowd sending its complaints and troubles up to heaven's gates, half querulously, half confidently. "We are sadly confused and troubled here below," the chorus seems to say. "Life is so strange; life is so hard. Can you help us? You will help us. Ave Maria!"

The children are trooping home. The sisters are kneeling at their devotions. The black-haired girl pins a smart shawl over her shoulders, and takes a farewell look at the mirror before she hurries away. I think she expects to see her sweetheart this evening. The sun is gone down, and the old man on the terrace prepares to go down too. The mingled harmony of the city reaches his ears up there. The shrill laughter of the children, the chanting in the church, the hum of talking, and the sound of wheels in the busy thoroughfares, and—above all—the clamour of the appealing bells. Not for many more spring-tides will he stand on that terrace among his flowers. Let us hope that a breath of peace and goodwill towards man is descend-

ing on him from the serene depths of the evening sky.

Good night, Signor Pantalon!

SUNDIALS.

THE Oriental potentate whose sayings and doings in England have formed quite a novel episode this summer, and who displayed a laudable curiosity relating to useful things that were new to him, is reported to have taken away with him a stock of egg-timers, or three-minute glasses, the action of which struck his fancy. Or it may have been those ingenious egg-boilers which extinguish their own fire when the eggs are done. If this be so, our illustrious visitor is almost too good to be a Persian; for egg-glasses are time-tellers. Time is not valued by the Asiatics as it is by Europeans; and all time-measuring instruments are regarded for their beauty or their ingenuity, rather than for the value of the thing which they measure. Whether the Shah possesses any sundials at Teheran is a question beyond our power to answer, but those earliest of all time-measurers would be more worthy of his attention than sand-glasses. Nay, English folk themselves have, for the most part, only a vague notion of a subject which, as we shall show, touches both upon science and upon poetry.

Sundials are, so to speak, sun-worshippers; their hour is just the length of his, regardless of the season of the year. If the earth stood upright, and spun round like a top; if, moreover, she revolved in a true circle round the sun—then the hours would be all equal in length. But neither of these conditions prevails. The axis of the earth is inclined to the horizon, and the orbit is oval or elliptical: circumstances which give an irregularity to the apparent path of the sun across the heavens from morn till eve. It is for this reason that solar time is not exactly the same as clock time; the difference may be as much as sixteen minutes and a quarter, the sun before the clock in certain seasons of the year, the clock before the sun in others. The difference varies from this maximum down to nothing, and then advances to another maximum in the opposite direction. And sundial time is the same as sun or solar time, obediently following it. The difference is called the equation of time, the amount of which is given for every day in the year in good almanacks. For in-

stance, on Michaelmas Day in the present year the clock will be nearly ten minutes before the sun; whereas on Christmas Day the sun will be about half a minute before the clock.

A sundial, this irregularity allowed for, shows the hour of the day by the direction of a shadow. A piece of metal, called the style or gnomon, is so placed that a straight edge along one side of it shall be parallel with the earth's axis, and the shadow of this straight edge is received on a surface marked with lines and figures. The length of this shadow is not a matter of much consequence. If we plant a stick, two feet in length, upright in the ground, its shadow on the ground will be about a foot long at noon on the longest day, whereas it will be more than seven feet long at noon on the shortest day; but the two shadows will be in the same direction, which is all that is absolutely necessary in sundial time-measurements. To this present day the peasants in some of the remoter and poorer districts of southern Europe get a rough knowledge of the hour by this straight-stick method, the stick being either stuck vertically in horizontal ground, or horizontally in a vertical wall. The stick, gnomon, or style, however, ought to be inclined, the angle of inclination depending on the latitude of the place.

When the principle whereon a sundial depends is once understood, the practical modes of working it out are numerous and varied. The plain sundial, so often to be seen on old country churches, usually faces the south, and has the hour-lines directed downwards, or a little to the right or left. If it is not exactly facing the south, the gnomon is adjusted in a different way, and the hour-lines present a peculiarity of arrangement. Some dials are horizontal, with the gnomon sticking up in an inclined position. If it be neither vertical nor horizontal, the sundial may be inclined; or there may be two kinds, the reclined and the proclined, considered relatively to the position of the sun. If parallel to the earth's equator, it is an equinoctial dial; if parallel to the earth's axis, it is a polar dial. If the plane of the dial be not exactly east and west, it is a declining dial. If the plane be neither horizontal nor vertical, or if it does not directly face the south, it becomes a de-inclined dial; while other peculiarities in the position give rise to other names. Some sundials are shaped like crosses, some like globes, some like hollow hemispherical basins, some like a ham or

leg of mutton; and if we closely examine the costly specimens of art workmanship at the South Kensington Museum, especially those which once belonged to the Bernal Collection, we shall find still more remarkable oddities in the forms of old-fashioned sundials. Whatever the shape of the surface, and whatever its position (within certain limits of range), there may be such an adjustment of gnomon, and such a marking of hour-lines, as to enable it to serve approximately as a sundial or hour-measurer.

Let us cursorily glance at some of the more remarkable sundials which have found their way into illustrated books.

A shopkeeper at Marlborough has an oval vertical sundial in his window, in which he (or his dial-maker) has ingeniously managed that the hour-lines shall bear a definite relation to the direction of the street. At Madeley Hall, Salop, there is a solid cube of stone, with four large hollows or concavities in the four surfaces; and around them smaller hollows of various shapes; every hollow is fitted up as a separate sundial, to mark some or other of the hours during the sunny part of the day. At Tredegar Park, Monmouthshire, in a fine old room panelled with cedar, a pane of glass in a window is marked with the lines and figures of a sundial radiating from a gnomon; and there it has been, according to a date inscribed underneath, for just two hundred years. In the garden of Wentworth Castle, Yorkshire, is a sundial formed of box-edging cut into the proper numerals. A pretty conceit has sometimes been realised, of making a floral sundial, the dial being composed of flowers that bloom in succession during the months of sunshine. George Stephenson, when he was plain Geordie the colliery viewer, had the aid of his son Robert in setting up a sundial over his cottage door; they hewed, carved, and polished the stone, and constructed a dial upon it by the aid of the rules laid down in Ferguson's Astronomy. Some of the sundials at present existing in various parts of England date their history from the time of Nicholas Stone, a celebrated sculptor two centuries and a half ago. There is an entry extant of the expense of setting up a sundial by him at St. James's Palace, six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence, the king finding material. He also records, "In 1622, I made the great dial in the garden at Whitehall, for the which I had forty-six pounds"—no small sum in those days.

In the same year he "made a dial for my Lord Brook in Holborn, for the which I had eight pounds ten shillings." This was on the site of the present medley of houses called Brook-street. On the top of a fountain at Leadenhall, erected in the same century, was a singular globular sundial, which showed the hour without the aid of any gnomon or style. It was adjusted to the latitude of London; a belt or line representing the equator was marked with two series of numbers from one to twelve; when the sun shone on this globe, the numbers found under the place where the shadowed part met the illuminated part, denoted the hour of the day.

Scotland has some rather curious sundials still left, chiefly in and around the old mansions and abbeys. At Dryburgh Abbey, there are four dials on the four faces of a pillar, all different—indeed, they must necessarily be so, to accommodate the different directions in which the shadow is thrown. At Glamis Castle, the name of which is known to all the readers of Macbeth, there is a sundial of specially curious character. Four carved stone lions stand on a base, each holding a dial as a shield; the names of the months and days are engraved below; between and above the lions, in a kind of pyramidal or obelisk arrangement, are no less than eighty other dial-faces, cut diamond-wise on the several blocks of stone. Every one of these was the result of much calculation, to see that the markings bore a proper relation to the plane of the surface; some among them could have shown only a few of the hours just after sunrise, or just before sunset, on and near the longest day. At Kilburn House, in Ayrshire, is a tapering pillar on steps, swelling out in the centre; it is covered with small sundials on all sides, and of all shapes—cruciform, hemispherical, shell-shape, &c. Scotland, as well as England, has preserved a few specimens of the ingenious ring-dial, much in favour during the seventeenth century. It was usually a brass ring, with a narrower ring moving in a groove in its circumference; this facility of movement being necessary for the adjustment of the dial to the declination of the sun at various seasons of the year. The sun's light passed through a small hole, and fell upon the interior surface of the ring, which was engraved with hour-numerals. The ring was held suspended from the finger, and a boss was so placed as to govern the shifting of the inner ring, according to months and days

marked on it. Whoever invented that ring had a remarkably clear notion of the principles whereon sundials must be based. Nor was it a bad idea on the part of a young lady who marked the hours on the door-sill for every day in the year, thrown by the shadow of some of the framing.

Tourists on the Continent and in the East meet occasionally with curiosities in the form of sundials. At Malaga, in Spain, is a white marble pillar or pier marked with nearly a hundred and fifty of these, many in the forms of stars, crosses, and shells. Father Lyne, professor of mathematics at Leyden, made a sundial which was based on a stone pedestal; six pyramidal compartments rose above the pedestal, on which were no fewer than two hundred and seventy dials. Some of these were sundials to mark the hours according to European time; others marked it in accordance with Jewish, Babylonian, and astronomical time; others threw a shadow on the gnomon itself, instead of a shadow of the gnomon on the dial-face; while others furnished the means of solving several problems in astronomy and mathematical geography. In the Pyrenees an ingenious sundial is sometimes to be met with made of a small cylinder of boxwood; the top can be drawn out, exposing a small blade turning on a pin; this forms a gnomon, the shadow of which falls on engraved lines on the cylinder, and denotes the hour with an error seldom exceeding five minutes. In the base of Cleopatra's Needle a sundial was discovered a few years ago, a hemispherical cavity scooped out of a square block of stone. We might perhaps have dismissed our conjecture relating to the possible ignorance of the Shah concerning sundials, for they are well-known in Turkey and other Mohammedan countries; and although the Shah and the Sultan do not accept the same version of their faith, they agree in essentials. But be this as it may, the Turks—the real Osmanlis of the Sultan's dominions—pray several times a day; and all the principal mosques in Constantinople are provided with sundials outside, that the people may know when the hours of prayer have arrived. Most of them have no other marks than such as will denote the time; but some have a line drawn, which points in a direction towards the sacred town of Mecca, this being the direction in which the faces of the faithful must be turned during the performance of worship. Going further East, we may remark that the Chinese and Japanese use sundials. At a watchmaker's shop at

Yokohama an English traveller recently observed a clever bit of ingenuity; the shopkeeper used the railings round his house as a dial to set his clocks and watches by, the markings for the shadows being observed and adjusted once a week by the Saturday gun of the flag-ship.

The literature of sundials is rather copious. Satirists, moralists, poets, all have contributed towards it in various ways. Plautus denounced the man who first invented these time-measurers:

To cut and hack my days so wretchedly
Into small pieces! When I was a boy
My belly was my sundial—one more sure,
Truer, and exact than any of them.
This dial told me when 'twas proper time
To go to dinner, when I had aught to eat;
But now-a-days, why even when I have
I can't fall to, unless the sun gives leave.

In the old days of Seven Dials there was originally a Doric column in the middle of the open place where the seven streets meet; and on the sides of this column were seven sundials, each about a foot square. Dials and column were removed long ago; but when Gay wrote his *Trivia*, or the *Art of Walking the Streets of London*, he thought the matter worthy of a little of his versification:

Where fam'd St. Giles's ancient limits spread,
An in-rail'd column rears its lofty head;
Here to seven streets seven dials count the day,
And from each other catch the circling ray.

Bowles, in his *History of Brompton Parsonage*, has some lines far above the level of *Trivia*:

To count the brief and unreturning hours
This sundial was placed among the flowers,
Which came forth in their beauty, smiled, and died,
Blooming and withering round its ancient side.
Mortal, thy day is passing—see that flower,
And think upon the shadow and the hour.

The genial Charles Lamb had his own quaint way of treating the subject: "Why has the dial almost everywhere vanished? If its business use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarcely have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd carved it out quaintly in the sun, and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones."

Mottoes:—this word of Charles Lamb's suggests what is perhaps the prettiest fea-

ture about sundials, the mottoes which they so often bear. The antitheses between day and night, sunshine and shadow, waking and sleeping, life and death, time and eternity, are brought before us in numberless ways by the phenomena presented, and the mode of representing them, in a way, too, tempting both to the poet and to the epigrammatist. Mrs. Gatty's elegant volume on sundials is crowded with descriptions and quotations, from which almost every taste might be gratified. Even those who know but little Latin could pick out the sententious meaning from the appearance of many of those written in that language. We have only space for a few.

In the south wall of an old house at Tottenham is a sundial of large size with the motto "Sumus umbra," bringing in the Latin for shadows in a religious sense. On a house in the High-street of Marlborough, beneath a sundial painted on a window, is a motto with much meaning in it, "Dum spectas, fugio—sic vita." On Elsworth Church, Cambridgeshire, "Mox Nox," Night shortly. Under a sundial on a white marble cross in Collaton Church, Devon :

If on this dial fall a shade, the time redeem;
For, lo! it passeth like a dream.
But if it all be blank, then mourn thy loss
Of hours unblest by shadows from the Cross.

On St. Mary's, at Kidderminster, a sundial bears an inscription, "None but a villain will deface me;" though why even a villain should take the trouble to do this does not clearly appear. At St. James's, Bury St. Edmund's, a motto, under the guise of a somewhat rude homely reproof, gives a timely reminder of the duty and value of industry, "Go about your business!" At Roscommon there is a sundial which contrives to keep alive the Orange enthusiasm in a way novel, if neither poetical nor logical :

May thou be blest with length of days
Who still proclaim King William's praise.

On a church at Charlton Kings, a sundial motto perpetuates the monition, "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." At Seaham a dial on a stone slab is inscribed :

The natural clockwork by the Mighty One,
Wound up at first, and ever since has gone.
No pin drops out; its wheels and spring hold good;
It speaks its Maker's praise, though once it stood.
But that was by order of the Workman's power;
And when it stands again, it goes no more.

On an old dial in the front of Catricken Church, are the three simple but expressive words, "Fugit hora, ora," "Time

flies, pray." Doctor Watts wrote an inscription for a sundial in the garden of Lady Abney's house, Stoke Newington :

So rolls the sun, so wears the day,
And measures out life's painful way;
Through shifting scenes of shade and light,
To endless day or endless night.

Nor is the Continent bare of such inscriptions, often couched in that epigrammatic Latin which is difficult to render into English with less than double as many words. Such is the sundial motto at St. Philippe's, Nice, "Sine sole sileo," "Without sunshine I am silent;" and that in the convent of St. Cimies, in the same town, "Scis horas: nescis horam;" and that on a third sundial in the same place, "Non numero horas, nisi serenas," "I only mark the hours in fine weather," or, "I mark none but serene hours." At Cannes, where the late Lord Brougham often resided, we find "Irrevocabilis hora," a sentiment which we all admit every day of our lives. A German sundial tells us that "Die Sonne scheint überall"—words that almost translate themselves to an English eye and ear; while one in French, at Rougemont, in the Canton de Vaux, says, "Je suis pour tout le monde. Mon ombre passe avec vitesse, et la fin approche avec rapidité, O mortel!"

THE VALLEY OF FLOWERS.

It lies at the gates of the morning,
Hard by the fair plesance of youth.
Bear its winds never whisper of warning?
Its songs never burden of ruth?
Ah nay, for the airs are all gracious
That breathe through its bloom-laden bowers;
Serene, sunny-swarded and spacious,
The Valley of Flowers!

By what mystical rose-shadowed portal,
Unwarded by visible hand,
Are the feet of the way-weary mortal
Drawn down to that delicate land?
What soul, that hath strayed o'er its borders,
May tell in the grey after hours?
No sword-flaming ones are thy warders
Oh Valley of Flowers!

Soft, soft is the footway and glowing
With green that out-glories the spring.
Are they earth-blossoms lavishly blowing?
Earth-birds that so blithesomely sing?
It is bright with unwearied splendour,
And cool with the tinkle of showers;
Delightful and tranquil and tender
The Valley of Flowers!

What sweeter than trancedly straying
Through tracks flower-soft to the tread;
By fountains snow-created, bright-spraying,
And lilies that are lucently led
Through thy green-girt and blossomy mazes,
Thy silent and shadowy bowers,
Rose-vistas, and violet hazes,
Oh Valley of Flowers?

What flowers? Ah say, are they roses
Red-hearted, that crush and that trail?
Yon lily that languidly doses
With mystical pallor is pale.

They are blazoned with beauty that thralleth,
And dight with unspeakable powers;
On thy swards is it sunshine that falleth,
Oh Valley of Flowers?

What flowers? Flame-tinted, snow-creamy,
And weird uncelestial blue;
What delirious odours and dreamy
Exhale! Oh the ominous hue
That peers up through the mosses and grasses!
Red-dappled are footways and bowers;
He must crush out those petals who passes
The Valley of Flowers.

Ah where in the flower-dight mezes,
Crush-clustered with blossom and bell,
Are the smiles of the innocent daisies?
Not here in this valley they dwell,
Nor the purple and pure-hearted pansies;
What glamour is then in thy bowers,
That filleth with fear-winged fancies
Oh Valley of Flowers?

What spell in the pathway is growing,
That draweth the hesitant feet?
Are the red-hearted roses out-throwing
In odours seductively sweet,
This shadow that claspeeth and chilleth?
Hath it paroling and palyng powers
This soul-steeping fragrance that filleth
The Valley of Flowers?

Cold! cold! and the odours are sickly,
Death breathes in the blossom-born gale.
Ah forth, let us forth then, and quickly,
For love and delightsomeness fail!
But who, unattaint and unsmitten,
Shall pass where the thunder-cloud lowers,
O'er thy portal, erst fair and rose-litten,
Oh Valley of Flowers?

THE LOSER WINS!

ON a bright spring morning a few years ago, my regiment marched out of Colchester en routé for Ireland, where we had been ordered to the unspeakable disgust of the youngsters, who looked upon duty in the Sister Isle as foreign service. The sadness with which we marched out of our pleasant quarters was deepened into profound melancholy by many days' marching from Dublin to our new station, and we took over our barracks with heavy hearts.

However, after six months' residence our feelings had undergone considerable change; half the regiment was at outstations within easy distance of head-quarters, where our band played twice a week, bringing together to croquet fights and afternoon tea the surrounding families, who returned our small attentions with boundless hospitality. Six months' dinner parties, croquet parties, riding parties, cricket matches, and picnics, had done their work but too effectually, for the mess casualties showed two captains married, and three subalterns engaged.

The captain of my troop, Frank Egremont, was an easy-going fellow as any in Her Majesty's service; so, freed from the

constraints of head-quarters, our duties were confined to morning parade. We left stable duty to the special supervision of Providence and the sergeant-major, and at one P.M., when the unfortunates at head-quarters were confined to the stables, learning to hate everything in the shape of a trooper, we were generally to be found driving through the village to some scene of festivity.

Our station, Ballywilliam, was a curiously dirty village, in an undulating grass country, studded with comfortable farm-houses, and some large domains and residences. The country was well wooded; the fields of that emerald green so seldom seen out of moist Ireland, where Nature paints her most beautiful landscapes in water colours, and the sky line broken by a serrated mountain range that supplied a background leaving nothing to be desired.

A bird's-eye view of the country showed Ballywilliam set in the midst, like a refuse heap in a garden. A salmon river flowed by the barracks, and, in winter, hounds met four days a week within easy distance. The people of the neighbourhood were hospitable; fishing and shooting without end were freely given us; so Egremont and I were fain to confess that our good fortune had drifted us into a capital station.

"Where away to-day, Jack?" asked Egremont one morning, as we sat smoking after parade in the room that did duty as a mess-room.

"I think I shall fish the Grangemore waters," I replied.

A shadow passed over Egremont's open face as I spoke; he made no further remark, but immersed himself in the Field.

The Meredyths of Grangemore were our staunchest allies. A week after our arrival, Mr. Meredyth had called upon us; in a month a friendship had sprung up, and ere the summer had well come an alliance offensive and defensive was completed between the barracks and Grangemore. Need I say the attraction that drew us there almost daily was not Mr. Meredyth, with his genial bonhomie, nor yet Mrs. Meredyth, who as the organiser of every social amusement won all hearts? Nor yet the sons of the house—one home from India, the other devoting his talents to the destruction of the various animals, birds, and fishes, the killing of which comes under the head of "sport." No, I may as well confess at once—there was a daughter, and such a daughter! Of Adela Meredyth I shall not give an analytical description; she was dark, and, as even the ladies allowed,

very beautiful, with a nameless grace in every movement of her beautiful figure; a heaven of lustre in her dark eyes, and that charming insouciance that makes an Irish girl so fatal to the unwary, especially to an Englishman, accustomed to the more staid coldness of our English ladies. Her Majesty's Twenty-ninth Hussars went down before her charms without a shadow of resistance. Ere the September gold had clothed the corn-fields, I was hopelessly in love, and as hopelessly despairing, for I saw that Egremont had also struck his flag to the Grangemore queen. A universal favourite, rich, handsome, and gifted, he was everything a woman could desire. I dared not hope, with him for a rival, and saw with all the pain that jealous pangs could inflict, that while often silent and constrained with me, with him Adela Meredyth was always gay and charming.

Half an hour after my announcement to Egremont found me walking along the river bank towards Grangemore, ostensibly to fish, but in reality to enjoy, moth-like, the light of her presence. As I walked along, for the twentieth time I determined to "do or die," and to learn my fate if opportunity offered. Irresistibly passionate appeals shaped themselves in my brain; my spirit had already flown forward to Grangemore, asked the eventful question, been accepted, and revelled in a long life of romantic bliss, while my poor deserted body was unconsciously doing its four miles an hour along the well-known path. Having in spirit been married for years, and gone the round of almost every earthly amusement, I was, I think, in the act of accepting a brilliant offer for my daughter, when my castle in the air was shattered.

"Hallo, Jack, where are you going?"

"Good morning, Mr. Brandon."

There they sat, Tom Meredyth, and Adela herself, lazily basking on the cool river bank, where I joined them.

"Well, Jack, so I hear you are going to ride French's Chanticleer at the Crossbane races next Monday?"

"Yes, I hope to."

"It's a nasty course; have you seen it?"

"No. I am afraid a close inspection might develop my bump of caution too much. I shall walk over it before the race, on Monday."

"You will require to steady Chanticleer at his fences. You remember, Adela, what an awful cropper he gave French in the run from here last winter; he loses his head when other horses are galloping beside

"I hear Captain Egremont is going to ride also," said Adela.

The first remark she had made since I joined them! Jealousy and I had a sharp dialogue over the fact of her thinking of Egremont, and the conclusion was not a pleasant one.

"Yes," answered Tom, "and, I think, to win. I know nothing in the race to beat Warhawk at the weight, if he stands up, of which there is but little doubt, for he is a perfect fencer. Come, Adela," he added, "let's have a bet about the two horses; you shall have your choice, for half a dozen pair of gloves."

"Which shall I take, Mr. Brandon?"

"Whichever you prefer," I answered, with what I meant for a killing look of entreaty to show some preference for my mount.

"Then I think I shall take Warhawk," she said, with an air of unconscious innocence, most aggravating to a man in my state of mind.

"It's no use spending the day here," said Tom, as he jumped up. "I mean to seduce the wily trout from his shady retreat." And he left us.

At last we were alone, the long-wished-for opportunity had arrived, and I determined to seize it this time. But the question was how to commence? Should I plunge into the business, in medias res, and say at once, "Miss Meredyth I love you!" or ought I lead the conversation delicately to the subject, and when I had prepared her mind for the reception of the intelligence, declare that, without her, life would be insupportable? The first plan would be too abrupt, and as for the second, all capability of framing thought in language suddenly left me; my brain refused to act; I was dimly conscious of an overwhelming desire to say something, but the immensity of my desire refused to be trammelled in the narrow bounds of language. I could only feel like a pleading criminal, and look like a fool.

She was simply irresistible as she sat, picking a honeysuckle to pieces in the bright sunlight, and presented as beautiful a picture as ever crowned the combined efforts of nature and art. Armed with the prettiest and most becoming summer dress, the tiniest and saniciest little boots, a soft white silk kerchief tied loosely and carelessly round her beautiful neck, and a hat, for the fabrication of which, as a dangerous man-trap, the creating milliner deserved incarceration for life; her cheeks suffused

and her soft dark downcast eyes, she was charming.

At last, I made an effort; and succeeded in breaking the silence.

"What a lovely day it is."

I cannot say that my observation was brilliant, but it was something to have spoken, even though my voice sounded like a croak, for, by some mysterious process, my heart had jumped into my throat, where it stuck crosswise, and my tongue had become too large for my mouth.

"Yes, beautiful, but rather bright for fishing, is it not?"

"I assure you I infinitely prefer basking to fishing."

"That is a want of devotion to sport against which you should struggle. Tom acknowledges that the besetting sin of the army is laziness."

"Do you dislike the army?"

"N—no, not at all. Yet I am not sure that if I were a man I would adopt it for a profession."

"Why?"

"It seems to me, pardon me, a rather profitless existence. Confess you feel, sometimes, a little like a drone?"

I determined to send in my papers at once. Now for the plunge.

"No, I do not feel the least like one. I believe a drone is, in the main, a happy fellow; he eats, drinks, and is merry, while I am thoroughly unhappy."

One look, and I felt she had read my story; then she seemed to shrink from me, and changed the subject.

"Don't mind what Tom said about Chanticleer. Mr. French would not have asked you to ride him if he were not safe, and I have seen him go admirably. But Miss—Of course," she continued hurriedly, "you and Captain Egremont will come to the races with us."

"I was not alluding to the races," said I, determined to have my say at last. "I was—"

"See, Tom has been successful; he has a fish; I must go and land it," she exclaimed, starting up.

At that moment a boat shot round the bend, propelled by Egremont, who sculled like a waterman. He stopped when he saw us.

"Are you not afraid of spoiling your complexion, Captain Egremont?" said Adela.

"Not at all," he replied; "it's a lovely day on the river; do come for a short pull. See, I have room for you in the stern, and you can steer. Now Jack, hold that stern steady while Miss Meredyth steps on it."

As he spoke, he backed the boat to the bank, and ere I well knew what had happened, she was sitting in the stern; he pulling away with a flush of triumphant delight on his face.

"We won't be long, Mr. Brandon; have a trout when we return," she laughed; as the boat swept away down stream, I stood for a short time, torn by furious jealousy. Then declining Tom's invitation to remain for luncheon, I started home like one demented. She loved him after all. I recalled her tone as the boat passed away. Every syllable was a poisoned dagger. Knowing that I loved her, she laughed at me! Egremont was then no doubt telling her the story she would not hear from me. The boat gliding on in the noontide hush—the oars at rest—he bending forward in passionate pleading—Adela listening with folded hands and downcast eyes, with beating heart and heightened colour, while a magnetic, unspoken language told him he was loved. It was too bitter, and with a blackness of despair that I had never imagined possible, I flung myself upon my bed and lay there for hours.

I did not see Egremont until next morning, when neither of us alluded to the episode of the day before; but I thought that, for a successful lover, he looked rather grave. I determined never to see Adela again, and adhered to my determination with unconquerable firmness for two days, when Mr. Meredyth called at the barracks, and insisted on our returning with him to Grangemore.

"How very ill you look, Mr. Brandon," was Mrs. Meredyth's first observation to me, as I joined her in the pleasure-ground after dinner. "You have been working too hard, or training too hard, after the manner of you gentlemen riders. So we are to have the pleasure of bringing you and Captain Egremont to the races. How provoking it is that only one of you can win; but remember one of you must win, for I am determined that the winner shall belong to my party."

"A determination that will no doubt be shared by some five or six others," I replied.

"No matter; my motto is 'Where there's a will there's a way.' You must try hard that I shall not be disappointed."

"My dear Mrs. Meredyth, I am an exemplification of the fallacy of that old adage."

"Indeed! Perhaps you did not wish with all your might."

"I did, indeed—with all my soul," I said, sadly.

"Then," she replied, kindly, "you must have been willing an impossibility, a fault of no great magnitude at your age. Remember there is another old adage, 'What is, is best.' If want of success has made you unhappy, I am sorry for you; you must only take courage. In the future you will perhaps agree with the poet that 'Sorrows remembered sweeten present joys.'"

"Then you think unhappiness is not an unmitigated evil?"

"I think it is questionable if it be an evil. Happiness exists but by comparison with its reverse, therefore the existence of one is necessary to that of the other. However, theorising on unhappiness will not make it less. Take the advice, Mr. Brandon, of an old woman; do not give way to unhappiness. You have youth and health, the greatest blessings of this life; do not lie down like a coward, because you may have failed once in some desire. Try again, and if unsuccessful still, let it but inspire you with determination never to rest till you succeed. If success does not follow, you will nevertheless, in the attempt, have secured the unfailing panacea for all worldly misery—work. Now come in, and Adela and Captain Egremont will charm away your blue fit with a duet."

Dear, kind Mrs. Meredyth! Little did she know the refined torture she prepared for me. I believe they sang well, but that duet will ever be to me one of the most unpleasant reminiscences of my life. I sat in a corner, and remember considering that the mutual declarations of love, and his cool request that she would fly with him somewhere or other, over the moonlit sea, were positively outrageous, and should have been stopped by her father. During the evening Adela appeared more affable than usual; her manner to me was half-apologetic, but I preserved what I considered a dignified coolness and reserve. The wretched evening at length came to an end, and we drove home silent and thoughtful.

Monday came at last, a beautiful day, too fine, indeed, for the horses and riders, for the ground was hard as iron. I had become madly anxious that Egremont should not win the race. For him I had conceived the most unreasoning hatred. In every look of his I thought I could detect a gleam of triumph which I resented bitterly. We arrived early, and had I been in a different mood there was abundant field for amusement. Hundreds of vehicles came pouring on to the course, from the well-appointed drag to the most extraordinary constructions that ever set the rules

of coach-building at defiance. Seventy or eighty long gipsy tents were crammed with thirsty natives, and many thousands thronged the course, every fence having its crowd of particular admirers, as they calculated on the probability of a fall—the falling being to an Irishman the main interest of a race.

Having threaded my way through the carriages, with their attendant roulette-boards and nigger minstrels, and received at least thirty invitations to return for luncheon after the race, and many wishes for success, I took refuge in the saddling yard, where I found Chanticleer looking fit as paint, and his owner rather anxious but sanguine. The first race was over, and around each carriage and trap luncheon parties gathered and enjoyed themselves; I remained on the stand chewing the cud of bitter fancies, for I could see Egremont laughing and chatting gaily with Adela, who was the centre of a pleasant knot.

At length the saddling bell sounded, and I returned to the carriage for my whip.

"What's the matter, Brandon?" said Mr. Meredyth; "you look more like going to drive a hearse than to ride Chanticleer. Come, have a glass of wine."

Egremont was talking to Adela. "Wish me success," I heard him whisper. Of course she said yes, for as he turned away I saw him take her glove from her lap and slip it into his breast. I drank my champagne at a gulp. "Another, please. Thanks." And, as quickly, I swallowed that. Mr. Meredyth looked a little astonished. As Adela handed me the whip, she whispered, "What is the matter?" She looked sad, and I thought, pitying, at which my pride revolted. I made no answer, but hurried away to the dressing-room.

Seventeen horses came to the post for the principal event. I was one of the last out of the weighing-yard, and as I emerged, Warhawk was cantering past the stand. As he went by with a grand swinging stride, he was accompanied by a murmur of admiration. Egremont's white jacket and red cap contrasted well with the horse's colour—a jet black, shining like satin.

"That's a racer," said French, as he walked beside me, giving me those inevitable last directions. "Watch him, but don't ride at him until the last mile, for he is faster at his fences than you are, and Chanticleer does not like being passed. Some of these fools will make the running. Keep about fourth until you get over the double in the second round, then let him come if he will."

"Good luck to your honour, and safe home," said the groom, with a last affectionate pat on the horse's neck as he turned him for his canter.

Chanticleer was a bright chestnut, hot-tempered, like all his colour. As he went along swinging his head about, and pulling hard, I saw that I had rough work before me, for already he was excited by the crowd and the noise.

I avoided looking at the Meredyths' carriage as I passed. Why should I look for a passing glance, when Egremont carried her gage d'amour in his breast? but I heard Tom's cheery voice, "Good luck, Chanticleer," and it sounded like a good omen.

"Are you ready, gentlemen. Go!"

We are off; off with a rush and a plunge, and a thunder of hoofs that drowns for us even the shout that leaps from a multitude at a start.

Chanticleer, plunging forward, swinging his head, and tearing at his bit, gives me no time to look right or left as we sweep past the stand in our first rush. I see a cloud of grey, pink, blue, black, green, before and around me, and wonder, as we come at the first fence, how we can possibly jump, packed in this flying crowd. Chanticleer, wild at all times, is mad now, with a horse's tail whisking in his face, a horse on his right and one on his left, precluding the possibility of swerving, while I have a dim consciousness of a young one behind me, to insure my destruction should we fall. A slight slackening in the pace. I see that blue and white balloon before me subside as its wearer sits down on his horse. If he falls! Heavens! how I pray for the safety of that blue and white—with a vivid consciousness of the Nemesis astern. Chanticleer appears determined to look at nothing but that horse's tail. I take a pull at him, then the blue and white jacket rises out of the line of sight, and discloses a single bank. Quick as thought Chanticleer rises to it; I see his head for an instant between the gleaming hind shoes of the horse in front. The little balloons to the right and left pop up and down like painted floats at a nibble, and we are all safely over. Now that the possibility of escape has been demonstrated, I am beginning to feel more at ease, and approach the next fence in a more hopeful mood. The horses are settling into their stride, and as I venture to look round, I distinguish the faces that surmount the little balloons. Vansittart overlooks a green one, that would have made him the favourite with the multi-

tude had he not worn a red cap. Gore glares from above a cerise and grey; Mansergh, black and silver; M'Dermott, Lefroy, and three or four more of our men, all looking before them with hard-set faces. None of the bonhomme that distinguishes the hardest run with hounds, where, no matter what the pace, there is always time to find an observation to an accompanying Nimrod; to gasp, "A good run—splendid," &c. Here your companion riders are not so much participators in a sport, as men to be beaten, and the excitement is purely selfish. I feel that if my blue and white pilot falls, I can neither pull to right or left, but must go straight on him; I hope, in that case, I shall not kill him, but that is entirely his affair. My pursuing Nemesis is no doubt actuated by precisely similar feelings. We have passed the second fence in safety, and begin to straggle a little, led by a raking grey ridden by a man in a scarlet jacket. Warhawk goes on second, then comes a black and silver, next my blue and white leader, and then come the ruck, with whom I am swinging along, holding Chanticleer with all my might. The next fence is a wall; the scarlet and the white pop up and down as before, but the black and silver, instead of checking itself in its downward flight, disappears, and as Chanticleer flies past, I catch a glimpse of a horse struggling to his feet, and a black and silver figure lying within a foot of where we landed. However, there is no time to look round—the improbability of his escape from the rush of horses behind strikes me for a moment, and I think no more about him. Another single is passed in the same order; a small double, a hurdle, the brook; and now we are coming at the principal attraction for the casualty lovers. Two or three times I have heard the simultaneous "Oh!" from the crowds at the fences, proclaiming that some unfortunate in the rear has come to grief. At the double is a large crowd in hopeful expectation of a fall; nor is the expectation disappointed, for the grey makes a mistake in rising, strikes the bank, and disappears in the off grip, where he lies with his back broken. Warhawk has taken his fences beautifully, and is now improving the pace; Chanticleer has bungled a little at the double, but I feel him going well within himself, and range forward beside my blue and white leader. As we come into the straight, Egremont makes the pace a cracker, and we are obliged to call on our horses to keep our place. The thunder of the crowd greets us as we pass the

stand, and Warhawk's name is shouted from thousands of throats. Chanticleer has again lost his head—the noise is too much for him. As I pass, I see Adela just raise her handkerchief—a little, almost unnoticeable wave—of course to Egremont. I am mad with jealous fury, and giving Chanticleer his head, race at him, on past the stand over the first bank. There is no steadying now. I have but one insane idea—to throw Egremont and kill him, if possible.

Does he not carry her glove in his breast! After we pass the second fence, he says, "Jack, you'll kill that horse if you don't steady him at his fences!" He is now riding beside me, with the six or seven horses that have stood up, half a dozen lengths in the rear. I neither look at him, nor answer him. The brook is passed, and we are still racing neck and neck for the double. I steal a look at him; our eyes meet for an instant; I wonder if he reads the world of hate that gleams in mine. "Fool!" he mutters, as he takes a pull at Warhawk, whose head steals back to my side and then out of sight. As I come at the fence I see stretched outside the crowd the poor grey who had so gallantly led us a few minutes before. Chanticleer rises like a bird, and lands lightly as a deer. I hear a shout, and, Heaven forgive me! I hope that Warhawk and his rider have shared the fate of the grey, but on looking round I see him close on my quarter, and picking up his lost distance at every stride; but two horses follow us, four are down at the fence. Now commences a fierce struggle for the run home. At the last hurdle Warhawk is half a length in front. We have entered the straight, and now with whip and spur I urge Chanticleer. We are gaining at every stride. I see Warhawk's head again gliding back to me. I have a clear neck already; ten strides more and the race is won; when suddenly the greensward over which I have been flying like a swallow jumps up to meet me; I feel as if I were cast in the midst of a thousand plunging horses; over and over and over I roll; and when at length I stop, and sit up stunned and dizzy with my left arm hanging loosely, I see poor Chanticleer lying at a little distance with his neck broken, and the boy who had run before him and caused our fall being carried away dead or insensible.

Friends rushed to my assistance, and lifting me to my feet, half supported, half carried me to the Meredyths' carriage, where I was placed beside Adela, while

the horses were ordered for an immediate start.

I had at first avoided looking at Adela. What cared she; had not her lover won? Now I looked at her and saw her face was pale as death, her eyes fixed on me with a tortured look. Mrs. Meredyth was busily engaged cutting up napkins for bandages. I whispered:

"It's nothing, Miss Meredyth—only a broken arm. I congratulate you on Egremont's success."

"Don't talk of him. I hate him," she murmured, as she looked straight into my eyes.

"You gave him your glove to carry in the race."

"No, he took it without my permission," she said, very determinedly, while I saw the tears moisten her dark lashes.

A hope—a brilliant flood of hope—broke on my soul. Mr. Meredyth was returning with a doctor. Not a moment was to be lost.

"Do you love him?"

"No!"

"Adela, do you love me?"

Not a word, but one quick glad glance, a single pressure of the hand, as the doctor's head appeared over the carriage door. I had won after all.

Need I tell of my happy illness, my blessed convalescence, at Grangemore; how consent was given, and wedding presents made, and a bridal party set out for a quiet parish church on a bright January day; how, at the déjeuner, the clergyman made a goody-goody speech, whereat his wife was edified; and the old friend of the family made a touching one, whereat the ladies wept; and the best man made a funny one, whereat the bridesmaids blushed; or how, at last, the happy couple started for the railway station, pursued by a hearty cheer from the assembled tenantry, and a cloud of slippers of every shape and hue—are not all these things written in the annals of Grangemore and the parish registry of Ballywilliam?

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER IX. MR. DEVENISH SEES A GHOST!

"WHAT a nuisance it is when a fellow gets out of training, isn't it?" Jack Ferrer asked confidentially of Harty, as they loitered about together. "Now all these other fellows are as fresh as paint, and I'm dead beat; shall you walk home?"

"I'd just as soon walk as drive—with Mrs. Powers," Harty replied, candidly; "but it isn't in the programme that we should walk; and Mrs. Powers is very kind to us in her way, and I shouldn't like to upset her arrangements; we must go in the carriage, but—can't you come too?"

"I don't see why I shouldn't," he said, after weighing the matter in his mind for a few moments; "there's plenty of room; I'll give my gun to a keeper, and tell Powers; Mrs. Powers won't object?"

"Mrs. Powers won't object," Harty assured him meditatively. She was wondering whether Claude would object openly! Mrs. Powers she felt very sure about. That politely diplomatic old lady would never under any circumstances throw any obstacle in the way of intercourse between Jack Ferrier and Harty. But if Claude disliked it, and showed that he disliked it, "the carriage will go home without me, I know that," Harty thought.

They were not very long in getting off after the luncheon. The men loitered about to see the ladies start, and as Harty was following Mrs. Powers and Mabel into the carriage, Jack Ferrier, after a word with the keeper, said:

"Will you give me a lift home, Mrs. Powers? I am rather knocked up."

"Knocked up!" Claude repeated the words in an angry, questioning tone, and his face clouded ominously. But Jack Ferrier either did not see these signs of displeasure, or else he saw fit to disregard them, for on Mrs. Powers acquiescing heartily to his request he got in by Harty's side without another word.

"Stop a minute," Harty said, rather tremblingly, as she saw Claude turn impatiently away, instead of offering any assistance in the arrangement of the rugs and the wraps. "Stop a minute; I must go to Groves's cottage to-day, and I'm so much nearer it here, than I shall be if I drive back to the Court; drop me here, Mrs. Powers, please, and save me a long walk."

Claude paused to watch the result with a lighter brow, but he did not come back to help her out, and Mrs. Powers replied a little discontentedly:

"It seems to me that you none of you know your own minds; certainly I will leave you here if you wish it, Harty, but I should think your mission to the Groves's might be deferred till another day."

Harty laughed and shook her head. She knew that it was rather a mission of mercy to herself and Claude, that she was about

to perform, than to the Groves's. "No, I won't change my mind again," she said, and went off with a light heart, after a few whispered words from Claude to the effect that it "was very good of her."

The sportsmen went in one direction, the carriage took the homeward route, and Harty went away through a woodland path to the by-lane where Groves's cottage was situated. It was a pleasant path enough among the rustling leaves, and the girl was in a pleasant frame of mind. For inclination had prompted her to drive home, and listen to the words that Jack Ferrier would assuredly have uttered, words that were becoming insensibly more flattering day by day. Inclination had prompted her to do this, and she felt as if she had achieved a triumph in that she had not obeyed its dictates.

For a short distance she thought of Claude, and Claude only. Of whether or not he would word his pleasure at her course, to her when they next met? Of whether or not he would ever relax that obstinate adherence to a strong prejudice, which was the separating cause between them now. Of whether or not his love for her was strong enough to warrant her in clinging to it with ivy-like tenacity? And as her thoughts reached this point, they veered away from Claude suddenly, and fastened themselves upon Jack Ferrier, and the mystery that had been made about that lost brother of his.

Some considerable portion of her path lay parallel with the high-road, and for a while she heard the rumble of the wheels distinctly. But by-and-bye, just before she reached the point where the woodland path turned sharply off from the high-road, and ran down into the meadows, the sound of the wheels ceased, and she experienced a little heart-damping, sudden sense of loss of companionship.

Going down into the open now, at a slower pace, beginning to feel rather uncertain as to what she really wanted to do or say at Groves's cottage, when she got there, a conviction smote her that after all she had been rather foolish to walk home. It looked like pointed avoidance of Jack Ferrier, and the next most flattering thing to pointedly seeking a man, is to pointedly avoid him. "Very likely he only got in to talk to Mab," Harty thought; "every one who looks at her sweet eyes, and gentle mouth, must wish to talk to her; of course, he can't help admiring Mab, and what a goose I've been;" and

just as she thought this, she heard quick elastic steps behind her, and Jack Ferrier was by her side in a moment.

"Don't look frightened, nothing has happened," he laughed as Harty turned a startled, conscious gaze upon him, "only I remembered that there's a good deal of cattle about in the meadows you have to pass through, and when I mentioned it, Mrs. Powers said she had an idea that you were awfully afraid of cows; so I've followed you to take care of you, you see."

The conscious look deepened on Harty's face. She could not help it! It was her nature to feel wickedly pleased that this man was palpably running after her, although at the same time her heart was Claude's. Her heart was entirely Claude's; but her taste was pleased by this other one, her vanity was gratified, her imagination was fired by a desire to know how much he really liked her, and how much of the show of it was the offspring of idleness and opportunity. Don't we all know something of the causes and motives that make a girl like Harty go on the way she was predestined to follow? So now in answer to his explanatory remark, it was not surprising that she answered:

"I'm not a bit afraid of cows, and I never hinted to Mrs. Powers that I was; but, all the same, I'm glad you are come."

"Really?" he asked, in a lowered voice.

"Really," she answered, echoing his tone. Then she looked up with a little wistful expression of sympathy in his face, and asked: "Will you tell me your brother Frank's story now, Mr. Ferrier? Now, while we are alone, with no one to think you foolish for trusting me, a stranger nearly, with it."

They had slackened their pace since he came up, and now were sauntering very slowly. "Look here," he said, taking a locket from his chain and opening it. And as she stopped close by his shoulder to look as he desired, he showed her the painted photograph of a young fair-haired man, whose mournful-looking blue eyes seemed to rivet themselves on hers with a sort of sad intelligence.

"That was poor Frank, my young half-brother," he said, gravely, "the dearest, best young fellow in the world, I always believe."

"And he died?" Harty asked, half fearfully, feeling as if she were rending some veil asunder.

"Yes, he died." Jack Ferrier's voice quivered for a moment, then he added,

"he died by his own hand, poor boy, and his death killed my mother."

The tears sprang into Harty's eyes, and she flung an immense deal of pathos and sympathy into the mere gesture with which she took the case from him, and looked down at the handsome sad face of the man who died so young and so miserably.

"Will you tell me about it now?" she asked, utterly oblivious of Claude's request that she should ask no questions concerning the mystery of Frank's death.

"Will you tell me about it? Can you?"

"I'll tell you anything you wish me to tell you," he assured her with unwonted nervous excitement; and then Harty put her hand on his arm and said:

"You're sure it won't pain you? I wouldn't hear it if it would hurt you at all to tell it to me; but whether you tell me or not, do believe that I never felt so sorry for anything in my life as I do for you about this."

"Yes, I believe that, or anything else, sweet, that you choose to tell me," he said, passionately, prising her hand as he spoke; "you do mean what you say, don't you?" he went on in a pleading, earnest way; "you're not humbugging a fellow?"

"Yes, I do mean what I say," Harty replied, eagerly, thinking chiefly at the moment of what she had said about the sympathy she felt for him, and the interest she felt in the dark fate of that poor boy who had been so tired of life. "I do mean what I say, Mr. Ferrier, believe me, and trust me. Will you?"

"Will I not, indeed?" he whispered, coming to a standstill, bending his head down to read her eyes, and clasping her hand more closely. And then a conviction smote Harty that a climax was fast approaching which she had not contemplated, and which another moment's weakness on her part would leave her powerless to avert.

She changed in an instant. Released her hand, and walked along by his side, so calm and cool, so prosaically indifferent to his agitation, so superbly mistress of herself and the situation, that he felt it would be only making a fool of himself if he sought to touch her to tenderness about himself now. Accordingly he fell back upon the original subject of Frank with a feeling of actual relief, a sense of having escaped a mortifying danger.

"It happened about five years ago," he

said. "We were both with my mother at Brighton, both of us with her at the same time for the first time for several years. The poor dear mother was so proud of us, and fond of us, that she had her best taste of heaven here below in those days when she would go out with one of us on either side of her. She had always been the best of mothers to me; but Frank was her idol, and I subscribed heartily to the idolatry of which my young brother was the object.

"He was as handsome as a star—you can see that at a glance even at that photograph, and women all did their best to spoil him; but he was one of the fellows who never went wrong; the very morning he left us, the very last time we saw him alive, poor fellow, my mother said, as he drove off to the station, 'The only heart-aches he's ever given me, are those I have when he leaves me for a day even.'

"He had gone up to town to meet Claude Powers, who was as fond of him as I was, and so my mother and I didn't think much of it when the night passed without his coming back. But when the whole of the next day passed I saw that the mother was worrying herself, and so I told her I'd go and look after him, and went up by the last train.

"I went straight to the hotel at which Claude always puts up, and found that they had both gone down to Southsea two days before—the day Frank left us, in fact. Some other fellows belonging to Claude's regiment had been up with them, and the whole lot had gone back together. The next morning I went down to Southsea, found Claude at his quarters looking broken-hearted. Frank had been arrested the night before charged by one of the fellows in the regiment of having robbed him of a heavy sum of mess-money; he was searched, and the money was found on him, and he was unable to offer the faintest explanation as to how he came to be in possession of it.

"I never doubted him for a moment; but I nearly died of the agony of hearing that he had been suspected. Claude was mad against the man who had made the charge, but I was eager to get to the boy, and so I didn't wait to make any inquiry into the matter, but just went straight off to the station-house with Claude, to cheer him if we could. When we got there we found the wildest confusion reigning—his room had just been entered, and he was found dead, with his throat cut from ear to ear."

A low, long cry of horror and anguish

welled forth from Harty's lips as his narrative reached this point. She had rent a veil asunder with a vengeance. She had developed a mystery indeed. And in a moment the vague, half-suspicious and irritating speculations of years faded into nothingness before the dread certainty of the terrible truth.

The blood of this boy was on Mr. Devenish's head. Of that she felt horribly sure. Claude's rage against, and repulsion to her step-father, was explicable enough. The boy had been loved as a brother by Claude Powers, was a brother by half-blood to the man by her side! The misery of it all! The hopeless, inextricable misery that must be wrought to her whichever way she turned by this curse which environed her, this curse of her connexion with Mr. Devenish.

"That's Frank's story, Miss Carlisle, and it has shocked you horribly. Powers was right, I oughtn't to have harrowed up your feelings by telling you about it; but I couldn't resist the chance of getting your sympathy, and I have it, haven't I?"

"Does he know, does he know, does he know?" These words actually sounded in Harty's ears as they formed themselves in her mind. Was it within the bounds of possibility that a man should know that the man who had murdered his brother and her step-father were identical, and should still speak to, tolerate her, breathe voluntarily the same air she breathed?

She turned a white wane face up to him; she would learn the worst without delay.

"And the man who accused him falsely, who lied him out of his life; what of him?" she gasped out.

"Poor wretch, I left him to his own reflections, and never even tried to get at his name. You see the whole business was hushed up at once, and I was torn to pieces by my poor mother's anguish, and her death following almost directly after Frank's. When I came out of that furnace of affliction, and began to make inquiries, Claude told me that the man who had falsely accused Frank had been found guilty of embezzlement himself, and had been dismissed the service; and——"

"His name?" she interrupted, impatiently. "Did you never hear his name?"

"No; I'll tell you how that was, for though it's Claude's secret, not mine, I can trust you with a hint of it: Claude made it a special request to me that I should never try to identify the man; he had been an intimate friend of Claude's; in short, I

more than half suspected that he was a brother or some sort of relation to a girl Claude was in love with. There was no object in paining my living friend, for the few who knew of the accusation against my dead brother knew also that it was a false one, and the poor wretch who had wronged him was punished enough already; besides, just then the scheme of Claude's life was smashed up, and it wasn't at all the time to choose to oppose a single wish of his, was it?"

"No," she said hoarsely; "but I think I should have found out the man; it would have been better if you had," she went on wearily, "because then in the white heat of your sorrow and anger you would have done——"

"Something rash that I should have repented all my life long," he interrupted. "No, Miss Carlisle, it's better so; no amount of avenging would have brought the boy back, and Heaven knows the other one's conscience must be a sorer punishment than any that one of his fellow-men could devise."

"It's not better so," she said imperiously; "in white heat you would have done what was rash very likely, but what was right at the same time. But now when you find him out—and you will find him out one day—you'll be perplexed, hampered, fettered, bothered by a number of conflicting feelings and circumstances, and you won't know how to act."

She spoke in an earnest, excited tone, that showed him how thoroughly she had grasped all the conditions of the case, and flattered him into the belief that it was for his sake solely that she flung herself into the subject with such ardour.

"If such a difficulty ever should arise," he said with some emotion, "I'll come to you for guidance; I know you'd advise me well."

"For mercy's sake don't," she stammered. "Avoid me of all people; indeed, it would be a very good thing for you if you began avoiding me this minute."

He stared for a moment in wonder and annoyance at her capriciousness, then he saw that tears were dimming her eyes, and that her flexible mouth was quivering painfully, and he knew whatever the sentiment that had seized her and stung her into speech that it was real, and not assumed for the purpose merely of making him think about her.

"Avoid you! that I'll never do willingly," he said in a low voice.

"You had better, indeed, indeed you had," she said, imploringly. "Only misery will come of it if you go on seeing much of me, and get to like me," she wound up with a rush, and the colour swept over her face. But no man, looking into her brave, honest eyes as she said the words, could have misconstrued them into a bold avowal, or a tempting suggestion.

"I have got to like you already, the mischief's done you see," he said, half laughing, but the real genuine look of pain and perplexity that crossed her face like a cloud checked anything like an exhibition of mirth from him. "Really, Miss Carlisle," he remonstrated, "you take impressions rather too deeply: you're saddened now into a belief that everything will go wrong all round, because you have been hearing a melancholy story. Claude was right, I oughtn't to have told you."

"Claude was wrong," she answered in a blaze of excitement. "I tell you Claude was more than wrong, he was weak not to have told it to me before."

"What do you mean?"

"I can't tell you yet; I may never tell you, or I may say it all out to-morrow," she said, panting. "I don't know quite what I ought to do; for I have a secret, Mr. Ferrier."

"You! A secret!" he said, looking down in utter disbelief into her mobile face. "Why you couldn't keep one for half an hour; your tongue wouldn't tell it perhaps, but I'd read anything off from your face within half an hour from the time concealment set in with you."

"Concealment set in with me about ten minutes ago," she said, sadly, "and here we are in the Dillsborough meadows; no, you shall not cross the Leeth; let me keep my secret a little longer; I really wish to go home alone, Mr. Ferrier; I know when I tell you that, that you will let me."

"Is there no appeal?"

"None, none," she said, impatiently. "I want to be alone with my secret; do say good-bye," and she held her hand out to him.

He saw that she really wanted him to be gone, and so he made no further protest against going.

"We haven't been much troubled by the cows, have we?" he asked, smilingly. "Nevertheless, I bless Mrs. Powers for her timely remembrance of your horrible dread of them; good-bye; I shall come and read your secret to-morrow."

"Good-bye till to-morrow, and when you have read my secret it will be good-bye for ever," she replied, sadly. And then she crossed the Leeth homeward bound, and Jack Ferrier went back to the Court.

Believing partly that it would please Claude, and feeling partly that he had no right to keep any part of "this business," as he was beginning to term it, from Claude, he exercised Claude's spirit terribly that evening at dinner by free and frank mention of his walk home, and of the companion thereof. But before Mrs. Powers he reserved statement of the fact of having told Harty about Frank.

But when they were unfettered by her presence, when curling wreaths of smoke from their cigarettes made a hazy atmosphere around them in which it was easy to say anything, when all the relaxing influences of wine and night were upon them, Jack Ferrier spoke.

"I think I have found the right girl at last, Claude; if Harty Carlisle really means it as much as I do, as much as she seems to mean it, I shall ask you to be my best man very soon; by the way, I told her about poor Frank's business, and I never saw a girl so cut up in my life; she realised it all with terrible intensity."

"Did she say anything, did she assign any reason for her excess of emotion?" Claude asked, speaking coldly, though he was raging in his soul. His Harty! his own Harty "seeming" to like another man so well, that the other man was justified in presuming she was ready to be his wife!"

"No, but it's easy enough to know why she was cut up, presupposing that she cares for me," Jack Ferrier said, with unconscious conceit; "she'd naturally be upset at the idea of my brother having died in that way. I showed her his likeness, too, and she really cried over it; and said his eyes seemed to look at her reproachfully."

"Let me look at Frank's likeness," Claude said, stretching out his hand for it. He wanted to gain time, and something like command over himself before he spoke again about Harty.

Jack lifted up his chain, and saw that the locket was not there.

"She forgot to give it back to me," he said, quietly, and in that forgetfulness of hers, and the matter-of-course way in which Jack Ferrier regarded it, Claude found

ample themes for most miserable reflection. What intimacy was implied by it all, and what confidence and full understanding! And through all the pattern of his love thoughts ran one black thread of fear.

"Supposing Devenish sees and recognises it, what then? Poor Harty, poor little innocent instrument of more misery and ill-feeling being worked."

Harty, meantime, had gone home, burdened with her recently acquired knowledge, and bitterly dubious as to what she should do with it. Had gone home to find Mabel sweetly, suavely describing the doings of the day to an audience that was interested in spite of its sense of injury.

Mr. Devenish was in his usual place, stretched on the sofa, affecting to indorse his wife's openly avowed expressions of delight at her girls having "a little pleasure now and then." "I used to be so fond of a shooting luncheon when I was a girl," she was saying, in tones of yearning, retrospective regret for the lost delights of youth and "long ago," when Harty came in.

"Harty doesn't look as if she had enjoyed the shooting luncheon of to-day," Mr. Devenish said, promptly, fastening with delight on a fair excuse for badgering the girl who had suffered the most through him. "Why is it, Harty, that you won't take the simple pleasures that come in your way as Mabel does? Why cavil at fate? I have ceased to do it, I have got used to unfair——"

His assumption of injustice being dealt out to him by his fellow-creatures was too much for her in her present overwrought condition. She grew reckless, pitiless, careless even of her mother in a moment.

"The simple pleasure of to-day has been poisoned to me by the sight of that," she said, flinging the open locket down on the table. And when Mrs. Devenish and Mabel crowded forward to look at it, Mr. Devenish requested his wife to "give him a sight of Harty's last folly," and, as she obeyed him, he looked and saw a ghost!

He fell back among his cushions, crushed, smitten down, shaken out of his normal state of exacting, self-pitying peevishness. "Take it away!" he cried, feebly, "keep it away. What devil brought it here?"

"I did," Harty said; and he flung the locket from him as if it had bitten him.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXIX. MY PROFESSIONAL STUDIES.

DAYS passed, and weeks and months; still, according to old Vickery, Mr. Monck was always "particularly engaged and couldn't be disturbed." I had never seen him. It was certainly strange. Solicitors could not always, I thought, keep aloof from their articulated clerks, and remain invisible in this way. And I was much perplexed in writing to my mother—a duty I punctually accomplished every week—how to answer her repeated inquiries concerning Mr. Monck, his treatment of me, and the degree of intimacy and friendship subsisting between us. Old Vickery tried to make me believe that there was nothing unusual in the case; but of this I could scarcely be convinced, new as I was to London and its ways, to the law and its enigmas. And sometimes I fancied that Vickery was himself embarrassed by the matter; wearied of sustaining a mystery that must sooner or later be dispelled.

I had entered no other room in the house except the office. Beyond Vickery and the office boy, whose name it seemed was Scoons, I had seen only a faded old woman, clothed with a sort of brown-holland cover, as though she had been an article of furniture. She usually wore a black bonnet, and appeared armed with a battered dust-pan and a stunted broom, though I could never discover that she plied those implements very effectively in the office. Her name, I gathered, was Cuppidge, or something like it. She was of a timid, humble nature, and whenever I chanced to meet her in the passage seemed seriously disconcerted, seized with a difficulty of breathing

as she flattened herself painfully against the wall with an absurd anxiety to make room for me to pass—the space being always amply sufficient for that purpose, for I was of spare proportions. Or she would dart away and precipitate herself down the kitchen stairs like a scared rabbit making for its burrow. I said "good morning," or "good evening" to her, sometimes, but beyond a convulsive gasp I obtained no response from her. I had never seen her face very distinctly, for it was always obscured by her bonnet.

Yet that there were other dwellers in the house I could not doubt. Surveyed from the outside, though it looked dingy and neglected and woebegone enough, it wore nevertheless an inhabited air. There were faded curtains and soiled blinds at all the windows. Once I even thought I saw a shadowy face at one of the cloudy panes. But it was withdrawn before I could quite assure myself that it had ever been present. And as I sat at my desk I could hear footsteps on the stairs, and movements, the opening and shutting of doors, in the upper rooms. Moreover, but this was not often, visitors entered by the street door who did not approach the office, but were speedily lost in other parts of the building. Now and then I amused myself with thinking that I was the tenant, during business hours, of a haunted house; and memories of youthful adventures at the Dark Tower beguiled my toils as a copying clerk; for that and nothing more I really was for the present, though I enjoyed the courtesy title of articulated pupil.

It was clear to me, too, that Vickery was a privileged person, and was entitled to enter portions of the house to which I could claim no admission. He often left the office with papers in his hand, as though to obtain advice or instructions from some

superior authority. If I was now and then tempted to think that Mr. Monck, my master, was a non-existent person, I was constrained to abandon this idea when I found that letters were frequently issued bearing a signature similar to that attached to the missives received by my uncle at the Down Farm, when first there had been question as to my adopting the law as a profession. That Mr. Monck was somewhere in the house could not be doubted therefore. Yet to all callers who inquired concerning him, Vickery had but one answer, Mr. Monck was particularly engaged, &c., followed by the suggestion that he, Vickery, was Mr. Monck's manager, and perhaps might do as well.

And then it was soon plain to me that the writer whose admirable penmanship Vickery had held up to me as an example for imitation was also resident in the house. Vickery would quit the office with draft documents to be copied; after awhile he would again retire, to return with the papers fairly written out in the same neat, regular, well-proportioned hand. Who could this writer be? I ventured upon inquiries, but I could extract no information on the subject from Vickery, and the boy Scoons, I found, knew no more than I did.

I wrote home no word of complaint; yet I found my life most monotonously dreary. I knew no one in London, excepting only Vickery and Scoons, for I could hardly count Mrs. Cuppidge and my landlady among my acquaintances. My duties in Mr. Monck's office were simple drudgery. I found my lodgings dull and depressing. Blackstone was less interesting than I had expected him to be. I borrowed novels from a circulating library in Holborn; I sketched a little in an idle way; and I often went at half-price to the theatre. Otherwise I had few amusements, and I felt the lack of companionship considerably. Often I longed, in my dreary solitude, for the society even of Reube, or Kem, or old Truckle. I had always led rather a solitary life, but now I seemed almost desolate.

I was not invariably, however, chained throughout the day to my desk in Mr. Monck's office. Sometimes, as part of my legal education I suppose, I was taken by Vickery to "the Lane," as he called it, meaning that of Chancery, and its precincts. He exhibited to me, much bewildered the while, the various offices connected with equity and common law proceedings. They seemed to me as so many temporary coverts in which hunted clients found refuge and breathing time as they

were chased and driven about by the hounds of the law. They were never safe for long, but still they were afforded a measure of rest and hope until renewed efforts were made for their dislodgment and further pursuit. In the end, of course, they were driven to bay, and rent in pieces, or else securely trapped by ruin in a jail. "It's a great thing to know the offices, Mr. Nightingale," Vickery stated; "it's really practical learning. I've got them all at my fingers' ends. It's more than every man in the profession can say. Once know the offices, and you know a good deal of law, practical law, Mr. Nightingale. Precisely. That's my experience." So I was shown offices where writs were sealed, where appearances were entered, where affidavits were sworn, where deeds were enrolled, where bills were taxed; Record offices, Masters' offices, Register offices, Accountant-Generals' offices, Lunacy Commissioners' offices, Great Seal offices, Patent offices—a most amazing catalogue. Then I was initiated into the mysteries of Judges' Chambers, a dingy row of dwarfed buildings in Rolls Gardens. Here there was a wild babel of noise from a congregation of lawyers' clerks shouting out the names of the firms they represented, or of the case they appeared in, or of the attorneys representing the other side, so that the matter in dispute might be adjusted between them with or without reference to the judge sitting in an inner room. "Time to plead" seemed to be the main object, so far as I could ascertain, of these uproarious wrangling meetings.

"You'll feel a little timid, perhaps, at first going before a judge at chambers, Mr. Nightingale," said Vickery. "I know I did—a good many years ago now—I was a mere boy at the time. But you'll soon get over that. I did. The judge is no more to me now than an old woman at an apple stall." And, indeed, I perceived that the judge moved little awe in the minds of the lawyers' clerks; who seemed a self-confident, loud-speaking, sharp, and rather uncourteous class. Perhaps it was because his lordship was bereft of his wig and robes. The door of his room opening, I viewed him with much interest. He was the first judge I had ever seen. He was not impressive-looking—a little withered old man, rubbing a trembling hand over and over a very bald crown. He seemed quite worn out with fatigue, and spoke with undignified querulousness. "Further time!" he said to one applicant, "you can't go

on like this, you know. There. I'll give you three days;" and he scrawled an order on the back of the summons. To another he said, "No, I can't hear you. It's no use. You must go to the court." And he said it in a most maledictory way, as though he were bidding him go to a much more remote place.

"The Pleas, the Exchequer, the King's Bench," said Vickery, as he introduced me to the various courts, and explained, or tried to explain, the difference between sitting at Nisi Prius and in Banco. He told me the names of the judges and of the leading counsel; and he met many fellow managing-clerks, as I surmised, with whom he enjoyed prolonged converse, exchanging pinches of snuff and legal jokes that I could not follow. He often mentioned me to them as "our new articulated young gentleman."

Further, he showed me the Courts of Equity. I was duly moved by the appearance of the Lord Chancellor, fronted by his gilded mace and the square embroidered bag reputed to contain that mysterious instrument the Great Seal. He sat silent and still with down-turned eyes. I think he was asleep—there was much slumber in the Court of Chancery in those days—while a learned counsel, with a mountainous pile of documents before him, prosed and droned through an interminable address, the significance of which I could not master for a moment. The Master of the Rolls was also exhibited to me, and the Vice-Chancellor of England. These wiggid and robed dignitaries struck me as looking all very much alike, with something of an owl's expression of comatose sapience in all their faces. They sat on their raised judgment seats very still and patient, not much interested in the matters brought before them, yet not wearied or repelled by them either, but submissive and long-suffering, and in no sort of hurry to be relieved of their duties. They all took snuff, and used double glasses when reading or writing was required of them. They rarely interrupted the counsel addressing them. They seemed to me all profoundly convinced that the Court of Chancery was almost of divine origin, that the suitors were made for it far more than it for the suitors, and that any attempt to quicken its proceedings was to be considered and reprobated as something in the nature of a crime.

I was sometimes, but rarely, left alone in the office. On such occasions I found it advisable to continue my copying work less

self, and drew caricatures upon my blotting-pad. I pried about somewhat, reading the notices upon the walls—one of them I remember set forth the circuit of the judges, but it was of old date—and peering into such books as I could find. They were, for the most part, guides to the practice of the courts, with the forms requisite under certain procedures. And I looked into an old Peerage.

Now the only nobleman I had any sort of acquaintance with was Lord Overbury. So I turned to his name. I found him described as the fifth baron; Marmaduke Augustus Frederick Oglethorpe. It was strange, I thought, that he should bear the same christian name as myself, Marmaduke. I did not know it before. Nor was I aware that his lordship's family name was Oglethorpe. The dates of his birth and of his succession to the title were also recorded; the peerage was said to have been created at the coronation of King George the Second.

I read also, greatly to my amazement, of his lordship's marriage, some sixteen years back, with Lady Jane Wilhelmina Caroline Pomfret, daughter of the sixth Earl of Bannerville, whose marriage with Edward Gustavus, second Baron Wycherley, had been dissolved by Act of Parliament. Married! Then there had been a Lady Overbury before Rosetta.

Further I was pursuing my investigations when the office bell rang. I touched the spring communicating with the outer door, and presently a stranger entered the office.

He glanced in the direction of the desk usually occupied by Vickery; appeared surprised, then turned towards me. But he said nothing. I quitted my high stool and advanced towards him.

"Mr. Vickery's out at this moment, if you want him." Then pursuing the form usual under the circumstances, I said: "Mr. Monck's engaged, and is not likely to be disengaged very immediately. Is it anything I can do for you?"

The stranger laughed. "Engaged, is he? I know all about that. And Vickery out? And you're young Mr. Nightingale, I suppose, the new articulated clerk?"

I said that was my name. Thereupon he laughed again.

CHAPTER XXX. I SERVE A WRIT.

THERE was not much to laugh at that I could see. Yet the stranger's laugh was not aggressive or unpleasant, but rather, as

a natural cheeriness and geniality of disposition. He was a young gentleman of about my own age, with bright, twinkling, blue eyes, and a delicately mobile mouth, that seemed readily tickled into a mirthful form. His whole face, which was smooth and lightly tinted, and not to be described as handsome so much as pretty, wore a femininely sensitive and impressionable look. He was smartly dressed in a blue coat and close-fitting lavender trousers, strapped under his shiny sharp-pointed boots; he carried an ebony cane, silver-topped, and decked with swinging silken tassels. Removing his glossy hat for a moment, he passed his thin fingers through his wavy flaxen hair, arranging it in clusters on either side of his face. In my own mind I accounted him quite what we then called a "buck." He had a smart London air about him, which I had not yet been able to acquire. Indeed, by the side of him I felt that I was more than ever a "yokel." And I was constrained and diffident in his jaunty self-satisfied presence. Not that I could find fault with him, or wish him changed. His manner was perfectly natural, and his little airs and graces seemed to suit him as completely as his dapper clothes fitted him. Indeed I felt myself attracted to him, his smile and glance were so winning, and his dainty prettiness of aspect and manner was altogether so admirable.

"Will you be seated?" I proffered him our hard wooden office chair.

"No, thank you, Mr. Nightingale. I'll not stay. This place makes me melancholy. It always did. I hope it doesn't affect you in the same way. But I sat at your desk once—I was a clerk here, studying law, as you are now studying it." Here he laughed. I blushed, for I felt that my so-called legal studies had something ridiculous about them. "But I really couldn't stand it. The law and this office were quite too much for me, to say nothing of old Vickery. Then I'm a flighty sort of person, you know. I felt like a bird in a cage." It seemed to me that this was a fair description of him. He was as a sprightly bird of gay plumage; the office must have been a dreadful cage to him. "So I and the law parted company," he continued. "But I'm detaining you. You're time's precious, I dare say, Mr. Nightingale."

I could not help regarding this rather as a joke. "You know my name, it seems," I said.

"Oh yes, I've heard of you. I hope you

find yourself comfortable here, and may like your profession better than I did. No, I won't stay, thank you. Good morning, Mr. Nightingale."

He was going; but he paused with his hand upon the lock of the door.

"I don't know that it matters much," he said. "But as I know your name, Mr. Nightingale, you may care to know mine. My name is Wray, Anthony Wray, but I am generally called Tony. People seem to think it suits me better, and I don't object. I dare say they're right. Tony Wray. Perhaps we may meet again some day."

"I'll tell Mr. Vickery that you called, Mr. Wray."

"Oh, just as you like about that. It doesn't really matter, you know. Good-bye."

A wave of his white handkerchief, wafting towards me a scent of lavender, and he was gone.

He did not quit the house though. The outer door did not close behind him. I listened. I could hear his light nimble step as he mounted the stairs. I hesitated. But I decided that it was no business of mine; that I was clearly not entitled to interfere. Probably Mr. Wray was privileged to enter the mysterious upper regions of the house. Otherwise he would surely not have gone there. I heard a door on the first floor close behind him. It was all right enough, there could be no question.

I resumed my study of the Peerage. But what remained was of inferior interest. I read, however, that the family motto of Lord Overbury was "Virtute et fide," which did not strike me as particularly appropriate; that his crest was "a dexter arm couped below the elbow, vested argent, and grasping a club or," which my lack of heraldic learning did not enable me to comprehend very fully; his coat of arms and supporters were also described, and then, by reference to the illustration plate, I was able to identify these armorial bearings with the carvings adorning Overbury Hall. Further I gathered that, in addition to Overbury Hall, his lordship was possessed of Brackley Castle, Cumberland; that the family was of great antiquity, had been enriched by intermarriage with other distinguished houses, and received territorial grants from Henry the Eighth at the dissolution of the monasteries; that a certain Charles Richard Oglethorpe had been sheriff of the county in the ninth year of the reign of James the First; that the Oglethorpes had espoused the cause of the

Stuarts during the great civil war, and thereby incurred much loss of property; that a certain Fletcher Vandaleur Oglethorpe had been bred to the bar in Queen Anne's time, and been appointed a judge of the Queen's Bench; with much more detailed information of the same kind. The book, however, was not of recent date. It did not set forth, therefore, the death of Lord Overbury's first wife. She must be dead, of course, or how could he have married Rosetta? Nor did it mention whether his lordship had any issue by his first marriage. Moreover, there seemed some doubt as to who was the next heir to the barony.

Old Vickery returned. I thought it becoming to close the Peerage, and to return to my copying work. Old Vickery eyed me suspiciously for a minute or two, and then inquired, "Anything happened in my absence, Mr. Nightingale?" He seemed able to read in my face that something had happened.

"Mr. Wray called—Mr. Anthony Wray. He left no message."

"Precisely. Mr. Wray. He would call. No; he was not likely to leave any message."

"He went up-stairs I think."

"You think, Mr. Nightingale? It doesn't matter much in this case, only, as a rule, never think when you know. Thinking isn't evidence. No doubt he went up-stairs. He would go up-stairs. He was likely to."

"He told me that he had occupied this desk himself, but that he didn't like the law."

"Precisely." Then, after a pause, he added: "You see, Mr. Nightingale, whether he did or did not like the law as a profession is of little concern to anybody but himself. Perhaps the law did not like him, and the separation was by mutual consent." He was silent for some time. Presently he resumed. "Don't, Mr. Nightingale, understand me to be saying anything disrespectful of Mr. Wray. A pleasant young man, I call him. But there never was, and there never will be, the making of a lawyer about him. There may be other things in him—I don't say no—but there isn't that. A pleasant young man, as I said; and, if you must know"—this was scarcely fair; I had certainly not insisted upon knowing; but Vickery liked to affect that information was extorted from him rather than supplied voluntarily—"if you must know, he's Mr. Monck's nephew, and he calls here now and then,

and, not troubling himself to consider whether it's convenient or not, or whether Mr. Monck is or is not particularly engaged, or too much occupied to care to see him or anybody else, he goes up-stairs. I mention the matter lest he should call again at any time and I should happen not to be in the way. For no other reason. As Mr. Monck's nephew, he's at liberty, or considers himself so, to go up-stairs or where he will. You need not take any notice of the fact. Now you know all about Mr. Anthony Wray. That is all. I hope you're getting on nicely with that fair copy on brief paper you've had so long in hand, Mr. Nightingale?"

I said that I was getting on nicely, I thanked him, with a mental reservation that nicely did not mean absolutely the same thing as rapidly, for, as a matter of fact, my progress had not been remarkable.

It was a day or two after this that Vickery took me out with him, leaving the office in the charge of Scoons. We did not, for a wonder, walk in the direction of the offices, but turned towards the western regions of London. Soon we were among the club-houses of Pall-Mall. Vickery seemed to be in no hurry, but I noticed that he looked about him almost anxiously as we advanced. He said little.

We paused at the corner of a street. Vickery leant against a lamp-post and took snuff. His gaze was fixed upon the flight of steps and classic portico of a massive corner building of white stone. It occurred to me that he was taking unwonted interest in the achievements of architecture.

Suddenly he started. A man had issued from the building, and was standing at the top of the flight of steps. He looked up and down, and waited, as though he were in search of his carriage.

"That's my man," said Vickery, quietly, and he produced from his breast-pocket a long narrow slip of parchment, and a corresponding long narrow slip of paper. "Now let me see if you can serve a writ, Mr. Nightingale. This will be practical learning to you. You see that gentleman on the steps? You will go to him. Show him this parchment, hand him this paper, and leave it with him. Mind that. It's very simple. There's nothing to be afraid of. If he asks at whose suit, say Dicker Brothers. Go at once. Do it sharply. I shall be here if there's any difficulty or trouble. But there won't be. You understand?"

I did not much like the errand. But I

could scarcely object to it. Was it not part of my profession? Still I was rather ashamed. I knew that my face was burning, and that my heart was beating with unaccustomed force and rapidity.

I hastened to the gentleman, leaving Vickery in the background inspecting me.

"What is it, my lad?" said the gentleman, as I mounted the steps and stood beside him.

He was tall and thin, dressed in handsome dark-coloured clothes. He was very pale, with aquiline features, heavy straight eyebrows, large deep black eyes, and iron-grey hair.

"If you please, I'm to give you this—a copy of a writ. This is the writ."

In my hurry and confusion I was nearly presenting him with the parchment original and retaining possession of the paper copy.

"A writ, eh?" A light flush of colour appeared in his white face; his brows lowered, and he bit his lower lip as he glanced towards me rather angrily.

"Yes, a writ, if you please. That's the copy, this is the original I hold in my hand."

"What's the amount claimed?"

"It's written on the other side, sir, I think."

"Oh, I see. Seventy-six pounds eight and tenpence. Dicker Brothers. I thought I'd paid it long since. It shall be attended to, young man. Provoking. I'm careless about these things. Where do you come from?"

"From Mr. Monck, solicitor, of Golden-square. The name's on the back of the paper, sir."

"True. Say I'll attend to it. I'm sorry there should have been this trouble about so trumpery a matter. I'll see to it at once, and call or send a cheque. That will do."

I was going, when he laid his hand upon my shoulder, and seemed to turn the light of his large eyes fully, almost fiercely upon me. He stood for a moment looking into my face intently, and yet as though he had forgotten what he purposed to say.

"What's your name, boy?"

I told him. He repeated the name after me in a musing way, as he gently withdrew his hand from my shoulder.

"And you're a process-server? Isn't that rather an ignoble occupation?"

I mentioned that I had never served a writ before.

"I think I wouldn't serve one again, if I were you," he observed.

I explained that I was Mr. Monck's articled clerk, and that I was bound to obey orders.

"His articled clerk? Well, that sounds better than process-server. And you're to be a lawyer? Well, you might be something worse, perhaps. I say, perhaps—I'm not sure, knowing little enough of the subject. It's not a pleasant profession to my thinking, but then I'm not a lawyer."

I waited, for he seemed about to say something more. But after another look at me he simply smiled and nodded in a not unkindly way, and I understood that my task was accomplished. I took the parchment back to Vickery, leaving the gentleman standing on the steps holding in his hand the paper I had left with him.

"What did he say?" Vickery inquired.

"He said he'll attend to it, and call or send a cheque; and he asked my name."

"Ah! he'd better attend to it. He didn't threaten you, did he? In my time I've known of process-servers being assaulted and pretty nigh killed. But I was sure that it wouldn't happen in this case, Mr. Nightingale. I knew whom I had to deal with. These fine club gentlemen are used to writs. They rather like them, I do believe. It's excitement for them. They couldn't get on without excitement. All the better for us. Well, you've learnt something practical to-day, Mr. Nightingale. You now know how to serve a writ, and that's really an important matter. The first step in an action at common law. But for the new Act we should have taken the gentleman to the lock-up straightway. They will keep on reforming the law, spoiling it to my thinking. The law's a very good law, if they'd only leave it alone. You never hear lawyers complaining of it, and of course they're the best judges, knowing more about it than anybody else."

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

A SILENT HOUSE.

WHOSO has visited the Catholic countries of Europe, is acquainted with the aspect of the brown-robed, rope-girdled, bearded Capuchin friar. His is a familiar figure, in busy street and squalid alley, as well as on country roads. He is to be found in the crowded haunts of men, and in remote solitudes where some lonely convent crowns a rocky eminence, or nestles amid woods and gardens. Humble as he is, the Capuchin is a soldier who has done important service to his Church. His poverty and

his ignorance bring him into immediate and familiar contact with the populace. He is a beggar, and patron of beggars. The food which he receives from the hand of charity he divides with the mendicant who is too old, too feeble, or too lazy to work. He may be met with, sometimes driving an ass laden with bags or paniers, sometimes trudging along under the burden of his well-filled sack, over a large portion of earth's surface. And here in Rome, within a stone's throw of my windows, is the head-quarters, the Downing-street, the Admiralty, the Horse Guards, of this brown militia all over the world.

Whether he treads the hot stones of a South American city with his sandaled feet, or climbs the rocky pinnacles of Assisi, cradle of his order; whether he basks under a Spanish sun, or braves the keen blast that sweeps over the "wind-gashed Appenine," it is from under huge monasteries, with its great walls and few windows, that the Capuchin friar receives commands, instructions, and superior officers; for there dwells the general of the order; a general of division, supreme over his own arm of the service, and owing obedience only to the great commander-in-chief of the whole ecclesiastical army, who sits in the Vatican.

The great mass of convent buildings stretch away behind the Capuchin church, Santa Maria della Concezione, and have behind them a large walled garden, which adjoins the gardens of the Ludovisi Villa, where the King of Italy resides when he is compelled to be in the capital of his kingdom. The church itself has not much either of beauty or interest to recommend it to the curiosity of strangers; but it possesses one or two fine pictures, notably a Saint Michael overcoming Lucifer, by Guido Reni, and being set down in the red book, is duly visited during the season by foreigners from beyond the Alps and seas. One other sight the church has to show—a very strange one. And to that we shall come presently.

It is May. The trees are all leafy and fresh, unscorched, as yet, by July heat. Sellers of lemonade and fresh water have their little booths at every street corner, and the ingeniously piled rows of pale lemons and amber oranges, mingled with goblets, which, though only of cheap glass sparkle as bravely as diamonds in the sunlight, make a very pretty show, and a tempting, to dry and thirsty throats. The white folds of the Roman head-dress utter on

the heads of the peasant women, for there is a breeze, a delicious, fragrant, vivifying breeze, wafting the smell of hay from the Campagna, and gathering garden odours—rose, and carnation, and acacia-blossom, and a hundred others—as it flies. On the Piazza Barberini, the cabmen have driven their horses into the shade, leaving the wide central space to sunshine and the pleasant spray from Bernini's fountain, where the Triton sends up prismatic showers from his conch shell.

How still and sweet the morning hour appears. In the deep blue sky, a little fleecy cloud seems too lazy to fly further, but has furled his white wings and poised himself to rest on the air, as a swan rests on the water. Up on cornice and jutting fragments of stonework the weeds grow luxuriantly, green, and purple, and brown; and they just sway and bend languidly as the breeze passes over them. A brown cowed figure, with silver-grey head and beard, is slowly ascending the steps of the Church of the Conception. An old blind beggar woman sits on the steps and jingles her tin box with a copper or two in it, by way of asking alms from the passer-by. But she is half asleep in the sunshine, and the coppers scarcely rattle, as she mechanically moves her box to and fro. The whole scene is full of tranquillity. That great blinking monastery seems the very "local habitation" of peace. Let us follow the friar up the steps into the church.

Well, we need not linger here very long. There are the usual tawdry altar ornaments, paper flowers, and gaudy carpets, and pictures of the Madonna with a tinsel crown on her brow, inserted to give greater splendour and dignity to the atrociously painted image. There is Guido's Saint Michael victoriously treading down Lucifer, behind a blue curtain, which is withdrawn, for a trifling fee, by a mild-looking friar. There are two silent old women, and three noisy young ones, who fidget, and rustle, and clatter up and down the church on their high heels, all more or less engaged in performing their devotions. The shabby rush-bottomed chairs stand piled up in a corner on the brick floor. A dim lamp twinkles before a shrine. A black-coated priest, with his shovel hat in his hand, comes in and kneels on the tombstone of Cardinal Barberini in front of the high altar. You may see the whole scene repeated a score of times in a score of Roman churches this May morning.

But follow the friar, who has shown us

the Saint Michael, and who gently asks if we would not like to see their "cimitero"—their burial-place? Certainly! The cemetery of the Cappuccini is one of the well-known sights of Rome.

Perhaps you expect to emerge from the whitewashed passages into the convent garden, where there is shady sleeping ground, under the cypress and stone-pine, for those followers of Saint Francis who will never more be roused by the matin bell in the dark of a winter, or the twilight of a summer, morning. No; you are wrong. Our brothers departed this life do not lie there with the birds chirruping and the weeds blossoming above their graves. They are in a holier, albeit to worldly eyes a drearier, place. Beneath the church is a series of vaulted chambers. They are not underground, because the church itself is, as it were, on the first floor, being approached by a tall flight of steps. These vaulted rooms are low, and are lighted by grated windows looking into a great external court-yard. A livery-stable keeper rents some buildings on the side of the court-yard opposite to the monastery, and a man is grooming a fine horse under the gateway. He does not hiss at his work as an English ostler would do, but rubs his two hard brushes together after passing them over the animal's hide, at regularly recurring intervals. That, and the occasional stamping of the horse's hoof on the flagged pavement, are the only sounds which break the quiet of the place. And these sounds do not disturb the occupants of the vaulted chambers under the Church of the Conception.

For this is a Silent House, and the monks who walked this earth in their brown serge garb two hundred and odd years ago lie and stand in it, and are disposed piecemeal about its walls and roofs, in the form of bleached bones, calm in the invulnerable quietude of death.

All of the brotherhood who die within the convent walls are interred, and disinterred—as will presently appear—in this place. The ground here is formed of soil brought from Jerusalem. In each chamber are three or four narrow and shallow graves, with a black cross at the head of each bearing a ticket with the name of its occupant written on it. Around three sides of the chamber is a kind of grotto-work of human bones and skulls, and the ceiling is decorated with symmetrical arabesque patterns formed in dead men's bones bleached to a yellowish white like old

ivory. The fourth wall of the chamber is undecorated, and has a window in it. When a friar dies, he is put—coffinless, and unprotected in any way from the action of the soil—into one of the graves, and allowed to remain there during four or five years. The body is then removed, and is found to have become mummified. There is no corruption or decay. The quality of the earth acts as a preservative, and dries the poor soul-sheath into a strange weird semblance of living humanity. The dead monk is placed by his brethren in one of the niches left for his purpose in the grotto-work. He wears his brown frock and rope girdle, now crumbling into snuff-coloured dust, and clasps a wooden crucifix in his withered livid hands. Some of the figures are propped up in a standing posture. Others recline, half sitting. The cowl is drawn over the yellow heads. On some the hair and beard remain. On others the skin is bare and shrivelled as a parchment buried ages ago in some forgotten tomb. And on these documents there has been writing; strange hieroglyphics; soul histories graven in cunning lines upon the sentient flesh. What is it you would tell us, you withered syllable leaves of humanity? Something you might reveal, some word you might utter of precept or warning, some cry of sorrow, some tone of sympathy, could we but decipher the half-effaced lines upon your silent faces. But they are dumb to us as inscriptions on an Etruscan monument. We have not the key. We cannot read them.

There are strange and grotesque varieties of expression on these charnel-house physiognomies. One man reclines with up-turned face and parted jaws, which show two rows of strong even teeth, and looks as though he were opening his mouth to appeal to, or argue with, some unseen being. Another—a aged man this, who died one hundred and fourteen years ago, with a reputation for sanctity—has his head, to which a few white hairs still adhere, hanging on one side, and the eyes closed as if weighed down by slumber. Sleep on, brother! Fortune turns her swift, thundering wheel—revolutions rush through the streets of Rome from gate to gate—pontiffs and princes fret and strut their hour upon the stage—but you heed them not! Yet hear them not as you slumber, and slowly, atom by atom, return to your native dust in the Silent House! Yonder is a figure which strikes horror as we gaze. The monk is standing. He holds his

crucifix in a claw-like, lead-coloured hand. His head is partly turned aside, and on the face, overshadowed by the cowl, is a strange derisive sneer. He seems in the act of turning from us to conceal this ghastly smile, which mocks at death and life. But we see it. It haunts us. We avert our eyes, and look at a sonnet which is written on parchment, and hung up hard by the skull of a venerable man who departed this life in the last century. The sonnet is addressed to "Il Superbo," the proud man, and admonishes him to reflect on his littleness, his helplessness, and his mortality, in presence of the memorials around him, that we are all but dust and ashes. We read the sonnets carefully through. But all the time we are conscious that the Mephistophelian monk is sneering under his cowl. Our gaze returns, fascinated, to his fleshless face, bent down and turned away from the outstretched hand which holds the crucifix, and smiling with the cynical despair of all good things, which is more tragic than tears. Ugh! It is cold here, is it not?

Our guide—the gentle friar with a pale, vellum-coloured face, and ample, soft, brown beard—smiles tranquilly. "We are all buried here," he says, lightly touching a thigh-bone with the back of his forefinger. "All of us who die in the convent are buried here. At least, we used to be. But now the Italian Government has forbidden interments within the walls. You understand Italian well. You have read the sonnet? Yes? Ah! you are looking at that one. He died—let me see, there is the ticket—yes, he died seventy-four years ago. But he is not so well preserved as this other, who has been dead a hundred and fourteen years! Think of it! A hundred and fourteen years! And there is the hair, and even the eyelashes, still remaining!"

The gentle friar is evidently very proud of this specimen. He opens the door, pursued by the malignant and demoniac sneer of the cowled mocker. As the shadow flickers across his figure with the opening of the door, one could almost swear that the evil smile deepens, and that the fleshless hand which holds the crucifix moves, stealthily threatening. Our guide bows humbly, and smiles with childlike gratitude as we put a very modest fee into his hand. Farewell, good padre. God have you in his keeping! Make haste up there to the convent garden where the sky looks face to face upon the earth we must

return to, and where little birds are piping in their nests, and flowers are growing and living after the law of their being. It is better, warmer, up there in the sunlight, than down among your departed brethren holding ghostly council together in the Silent House!

NEWS OF THE PAST.

TURNING over a collection of eighteenth-century newspapers not long since, we lighted upon a volume, dated 1736, bearing the attractive title, *The London Spy Revived*, by Democritus Secundus, of the Fleet. This oddly-named journal, "printed for the benefit of the author," and "sold by those persons that carry the newspapers," bears, of course, small resemblance to a London newspaper of the present day. There are no leading articles—readers interested in politics were supposed to be able to think for themselves. There are no law reports, no police reports, no literary reviews, no theatrical criticisms, no parliamentary reports, and even advertisements are few and far between. Still, with all these subtractions, it was no light task for one man to fill the columns of such a paper as the *London Spy*, published thrice a week. Why the industrious author should conceal his personality under an alias, is a puzzle, for despite the suggestive name, and its association with the disreputable Fleet, there is nothing in the *London Spy* of which an honest man need have been ashamed. Perhaps Democritus Secundus was over-modest, yet, if he had been, he would scarcely have assumed a *nom de plume* worn, with a difference certainly, by Melancholy's great anatomist. Since he did not scruple to filch his good name from Burton, we wonder he did not borrow a little more from him, and, as mottoes were in vogue, take,

No centaurs here, or gorgons, look to find;
My subject is of men and human kind.
Whate'er men do; vows, fears, in ire, in sport,
Joys, wand'rings, are the sum of my report.

Or, if he preferred prose to rhyme, Democritus Junior could give him: "I hear new news every day; and those ordinary rumours of wars, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, comets, spectrums, prodigies, apparitions, of towns taken, cities besieged, daily musters and preparations, battles fought, shipwrecks, piracies, and sea fights, peace, leagues, stratagems, and fresh alarms—a vast confusion of vows, wishes, actions,

edicts, petitions, lawsuits, pleas, proclamations, complaints, grievances, are daily brought to our ears;" for, truly, our London Spy speaks all such matters with a most commendable brevity.

London in 1736 seems to have been a happy hunting ground for thieves of every degree. We read of a gentleman and his two servants being stopped, near Brompton, by a pair of highwaymen, who, after robbing them, made off across Chelsea Common; of three gentlemen, taking the air near Norwood, having to deliver their purses, watches, and silver spurs to another pair, who bade their victims "Good night" in a very genteel manner. Hounslow Heath, Cambridge Heath, Battersea Fields, were scoured by well-mounted rogues, apt to cry, "Stand and deliver!" and five such toll-takers "kept the roads" about Hampstead and Highgate. Upon the 17th of November the Spy records: "Last Tuesday morning, between six and seven, Turpin the butcher, one of Gregory's gang, in company with another, both well mounted on bright bay horses, were seen to ride through Wandsworth, and are supposed to be the two highwaymen that have lately infested the roads in that neighbourhood." Turpin, attired in a brown coat and red waistcoat, was afterwards seen drinking at an inn in Clapham; but no attempt was made to arrest him, and this ruffian of ruffians, elevated into a popular hero on the score of a feat of rapid riding he never performed, did not meet his deserts until three years afterwards.

While its approaches were thus robber-ridden, London itself was an unsafe place to travel in. No one could walk from Pancras Church to Kentish Town, from Knightsbridge to Kensington, along the Oxford road, or cross the great field between Poplar and Stepney, without running the risk of being knocked on the head by footpads, ready to commit murder for the sake of a few shillings' worth of plunder. London Bridge, Tower Hill, and Bunhill Fields, were especially to be avoided after dark for like reasons. An oilman, venturing to take a walk with a friend about eleven o'clock one night, in the fields at the corner of Brick-lane, leading to Old-street, was set upon by six footpads in vizard masks, and eased of a silver watch, a moidore, five shillings, and a bunch of keys. His companion took to his heels, but did not escape without injury, receiving one cut on the head, and another upon

the shoulder, from a cutlass, ere he got clear of his pursuers. A man and woman returning home from Tottenham Court fair, were waylaid, robbed, stripped, tied together, and flung into a ditch in the Long Field. An officer of the Guards was attacked in Cavendish-square. The wife of the Duke of Chandos's porter, going from the duke's mansion in the same square to Mr. Fox's house, a few doors off, was stopped on her way; and a hackney-coach was robbed in Shoreditch while the watchmen were passing by it. No wonder the citizens' hearts rejoiced when twenty-six new lamps were set up in St. Paul's Churchyard, in hopes of lessening the number of night robberies there.

A few hours spent in a police-court will suffice to teach one that it is better to be heavy-handed than light-fingered; but although the law is still open to the reproach of considering the person of less account than the purse, things are not quite so bad, in this respect, as they were a hundred and forty-six years ago; when, at Hull, Charles Cadogan and his wife, charged with murdering their maid-servant, were found guilty of manslaughter, and "accordingly they were burnt in the hand;" while, at Winchester, Thomas Barton, was sentenced to death for cutting the hop-tops in a garden at Waltham. A convict, who took the liberty of returning from transportation, was effectually prevented from repeating the offence by being hung at Gloucester; "after he was turned off, several persons, having wens on their necks, made application to the sheriff to receive the stroking of the dying man's hands, with the agonised sweats thereon," which request was readily granted, and the permission as readily acted upon, the patients departing happy in the belief that as the dead man's hands mouldered in the grave, so would their wens shrink and shrink, till they disappeared altogether. The story of a double execution at Bristol has a yet stranger sequel. Two men, Vernham and Harding, were hung on St. Michael's Hill. After the bodies were cut down, that of Vernham was seen to turn on being put in its coffin, whereupon it was seized by some lightermen, who carried it away, and sent for a surgeon. He opened a vein, and Vernham sat up, rubbed his knees, shook hands with his friends, and spoke to them. The under-sheriff resolved to re-arrest the dead-alive in order that the sentence of the law should be carried out; but he

was spared the trouble, by the man dying the same night in great agony, and we are told, "it is uncertain whether any secret method was used to despatch him." Meanwhile Harding, too, had come to life again and been removed to the Bridewell, where the people flocked to see him as he lay in his coffin, covered with a rug, breathing freely, but unable to speak, "only motioning with his hands where his pain was." More fortunate than his fellow, Harding recovered in time, and received a pardon.

The Whitstable magistrates cooled a quarrel between a clergyman and a doctor, by making them pass a couple of hours together in the stocks as a punishment for swearing at each other. We doubt if Mr. King got off so lightly when he was tried at Warwick assizes for cursing the king, and drinking the health of his Majesty James the Third. A soldier of the second regiment of Foot Guards received two hundred lashes on the parade in St. James's Park, as a prelude to being drummed out, with a halter round his neck, for stealing a warming-pan. One Friday morning a woman and a man were whipped from the jail in Southwark to the bridge foot, "the usual distance for that discipline;" and at the same time a servant, who had robbed her master, was flogged from the prison to the end of the stones by her master's door. An "eminent attorney," dwelling in Southwark, did private penance in St. George's Church for slandering a woman keeping a chandler's shop in the Mint; and a young woman did public penance in Greenwich Church, by standing, arrayed in a white sheet, in the church porch, from the time the bell began ringing, until the commencement of divine service; and in the middle aisle until service was over. One Joseph Gillam was pilloried in Bishopsgate-street, for defrauding a doctor's daughter of a box of clothes; "the mob pressed to give him the usual reception, but were artfully diverted by some of his friends, who drew them off by a stratagem, and played them one against another until his time was up, so that he came off unhurt." No one seems to have interfered with the amusements of the "roughs" of the last century. When "Parliament Jack" was hung at Tyburn, the mob took possession of his body, and exhibited it at Westminster to all comers willing to pay a penny for the sight, to obtain enough money to bury their hero decently. A

gentleman put an end to the show by paying for a coffin and shroud, and then the dead highwayman was borne in triumph to the New Chapel churchyard, and there interred, apparently without any ceremony. When, for some mysterious reason, the mob dragged the corpse of a Quaker lady out of the church in which it had just been deposited, and hauled it through the streets, until her servants came to the rescue, and battled successfully for their mistress's remains, the perpetrators of this scandalous outrage went off scot-free. Such a thing would be impossible now-a-days, as impossible as for a gentleman of fortune, nearly seventy years of age, to marry a sixteen-year old shoemaker's daughter at the Fleet; or for a girl to be drowned in a Southwark pond in attempting to pluck some wild flowers growing by the pond side.

We have said that advertisements are rare in the columns of our old newspaper; we can only find three worth noting. In one, Jarvis Carr, of Spitalfields, notifies all whom it may concern, that whereas his wife Jane has refused to leave her mother, and live with him, her husband; he will receive her kindly if she comes, but if she does not, will not be answerable for any debts she may contract. The second runs thus: "October 1st, 1736. This is to give notice to all persons who have pledged any goods at the Greyhound and Hare, and the Three Golden Balls, in Houndsditch, to fetch them away, on or before the 20th of November, or they will be disposed of—the pawnbroker being determined to retire into the country on account of his health." The third, dated the 19th of August, is: "This day is published, price ninepence, The True Way of Evading the Act, humbly inscribed to all Distillers and Vendors of Spirituous Liquors." The Act in question was a bit of grandmotherly legislation worth recalling to mind. At the beginning of the year a petition was presented to parliament averring that the excessive use of gin had destroyed the lives of thousands of the king's subjects, and rendered many others unfit for any useful service by driving them into all manner of vice and wickedness. This was referred to a committee of the House of Commons, who found that the excessive consumption of the obnoxious liquor was due to its low price. A bill was at once brought in, laying a duty of twenty shillings a gallon upon all spirituous liquors, and compelling all retailers to take out an annual license,

costing fifty pounds. Pulteney led the opposition to this attempt to enforce sobriety by Act of Parliament, declaring he had never heard of laws forbidding people to partake of certain kinds of food and drink, but the Act passed by a large majority. It came in force on the 29th of September, and the advent of compulsory temperance was hailed with tumult and rioting. The London Spy tells us that the sellers of punch, not having taken out licenses, put their bowls and signs into mourning. "Mother Gin lay in state at a distiller's shop, near St. James's Church; but to prevent the ill-consequences from such a funeral, a neighbouring justice took the undertaker, his men, and all the mourners into custody." Although no gin was to be had, the gin-shops were open for the sale of various substitutes, and the dram-drinkers found it easy enough to get drunk upon Sangree, Tow-row, Parliament-gin, the Last Shift, the Bank, the Ladies' Delight, or cider boiled with Jamaica peppers. Near St. James's Market, red drams were to be bought in bottles, labelled, "Take two or three spoonfuls four or five times a day, or as often as the fit takes you;" and the apothecaries' shops drove a brisk trade in "colic waters." Many of these evaders of the law were heavily fined, but it was dangerous to inform against them, for the mob showed no mercy to an informer when they caught him. Democritus Secundus advises the distillers to conform to the Act, and refuse to sell less than two gallons of spirits to a customer, but adds: "Observe well that a contract is a sale; and if a customer cannot afford to pay for two gallons at once, you can sell for part money and part credit; and the buyer can take away with him just so much as he has occasion for—the buyer and seller agreeing as to how the goods be delivered and payment made." The Gin Act lasted just half a dozen years; as its opponents prophesied an immense injury had been done the revenue, while, instead of drunkenness declining, it had increased year by year. Few, if any, efforts were made to put the law in force against those who chose to violate it; informers dared not, magistrates would not stir in the matter, and when, in 1742, it was proposed to reduce the duty on spirits, and fix the license duty at one-fiftieth of its previous amount, a bill to that effect passed the Commons "almost without the formality of a debate."

Here is a contribution to the history of English pantomime: "October 6th.—Last

Sunday morning, Mr. James Todd, who represented the Miller's Man on Friday night last, in the entertainment of Doctor Faustus, at the theatre in Covent Garden, and fell in one of the flying machines from the very top of the stage, by the breaking of the wires, by which accident his skull was fractured, died in a miserable manner. Susan Warwick, who represented the Miller's Wife, lies at the point of death at the infirmary at Hyde Park Corner." And here is a bit of news from Dublin concerning a certain famous dean: "August 7th.—Last Tuesday the Society of Woolcombers walked in procession through the principal streets of the town. They made a beautiful appearance, being every one dressed in a handsome tie-wig, made of the whitest wool; with sashes hanging over their right shoulders of fine-combed wool, coloured blue, purple, red, and white." Where was the patriotic green? "They made a particular procession to the house of the Reverend Doctor Swift, D.S.P.D., and desired they might have the honour of seeing that glorious and worthy patriot of his country. As soon as he appeared they cried out, 'Long live the Drapier,' and 'Prosperity to Ireland.' After many huzzas, they passed in review before the dean, two and two, making the profoundest reverence to him as they marched by, which the dean was pleased to return."

From Dublin, too, comes a tragical story of a dream. Mrs. Ward, the wife of a shoemaker there, paying a visit to an old acquaintance, arrived just in time to see her laid out, and assist an old woman in that melancholy office. She was proceeding to undress the head of her dead friend, when the woman stopped her, saying that had already been done. Mrs. Ward stayed for the funeral and then went home. That night she dreamed the dead woman came to her and said, "Why did you not open my head? I was murdered by my husband!" Awaking in affright she told her dream to her husband, who advised her to go to sleep again. The next night she again saw her friend in her sleep, but this time the latter spoke to worse purpose, saying, "Since you did not open my head, you must come with me!" and gave Mrs. Ward's arm such a twist that she awoke screaming with the pain, and continued screaming until three in the morning, when she died. Upon her wrist was the print of a finger and thumb! The body of the buried woman was taken up, and, on examination, dis-

closed a bruise upon the back of the head, beside several others upon the shoulders; but as it was held these might have been caused by the jolting of the corpse against the coffin on its way to the grave, the inquiry ended in nothing.

In April a sea-monster was seen at Bermudas; the upper part of the creature's body in size and shape resembled that of a boy of twelve, the lower part was like that of a fish, and its hair was long and black. Taking the alarm, he made for the water, pursued by several men, who "intended to strike at him with a fish-gig; but, approaching him, the human likeness surprised them into compassion, so that they had no power to do it," and so lost the chance of making a very interesting capture, and convincing the sceptical that the merman is not a fabulous animal. Some among us would as readily believe in the existence of a man-fish as in that of a centenarian. Democritus Secundus was not their way of thinking, for he tells us that on the 17th of September Mrs. Elizabeth Shewer, aged eighty-five, the relict of an eminent pinmaker in Deptford, was interred at St. Mary Magdalen, Bermondsey, being followed to her grave by her mother, then near upon a hundred and five. Again, he chronicles the burial, in St. Pancras Churchyard, of Mrs. Ditcher, who died, at her lodgings in Tottenham Court-road, at the age of a hundred and six. "She was used to all manner of hard work, as washing and charring, from fifteen years of age, and never was ill or out of order till within a few days of her death."

Our editor or author occasionally treated his readers with a little rhyme, lightening his columns with the Five Reasons for Drinking:

If on my theme I rightly think,
There are five reasons why men drink;
Good wine, a friend, because I'm dry,
Or lest I should be by-and-bye,
Or any other reason why.

And the One Reason for not Drinking:

There's but one reason I can think
Why people ever cease to drink;
Sobriety the cause is not,
Nor fear of being deem'd a sot,
But if good liquor can't be got.

A triumvirate of quacks—Miss Mapp, the bone-setter; Taylor, the oculist; and Ward, whose remedy Chesterfield was willing to take himself, although he recommended others to leave it alone—are celebrated in a parody upon Milton:

Three famous emp'ricks, in one country born,
Epsom, Pall Mall, and Suffolk-street adorn.

Mapp makes the lame to walk by manual sleight;
Taylor alike restores the blind to sight;
The stone, the gout, and every human ill,
Ward cures eternally by drop and pill.
Ye quacks in medicine prescribe no more;
Without it, these, as sure as death, can cure.

There is nothing else in the shape of verse worth quoting, except it be the following from "a letter put in the post-house."

To William Callway, now at Lyme,
Let this be sent in proper time.
You at the George, in Lyme, may leave it
Where he in person may receive it.
To make the case more plain and clear,
Take notice—Lyme's in Dorsetshire.

THE EVIL EYE.

I.

BRIGHT scarlet pomegranates and fragrant, softly-tinted roses cling round a wooden verandah, and above them are vines and star-blossomed myrtles, breathing sweetness into the soft evening air. Overhead the sky is cloudless, with purple and green tints rarely seen in northern countries, and, besides these tokens, there is a more human indication of southern climate.

A middle-aged woman sits under the verandah, and beside her a girl stands speaking.

Both women have southern faces, clear olive skins, and lustrous dark eyes; both are handsome, but the girl is beautiful. So far, that is, as shape, and features, and skin can beautify, Thérèse Nouailles is beautiful; but, as she stands speaking to her mother, she looks imperious, and fretful too, and there is a fierce, resolute will in her splendid dark eyes.

Her mother had been like Thérèse years ago, but now she is fat and bulky, and her eyes are rather wily than fierce. She wears a gown of pale straw colour, but her head and shoulders are wrapped in a brilliant Indian shawl, in which black and scarlet are the predominant colours. She looks like a handsome sibyl as she peers through the shawl at her daughter's face.

"I tell thee, my mother, I hate delay. At Véron there is a rich home waiting for me, and I long to see it. Ah, my mother, remember that I have been poor all my life; it is a glorious feeling to think that I shall never want money again."

The mother's eyes glisten, there is a keen look on her face, which argues some sympathy with this love of money, and yet she resents her daughter's words.

"Take care, Thérèse. The dog threw away substance, thou knowest, in snatching at a shadow. Thou art married to a rich man, and he loves thee, and he is gentle

and easily persuaded. He will stay here in Chardees if thou wilt it. His property is funded; his presence is not needed at Véron. Be guided, my child. Stay here, it is, indeed, better."

The mother's voice grows imploring. At first a selfish wish to keep her rich son-in-law and his money at Chardees moved her; but, as she speaks, the picture of her daughter's dull life alone with this quiet old man is realised by her fervid fancy.

"Stay here," she repeats, "among thy old companions, and near thy father and me."

"Merci, ma mère. No. I have decided. I must see my husband's home. If I stay here I am only Thérèse married instead of Thérèse single; but at Véron," she curves her graceful neck, and her eyes shine out with the coming triumph she pictures, "I shall be Madame Dupont, wife of the richest landowner, except the seigneur himself. What do I know? It is possible that when the ladies at the château see me they will be only too glad to welcome me, and to admit me to their intimacy."

Madame Nouailles shakes her head.

"That might be possible here, in the south, Thérèse, where our claims and old descent are known; but the northerners are a cold-blooded, insensible people, and thy beauty even will not break down the stiff barriers set between classes up there."

"Monsieur Dupont is not cold-blooded."

The young beauty laughs and blushes; her courtship has been very short, and her husband dotes on her.

"No." The mother pauses an instant. "Monsieur Dupont is all that can be desired in a husband, or I should not have presented him to thee, Thérèse. Monsieur Dupont stays here happy and contented, and, although he is so much older, he stands by cheerfully, and sees thee dance and amuse thyself with thy old companions; but at Véron all this will be changed. Here Monsieur Dupont considers that I am still beside thee, and that all that I permit is to be permitted; but far away at Véron he will be thy sole guardian; and my Thérèse loves pleasure dearly, and it is possible that, at his age, Monsieur Dupont may not care for the gaiety which is to thee so necessary."

Thérèse turns away pouting, but, as her mother ends, a confident smile chases the pout from the girl's lovely lips.

"My mother, if I were to bid Monsieur Dupont stand on his head, he would try to obey me." Her mother laughs, and Thérèse

flushes with quick anger. "I say this in praise of my husband. He is everything I wish."

She moves away to the end of the long low house, and stands looking at the exquisite sky; at least her great passionate eyes are lifted to it, but her thoughts are all of earth.

"And can my mother think that I have married so old a man, given up all chance of a young and handsome husband, to stay contentedly under her wing at Chardees? No, I must have something more than this for my sacrifice." She begins to pace up and down. "My mother says that at Véron no one will know anything about me. Well, they soon shall know something about Madame Dupont. I will stop in Paris on our way, and see whether I like the bonnets and dresses there better than my own. My husband says that jewellery would spoil my beauty, but I think seeing is believing. If he is so rich it is better to decorate me than to hoard. Yes, I have decided. I will not stay another week in Chardees."

She gives a little stamp by way of seal to her purpose, then, as she turns abruptly, she meets her mother face to face.

Madame Nouailles has crept up silently. She puts her hands on her daughter's shoulders. The girl is startled by the unusual action. She looks inquiringly.

She sees a fresh remonstrance in her mother's imploring eyes and parted lips, but at the sight her will seems to be of iron strength.

"My mother, I have decided," she says, quietly. "Within a week I and my husband must leave Chardees."

"Ah, no!" There is a sob in the woman's voice, and her shoulders rise and fall with suppressed agitation. "I conjure thee, my child, not to be rash, not to tempt fate; I cannot tell why I so shrink from thy departure. It is not only the thought of losing thee. It may be because I detest the north and its cold formal ways. But I have one reason, that may weigh even with thee, my wilful Thérèse. I do not like that thou shouldst go to a house where already there is a mistress." Thérèse's black brows knit in a fierce frown. "I say I do not like this Mère Mangin of whom thy husband speaks with so much praise."

Thérèse bends down and kisses her mother. "Be at ease, my mother." She gives a cheerful smile. "La Mère Mangin is an ugly old woman, and if she does not please me, why I shall send her away. Ah, here is Monsieur Dupont."

A tall thin man comes from underneath the verandah, and advances towards them.

Madame Nouailles shudders, and then crosses herself.

"I should not fear so much," she whispers, "if he had not said that the people of Véron say his housekeeper has the evil eye."

II.

LA MÈRE MANGIN is a tall dark woman, with long narrow black eyes, and an ever-changing play of countenance. The children of Véron call her a witch, and their mothers say that she has the evil eye, but this is only whispered, for no one prospers who is on unfriendly terms with her.

Look at her standing in her master's garden. She is, indeed, very like a witch. Her brown cotton gown clings close about her legs, and on the top of her white cap, which has scarcely any frills to speak of, is a coarse brown straw hat with a high crown. She wears a blue and yellow neckerchief, strained across her chest, and tied behind her back, and her folded arms rest upon a black stuff apron. Her face is so wrinkled that you are surprised to see her suddenly turn round and go tripping towards the house like a young girl; perhaps the movement can scarcely be described as tripping; it is quieter, more cat-like.

She pauses when she reaches the low-browed entrance. The house itself is a large, square, gloomy-looking place; inside the long narrow passage the flag-stones are green with damp, and tell how little life goes on within the old stone walls.

She pulls a letter out of her pocket, and begins to read it through again. By the time she has reached the end she is frowning heavily.

"Yes, yes," she says to herself, "my master, Monsieur Dupont, is excellent, but the best of men have their faults; he is good and gentle, but he is also weak and obstinate; he loved his wife, that poor pink and white, meek Josephine. Yes, he had for her a passion that is not to be believed, and when she died in the first year of her marriage, he was so obstinate he would not take comfort. He shut himself up, he shut up the house from light and air, till it has become more like a prison than a house. Ciel! I do not know how it will ever recover it; and now what has happened?—six months ago he departs, without consulting me, and now he is to bring home a wife. Well, we shall see who will be mistress. I am too old for change."

She has left off scowling, but her smile has something far more fearful than her frown.

III.

THE wind is rising fast; clouds, at first gauzy, but lately thickening in texture, scud more and more rapidly across the sky to join a leaden, humid mass of vapour that seems to be spreading upwards from the horizon.

There is still some light on the river, but it looks cold and ghastly to Monsieur Dupont's young bride, as she catches a glimpse of it through the weird, white-limbed birch-trees that border the road.

She has been so impatient to reach her new home that she refused to sleep on the road, and she is very tired with the long wearisome journey.

They have left the diligence at the last market town, and have been jolting along the stony road in an old-fashioned vehicle, with a hood for the passengers, and a small seat perched up in front for the driver.

Thérèse shivers and draws her head again within the hood.

"Monsieur Dupont," she says, in a fretful voice, "how much longer is it along this dismal road?"

No answer comes, and she bends over to the corner where her husband sits, and touches his shoulder with her hand.

A loud snore—a start—and then—

"Ah, oui, Margot, fais comme tu voudras," follows the snore.

Thérèse leans back in her corner with a look of disgust.

"Foolish old man," she says; and then she smiles, "poor old dear, I am hard-hearted; the journey has been too much for his politeness. I wish I could go to sleep too."

But she cannot sleep, her mind is restless, and the fatigue from which she suffers has fevered her. She wishes she had consented to sleep at the last town they stopped at; then she should have escaped this lonely journey, and should have reached her home in bright morning light.

There is a sudden jolt. Monsieur Dupont starts awake this time, and looks round him with staring eyes; as these reach his wife he recovers consciousness.

"We shall be at home very soon now, mon amie, and then Margot shall take care of thee."

He puts out his hand and takes hers, but Thérèse shivers and draws herself away. At that moment her mother's warning

assumes a new shape; for the first time she hears in it truth and likelihood. And then her fierce will rises against her fear.

"I am tired and overdone," she thinks. "I have always ruled every one, and I will rule this Margot also."

Her husband has wrapped a shawl round her since he woke, and either the warmth or her complete exhaustion lulls Thérèse into a short sleep. She does not rouse till the vehicle stops.

She is so tired that she does not at first realise where she is. She leans forward and looks out.

It is almost dark, but she sees a large dark house standing a little way back from the road. At the open door is a tall woman, shading the light of a lamp with her hand. As she sees Monsieur Dupont the woman runs up and shakes hands with him.

"A la bonne heure notre maître," she says. "Why, you have flown here. I did not look for you till to-morrow. However, as you know, it is not easy to find Margot unprepared; you will find all ready but a fire, and if you need one that is soon kindled; here, Louison, come and carry in the baggage. Is the little mistress in the carriage?"

"Yes, yes." And Monsieur Dupont turns back to help his wife down the awkward steps. But Thérèse has scrambled down by herself, and she stands waiting for her husband, very erect, and with a tempest of pride in her face.

"You had better tell your servant that I am Madame Dupont," she says, very coldly, and so slowly that it seems as if she had measured the space between her words.

Monsieur Dupont is sensitive, and he shrinks into himself at the changed tone.

"I hardly consider Marguerite an ordinary servant," he says, gently; "but I came to fetch you that I might present you to her." He tries to take his wife's hand, but she sweeps past him up to where Margot stands, lamp in hand.

Instinctively the woman raises the light, and as it falls on the advancing figure it falls also on Margot's face.

She leans slightly forward; there is an eager gleam in the long dark eyes, but the lips are pressed tightly together, and the thick dark eyebrows meet in an intense frown.

There is malice and strength in Margot's face, and for an instant Thérèse falters in her purpose. Her mother's warning comes back; she feels chilled and fearful; but she

hears her husband's footsteps coming fast up the walk.

She makes a slight bow as she reaches Margot.

"You are the housekeeper, I suppose. Go on first, and show the way to whatever room you have prepared for me."

She does not look at her—and she would not read much on the tanned face; Margot turns a little pale, and her thin lips smile, but she goes on first, and opens the door of a small room.

She goes in, lights two old-fashioned sconces on each side of the fireplace, and then departs, closing the door behind her.

Thérèse looks round and starts, then gives a little cry, crosses herself, and flies to the door which Margot has closed on her.

The candles in the sconces shed only a feeble light on the dark walls, but facing her are two skeletons, and on the table below there is a large skull.

IV.

AT the end of Monsieur Dupont's garden furthest from the house there was a thickly planted grove of sycamore-trees, beyond this was a gate leading into a field, and on the right of this gate through the trees you could see another gate set in the ivy-covered fence that bordered that side of the garden.

Margot stood by this smaller gate, basket in hand, for within the fence lay the kitchen-garden—her treasury not only for herbs, but also for the curious plants out of which she brewed the decoctions which had made her famous in Véron.

Monsieur had practised surgery in his youth, and had also given medical advice, and Margot had studied his books to some purpose, and probably was the best doctor of the two.

There was a scowl on her face as she went into the kitchen-garden.

"Monsieur bids me make a tisane for madame, and when I answer she will not drink it, he has looked at me more sternly than he ever did before. I hate her."

She begins to gather dandelion leaves, snapping them off with a sharp nip of her bony thumb and finger, as if she wants to hurt some one, and is forced to give vent to the feeling on that which comes nearest. "I will not bear much more"—the words drop from her lips in broken sentences. "I thought Félix Dupont, for his own sake, would have taught her how to behave; she has neither tact nor temper, and she is a fool." Margot smiles at the last word in an unpleasant manner, and then her quick

ears catch the sound of voices among the sycamore-trees; she crouches down near a hole in the fence and listens.

"No, my sweet friend"—it is Monsieur Dupont's voice, and it sounds vexed—"I am sorry to refuse thee—it is harder than thou knowest."

"Then why give yourself the pain?" Thérèse speaks scornfully.

"Because I love thee really, my child, and I would keep our life together free from clouds."

"At least, then, I ought to have a reason given me. I only ask that all our friends and neighbours, who have seemed so glad to see me, may come and dance in my honour; it is not much to ask, and why am I refused?"

Margot laughs to herself as she crouches under the hedge.

"Tiens! she has a rare temper, but Félix Dupont must be doting indeed if he submits to a tone like that." She listens eagerly for her master's answer, but he waits before he gives it.

When he speaks his voice is full of pain.

"Thérèse, do not make me call thee wilful. I told thee at Chardes that I lived a quiet, dull life; that at Véron we are quiet, dull people. Every now and then, from time to time, we ask a few of our neighbours to dine with us, according to the custom of Véron, and thou shalt do this, my child; but a fête, such as that thou desirest, would raise the tongue of gossip against us, and would lessen our friends instead of increasing them; and besides—hush, till I have ended—since we have been married we have had too much gaiety. I want thee more to myself, my dear little friend; if we love one another, our own society should be all-sufficient."

It seems to the listener that Madame Dupont struggles away from her husband.

"Oh that I had stayed at Chardes," the girl sobs, passionately. "I have never lived a dull life, and I will not; if you had a quarter of the love for me which you pretend to have, you would not make me so unhappy; but you do not love me. Sooner than displease that hateful housekeeper, you will break my heart. Either she shall go or I will."

There is a sound of swift footsteps hurrying away, and then silence.

Margot rises, creeps softly to the gate, and looks through it. Monsieur Dupont stands under the trees very still and quiet, his face hidden between his hands.

"Bon! she has shown her hand. She

shall go, not I," the housekeeper says, between her teeth, as she hides again behind a tall row of scarlet-runners.

When she comes again to the gate, Monsieur Dupont is out of sight.

Margot goes in-doors. She is anxious to see how the young mistress bears defeat; but Thérèse is not in either of the downstairs rooms, and presently, when the housekeeper makes an excuse to go to madame's bedroom, she finds the door locked.

Madame Dupont kept her door locked till noon the next day, then she came into the eating-room and rang for coffee.

Hitherto Margot had refrained from remonstrance. She foiled Madame Dupont's haughty airs by an apparent unconsciousness that any offence was meant, and this reticence had been part stratagem, part love for her master, and desire to spare him pain.

To-day she brought in the coffee herself, and she saw with satisfaction the pale cheeks and heavy eyes of her master's wife. It seemed to her that her time to speak had come.

"Madame has not slept well," she said, with a keen look through her half-closed eyelids.

No answer except a haughty movement of the graceful neck.

"Monsieur has not slept either." Margot drew near, and put her hand on the young lady's chair. "Ah, madame, it makes me sad to see my master unhappy."

Thérèse's first impulse was to bid the woman leave her, but she checked this; there was a new sound in Margot's voice, and the girl's heart beat fast in vague terror. The dread that had seized her on that first night had been lulled by the housekeeper's indifference; but now the old fear was coming back. She dared not look up; "the evil eye" might even now be blighting her. Margot's appeal had startled her—the woman was impertinent and interfering, but she was plainly moved by love for her master, and secretly Thérèse felt ashamed of her own treatment of her gentle, loving husband.

Margot was surprised at her silence.

"The bird is tamed so soon, is it?" She closed her eyes on this thought, and stood weighing the possibility of governing Thérèse instead of getting rid of her.

"I will go and tell monsieur," she said, "that madame wishes to see him."

"You will do no such thing; you had better mind your own business, or you may

get into trouble. All you have to do is to take care of the house, and see that it goes as it should do. You can leave me; I prefer to be alone."

Thérèse spoke haughtily, but she did not look at the housekeeper. Margot bent over the high-backed chair till her face almost touched Madame Dupont.

"Good counsel should always be welcome. Madame is very young, and she does not perhaps remember that the chief duty of a wife is submission. Monsieur is more unhappy than I have ever seen him since the death of madame, and he did well to regret her—she never gave any one an unkind word. She consulted me in everything."

"Then she was a fool——"

Thérèse's anger mastered her fear, and she pushed back her chair impatiently. It struck the housekeeper a sharp blow as she still bent over it.

Margot whitened till she looked like a dead woman, and Thérèse trembled as she glanced at her face.

"She was what you will never be—she was an angel. She made others happy, you live only for your own pleasure; her death was blessed, yours will be a curse."

Margot had kept calm outwardly, but the blow, which she believed was intentional, had made her furious, her words came without her control.

Thérèse's indignation conquered all discretion. She stepped forward and gave the insolent servant a box on the ear.

"Go away, do you hear me. Insolent!" she stamped her foot. "I do not wish ever to see you again. You can tell Monsieur Dupont I have discharged you."

Margot stood drawn up to her full height, colourless except for a faint streak on the cheek which Thérèse had struck.

"I will tell your master and mine what you say," she said, her voice full of contempt.

Thérèse looked up quickly, a flush of shame had spread over her face, but when she met Margot's eyes, she blanched at once, and caught at the chair to save herself from falling. It seemed to the unhappy girl that through those half-closed, dark eyes an evil spirit was looking at her, smiling in malignant triumph. Before she recovered herself, Margot had departed.

V.

It is late evening, and the wind is cold and searching; it blows pitilessly through the sycamore-trees, and sends with each blast a fresh tribute of leaves into the dark

water that lies in the field beyond the gate. The water eddies and trembles as if it, too, shrinks from the chill blast. Monsieur Dupont, hurrying home across the field, shakes his head at the accumulation of leaves and broken twigs on the water.

"It must be cleansed to-morrow," he says, "or the fish will be choked."

And then, as he opens the gate, and passes into the garden, Monsieur Dupont sighs, and wonders whether his wife's temper will be changed.

Margot has told her story, and he is angry as well as grieved with his wife. He has only seen Thérèse for a few minutes, for she insists on Margot's instant dismissal. As he walks slowly to the house, so full of discord now, the memory of his sweet, loving Joséphine comes back, and he sighs still more heavily.

"She loved Margot," he says, trying to nerve himself into resolution, "and Margot is a good and valuable woman. I cannot have her ill-treated."

Monsieur is patient and good, but his wife's conduct is out of the pale of his experience, and her resolute avoidance of him during these last days has broken the spell of his infatuation.

"I was happier alone with Margot," he murmurs, as he goes slowly and heavily into the house.

He finds Thérèse pacing up and down the large bare dining-room. She stops when she sees her husband, but she does not speak or smile.

Monsieur Dupont walks up to her.

"My wife," he says, very gravely, "Christian people cannot live as thou and I have been living these last three days, and I love thee too well to suffer thee to commit injustice without repairing it. I will never permit Marguerite to be impertinent, but I cannot discharge so good a servant. I must ask thee to apologise for the blow thou hast struck her. I am quite sure thou dost repent it."

Thérèse's eyes flash such brilliant scorn that the poor man cowers.

"Then you choose between me and her. I have said I will not live with her, and I will keep my word."

Monsieur Dupont shakes his head.

"Thérèse, thou hast made me frightened as well as sad; such a temper is a curse. It is not Margot, it is thyself thou must learn to rule."

She gives him a passionate glance, and hurries away to her room.

"I must write to her," he thought; "she will not listen to my words."

That night the wind rose to storm fury; it burst into the houses through windows, hurled huge slates off the old roofs, and brought many a tree crashing down into the river. But Thérèse did not hear it. She paced her lonely room up and down till twilight faded into darkness, and even then she went on pacing up and down. There came a sudden tap at the door, and she started with a scream of terror.

"C'est moi, madame." The twang of Louison's voice soothed Thérèse's fear; she went to the door and opened it. A sudden shrinking from her loneliness made her glad even to see Louison. The girl had a lamp in one hand and a letter in the other. She held the letter to Madame Dupont.

"But madame has no light." She peered over the young lady's shoulder into the dark room.

"Give me your lamp," Thérèse said. She longed to ask Louison to stay with her, but the girl turned away when she had set the lamp on the table.

Thérèse seated herself and looked at the letter. It was from her husband.

"Folly," she said, angrily. "A sermon, I suppose."

At the first few words her eyes softened, and her bosom heaved, Monsieur Dupont assured his wife so tenderly that his only wish was to make her happy; but as he went on in praise of Margot's good qualities, the dark eyebrows knitted, and the fierceness came back. The letter ended with these words: "It is better to submit to a little that we do not like, than to lose so good a housekeeper. I cannot turn away so old and attached a servant even for thee; and besides this I make it a special request that thou wilt apologise for the blow. After this there will be peace."

Thérèse started up and flung the letter on the floor.

"Selfish old fool! I see it now. He cares for his peace and his untroubled life more than anything—much, much more than he cares for me. Well, he shall have it. I will go away, and leave him to find out what it is to lose me. Yes, I will go—" She stopped and put both hands to her temples; they seemed to be swelling with the dizzy tumult within her brain. Where should she go? Not to Chardes, where she had thought to make a triumphant return. She could not go there as a fugitive. Where could she go?

She shivered and leaned against the wall of her room. She could not go into that great cold outside world alone. Would

it not be better to stay here? But the tiny whisper was silenced instantly.

"No, no—never!" She stood erect again, her eyes flashing, her hands clenched. "I cannot stay unless I beg pardon of that woman. Ah, she is no woman—she is a fiend!—her eyes—her eyes!" she covered her face with quivering fingers. "And he—he is determined, or he would not write in that cold manner; he would come himself and entreat me to be friends. Friends!" she laughed scornfully. "I begin to hate the old wretch, and if I did stay here, to live shut up alone with him would be hell—hell! Well, there is one fiend here already"—her eyes grew wilder, and she talked aloud in her excitement. "Yes, she has the evil eye; I felt it scorch my brain. And she has said my death shall be a curse. No, the curse be on him who brought me here—lured me under the same roof with this fiend; my curse on her, too! Ah, my mother, if I had but listened to thee, if I had but stayed in Chardes; but that is idle now, I am doomed—if I stay I can only wither slowly under this fire, it is in my heart and in my brain; if I fly it will follow me, for she is no woman, and her terrible eye—ah, what do I know, even now it is destroying me!"

She flung herself on the floor.

La Mère Mangin rose early. She was always up and dressed before her lazy help arrived, for Louison did not sleep in the house. This morning, to her surprise, she found the door leading into the garden open.

"Did I forget to lock it, then, last night?" she said, with a puzzled face.

Louison was late. The fire was lit and the kitchen swept before her sabots came clattering down the stone passage.

Margot turned round with a reprimand on her thin lips, but the sight of Louison's face stayed her tongue. The girl looked clay-colour, and she dropped into a chair as if she had received a blow.

"There is a ghost, Mère Mangin—a ghost who walks amongst the trees là-bas," and she points to the garden. "Pierrot has seen it while he was looking for mushrooms—a ghost with long black hair and all in white."

La mère grows pale, and her narrow eyes shrink into a line.

"Hold thy peace, simpleton; do not let the master hear of such folly. Here, mind the coffee-pot an instant."

For a sudden thought, almost a fear, has come to Margot, and she hurries up to

the room of Madame Dupont. She opens the door gently. She is surprised to find it unlocked.

The room is empty, the bed has not been slept in, but the clothes which Madame Dupont wore yesterday lie in a heap on the floor.

Margot takes this in at a glance, and then she goes to find Monsieur Dupont.

"Have you seen madame?"

His face answers her, and she hurries on to the garden. She searches every corner, and then with slow, unwilling steps she goes to the silent pool beneath the trees. It is covered with fallen leaves, and one or two large boughs have been wrenched off by the wind, and stretch their twisted arms as if they were snakes writhing on the water.

Margot stands peering down into the water as if she thought she could see to the bottom.

Her arm is roughly seized.

"What do you here, wasting time?"

Monsieur Dupont says hoarsely. "You have driven her away—find her, I tell you, find her at once."

Margot only shakes her head and points to the pool, and the wind moans sadly among the trees.

They seek her at Chardes, for at first Monsieur Dupont will only believe that she has sought refuge among her own people, but Thérèse is not there, and her parents cry shame on the grey-haired husband who has failed to make their daughter happy. They search the neighbourhood of Véron, and at last in sheer weariness, Monsieur Dupont permits the pool to be searched, but Thérèse is never found.

Some of the old folks of Véron shake their heads, and say there are deep holes in the pond, and that Margot knows of them, and that till the missing wife is found the house of Félix Dupont will be haunted. And, it is whispered, that in every September in gusty weather, just when the dawn brings a ghastly light over the damp dismal house, a tall white woman with long black hair glides through the garden and disappears among the sycamores.

La Mère Mangin has never seen the ghost, and no one would dare to tell her of it, but she is avoided more than ever. She rules supremely now in the old house, but she looks aged and anxious, and there is in her eyes the same seeking, expectant expression which you see in her master's.

Félix Dupont is always seeking his lost Thérèse. As he goes through Véron the children point at the withered, bent old man, and cry out:

"There goes the old Dupont looking for his witch-wife."

And as he goes, the poor broken man murmurs:

"My poor unhappy child—my lost Thérèse—shall I ever find thee?"

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER X. WELL MET!

HARTY left all hope behind her when she witnessed that recognition. The man who was bound up by his union with her mother, with her fate, was the same one who had driven that wretched boy to a dishonourable death in order to avoid living a dishonoured life. There could be no doubt about it. How should she ever face Jack Ferrier again?

To her intense surprise, neither her mother nor Mabel betrayed much emotion when Mr. Devenish delivered himself of the excited inquiry as to what devil had raised the ghost of young Frank Archer. Though he had fallen back faint, shocked, exhausted, they bore the spectacle with their customary affectionate anxiety about him truly, but with no manner of amazement or curiosity expressed in their manner. They at least, Harty felt with a throb of intense relief, were innocent of the great offence of knowing or suspecting aught of the worse parts of Mr. Devenish's delinquencies. If they had been cherishing him in spite of that knowledge, Harty would have found it hard to forgive them.

"I might have been sure it was your wish," he said presently, with a snarl. "If I am to hear anything unpleasant, you're always ready to be the medium of communication; if I am to see anything disagreeable, you are always ready to play the part of show-woman. I suppose Claude Powers, with his customary good feeling, made you show me this by way of recalling happy memories of a man who was the cause of my downfall."

Harty shivered through her whole soul, and her judgment was swayed about most cruelly. Should she keep the peace for her mother's sake? or should she, for the sake of fair justice, denounce and expose the machinations, the murderous duplicity, the misrepresentations, and the false pretences of the man who hurled bitter accusations at every one else without compunction?

No; she could not do this latter thing. It was not demanded of her that she should do it. His guardian angel, as she

had called her mother on a former occasion, stood between him and vengeance now. So, picking up the locket with a gesture of tender pathos, she said :

"Claude Powers does not even know that I have it. This poor fellow's half-brother, Mr. Ferrier, was showing it to me to-day, and telling me the story of the boy's wretched death; and in the excitement of my pity and—horror—I forgot to return it to him."

"Mr. Ferrier! his half-brother! telling you the story of—of Frank Archer's death!" Mr. Devenish stammered out. And as he spoke he grew pale with the waxen, sickly pallor of a white ivy leaf, and for the first time Harty pitied him!

Really pitied him for that self-abasement of his which had ruined his life, and more than probably destroyed her happiness. "He feels that I know all about it," the girl thought. "How sorry I am that he has been unkind to me, because it must hurt him all the more, that I should know it, and how can I make him understand that I'm not scorpion enough to sting him for that?"

"Yes," she said aloud, speaking very sadly, and striving at the same time to make her eyes speak this truth to Mr. Devenish, that he need have no fear of her using her recently acquired knowledge against him, "yes; Mr. Ferrier told me the story, and I hope with all my heart that I may never hear mention made of it again."

"Amen to that," Mr. Devenish muttered, with a sigh of relief, and a shade of the livid hue crept off his face, as his spirit strengthened within him. I knew that young fellow at a period of my life which I certainly have no particular pleasure in recalling; therefore, if you'll put that triquet out of my sight, and kindly avoid the topic, I shall really have reason to be obliged to you for once, Harty, and shall be inclined to believe that you are really not quite destitute of feeling for me."

It was an ungracious form of words, an irritatingly grudging acceptance of her generosity, but for once Harty was not irritated by him. For she had watched his eyes while he spoke, and had read in them truly that he was acting a part of distrust against, and dislike to, her now. There was gratitude, trust, admiration almost expressed in his eyes, and she realised that in this victory, which she had achieved with a struggle over her own young burning spirit, she had achieved one over his broken, and possibly contrite heart also.

"Let the dead past bury its dead," she said, reassuringly, and then she took the locket away with a good deal of solemnity in her heart and manner, and packed it up to be returned with a civil note to Jack Ferrier, a note so civil, meaningless, cool, and altogether unlike herself, that she could but feel sure it would chill him off from her effectually.

"I can never tell him the truth, I could never bear to see what he would feel when he knew it; for if Claude is compelled to be inexorable, what would Jack Ferrier be? and so I won't let him like me any longer. He'd hate himself for the weakness when he found out whom he had been liking."

So she mentally resolved to have done with Jack Ferrier's friendship for ever. For she had given her bond to Mr. Devenish that she would never betray him, never render up a secret which disclosed would surely bring down a heavier weight of obloquy on his bowed, humbled head. And she could not bear the continual constraint of being on guard against herself, of being reserved with one of the freest and frankest of her fellow-creatures—of finally feeling that he was receding from her, because he had found her out. She could not bear this, she could not bear the contemplated possibility of it. Therefore she mentally relinquished the friendship even, which was fast becoming precious to her.

The leverage power which moved her to do it, meanwhile, was fast relapsing into his normal condition. As soon, indeed, as the influence of her personal graciousness was no longer upon him, Mr. Devenish was himself again.

"I wish you would prevent that girl of yours running wild in the way she does," he said querulously to his wife, who was just prematurely congratulating herself on the turn things had taken between the belligerents; "this Mr. Ferrier who lends her his lockets, is hardly the sort of man I should choose to cast a daughter of mine adrift with."

Mrs. Devenish fidgeted meekly, and responded: "It wouldn't be just to isolate the girls as entirely as we do ourselves, Edward; surely, Mrs. Powers is—I am sure you think that Mrs. Powers is a sufficient guarantee for this young man."

"I had very much rather that Harty had nothing to do with him," Mr. Devenish said, in an exasperated tone; "if you want a reason I have none to give you, none that I choose to give you, at least; that brother of his died in a discreditable way, and if

you take my advice you'll take some steps to stop their intimacy before anything discreditable comes of it; I've no authority over Harty, I have never attempted to usurp any; but as the nominal protector of your children, I venture to offer my opinion."

He stopped breathless, having succeeded in working himself into a trembling, quivering rage, which reduced his wife to the lowest and most helpless depths of despondency. But in her despondency she dared not be silent. She knew that she must speak, or he would further goad her with accusations of being sulky.

"You know how I value your opinion, dear Edward," she said, meekly. "I will speak to Harty; I will tell her what you say about there being something discreditable——"

"In the name of common sense don't tell her anything of the sort," he interrupted, shaking his head at her. "It would be just the very way to rouse her spirit of opposition; what effect has your speaking to her had as regards putting a stop to the ridiculous exhibition she makes of herself with Mr. Powers? She'll go on and make an equally ridiculous exhibition of herself with this fellow, unless you use your authority as her mother for once in your life, and put a stop to it; speak to her, indeed!"

"I will try," Mrs. Devenish promised, meekly, and Mabel put in:

"Good feeling will make Harty give up all intercourse with both of them, I'm sure, when she knows that papa really wishes it." To which he rejoined:

"No, no, my dear; you judge her by yourself, therefore you judge her erroneously." And Mabel blushed at the praise she felt herself to be so well deserving of, and was almost melted to tears at Mr. Devenish's perfect appreciation of her.

Mrs. Devenish did "speak to her daughter" as she had promised. She did in a halting and self-condemnatory way try to put a stop to the one pleasant thing in Harty's life, her intercourse, namely, with Claude Powers and his friend.

"Give me a good reason, mamma, a reason that I can see you feel to be good, and I'll do it," the girl said, rather hopelessly.

"Edward wishes it, and he has always a good reason for his requests," the wife said.

Harty shook her head. "His wishing it isn't enough; he must tell you why he wishes it; we're not the soulless creatures he supposes us to be, mother; I must have

a reason given me for relinquishing the only happiness that comes in my way—excepting what your love gives me," the girl added, hurriedly, and Mrs. Devenish seized upon the softening mood, and strove to mould it to her husband's will at once.

"It would make him happier, Harty; that is the only reason I can give you; an all-sufficient one for me, my child." And then Mrs. Devenish went away full of all manner of exalted feelings as a wife; but owning herself to be entirely defeated as a mother. For she could not find words to combat the truthfulness that seemed to envelop Harty as the latter said:

"And an insufficient one for me, mother. And you know it."

The dull daily routine went on for about a week, during which time the girls in the house at the corner saw and heard nothing of their friends at the Court. The two young men were very much at odds in reality, but very much absorbed by each other, and pursuits that led them quite away from the Miss Carlises in seeming. The causes whereof were these.

In the first place Claude was morbidly and vaguely jealous and angry, inclined in his heart to believe that Harty had descended to the depths of trick and lure, and that she had met Jack Ferrier rather more than half-way. While in the second place Jack Ferrier, in consequence of that note which she had written in all honesty, was misled by the idea that Harty was feigning to be coy, merely to invite him to advance the more speedily! And he loved her so well already, that the mere suspicion that this might be the case, checked, and hurt, and kept him apart from her.

And in the third place, Mrs. Powers, who was carefully watching events, was delighted to observe the drifting apart of these young people by reason of certain strong under-currents, whose source she could not determine. Delighted to observe that they were drifting apart, and not at all desirous of bringing them together again. A brace of sentiments which united in keeping her quiescent, and made her cease from sending invitations to the two girls.

But when the fates of two people are "inextricably mixed," it is useless for opposing human influence, or even for their own weak wills, to try to separate them. Without design—for each carefully avoided the other's haunt—Claude Powers found himself thrown into Harty's company one day, when there "were none others by."

He overtook her as she was struggling back from the station one afternoon, a load of newly-arrived books and newspapers in her arms, and a good deal of very newly-acquired weariness in her gait and manner. And he could not find it in his heart to pass her with merely a bow.

"Let me relieve you of your burden," he said, dismounting before she had time to protest. "Why do you do these things, Harty? Why toil down to the station and knock yourself up in this way?"

He looked thoroughly vexed for and anxious about her, and Harty's heart swelled.

"Toiling and being knocked up are experiences that I'm pretty well accustomed to by this time. No" (with a laugh), "don't think that I'm being broken down by household drudgery; but it's toil to me to get through the days here, and it's drudgery either to let things take their course or to struggle against them."

He felt very pitifully towards her, but it was "her own doing" he reflected, that things had come to this pass with her. He had no alternative. He could not concede one fraction more of his point than he had already conceded. Whereas she had it in her power to make both him and herself happy by simply breaking the imaginary fetter that bound her to her step-father. So, though he felt very pitifully towards her, he said nothing.

She read his feelings in his face, and somehow it smote her that her love for him ought to make her feel more sorry than she did, that she should be the cause of sorrow and suspense to him. At least he should have the gratification of knowing that she now knew he was right in his judgment and denunciation of Mr. Devenish. So she said in a low voice:

"I know now that you were justified in calling Mr. Devenish a scoundrel, Claude. Mr. Ferrier told me all the story of his brother the other day, and I know by what I felt for poor Mr. Ferrier what you, who know him so much better, must feel."

"I wished you not to hear it, if you remember," he said, coldly.

"Yes. I know that; but, Claude, I seemed as if I couldn't help myself when Mr. Ferrier overtook me that day. I longed to know so that I led him on——"

The phrase jarred on Claude's nerves. "Led him on," he interrupted, "that is just what I thought, what I feared you were doing, Harty. What's to be the end of it, Harty? An uncomfortable feeling at best between my old friend and me, for

he is getting fond of you, and changeable as you are——"

The words were ill-chosen; he felt that they were the instant he had uttered them, for the statement of the two facts, namely, that Jack was getting fond of her, and that she was changeable, caused Harty's face to bloom into bewitching beauty, and her eyes to flame with dangerous excitement. The sight galled him, and in spite of his conviction that his words were inexpedient, he repeated:

"And changeable as you are, you can hardly deliberately contemplate winning Jack Ferrier's heart? Can you?"

"No, not deliberately," she said, slowly. "Not deliberately. I should never do anything of that sort in cold blood."

"But you're not blind; you must see what you are doing. I held my peace while I thought you were putting forth your winning power unconsciously; but now it is time to speak when I see you and Jack Ferrier on such terms that for the sake of proffering him your sympathy you go directly adverse to my wishes. Good Heavens!" he continued, working himself into a hotter jealous rage with each word he spoke, "is it possible that it is true what you told me, that you had only been true to me all these years because no one had tempted you to be false?"

"I think there was a great deal of truth in it, Claude. I know many girls would have flattered you by implying that numbers of men had been sighing in vain for them during your absence; but I think that would have been a meaner thing to do than to tell you the truth as I have done."

He chafed in silence for a few moments. He had done mischief he felt. The girl would not be scolded, would not be curbed, would not be put into any groove that pleased him, and made to run in it. A fierce pang shot through his heart as he thought, "Am I losing her love!"

"I have loved you a good many years, darling," he said presently. "Ferrier's is only a matter of yesterday in comparison with mine."

She moved her head uneasily in a melancholy, deprecating way, and looked up at him with her candid clear eyes.

"Why do you keep on speaking of his liking for me, Claude? Why do you do it? I know myself—I know that I shall go on thinking about it. I know that if I do ever see him again I shall be more than I have ever been to him before, because I do so like to be liked——"

"I know that you will drive me mad,"

he interrupted, almost groaning; and the tears flashed into her eyes as she answered:

"Oh, Claude, what a pity we ever met again!"

"Not if you'll continue to be what I believe you always have been, faithful and brave," he exclaimed, eagerly. "Let us marry and go abroad, darling."

"I should like it, but I can't," she said, simply. "I can't do it, Claude; it's no use."

"Your love for me is waning," he said, jealously.

"Do you think it is?" she asked, dubiously. "Isn't it possible to care very much for some one else, and still to be fondest of you? If it isn't possible, hearts are narrower things than I hoped they were."

"I should consider any woman's heart too capacious if it had room for another besides myself," he said, in quiet, miserable accents. "Harty, do you know we are talking in a way that is very horrible to me? Give me, after it all, one scrap of comfort; tell me that you would feel no pain if you believed that you would never see Jack Ferrier again."

Her heart began to beat more rapidly. Was it possible that Jack Ferrier was gone already? was it possible that her chilling note had so effectually chilled him, that he had gone away without making further effort to see her? There was genuine sharp pain to her in the possibility, and she could not conceal it.

"Oh, Claude," she exclaimed, "I shall see him again, shan't I? I mean he isn't gone, is he?"

"It would hurt you, then, if he were," he said, bitterly; "it would hurt either your heart or your vanity; which is it, Harty? Is it a love of mere flirtation, or is it anything deeper?"

"I don't know which it is yet. Is he gone?"

"You ask that again, though you see how the question cuts me. Well, as you will have it, you shall. No, he is not gone; would to Heaven he were."

She heaved a sigh of relief.

"You can't control a sign of delight," he muttered, in a paroxysm of mortification and love. "You don't take the trouble to try and hide from me that you are glad that he is here still."

"It would be deceitful to pretend to be

any other than I am, and that's glad," she said, steadily; "but, Claude, look here; I haven't seen him for a week. Has he taken a dislike to me? does he know that I am connected with the man who ruined his brother's life?"

She asked it with pitiable eagerness, poor child, and her eagerness goaded him into making a cruel retort.

"He does not know it yet; when he does he'll break the spell you have cast over him quickly enough. And he won't think the better of you for having reserved your part of the story, when he made a full confidence of his portion of it. You're only preparing misery and mortification for yourself, Harty, by this course you're pursuing."

"What am I doing?" she struck in. "I don't seek him, or try to lure him to come after me. I haven't seen him for a week. What have I done that you're so angry with me, Claude?"

"Changed to me," he answered, with a choking sensation in his throat. "Let yourself feel such an interest in him as no man can tolerate the woman he loves feeling for another man. Harty, I make every allowance for you, for your excitable, changeable nature, but other people will not be so lenient, and, by Heaven, I'll never hear my wife dubbed a flirt."

She came to a stand-still in an instant, her lips quivering, her whole face working with emotion.

"What have I done?" she reiterated. "I have done nothing to deserve this yet; if I were what you mean by a flirt, I could have done all that I have done, and much more too, without you're being a bit the wiser for it. But I have told you the worst of myself, and you scold me for it."

"You don't know what it is to feel that the one thing you love best in life is slipping away from you," he pleaded.

"Do you think I am slipping away from you, Claude?" she asked, wistfully. "No, no; don't think that; but it's all so unsatisfactory between us. We stand upon shifting sands, don't we? I can't help liking to look away from the danger and uncertainty sometimes——"

"Well met," a hearty clear voice shouted out, and Jack Ferrier dropped over the hedge into the road a few yards ahead of them.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXXI. TONY.

AT Vickery's bidding, on our return to the office, I duly endorsed my name on the writ as the person who had served it. Dicker Brothers, the plaintiffs in the action, were tailors in the Quadrant. I omitted to notice the name of the defendant. Vickery, I think, rather hindered me from acquiring this information, although I was not really curious on the subject. He always preferred to be mysterious whenever he possibly could; not that there could have been any real necessity for mystery in the present case; but secrecy and stealthiness had intrinsic and irresistible charms for him. He delighted, himself, in worming out hidden matters, and found pleasure in providing occupation of this kind for others, if they cared to avail themselves thereof. I did not to any great extent.

But two facts, in connexion with the affairs of the office, soon came to my knowledge with little stir on my part. In the first place it could not be concealed from me that Mr. Monck's circumstances were somewhat embarrassed. There seemed to be difficulty at times in his providing money to defray the current expenses of his business. Creditors began to call with increasing frequency, and were dissatisfied with the answers returned to their applications. They could not understand any more than I could Mr. Monck's constant invisibility, and were suspicious of the incessant engagements that held him aloof from them. They were not as yet angrily clamorous; but it was plain that their patience was yielding. And other evi-

dence was not wanting. Vickery, of course, made no sign, and whether his stipend as managing clerk was or not paid to him, could not be discovered. I fancied, however, that of late he had looked somewhat additionally pinched in appearance, and that his dress betrayed shabbiness and neglect that might fairly be attributed to access of poverty; while it was certain that the small wages of the boy Scoons were some weeks in arrear. I could hear him, in a dream-like condition, murmuring as much from his murky corner of the office; and as a consequence, perhaps, he grew quite vindictive in his wasteful treatment of the ink, and his cruel assaults upon the candles with the sharp point of the snuffers.

In the second place, it was plain that Mr. Monck's business, to say the least of it, did not increase. Now and then, as in the case of Dicker Brothers, some tradesman in the neighbourhood required legal aid in rousing the attention of a negligent customer; and in such wise a lawyer's letter was occasionally despatched, or a writ of summons issued and served. But this was really exceptional. There was in truth very little doing in Mr. Monck's office. Nevertheless he appeared to enjoy considerable repute as a practising solicitor. The house in Golden-square was rich in traditions of former important transactions. Mr. Monck's business had at one time, no doubt, been of a valuable and distinguished kind. But it now seemed to be subsisting upon its past fame. So far as I could comprehend the matter, Mr. Monck and his father before him had enjoyed a very profitable connexion with the West Indies. They were the representatives in this country of numerous planters and colonial proprietors, and had been charged with

the conduct of many Chancery suits, and appeals to the Privy Council and the House of Lords, upon the subject of West Indian interests. All this had, without doubt, been very lucrative to the lawyers. But the recent abolition of the slave trade had, with other influences, greatly depreciated colonial property, and as a consequence diminished litigation in that regard. No new business of this class came to Mr. Monck while I remained his articulated clerk.

Still it must not be supposed that we were absolutely idle and without occupation. We were as a theatrical manager who does not depend for existence so much upon the production of new entertainments as upon an established repertory. We had, so to speak, our stock pieces, which proved themselves fairly remunerative. These were Chancery suits, for the most part, which, as I judged, had long been as heirlooms in the Monck family. They were subject to cataleptic seizures, and remained apparently inanimate for very prolonged periods. Still they awoke of themselves, or were roused by others at intervals, and were found to be yet possessed of life to some extent. At any rate they had money in their pockets, and, properly handled by the solicitors concerned, they yielded up this in the shape of costs, like sluggard travellers upon the compulsion of footpads. Some few cases of this kind—and no reasonable lawyer could expect to benefit by more than a few—yet remained in Mr. Monck's office, and kept it going after a fashion: the machinery working slowly and uneasily, with jarring and creaking, from lack of oil and power. But this was the normal method of Chancery movement at that period.

Of these prodigious and venerable proceedings of immemorial origin, and though still existing, fallen into exceeding dotage and decrepitude, I really knew little more than the names. Even these were complicated by supplemental and ex parte transactions, by the original case having littered, as it were, and produced a progeny of descendant and additional suits. Still in the ardour of my noviciate I made repeated efforts to master certain of their complications and mysteries. In all there was unquestionably a "fund in court," the origin and mainspring of the litigation. Round this fund in court generations of plaintiffs and defendants had gathered, and fought, and perished, bequeathing their share in the property, or rather their

share in the contest for the property, to their descendants, who had struggled on until, in their turn, death had overtaken them, and others filled their places, armed with their abandoned weapons. In one suit—I think it was *Dobson versus Dicks*—in addition to the fund in court a landed estate called the Happy Retreat, in the Island of St. Mungo, was also the subject of strife. This property, I remember, had frequently been valued and revalued, and the most fluctuating opinions prevailed as to its worth. There was a testator who had made an incomprehensible will, and appointed trustees and executors, some of whom would act and some wouldn't. There were various charges upon the estate, and a fierce struggle had arisen among the mortgagees as to who held the first, and who the last, encumbrances. There were trustees also of the testator's marriage settlement charged to pay an annuity to his widow out of the income of the estate, and intrusted with separate provisions for the behoof of the children of the marriage who were thus brought in and made parties to the suit. Then the widow had married the overseer of the estate, and so the case was recruited by more trustees and a fresh family. The overseer claimed to be a partner in the estate, or to have some extraordinary lien upon its profits. Doubts had arisen as to the formality of the testator's marriage, and as to his capacity for executing a will, and thereupon all his next of kin had come in as claimants. Next the consignees of the produce of the estate asserted themselves to be secured creditors for an enormous amount, while on the other hand efforts were made to demonstrate that they were in truth debtors for an equally large sum. Some one had gone mad, and committees of the lunatic had to be appointed, and accounts taken of his revenues and possessions. Some one else had gone bankrupt, and in such wise a swarm of representatives, assignees, and creditors had been added to the suit. There were numberless infants who appeared by their next friends, and whose interests the court was supposed to watch over most jealously, even to keeping them all tightly bound hand and foot. There was some one always paying large sums of money for premiums on policies of insurance on the life of some one else, and a great question had arisen as to where the money was to come from that was to pay these premiums, and as to whether any one was really entitled to receive the amount

of the policies when the assured's life dropped. Of course some of the parties to the suit had been committed for contempt, and it was supposed that a few had died in the Fleet or the King's Bench prison, unable to purge themselves of their sins in that respect. Moreover, some of the parties had disappeared altogether; and though they had been advertised for, and all sorts of officers of the court directed to search and inquire and report concerning them, still they were not forthcoming, and it was conjectured that they were hiding away in the uttermost corners of the earth, expressly to be out of the reach of the Lord Chancellor, and out of hearing of the case of *Dobson versus Dicks*. Of course everything had to be doubted and proved, and of course everybody questioned and derided the claims and the evidence offered by everybody else. There were doubts about births, about marriages, about deaths, about every mortal thing, indeed. A fresh crop of difficulties was always growing, and any sort of a practical close to the suit seemed to become more and more inconceivable and impossible. It had outlived I don't know how many chancellors. The original will was supposed to bear date some time in the last century. The shuttlecock had been first struck by the then Master of the Rolls, and had since been creditably battledored by his successors and the chancellors and Appeal Courts for the time being. It was heard and reheard, was "spoken to," came on for "further directions," or "on petition;" was argued and re-argued; was now referred to this master, now to that, then to the other; evidence was required and affidavits beyond number were filed, and witnesses were examined upon interrogatories. States of Facts were carried into the Master's Office, followed by Further States of Facts and Counter-States of Facts, and accounts were taken and schedules sworn to, and every document had to be draft-copied, and fair-copied, and office-copied, and brief-copied for counsel, and every party to the suit had to be formally served with a copy of everything. It was certainly a wonderful suit—at least it was so in my eyes. Vickery never appeared to think that there was anything very remarkable about it. I presume that he understood it thoroughly, but I am not sure. I know I never did. I have only hinted at a few heads of it, appearing like patches of dry land above a dark unfathomable sea. For my labours as an

articled clerk in Mr. Monck's office were chiefly devoted to copying the multitudinous and ever-increasing documents in *Dobson versus Dicks*.

One day I was dining at the house in Rupert-street.

"I felt sure that we should meet again, Mr. Nightingale." Mr. Tony Wray was the speaker. "May I sit at your table?" Of course he might. I was thankful enough for the chance of bettering my acquaintance with so pleasant-spoken a young gentleman.

"You dine here pretty often, I suppose? I used to when I was at Mr. Monck's. And I come here still every now and then just to see how things are going on, you know. Roast mutton will do very well, I think, William; and say apple-pudding to follow." This was to the waiter. "I like this house. Wilkie and Haydon used to come here, you know, and that gives it a sort of artistic and historic interest. Wilkie I've never seen; but Haydon I have often. I attended his lectures. They were really grand. And he stood behind me once when I was copying the *Thesens* in the British Museum. 'The Greeks were gods,' he said; 'but don't follow them slavishly. Nature before everything; never forget her or try to dispense with her; refer to her always. Your eye is correct; but your hand is infirm. When you begin to paint, paint everything life-size. Study anatomy, dissect, cleave to the skeleton, master the muscles. Your drawing wants force; but for so young a student it's commendable. I tell you so—I, Benjamin Robert Haydon.' That was what he said. A short man, wearing spectacles, with a high, bald, shining forehead, and a firm, ringing voice. I thought it kind of him; for my drawing was but a poor thing. Still it was encouraging and interesting of him to notice me."

"You are an artist?"

"Well, I should prefer to call myself a student. Thought of course, in a certain sense, an artist is always a student. But I've done little enough as yet; I'm only a beginner; though I intend to do great things of course; who doesn't? I've rather a knack of beginning things. The difficulty I find is in going on with them. I began law once, as you know. But somehow I couldn't get on with that at all, though I tried to, for a time. Yes, and I copied all sorts of papers, writing as neatly as I could; and I actually read a book or two—not that I understood them. I don't

pretend that for a moment. And I began medicine once. It struck me it was rather a good notion feeling people's pulses and looking at their tongues; punching them in the side, asking if it hurt them, and then looking wise, and writing a prescription for them. I thought that was just the business to suit me. I really thought I might rise to great distinction as a doctor. But it was of no use. I'd forgotten to take into account the dissecting room, the hospitals, the surgical operations, and all that part of the business. My nervous system—I may say my stomach—refused to stand it. I bought a head once for anatomical purposes; but I couldn't touch it after I'd bought it. I felt as though I'd murdered some one, or were engaged in some hideous crime. So I gave the head away to a fellow-student; he was glad enough to get it. He'd no compunctions, bless you. He had the skull polished and made into a sort of tobacco jar. I'm not sure he didn't drink out of it. But it was odd, I thought, Haydon telling me to dissect. I had dissected as it happened; at any rate I had made a beginning that way. And I do know something of anatomy—the bones, the muscles, and all that kind of thing."

"And you'll go on with art?"

"Yes, I think so, for I adore art, and a fellow must go on with something, you know. I've always held that opinion. And I've real taste for art, and, if I may say so, am rather clever at it than not. I haven't done much, of course, at present. That was hardly to be expected. I'm young, you see, and I always feel that in cases of this kind there's never any real occasion for hurry. I simply ask for time to turn round and look about me and consider the bearings of things. I like to go on in my own way, which is rather, perhaps, a leisurely kind of way. Not that I am without enthusiasm. I abound in enthusiasm, and I am always looking forward to grand achievements. Looking forward is, indeed, quite an occupation in itself. I find myself constantly employed in that way. I can even see myself in the distant future—I don't pretend to say it will be very immediately—elected President of the Royal Academy. That will happen, I dare say, much about the time you receive your appointment, or patent, whatever it's called, as Lord Chancellor."

"I hope it may happen before that," I said.

"You're very kind. It may or it may

not. I promise not to be disappointed in either case. Still I should much like in my position as President to be painting your portrait as Lord Chancellor. I think I could do a good deal with such a subject as that. Your head, in a certain light, has really an impressive aspect. I should take a three-quarter view of your face, I think; it's characteristic of chancellors, you know, to be turning a little away from the present to keep the past in view. Then the wig and robes, the mace and seal—I should really enjoy painting those accessories. There's a great deal to be done in art in the way of carefully rendering details and compelling them to help tell the story of a picture. I should make a really fine work of your portrait. I feel that; I'm quite confident about it. Indeed, I feel tempted to order in a large canvas and begin upon the thing at once."

I suggested that it would be certainly premature to paint me in the character of chancellor, and to this he laughingly assented. "It would only be taking time by the forelock, however; and, you know, we're always recommended to do that. I never have yet, that I know of; and it seems a pity to abandon so good a chance of doing it."

I found his talk and manner delightful; both were so new to me. And there was a certain graceful, airy unconsciousness about all he said and did that won upon me greatly. His speech might be nonsensical, but his simple faith in its soundness was indisputable. He was admirably unaffected. And though he seemed to be idly prattling he was plainly sincere the while, for the moment. He spoke with effortless liveliness, sensible that his utterances possessed an element of humour, yet laying no stress upon this or demanding its recognition; he talked on from mere natural cheeriness of heart with a sort of quiet fervour underlying even his strangest speeches. His blue eyes twinkled and his face was lit up with a frank, genial intelligence as he spoke; the while his dainty white hands fluttered like birds about him in appropriate unstudied action. He talked himself quite out of breath.

"I'm devoted to art, as I said. But I don't avoid other pursuits. I can't deny the charms of literature. Indeed, at one time I had really a great mind to be a poet. I think—I say it with all modesty—I possess some gifts that way. I'll own to you that I have dabbled in the waves of Helicon—just gone in up to the ankles—not much

more than that. I've never really plunged in headlong. Still I found it pleasant. The water did not strike cold upon me. It was agreeably warm. Some find it boiling, no doubt; and some ice-cold. It was tepid; that was my feeling about it. But I keep on prating about myself. How vain and egotistical you'll think me. I'm not so really, Mr. Nightingale, I do assure you. Tell me how you're doing. How do you get on with Mr. Monck, my uncle. You know that I suppose?"

I stated that I had not yet had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Monck.

"Not seen him? But no, of course not, I forgot." He checked himself as he was about to say something. "I must not tell tales out of school," he added; and for a moment he looked grave and remained silent.

Tony Wray and I swore an eternal friendship; not in words or ceremoniously, but the matter was perfectly understood between us all the same.

OUR KITTY.

On the resignation of a somewhat comatose Abigail, with fiery hair and blinking eyes, we had to "look out," as it is called, for an "own maid." After some trouble we came by our Kitty in the following way.

At some genteel apartments by the seaside we were co-tenants with a military family, commanded by a hoarse major, who ruled over a shrinking, delicate wife and a young family that seemed to live entirely in perambulators. A room half-way up on the drawing-room flight appeared to contain them all, for we could hear the door open to let out a short sharp bark for "Kitty," and shut again with a bang; while the flurried Kitty would be heard rushing from the depths. The major, besides his military duties, seemed to act as nurse, dresser, if desired, tutor, &c., to say nothing of his taking vast delight in railing at the unhappy Kitty. It was a great sight to see him and his family going out to walk in procession—the malacca cane and delicate wife going on in front, the two well-charged perambulators following behind, propelled by the unhappy Kitty, and a temporary drudge. How he contrived to combine these nursery offices with his duties to his regiment, seemed incredible, but he did so, and with success. No doubt he "confounded" the unhappy Kitty, as he did the privates of his regi-

ment; possibly using a shorter, sharper, and more satisfactory form of malediction, and roared away at her as he did at his men.

The major was ordered off, and Kitty hearing that there was a vacancy in our little corps, was enchanted to enlist with us. Her wretched wage as drudge was doubled on this promotion. She was wild with delight, and could have prostrated herself at the feet of her new employers. She would do everything, and would be the most faithful and grateful of dependents. Various articles of dress were released from embargo, and Kitty entered on her new duties. She was a handsome, high-spirited creature, and with some hesitation ventured to make a stipulation that no hindrance should be put in the way of religious duties. On Sundays and other festivals she would ask to be allowed to practise devotion; she had been brought up so strictly. This was considered by the Half (complimentarily styled "better") of the highest promise; but in the mind of the worse one it started the gravest doubts. However, both said that we should see, and we did see eventually.

The first thing that I did see, three weeks after engagement, was the spectacle of Kitty returning from church. I rubbed my eyes. She was fashionably attired, with parasol, black silk, veil, flowers—bonnet as inappreciable as any worn by her betters—chignon (or "sheenon" as she always called it), and, above all, a not at all unsuccessful imitation of what is called a "panier." But this was not all. She was in an animated conversation with two gentlemen belonging to different services of the country; one being in Her Majesty's Guards, the other in the police force of our city. When it is considered what an antagonism, not to say jealousy, exists between these two arms, and what an utter stranger she was to the district, the reflection that the young lady possessed a store of gifts that we had not given her credit for, forced itself on me.

It was evident that the conversation was of a rallying kind, the two gentlemen dealing in rough and noisy gallantries, which were met in a Di Vernon style, and with a readiness of repartee that must have come from long practice. On stern interrogation she had a story ready. Surely, he of the Guards had been in the major's old regiment! "I thought I should have dropped. And when they began to talk of old times, and ask questions about the old people," &c. All this story was set out

with a richness of detail that conveyed everything except conviction. After all, too, this was the land of liberty, where there was no literal offence against the laws in the fact of a young maiden speaking on the highway with a private in the Guards, or for that matter to a member of the Force. However, as was before remarked, we would see.

We had a very young but steady cook, and a composed but intelligent man-servant, who seemed to concentrate himself on his business with an ascetic devotion. These elements, we thought, must insure steadiness, acting as a sort of ballast. Within a short time, however, sounds of hilarity would occasionally rise through the house, clearly to be traced to a sort of story-telling gift which the new Kitty possessed. Indeed, her influence in this direction was appreciated by her mistress, who confessed to me, with some hesitation, that "it was really wonderful how clever Kitty was;" how she would, when arranging hair or otherwise decorating, humbly beg leave to be allowed to spin a short yarn, or relate diverting adventures of some friend or acquaintance. One night at the theatre we had been amused by the antics of a certain Miss Fitz-Smith, of the corps de ballet, who wore blue satin trousers and a velvet jacket, and whose entry, I perceived, was greeted by the Half with something like pleased recognition. I was then told that before this young person had reached her present high position, she had been on probation at some country theatre—a most excellent, well brought-up girl, with a hard-working mother and sisters—the father a drunkard, who had run away—the girl the prop of the whole family, a model of propriety under the usual temptations, with other details of the fullest kind, related with some little confusion, yet not without a certain pride.

"Why, how on earth," I said, in amazement, for I had hitherto plumed myself on a monopoly of theatrical information, "do you come to know all this?"

She answered, "Oh, Kitty knows all about them. She has often taken tea with the Fitz-Smiths—is quite intimate, indeed."

It then transpired that most of the Scherazade tales with which she used to beguile the three hundred and sixty-five nights and mornings of hair-dressing, &c., were usually based on legends of the stage; and this, too, accounted for a certain familiarity with the lives of actors and actresses which I had lately noted in

the better Half. I was henceforth a prey to doubts, to uncertainties. What was this Kitty? It really looked as though she had been herself on the boards, or perhaps had tried to secure entrance there without success. There was a theatrical air about her. The worst was, she had gained over her mistress, who thought her "a very good girl," full of a proper spirit, all heart and real affection. And once indeed, when her mistress was taken with a sudden faintness, the first object seen on recovery was the faithful creature on her knees with clasped hands and streaming eyes; the mistress declaring that during the inanimation she was conscious of hysterical lamentations.

Yet there could be no doubt but that she was introducing the reign of pleasure into the house. A little remark of hers, "how curious it was that we were all, every one of us, in the house, young—cook, maid, and man, master and mistress," made a deep impression, conveying that we were made for life and jollity, and that work was more for the aged. She always conveyed the idea of being an old retainer, and though with us only a few weeks, had contrived to exhibit this in a highly ingenious way. She discovered little anniversaries: my birthday, the mistress's birthday, a festival of the Church, her own birthday, the "anniversary of master and mistress's marriage;" and on such occasions, as I descended to breakfast, I would find a little bouquet in a breakfast cup filled with water, with a little scroll attached. On the scroll was a legend, "Many happy returns to master, who will excuse the liberty." These little artless tributes delighted mistress, though master, it must be confessed, always accepted them with something like a grimace. It was the sure prelude to an elaborate banquet and jollification—in our honour be it observed—and to which we were expected to contribute a quart of spirits to be made into the punch with which our health, "many happy returns," and the rest of it, was to be drunk. What excited my distrust in all this was the wedge-like fashion in which progress was being made, for I was acute enough to see that repetition would soon make precedents, and that precedents would make right. Punch and jollification, after all, lose half their charms when celebrated in a comparatively private and domestic fashion. You must not want a friend or a bottle to give him, to insure the true festivity. "Poor Susan," the cook,

pleaded Kitty, had influential relations in the bacon business out at Clapham. She was an orphan, we were reminded; the poor girl's worldly prospects depended on those potentates being conciliated, and would it not be permitted that they be invited? In a weak moment this was granted, and, as I foresaw, was to be made a precedent of. The apartments below were filled with an invited party—a country person in a blue coat and brass buttons, with his "missus," and the rest of his family, and a person who was suspected to be a member of the Force, though he came in plain clothes, and a female acquaintance or two. The sounds of solo singing presently arose, each being called on in turn, and required to name some one else, the member of the Force giving Red, White, and Blue, with effect and full chorus; our Sue, Come Back to Erin, in high sentimental style, the blue coat and gilt buttons contributing nothing; but the feature of the night was the irrepressible Kitty, who gave I Love the Military, from the Grand Duchess, with extraordinary vigour and effect. Shuffling sounds were heard, attended with obstreperous applause and delight, from which it was almost a certainty that she was giving the company an idea of the rather indecorous dance that succeeds the melody. The Kitty, it must be said in justice, seemed to be the life and soul of the party. She, indeed, described the whole scene later when taking down or putting up the hair, with an extraordinary vivacity, convulsing her employer. In vain I warned. It was, according to my favourite illustration, the small end of the wedge. The creature would grow demoralised and demoralise others. But I was not listened to.

We had to go abroad the following winter, and with us went abroad the indomitable Kitty. In the very packet she displayed her foibles, and was discovered behind the funnel engaged in a flirtation—if her rustic advances deserved the name—with a person she called "a gentleman;" but this she ingeniously justified on the pretence of picking up foreign information for us. At our destination, which was a lonely, rather unfrequented spot, supposed to have great healing virtues, she had an ample field for the exercise of her qualifications. There was a large fishing population, and a number of gay young shopkeepers, and the good-looking young English "mees" or *bonnes* was much esteemed. She set to work almost at once. She would come in

with a complaint of the dreadful attentions to which she was subject, but at the same time never relaxed a moment in decorating herself with finery to invite what she affected to deprecate. She received letters in broken English—so she told us—from innumerable gentlemen (all were "gentlemen" that came within her net), and would come with something like tears in her eyes to beg protection from their attentions. There was some truth in her statements, though she could embellish—a habit she had unconsciously learned from her story-telling. It was remarked, too, that at this time began that invariable postponement of her regular duties to the incidents of the various little romances in which she lived—the regular service, as she seemed to suppose, for which she drew her wages. This delusion would have been amusing were it not that it was attended by inconveniences. Dress, finery, perpetual expeditions, and "slipping downs," to some corner or other, which are so often the prelude to some moral slipping down—these things were incompatible with anything like the business of a servant. She was treated with amazing indulgence, and the artful hussy knew that she could always extenuate her neglect by an amusing tale or delineation of some admirer clumsily making known his devotion. But presently she was actually to become a sort of heroine, and after that it seemed as though the question were not so much whether we would keep her, or whether she would keep us.

A young grocer, who supplied us with the higher groceries—such as wine, and indeed he would have resented being described as a mere *épiciier*—had, strange to say, become a genuine admirer. He came every morning for orders, a custom not at all familiar to the place, and generally brought some little present selected from his stock. He was really a worthy youth, hard-working, money-making, and prosperous. We little knew, however, that our burly landlord's niece—a plain and somewhat elderly virgin—had long marked him for her prize, and that the burly uncle and the virgin herself had, previous to our coming, been paying him such honourable attentions as in other countries and ranks are supposed to lead on young men to hymeneal offers.

A perfect storm of fury burst upon the Kitty's head when the young man's homage became conspicuous. It was the one topic in the little place, and the whole town took the side of the deserted niece. The Kitty relished it with a mischievous enjoyment,

and purposely used to take her way through the market-place for the purpose of inflaming the fish-women and others who congregated there, and greeted her with fierce glances, squared elbows, and noisy denunciations. Fearful scandals were set abroad about her; the supplanted maiden would have torn her eyes out. The stout uncle came to me mysteriously to speak about what he called "a very grave matter," namely, that "the young girl" had been seen in the dark walking with *all* the dissolute young fellows of the place. Every one was talking of it. His was a respectable house, and he wished it to be so. Though never feeling indulgence for Kitty's vagaries, this speech put me on her side, or it may have been that the old national antagonism that was roused. I replied, with dignity, that if he felt any scruples we would be glad to leave. This alarmed him, and he hurriedly explained away what he had said. It was in the girl's interest; the young man was gay, as we all had been (though he had no warrant to include me in his compliment); and as for marriage, why—here the burly landlord made a sound with his lips like "Pouah!"

Below in the kitchen raged spiteful battles; but it must be said Kitty was quite a match for their Gallic fury. Plots were set on foot to destroy her; anonymous letters were sent to us and to the lover, but without much effect. The confusion and dismay may be conceived when it was known that actual proposals of marriage had been made—made, too, without mistake or ambiguity. Kitty, though highly flattered, did not conceal her national contempt for the "dirty Frenchmen;" and though the alliance was in every way desirable, could not be induced to entertain it a moment. Still she was determined to plague her enemies, and on this account beguiled the unhappy young man still more, and always chose market days for a public promenade with him through the market.

At last we left the place, taking with us our Kitty, who had contrived to embroil all the natives. The young man attended us at the station, and could not conceal his tears. This was all very well in an international or holiday view, but for the work-a-day purposes of life it was now to be discovered that our Kitty was of no use. What could be expected from a heroine? She began to complain of her nerves, and to languish. She was found gazing ab-

stractedly in the glass, when she should be "doing" her mistress's hair. When it was announced that a servant-acquaintance was going to be married, our Kitty declared with ineffable conceit, "I declare, ma'am, I think I'll take away her lover from her." This, in fact, she seemed to think was the service for which she was engaged, mere vulgar humdrum attendance or labour being outside the contract. It was to be all romance, agreeable anecdote, parties of pleasure, with such few moments as she could reasonably spare to be devoted to those low offices of hair-dressing, &c. She lay in bed of mornings, and came down undecorated and ungarnished, grumbling at being disturbed. A heroine has her privileges. This was endured for a time, but at last came the straw which broke, morally speaking, both our backs. She demanded leave to attend a junketing. "Oh, ma'am," she added, "there's Lady Judkins's own maid to be there, with the groom to whom she's going to be married, and I'll have such fun, making her jealous."

This proposal was coldly received, and it was strictly ordered that the heroine should forego the promised luxury. I foresaw what was coming, and enjoyed the opportunity which I had longed for. With this view I proposed going out, as if to the play, thus baiting the trap as it were. Kitty fell into it. When we returned she was absent, and on the following morning was informed that we could not any longer treat ourselves to the privilege of maintaining a heroine. She wept a little, but it was all in vain. That failing, she took leave with some indignation, as though her talents had been rather thrown away.

DRAMATIC SOUVENIRS.

EARLY impressions leave their permanent mark; and, like proof engravings and prints before letters, retain their clearness and increase in value when later images have lost their distinctness. Here is one.

Dumas the Elder's introduction behind the scenes of the Théâtre-Français occurred on the evening of the first representation of *Sylla*. He was then two-and-twenty. His introducer was Adolphe de Leuven, the author of the *Postillion of Longumeau* and other pieces. He was to be taken into the presence of the man called sometimes the French Roscius, sometimes the French Garrick, but whom posterity will mention as simply Talma. He was deeply and

doubly impressed by the event. It was his first glimpse of the corridor of a theatre—that is, of the interior corridor which leads to the artists' dressing-rooms. The corridor of the Théâtre-Français was full. De Leuven, familiar with the labyrinth, took him by the hand and dragged him through the crowd.

They reached Talma's room. There, the press was even greater. It is doubtful if the Dictator ever saw more clients at his door than his representative, that night, had admirers at his. Both Dumas and his friend were then slender young fellows. They glided on like eels till they reached an antechamber where all the literary celebrities in Paris were packed as closely as human beings could be. Many of the faces, Etienne and Soumet for instance, were as new to Dumas as the actor's ceremonial reception. While struggling to get into the second chamber—the sanctuary in which the idol was enshrined—some one called out, "Room, if you please, for Mademoiselle Mars!"

They squeezed themselves into nothing, with their backs to the wall. A charming frou-frou of rustling satin was heard, the air was filled with perfume, and in the midst of a cloud of gauze shone eyes as bright as diamonds and teeth as white as pearls. The gracious phantom glided past them, and a voice, mellow as the tones of a hautbois, was heard, expressing, with an accent of perfect sincerity, the depth of its admiration.

It seemed to Dumas that Mademoiselle Mars said "vous," indicative of respect, while Talma said "tu," denoting familiarity and protection; and that the two great artists kissed each other. The same rustling frou-frou was once more heard; Mademoiselle Mars reappeared, exchanged a few words with Etienne and Soumet, signalled with her hand a "bonjour" to Adolphe, and disappeared. Lucky Adolphe! His companion could not understand how he contrived to receive the favour so coolly.

"Come along," said Adolphe, "we must go in too."

"I dare not," was the juvenile reply.

"Nonsense! He won't even notice you."

What a bucket of iced water to pour on Dumas's humility, or on his self-conceit, as the case might be! The encouragement did not encourage him in the least. Nevertheless, he plucked up courage and made his way into the second room. If not always stout, he was always tall. Although

only just inside the door, and without the wish to advance any further, by standing on the tips of his toes he could see over everybody's head and shoulders. His eyes sought Sylla, with his laurel crown, his imperial tuft, his dictator's toga, and he beheld everybody crowding round a little old man in a flannel dressing-gown, as bald as your knee.

Dumas could not believe his eyes. But Adolphe went and embraced the bald man in the flannel gown. It was decidedly Talma, and no mistake.

Subsequently, the great actor baptised Dumas dramatic poet, in the name of Shakespeare and Corneille, but died before he could render him effectual assistance. A five-act tragedy had been written, Christine at Fontainebleau. Whatever might be its imperfections, Talma would have found in it an original part, unprecedented on the French stage—the part of Monaldeschi—a coward! Talma would have seized the character by the collar, and held it till it became his own. No one had ever dared to put a cowardly hero on the stage. Dumas dared, but in perfect innocence, without a thought of making an innovation. He had found the character ready drawn to his hand in Father Lebel's narrative.

If climbing in courts is slippery work, rising in theatres is not a whit less so. To obtain the reading of a piece, at all times difficult, was still more difficult then. His patron, Talma, being dead, after considerable efforts he managed to get at Garnier, the prompter of the Comédie-Française (another name for the Théâtre-Français). Through the prompter Garnier he mounted to the actor Firmin, a clever little man of five feet two, forty years off, and six-and-twenty on, the stage. Like all five-foot-two men, he was touchy and quarrelsome, but brave enough when it came to fighting. His great ambition was to play Bayard. Scores of times he asked Dumas to write a Bayard for him, always adding, "You must not suppose Bayard was a colossus. On the contrary, he was short rather than tall, and slim rather than stout. Bayard was a man of my size."

After efforts only rivalled by the patience of ants and a few other insects in surmounting difficulties, Christine was read before the committee (that is, the leading artists) of the Comédie-Française, (one of whom, Monsieur Lafon, did not attend), who neither accepted nor rejected it, but referred it to the judgment of one

Monsieur Picard, ex-actor and dramatic author, who granted Dumas an audience at the end of a week. Playing with the manuscript as a cat plays with a mouse, he inquired, in honeyed accents, "My dear monsieur, have you any other means of subsistence besides the career of letters?"

"Monsieur, I have a place of fifteen hundred francs a year in an office under the Duc d'Orleans."

"Well, then," said Picard, pushing the roll into his hands, "go to your office, young man; go to your office."

But Picard's opinion had not been accepted as infallible. The author must have been saved from utter discouragement by finding the actors interviewing him. On reaching his office, he found that Monsieur Lafon had called. This gentleman filled the rather ranting line of parts known as "chevaliers français," although it included Orosmane, Zamore, Achille, and other heathens; namely, parts dressed in a black cap, a white feather, a yellow tunic, tight pantaloons, buff-skin boots, and a cross-hilted sword; Bayard, Duguesclin, Raoul, Tancrede. Of course he was vain. When he spoke of Talma, he said "the other."

Lafon soon returned to the office. "Monsieur," he said, on entering, "you have written a tragedy on Queen Christine."

"Alas!" replied Dumas, "I cannot deny it."

"You would be wrong to deny it, monsieur. It seems your work contains great beauties. Such is everybody's opinion."

"Except Monsieur Picard's."

"What signifies Picard's opinion? Your piece is accepted, and I came to tell you so. But, Monsieur Dumas, haven't you amongst your characters a spirited fellow who, when the queen wants to murder poor Monaldeschi, interposes and says, 'Majesty, you have not the right to do it. No, no, no; you have not the right?'"

"Sapristi! Monsieur Lafon, now I think of it, there is no such a part. It is too late to remedy the omission. But, que voulez-vous! I am only an apprentice."

"But cannot you introduce the part? I will answer for the play's gaining by it."

"No doubt; but it was not written from that point of view."

"Comment, Monsieur! Is there not, in the whole court of Louis the Fourteenth, a chevalier français, to plead, like the Talbot of Jeanne d'Arc, the cause of this unhappy stranger?"

"The event occurred, as I have dramatised it, fifteen leagues from Paris, nineteen from Versailles. There was no time for any chevalier to interfere. The murder was instantaneous. Its suddenness is the queen's sole excuse."

"She has no excuse, monsieur," said Lafon, indignantly. "I am to understand, then, that in your Christine there is no spirited fellow to say to the queen, 'Your majesty has no right to kill this poor man. No, no, no. You have not the right, and you shall not kill him.'"

"And since there is no such personage in my Christine——?"

"My visit has no further object. Your most humble servant, Monsieur Dumas. Good luck to your Christine."

"Thanks for your kind wish. And if ever, in a subject which admits of it, there should be required a spirited fellow—handsome, well-built—standing no nonsense——"

"You will think of me."

"I give you my promise, Monsieur Lafon."

The door closed, and the actor came no more.

Two months afterwards, Christine was ordered for rehearsal. The favour was incredible, for there were authors who had waited five-and-twenty years. One day the office doorkeeper announced Mademoiselle Mars. The visit completely upset Dumas. "What Mademoiselle Mars?" he asked.

"Are there two Mademoiselles Mars?" said a voice outside, which he recognised from having heard it on the stage.

"Yourself, in person!" he exclaimed, hurrying to the door.

"Certainly. As you do not go to see your actors, the actors are obliged to come and see their author."

"Ah, madame; I did not presume——"

"The moment you are accepted by the Comédie-Française, you are received by the comédiens français."

"I did not know it."

"There are a good many things you don't know. I am come to have a long talk with you, and you don't know that you ought to offer me a chair."

After discussing the distribution of the parts and the fitness of the actors in a business-like way, they came to the real object of the talk. The lady pulled from her pocket her written part (of course Christine)—which was not only copied, but learnt by heart. She observed that,

in her scene in the first act, there were six-and-twenty lines which she did not like, and which she requested should be omitted. Now there may be better rhymed verse than those lines, as there is worse. They are scarcely worth translating here. On the English stage, however well spoken, they would probably occasion a yawn; and we may believe that the actress, who knew her profession, was right. But, at that time, Dumas thought them the finest verses that ever were written, and would not yield. After a short discussion, Mademoiselle Mars made her exit, as stiffly as she had entered graciously.

At rehearsal, she skipped the objectionable lines, telling the prompter that the author meant to cut them out. The prompter, knowing the actress, warned the obstinate author that unless he suppressed the verses, the play would be suppressed too. Dumas was firm. Consequently, next day, Mademoiselle Mars was indisposed and could not attend rehearsal, nor the day after, nor the following day, nor ever; so that, instead of being played at the Théâtre-Française by Mademoiselle Mars, Christine was eventually produced at the Odéon with Mademoiselle Georges as the Swedish queen.

One day Dumas met Lafontaine, the excellent actor who had "created" at the Gymnase and the Vaudeville a considerable number of different parts.

"Do you know one thing, old fellow?" asked Lafontaine. "I am engaged at the Théâtre-Français."

"I am sorry for it."

"How; sorry for it?"

"Yes. They have not engaged you, my poor boy, to make you play, but to prevent your playing at another theatre."

"Don't believe that. In the first place, they give me the choice of a part for my début. Guess which I have chosen."

"Oh! the repertory is too large, and I haven't time to indulge in that amusement. Out with it at once."

"Well, then, I make my début in—The Cid."

"You commit a stupidity. You will break down completely."

"I have no talent, then?"

"On the contrary, you have plenty of talent; but it is not talent which is required to play the Cid."

"Oh! I will play it after my own fashion."

"In that case, you will be still worse.

If you had absolutely set your heart on coming out in the Cid, you ought to have told me so. I could then have made you a Cid to suit you out of the Spanish Roman-cers and Guilhem de Castro."

"You think yourself, then, cleverer than Corneille?"

"My poor Lafontaine, are you come to that, even before playing the Cid?"

"But, in short, The Cid is The Cid."

"Yes, certainly, The Cid is The Cid; but the genius of the seventeenth century is not the genius of the nineteenth century. You, my mistaken friend, are a completely modern man, an actor of the present day. You will admirably give my son's or Octave Feuillet's prose, Hugo's verse or mine; but you won't know how to recite Corneille's verse."

"You think, then, that verses ought to be chanted?"

"Some verse is none the worse for it. Racine indicated by musical notes the tones for the characters of La Champmeslé, nearly in the same way as notes are written for the epistle and the gospel in saying mass."

"We are talking of Corneille, and you cite Racine. Corneille ought to be spoken like prose."

"If Corneille had thought his verses ought to be spoken like prose, he would have written his tragedies in prose and not in verse. No, my dear fellow, to recite verses is an art, and a great art, which demands years of study, especially when the verses are transported from one epoch into another; when, instead of speaking the language of every-day life, you have to speak the language not spoken for two hundred years. Ah! if The Cid were a 'human-nature' play, like Shakespeare's, I shouldn't have a word to say. Shakespeare's plays, especially when translated into a foreign language which obliterates the mark of their date, can be acted at any epoch. Moreover, The Cid is a tragedy by no means written in the true French spirit, and its success was only a succès de circonstance."

The Cid, in fact, is not a play, but a protest; not a literary but a political triumph. There are few of Corneille's pieces, beginning with The Cid, which are not trials in a criminal court. The Cid kills Don Gormas; the king is informed of his death by Don Alonzo, who at the same time announces the arrival of Doña Chimène, to demand justice. But simultaneously with Chimène, who is the counsel

for the prosecution, comes Don Diègue, the counsel for the defence; and the trial begins.

Horace, again, irritated by his sister Camille's imprecations, kills her. Here we have quite a different affair to the Cid's—past a joke, sororicide, or—if that word be rejected—fratricide! This time, Valère is the public accuser. But, as King Tullus refuses to pronounce judgment unless the prisoner is defended, he turns to him and says:

Horace, defend yourself.

And Horace defends himself in a speech not less able than the opening of the case by the Roman attorney-general. Consequently, as the situation is the same as in *The Cid*, as the punishment, exactly as in *The Cid*, would strike the saviour of the state, the sentence is the same, and Tullus pardons in nearly the same terms as Don Fernand.

Apropos to this latter tragedy, one evening, when Dumas was receiving a large party of artists, Mademoiselle Rachel said to him, "Come and see me in Camille. I have hit upon a striking effect which is much applauded, and which I think is really fine."

"When do you play Horace?"

"Next Saturday."

"I will be there." And he took care not to miss the rendezvous given by Melpomene, as her fanatic worshippers called her. He had not asked where the promised effect was to be introduced; but knowing Horace by heart, having seen Camille played by all the tragediennes who had succeeded each other during the last thirty years, acquainted with all the theatrical traditions, he was sure not to let it pass without observing it. He sat, like Sister Anne, in the balcony, looking out for something to arrive. The first, second, and third acts passed without producing any besides the usual points, which Mademoiselle Rachel gave with her accustomed talent. The curtain rose on the fourth act; and, as in the fourth act Camille is killed, he felt at every line that the decisive moment was approaching. He saw, moreover, that the actress was playing her best for him. She really was magnificent.

At last came the capital scene of the fourth act, in which Horace enters followed by Procule bearing the swords of the three Curiaees, and in which Camille, face to face with her brother, bewails the fate of her slaughtered lover. She marvellously rendered three-quarters of her speech, ex-

actly like the Rachel Dumas had always known. But after the line:

Give me, barbarian, a heart as hard as thine,

her voice grew gradually weaker and weaker; the last four lines were uttered with the languor of a person at the point of death; after which, she fainted away. The closing words literally died on her lips, and she fell back senseless into the well-known tragic, uncomfortable arm-chair, which must be specially inconvenient for fainting fits.

As may be easily supposed, such weakness only exasperated, and not without reason, her victorious brother. Let his sister curse him, well and good; she was still a daughter worthy of Horatius; but that she should faint was much too bad; and while the house was ringing with applause, he roared out the lines beginning,

Was ever woman fired with equal rage!

(he ought to have said, "with equal weakness;" for a syncope can hardly be described as rage), and concluding with,

His death secures the interests of Rome.

At the word Rome, Camille shuddered. Then with a prodigious study of nature's hesitations, slowly, little by little, and, so to speak, fibre by fibre, she came to herself. Nothing was omitted in her return to life, neither the trembling limbs, nor the dull eye, nor the infiltration of thought and intelligence into the still inanimate body. At last she suddenly awoke from her torpor and recovered her voice to give vent, with closed teeth and increasing fury, to the remarkable anathema beginning

Rome! All I owe her is eternal hate!

The climax, thus worked up, brought the house down. Rachel, while making her exit, gave Dumas a triumphant look—and he, perhaps, was the only person of the audience who had not applauded her. The act over, he hastened to her dressing-room (where French actors and actresses receive their intimate friends), in a state of considerable embarrassment. She had evidently reckoned upon his approbation; but far from approving, he blamed her.

"Well," she asked as soon as he entered; "what do you say to the effect?"

"The effect on the public, or the effect you have discovered?"

"Of course, my effect—the effect I have hit upon."

"I am sorry, my dear friend, that a woman of your talent should hunt after such effects, and above all that she should find them."

"How so?"

"'Tis as plain as can be. Do you think it consistent with Camille's nature to faint on learning her lover's death? And do you fancy a woman, on recovering her consciousness, would utter such a line as

Rome! All I owe her is eternal hate?

Insult your brother, scratch his face, tear out his eyes; but for Heaven's sake don't faint. One thing only has surprised me; namely, that the shade of old Corneille did not start from the boards, and cry, 'Up with you, spiritless Roman hussy! In the family of the Horatii, women die, but they do not faint.'"

"Nevertheless, you authors of the romantic school like to follow nature——"

"My liking to follow nature is the very reason why I, for my part, blame you while the crowd applauds you."

"But it is woman's nature to faint."

"That depends on the woman."

"At least I know one thing. When Monsieur de M. was brought to my house wounded in a duel, the sight of his blood made me faint."

"But you are not a Roman of the time of Tullus Hostilius. You are a femmelette nerveuse, a poor little hysterical woman, of the nineteenth century. You are not the daughter of old Horatius; you are only the daughter of Daddy Felix."

Dumas's preaching was all in vain. Mademoiselle Rachel was enthusiastically applauded; Mademoiselle Rachel continued to faint.

Such is a sample of the reminiscences to be found, by those who care to look for more, in Alexandre Dumas's *Souvenirs Dramatiques*.

SUNSET IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS.

OBAN, ARGYLSHIRE.

THE bay is smooth as glass; no breeze awakes
To stir its silent depths. The white-sailed boats
Are all as still, as though an angel's hand
Had painted them upon the sleeping sea.
The Earth in deep, expectant silence, waits
To catch the lingering rays of golden light
Thrown fondly on her by her lord, the Sun.
He sinks! the king of the all-glorious Day!
Flinging his lavish smiles on rock and glen,
Till the grim peaks of Mull grow rosy red
Beneath his glance; as maiden's blush replies
To the first pressure of a lover's kiss.
Anon, he scatters streams of purple light
Across the water, in such wantonness,
That one small wave, elated with the sight,
Bursts, rippling, from the calm of former rest
And breaks, in bubbling laughter, on the shore.
Sudden, a cloud, shaped like angelic wings,
Of fiery crimson, stretches o'er the sky,
As though some flying messenger of God

Were spreading o'er the world his pinions wide
To shelter 'neath them, wearied human-kind.
Grey old Dunolly, on its rocky steep,
Seems lit with golden glory. One by one,
The bright tints fade in thin and tender lines
Of palest pink, and softest emerald hue,
While on the distant summits of Ardgour
A glowing orange light shines suddenly,
Then pales and dies in wreaths of purple mist.
Scarce now is seen the radiant orb of Light,
Lower he sinks, and lower! he is gone!
And tender Twilight steals on tip-toe soft
Across the mountains. But the brilliant fires
Lit by the Sun upon the tranquil sea,
Defy her misty shadow for a time,
And dance together on the crystal tide,
Till all, uniting in a dimpled smile
Of parting splendour, fade and die away.
Mull shrouds herself in veils of violet mist,
And from the sky, the faintly beaming stars
Timidly peep, to see if they may shine
In their own lustre, till the Queen of Night,
The silver moon, steps out to shame them all.
Pearl of the Highlands! Scotland's brightest gem
Art thou, fair Oban, nesting 'neath the hills.
Nature puts on her gayest robes for thee,
And heather-bells fling amethystine light
Over thy sternest crags and wildest glens
Till thou art like a very Fairyland.
Would I could dwell amid thy loveliness,
Heedless of all the tumult of the world,
And hear the music of thy leaping burns,
And sail across thy mountain-sheltered bay,
Thus, seeing naught but grandeur and delight,
I'd live such life of perfect peace on Earth
As should prepare me for the peace of Heaven!

MY FRIEND THE MAD-DOCTOR.

I AM not a peculiarly nervous man, and yet I confess that a certain feeling of distrust stole over me as I entered the fly to go and dine with my friend Horniblow, the medical director of a large county asylum in the North of England.

I had seen much of the insane, visited asylums in many parts of the world, and read much about the treatment of those unhappy fellow-beings to whose dreadful disease too often death alone can bring anodyne. It was not that when an insidious footman opened the hall-door I expected to find myself in the centre of a gibbering and howling mob of fifteen hundred madmen, it was not even that I expected to be stabbed or strangled on my way to the dining-room, but still a certain tinge of apprehension at being so near fifteen hundred people with turned brains, controlled by a mere handful of attendants, filled me, I confess, with a vague alarm, of which I felt half ashamed. There would be half a dozen locked doors between me and the mad folk, and it was not very likely that a crazy insurrection would wait my arrival to break out; it was perhaps rather the dread of the appearance of something horrible and startling, than the actual fear

of a positive danger, that had roused my somewhat fervid imagination.

The reader perhaps imagines the director of fifteen hundred madmen a pale man with enormous bushy black eyebrows and whiskers, a large featured face, mouth hard as steel, and eyes of terrible fixed power. He must be of herculean build, and be able to either grapple for life with a madman, or strike him dumb with a glance of the eye. My friend, on the contrary, was a handsome, slightly-built man, with very fair hair, long blonde whiskers, the pleasantest of smiles, and the blandest and most conciliating manner. A man who, but for a certain look of calm good sense and acute sagacity, you would have taken, if you had met him in Regent-street, as a pet of society, a leader in the ball-room, and a lion of the Row. To judge him correctly, you should have seen him in the lunatic wards, firm yet kindly; in his study; or poring over the microscope; or watching by the dying bed of suffering and misery.

Except that the footman who received me in the hall looked rather more muscular and soldier-like than usual, there was really nothing to remind me how near I was to fifteen hundred madmen, who, if they had agreed on any definite line of action, could have torn us all to bits in five minutes. Once during dinner, between the soup and the fish, I fancied I heard a wild distant scream that sounded very like the shriek of some one being murdered, but it was not repeated, and I looked at my friend Horniblow, who was just then engaged in drawing a sort of ground plan on the body of a turbot; but he was calmly intent on his task.

Presently, when the dinner was nearly over and our glasses of Burgundy were casting little red danger signals across the white cloth, Horniblow, after some remarks on the opera season and the last new novel, suddenly threw himself back in his chair with a fine pear which he began to peel, and said:

"Now, my dear fellow, I'm at your service; we have every sort of insanity here, and I'm ready to answer questions on any point you are interested. Imagine yourself a commissioner of lunacy, or two or three if you choose, and ask me anything you like."

The doctor, discussing the pear as he uttered these words, looked as bland and beneficent as if he had spent his life in a round of tranquil pleasure.

"Do you believe much in the power of the eye in intimidating the insane?"

"I believe a good deal more in two strong warders," said the doctor, with a benevolent smile. "These lunatics are always cunning, and one does not always know when they're homicidal. I'll give you an instance. Last March, one of our attendants, a strong active man, was watching an epileptic patient, and after poking the fire, he forgot to lock up the poker as he had been especially ordered to do. He had turned his back from the man and was looking out of the window at the patients exercising in the airing-court below. All at once the homicidal impulse came with the opportunity; the assassin stole softly behind him and killed him with one blow; after that beating the head to pieces. The blow was actually seen by an attendant, but too late to render assistance. The murderer afterwards, when describing his crime and praying aloud for his victim, prided himself on its accomplishment. 'I struck him,' he said, 'and you know I could strike, for I was a striker by trade.' The man was tried for murder three days after, but being found unable to plead, was sent to Broadmoor, where criminal lunatics are confined. For a time that murder upset our whole asylum, made the patients mutinous, and the attendants timid or inclined to undue severity."

"Do you effect many complete cures?"

"About fifty per cent, and I think with improved treatment we shall be able to cure eighty per cent. Fetters, strait-waistcoats, cold shower-baths, incessant bleedings, surprise-baths (where the floor of a dark room gave way under the patient's feet and let him fall in), are all abandoned now as mistakes and barbarities, and we use instead anodynes, electricity, warm baths, and generous diet. Our success is the best proof that we are nearer the mark than our ancestors were who effected fewer cures."

"Is it not injurious to patients to see visitors at these weekly dances that you give? Does it not excite them?"

"You must remark, we only admit five hundred patients out of fifteen hundred to these plays and dances, and the result is excellent. The patients learn to exercise habits of self-restraint, are pleased with the kindly questions and sympathy of the visitors, and feel that they are not entirely shut out from the outer world. You would be surprised how the patients restrain themselves for fear of being prevented from coming to our weekly amusements."

That effort of self-restraint is most valuable to us as a curative power."

"What trades contribute most to your male lunatics?"

"We have nearly all trades," said the doctor, calmly sipping his wine; "but perhaps labourers, colliers, and mill hands preponderate here."

"To what do you attribute the majority of cases of insanity?"

The doctor smiled benignly. "There," he said, "you ask almost too much, but perhaps I might answer accidents at birth, congenital defects, hereditary tendency, injuries of the cranium and nervous shocks. Congestions of some organs produce insanity, and drinking and vice send us many a patient. Ambition, vanity, avarice, all have their victims here. We'll have some of them in presently, and you will hear them detail their peculiar fancies; in the mean time pass the wine, which has been standing with you some time."

I apologised for my inattention, and asked the doctor if he had many spiritualists under his care.

"Not at present," was the reply; "but many religious maniacs very much akin to those conversers with sham spirits. There was one young woman here, some time since, who believed she had committed the unpardonable sin mentioned in the New Testament. It was important to discover the special point of her delusion. Over and over again I pressed the subject. At last, one day, in a quiet mood of melancholia, she confessed that from vanity she had once shaved her eyebrows. Another patient I had, who, laying undue emphasis on the text, 'Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die,' spent the whole day in revolving in a kind of dervish waltz, till he fairly dropped from exhaustion."

Our conversation then turned on hypochondria and its strange delusions, which are often so ludicrous and yet so difficult to remove; and we discussed the clever stratagems that had sometimes been successfully adopted to dispel these fanatic hallucinations. The doctor, as might have been foreseen, was full of illustrations of this class of insanity.

"I was very successful in one case," he said. "A military man I attended believed that his head had been changed for that of a patient who died in the same ward. I humoured him on this point, waiting for my opportunity. Every day he used to mourn over this misfortune and look at himself in the glass. One morning when

I went to see him, I had prepared myself for a last vigorous effort to break up this delusion. The moment the door opened I looked at him full in the face, and fell back as if in astonishment. 'What's the matter, doctor,' said he. 'Matter, captain,' said I, 'why only that you've got your own head back again at last.' He gave a look of surprise, ran to a glass, stared at himself with astonishment and delight, and with a deep sigh of relief exclaimed, 'God be thanked, so I have.' He was well from that moment, and never relapsed."

"Of course," said I, "various wholesome influences had been brought to bear on him in the asylum, and a general improvement in health had taken place before the fitting moment for you to step in arose."

"No doubt—my experience instinctively selected the moment for striking at the delusion. By-the-bye, I'll tell you a curious instance from the case-book of a friend of mine, who is at the Newcastle asylum. It is an extraordinary and typical instance of a thought being stereotyped in the mind by a cranial injury. In this case it was the man's leading thought at the time the injury was received. He was an engineer employed in the construction of cannon at Sir William Armstrong's factory. He was struck by a splinter of iron, and was for a time deprived of sensibility; when he recovered consciousness he was insane, and all his ideas turned upon huge guns. His constant delusion was that he could mow down whole armies at one discharge by means of a machine which he himself had invented, and he used to perpetually toil at turning the handle of this imaginary machine till he was ready to drop from exhaustion."

"I have heard cases," I said, "where blows on the head have benefited the brain and produced extraordinary changes for the better."

"Just so," said the doctor, rubbing his own head approvingly. "Mabillon was almost an idiot till, at the age of twenty-six, he fell down a stone staircase, fractured his skull, and was trepanned. From that moment he became a genius. Doctor Prichard mentions a case of three brothers who were all nearly idiots. One of them was injured on the head, and from that time he brightened up, and is now a successful barrister. Wallenstein, too, they say, was a mere fool till he fell out of window, and awoke with enlarged capabilities. I had a patient here a short time ago who was

the victim of many delusions. He was paying off the national debt, going into partnership with Baron Rothschild, and forming a lodge of female freemasons. One day an epileptic patient, irritated at being perpetually asked to buy imaginary shares, gave him a tremendous blow on the bridge of the nose. From that time he improved rapidly, and told me that the blow had had a sobering effect, and had quite knocked the nonsense out of him."

"You had better start a sparring school at once," I suggested.

"There is no doubt," said the doctor, smiling, "that this was the secret of that cruel old remedy for madness—the circulating swing, mentioned favourably by physicians of the last century. This horrible swing was a small box fixed upon a pivot, and worked by a windlass. The 'inflexible' maniac, or the maniac expecting a paroxysm, was firmly strapped in a sitting or recumbent posture. The box was then whirled round at the average velocity of a hundred revolutions a minute, and its beneficial effect was supposed to be heightened by reversing the motion every six or eight minutes, and by stopping it occasionally with a sudden jerk. The results of this swing (which occasionally brought on concussion of the brain) were profound and protracted sleep, intenser perspiration, mental exhaustion, and a not unnatural horror of any recurrence to the same remedy, which left a moral impression that acted as a permanent restraint. That the results were often beneficial we have indisputable evidence.

"The cases of suspended consciousness after brain injury are also well worthy attention," continued the doctor, after a pause. "A man who awakes out of sleep is conscious of a lapse of time, and can generally even guess its duration; but the man struck on the brain is often unconscious of any lapse. I knew a man who was in the asylum in 'seventy-one, who had been struck in the street and was afterwards delirious. He was unconscious after the blow for fourteen days. He was then delirious and maniacal for ten weeks. When he became more tranquil, they brought him here in a strait-waistcoat. He soon recovered, but when he became conscious he had clean forgotten the fourteen days' trance, and the ten weeks' delirium and mania. I'll give you another example: at the battle of the Nile an English captain was struck on the head by a shot, and became unconscious. He was taken home

with the wounded, and remained in Greenwich Hospital fifteen months deprived of sense and speech. At the end of that period an operation was performed, and the brain relieved from the pressure. He instantly rose from his bed, and continued the orders to the sailors which had been so abruptly interrupted fifteen months before. Dr. Abercrombie gives an analogous case. A lady was struck with apoplexy while sitting at the whist table. It was Thursday evening when she fell, and she lay in a stupor all Friday and Saturday. On Sunday she suddenly recovered her consciousness; and her first words were, 'What are trumps?' The clockwork had stopped at that point, and now the pendulum again commenced to swing."

"Very interesting," I said; "but how much we have to learn before we know that clockwork thoroughly. Microscopic differences seem to be the boundaries between health and disease, great intellects and small; to the microscope then we must trust, and to the study of years of examples. We certainly owe much to Gall and the phrenologists for drawing attention to the study of the brain, and for trying, however imperfectly, to localise the faculties. It was a tremendous step forward from the dreamland of the metaphysicians."

"It was, indeed. Of all Gall's researches, those, I think, on language were the most imperfect, because he tried to localise too much. Doctor Browne, of the Crichton Royal Institution, has written a most curious and interesting essay on aphasia, or loss of speech in cerebral diseases, which bears on this subject; the doctor shows that it is certain some part of the brain must be injured before this loss arises, but then there are many sorts of deprivation. Doctor Browne gives some most extraordinary instances of this—but I'm tiring you out."

"Tiring! What did I come for but to consult the oracle?"

"The oracle is obliged to you for the compliment; and, moreover, as you seem interested upon this curious question of brain diseases affecting the organ of language, the oracle will now give you a few notes from various sources on this very subtle subject. Without discussing such technical subjects as to whether local or general disease of the brain leads to partial or total deprivation of the power of language, I will read to you, my patient listener, a few of the most remarkable cases of such deprivation, which is called

by us oracles aphasia. You have, of course, observed how a particular word will sometimes refuse to come at the bidding of the writer or speaker. Such instances are specimens of temporary aphasia. The clockwork, for a moment, refuses to act. The memory, for a moment, seems paralysed, or in a stupor. Doctor Jackson, of Philadelphia, relates a case of cerebral irritation, which did not affect either intelligence or memory; but the patient could only repeat one grotesque form of words, which were always, 'Didoes doe the doe.' He was bled and soon recovered. Mezzofanti, the master of seventy-two languages, was entirely deprived of them all by a brief attack of fever. The moment the attack subsided, the languages all flew back like bees to the hive. In these cases, when the power or will to use intelligible language seems gone, there is sometimes substituted a jargon (as we call it in asylums) peculiar to the patient, and with a marked character of its own."

I expressed my great interest at this.

"Well, I allow it is worthy of your astonishment, and would only be observed by oracles who have a wide experience of all forms of insanity. A patient at the West Riding Asylum, in 1868, uttered words all framed on this model. The following were words taken down from her lips, and all of them had a vague resemblance to Greek: 'Kallulios, tallulios, kaskos, tellulios, karoka, keka, tarrerei, kareka, sallulios.'

"She would utter this jargon for hours together, and ask or answer questions in this self-manufactured language, and seem surprised that no one understood it. Not unlike this strange talk was the 'unknown tongue' spoken by the Irvingites when in violent states of religious excitement, about forty years ago. A Scotch pamphlet of the time gives the following as divinely inspired utterances to which the less gifted listened with awe and amazement: 'Hippo, gerosto, hippo, booros, senoote, Foorime, oorin, hoopo, Jamo, hoostin, hoorastin, hiparous, Hispanos, Bantos, Boorin, O Pinitos, Elastina, Halimungitos, Dantita.'

"Now, unless these could be shown to be words of real languages, and languages unknown to the speaker, they merely show a power in certain minds when excited (and madness is only a super-excitement) of inventing words which only the insane seem to have the power of remembering and using again. At that very same period a

medical man took down the following jargon from the lips of a patient in the Montrose Asylum who had never heard of Irvingism: 'Ellueam, vuruem, errexuem, vaulem, bathoram, ullem, dathurecm, been, tuurem, ellexuem, vara, ellevara, exullem, dathellia, villera, civen, ureme, vas, cillera, exeram, datherveam, liaulveilineuem, villera, repthallon, erriphultou, bilirea, ebillera, lubluron, eluberon,' &c.

"The natives of the Cevennes used to prophesy and speak in unknown tongues, no doubt the result of what would, in the Middle Ages, have been called 'demoniacal possession,' but really the result of the above-named causes. In some cases lunatics will talk in rhythm; and Doctor W. A. F. Browne gives a remarkable instance of one patient who, for four days and nights, spoke no words but such as ended in 'ation,' a termination which the man added to every word he uttered. His pronunciation was correct, and the terms, as far as they could be interpreted, bore some reference to the questions asked him, as, for instance, "gratification, robustation, jollification," which meant that he was pleased to say he was healthy and happy. This iteration gradually ceased, and the man eventually died of general paralysis. In some cases of idiocy the patient can only utter monosyllables, in others they utter only oaths, or roar like wild beasts; in one case the loquacity I remember was so intense that the words were all run into one long sentence. A maniac in the Salpetriere used to speak clearly and significantly, but with frightful feverish rapidity, especially when irritated. Mixed with threats of vengeance and imprecations, she used to tell those she abused, parenthetically, that she did not mean what she said, that she loved them, and felt grateful to them for their kindness and forbearance, but that, though anxious to please them by being silent, she was constrained by an irresistible agency to speak."

"This reminds me," said I, the most patient of listeners, "of Lord Dudley Ward's inability to prevent talking aloud, and uttering his opinions (not always peculiarly favourable) of persons present."

"Exactly; his brain had been prematurely developed; he had probably incipient disease of the frontal lobes, and he eventually died insane. There is a celebrated French case, where the patient could only articulate one word, 'cousin,' and yet could play well at draughts and dominoes. But, come, you have had enough

of these medical stumbling-blocks." Here the doctor rang the bell, and a footman appeared. "Are they assembled, John?"

"Just going in, sir."

"Now," said the doctor, "we will reduce theory to practice. This is the night of one of our weekly entertainments, and I'll make any patient you like come up and tell you his history. You will see here almost every variety of monomania, many curable, and in the state of convalescence. Come with me, but you must have a glass of sherry first."

We first discussed the sherry, and the doctor then led me through the corridors of several wards into the ball-room. It was a very large handsome room, with bare floors, and a gallery for the musicians. At one end was a sort of alcove; the medical attendants and the guests (including many ladies) were seated. On either side of the room, four or five deep, sat the patients, the men one side, the women on the other, quiet and contented. Here and there a melancholy madman turned away moping apart, absorbed in his own weary thoughts, and apparently unconscious of what was passing. Soldier-like attendants and young nurses, trimly dressed in black, attended to the patients, or chatted together. Here and there an eye turned to the doctor, but I saw no look of fear or alarm. Every one was on his best behaviour. It was evidently remembered that oddly-behaved and excitable people had before now been expelled.

In the intervals of what is called, I believe, in asylums "the Circassian round"—a sort of march past of all the patients, with a four-handed reel at intervals, rather a ghastly and insane kind of dance it must be confessed, but still suited to every capacity—I entered into a conversation with a fussy little man with a wooden leg, who assumed the manner of one in authority. I set him down at once as a mechanic who had been a foreman, and I heard afterwards that my conjecture was right. He had worked at some dockyard, and had tormented the ministers by incessantly haunting Downing-street, and soliciting interviews about some mad scheme of national defence. It had become at last necessary to put him under some restraint. He seemed perfectly happy, and evidently believed himself to be very useful and the manager of the whole entertainment. He was very loquacious, and talked nonsense in the most rational way possible. He had a way of conveying troops underground to the sea-

ports to prevent invasion. He knew how to do it. He had laid the matter before ministers. It could be done as easily as you raise your hand; but there were the Jesuits against it. As he changed the subject every half-sentence, it was rather difficult to follow the scheme minutely. He was all winks and smiles, and spoke confidentially, as if it was unnecessary to more than hint at a plan so perfectly understood and so entirely practical. All at once he drew me on one side, and whispered, "You know where the place underneath here leads to?" I confessed I did not. "To H. E. LL." He said this winking with good-natured cunning and sanity.

"Oh, that old fellow will talk for ever," said the doctor, whom the saviour of the nation eyed with good-natured approval. "Come here and I will show you a curious case of religious monomania."

We walked down the long room till we came to a gloomy, big, sturdy-looking man sitting in the second row.

"Philpot," said the doctor, "come here and tell this gentleman about that affair of yours in York cathedral the other day." It appeared that Philpot a week or two before, in a fit of religious enthusiasm, had stood up in York cathedral and denounced the preacher as "a whitened sepulchre."

Philpot made his way to the front benches and stood up before us, evidently in rather a troublesome mood.

"Well, how are you this evening, Philpot?" inquired the doctor; "tell this gentleman how the whole thing happened."

"Oh, I'm all right," said the refractory patient, "but I don't want to speak of the affair, Doctor Horniblow. Look here, I'm quite well, and all I want is to get back home to my work and maintain my family. That's what I want, and so I tell you."

The doctor looked slightly surprised at Philpot's refractoriness, but otherwise as bland as ever. All he did was to give the sturdy fanatic a slight push on the chest, such as a schoolmaster gives to a stupid boy who does not know his lesson. "There, go back to your place," he said, "we shall see to that all in good time."

As if on purpose to give me a good specimen this time he passed a little lower down the long line of seats, and called out a man from the third row.

"This man," he said, "we have been treating with Calabar bean with great success. He will go out soon. Delusion that he is the Earl of Pomfret and King of Jerusalem."

The man, a tall, sturdy mechanic stood up and came nearer to us.

"Well, Jenkins," he said, "better to day?"

"Much better, doctor; feel nearly well now."

"You'll soon be all right. That man we are opposite to now," said the doctor, stopping, "is a case something like what we were speaking about. He will go on talking for hours without coherence or the slightest meaning."

The doctor spoke to the man, who at once stood up, and began an interminable harangue, the words of which were intelligible, but in which there was no other cohesion.

"There, that will do, my good man; go to your seat," said the doctor, and the patient quietly became silent, and retired to his seat.

"Johnson," said the doctor, beckoning to a young alert-looking man, near the end of the room, "how are you? A stud-groom of Count Lagrange," said the doctor to me in a low voice; "insanity produced by a kick of a horse; much better; will soon go out."

Johnson came out, answered a few questions from me about his health, and told me that he was very nearly well, he hoped, and retired to his seat in the most respectful way.

"Now here," said the doctor, looking at an anxious-looking artisan in the second row, "is a bad case of monomania. The man is an engine fitter, and thinks he has discovered perpetual motion, a not uncommon form of insanity among clever engineers. You shall hear him. Here, Wilson, come out here, and tell this gentleman about this discovery of yours. He feels a great interest in these things."

Wilson, a stunted-looking artisan, with an absorbed look, rose and stepped out at once.

He came up to me as the doctor walked on to say a kind word to other patients, and plunged at once into technical details, with one finger of the right hand placed on the top of a finger of the left, as when we argue difficult points.

"You see, sir," he said, "there is no reason in the world why this engine shouldn't go up mountains. From the fly-wheel we carry a band. The ratchet pinion is looked in. So the driving band runs round——" and so on for some five minutes, till I was rather glad when the doctor came back, and quickly reconsigned

Wilson to his seat, with "The gentleman understands all about it, Wilson, now; that will do."

"This young man," said the doctor, calling one from the ranks, a young mill hand of the ordinary type, and introducing him formally to me, "you will be interested to hear, is the son of the Emperor Nicholas of Russia. Tell him where you were born, my man."

With the utmost seriousness the man began to tell me how the empress his mother came to London in 1858, and lodged at No. 6, Greenarbour-lane, Hoxton, where he was born.

"The worst of it is," said the doctor, "that this young gentleman has such expensive ideas. It was all I could do yesterday to prevent him ordering two thousand rounds of beef."

"Three thousand, doctor, and why not?"

"And five thousand legs of mutton. He thinks nothing of money."

"Why should I? Ain't I able to pay for them?"

"Of course you are. There, I think you are getting on well. Go to your seat, my lad. You see that old man sitting down by the man who has the scheme for national defence?"

"Yes; he told me he was as comfortable as he could be, considering."

"Yes, he's very quick and rational, and works at his trade with us; still, he nearly killed a man a month or two ago. Lunatics are very deceptive."

Just then a little, smiling, elderly woman, with thin greasy black ringlets, who had been waltzing vigorously with a fat, imbecile-looking girl, halted near us, and began to simper and curtsy.

"This lady," said the doctor, introducing me, "you will be interested to hear, was cook to his Majesty George the Fourth."

The lady simpered assent.

"Tell this gentleman what was his majesty's favourite dish?"

"Roast mice and onion sauce," simpered the ex-official, and again capered off into a wild but not badly-executed waltz.

"I will now show you a case of hypochondria," said Doctor Horniblow, "or of some form of gastric disease conjoined to monomania."

We passed over to the women's side, and there, next to a fat and healthy but perfectly hopeless madwoman, sat a worn-looking, anxious mechanic's wife, with a depressed and disconsolate expression.

"Tell this gentleman about the snake

that you swallowed," said the doctor, in a kind and sympathising way.

The poor woman rose respectfully, and told me how, three months before, in eating a bit of raw turnip, she felt that she had swallowed the egg of some animal. Since then she had constant pains, and latterly she could feel a snake come up and eat whatever she swallowed.

"You must give me a lift here," whispered the doctor, as we turned away for a moment. "We are going to show her tomorrow a small blindworm, and pretend that she has vomited it. I really think it may answer."

I turned and asked her a few questions, and then told her that the doctor was very soon going to give her a very powerful medicine, which he believed would either certainly kill the snake, or in some way finally relieve her.

The poor woman gave rather a cold assent to the hope, and we passed on just as the terrible march round was recommencing for the last time before the strange party broke up.

"We have a great deal to learn about these mysterious diseases," were the doctor's last words to me as I got into my fly. "But we are going on, I really do think, in the right direction."

And I thought so too.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER XI. "NOT YET."

"WELL met!" Jack Ferrier had cried out, in the jubilant agitation of this first moment with her, his queen, after their comparatively long separation; but they one and all felt that his words were a mockery, and that they were quite the reverse of "well met," that, in fact, they were very ill met indeed.

For the two men distrusted each other, and, through some extraordinary distortion of judgment, each one distrusted the girl. "Is she fooling me or him?" was the question asked of himself by both Claude Powers and Jack Ferrier. "Is she going to be a recreant to a freely-pledged faith? is she going to throw me over for the first fellow who holds his finger up?" Claude questioned savagely of himself. And simultaneously Jack Ferrier was saying to himself, "Is she playing for the higher stakes? is she using me as bait to bring

him on? It isn't in her to resist the temptation of being Mrs. Powers of the Court."

So even the men who loved her thoroughly misjudged her.

Meanwhile, demurely as she paced along between the two men, she was in a very tempest of agitation, of doubt, and bewilderment, and (it must be written) of flattered, fluttering vanity. She was no impossible monster of perfection, this poor little tossed-about heroine of mine. She was essentially human, therefore very faulty, and very lovable, and the conduct of her two companions taught her clearly that she was this latter thing, and well she liked the teaching.

She caught herself comparing them, contrasting them, defining delicate points of resemblance and difference between them, as they tried to talk lightly and easily about common-place things, leaving her the while in silence mercifully. And it never does answer to contrast or to compare two people together whom we have hitherto thought we liked equally well, and were equally well worthy of one liking. It never does answer. One must lose, and, as a rule, the one who loses is the one we have believed in the most blindly and fondly hitherto.

"Claude can talk, and Claude can be obstinate, and a trifle unjust," Harty thought; "he's rather masterful too, and, as he has no open claim upon me, he oughtn't to be that; but" (with a sigh) "he knows everything; perhaps Mr. Ferrier would alter if he knew everything too."

"You got your locket safely?" she asked suddenly, speaking out of the fullness of her heart, which could only feed upon that one subject just now.

"Yes," he said, speaking so low that Claude, on the other side of her, could not distinguish the words that were spoken. "Yes, and the note too. What a freezing note it was; what chilling wind was sweeping over you when you wrote it?"

"Self-reproach for having used concealment towards you," she whispered promptly, turning her face to him, "and cold uncertainty as to whether I should be candid in the future with you or not."

"It won't be my fault if I fail to win your confidence," he muttered in reply; and by this time Claude was thoroughly vexed and aggrieved, as a man always is if he hears the "lowered-tone" system applied to another man by a woman in whom he is interested. He felt wronged and wrathful, only because he could not hear

distinctly what two of his fellow-creatures were saying to each other. And he felt annoyed with himself for entertaining such feelings, and altogether humiliated and put in the wrong place. It was almost a relief to him that they were just turning into the High-street, and that the moment for parting with Harty had come, for would not Jack Ferrier have to part with her too?

"Good-bye," he said, taking Harty's hand and holding it for a moment or two. "If my aunt tries to beguile you and your sister over to-morrow, will you come?" (He really could not constrain himself into abstaining from her society a day longer.) "You will come, won't you?" he added, amending the phrase.

Her heart did not bound responsively to his invitation. The truth came home to her heart, and pressed heavily upon it. She was not essentially delighted at the idea of seeing her lover the next day. The power of feeling ecstasy about him had passed away for ever.

"He has called me 'changeable,'" she thought, "and I am—of course I am—Claude is always right." And she felt a hot throb of anger against him, for that he had not combated her weakness. "A man oughtn't to let a girl change when once she loves him; Claude put the idea that I might do so into my head."

She was regarding him wistfully and uneasily as she thought over these things; and somehow she forgot to speak, and there was silence for a moment or two.

"You will come?" Claude asked, more earnestly.

"I suppose so," she said; and then she remembered that Jack Ferrier would be there; and at the remembrance, in spite of everything, her heart and her face lightened.

"Good-bye," Claude repeated, in flat, disappointed tones. A presentiment of what was coming was pressing upon him heavily. "Come on," he added, carelessly, to Jack Ferrier, as Harty mounted the door-steps.

"If Miss Carlisle will allow me, I will go in and see Mr. Devenish," Jack Ferrier said, hesitatingly; and Harty, with one passing look of apology at Claude, acquiesced in his request, while Claude, with a sickening, indignant feeling at his heart, went away.

She opened the door, and he followed her in, wondering within himself whether or not his time had really come, striving to

assure himself that he would be prudent, and not precipitate.

Harty walked along the passage towards the door of the drawing-room, where she anticipated finding the family assembled. Not that she desired to see one of their familiar faces. On the contrary, what she did desire, was a few minutes unrestricted intercourse with Jack Ferrier, in order that she might tell him everything she had to tell—everything that was clogging her spirit, and wearying her heart, before he had time to go any further.

"Before he had time to go any further." Jack Ferrier was not the type of man who suffers himself to be made the fool of time. His quick glance took in the fact as he followed her, that the dining-room door was open, and the dining-room itself empty. He had not come in for the purpose of talking polite conversation to the rest of the family! He had come in, he felt in a flush, for Harty, and Harty only.

"Come in here for a minute," he said, and with flattering readiness, she turned and followed him.

She did not think it needful to make any protest. She uttered no idle platitudes about "going to look for any one else." She knew that he wanted her, and so she only watched him closely as he shut the door, and (throwing prudence to the winds) came up impatiently close to her.

He looked so strong and generous in his grand, powerful, fair, manly beauty, as he stood over her, that she felt as a brown mouse, looking up at a magnificent tiger, might feel. There was about him such an atmosphere of manliness, and confidence, and courage. She longed to find out whether or not he would be pliant in her hands. She shuddered to feel herself swerving towards him and away from Claude every instant.

"Look here," he began, in wonderfully soft, subdued tones for Jack Ferrier, "the tone of your note seemed to me to imply that you wished me to keep away from you, and I have kept away all this time; but it's been the hardest work I have ever done in my life; tell me that it's the last task of the kind you'll ever set me. Harty! tell me in words what your eyes have told me already to-day, that I may come to you—"

He was going to take her hand, but she stepped back from him, clasping her hands together at the back of her neck, almost maddening him by the wild, childish grace of the gesture, perplexing him by the ap-

parent avoidance depicted in the act, for in spite of it all her soul was in her eyes, and all her soul seemed seeking him.

"Wait," she said, "I have something to tell you, something horrible to tell you, before you say another word to me."

"You can have nothing to tell me that will check the utterance of the words I want to say to you."

"Ah! but I have," she cried, impetuously; "that's what is so dreadful; I ought to have told you before—before we got to like each other as well as we do; I ought to have told you that day when you gave me your confidence about your brother—when you showed me the likeness, and told me how cruelly the original had been driven to death—"

"Wait till you have heard what I want to say first," he eagerly interrupted. "Nothing you can say can stop me; I love you so, Harty, that nothing short of your being another man's wife could stop me."

"I never could be that," she said, unclasping her hands, and holding them out to him as she sank down on a chair, and really believing that she loved this man so much for his bold fervour that the past romance of her life with Claude had been merely a delusion—"I never could be that; but I shall be Harty Carlisle to the end, because when I tell you, you'll leave me, and despise yourself for ever having thought of loving me."

He slipped a snake ring off his finger, and put it on hers before he answered. Then he stooped and kissed her. "The emblem of eternal devotion, my darling," he said; "our engagement ring."

And a ring that Claude had given her in ratification of a similar arrangement with himself was on the finger of her other hand the while. Another "emblem of eternal devotion," another twisted golden bauble writhed its fascinating folds, snake-like, around her. But she had no thought of either that gift or the giver of it; she was thinking solely that when she told the truth (as Harty always would tell it), she would lose this man whose love had become so precious to her.

"Our engagement ring," she repeated after him, mournfully; "the magic ring that forces me to tell you that Mr. Devenish is the man who maligned your brother into murdering himself."

"Now, you dear little melodramatist," he said, joyously taking her in his arms (and how ready Harty was to be so taken!), "what does this fact that you have mis-

takenly magnified into importance matter to us? Don't you think I can separate you from your step-father, Harty? Have you dreamt of me as a Corsican bent on bringing the vendetta system to bear upon our case? I've trespassed a good deal in the course of my life, Harty. I don't come to you a white-handed saint by any means, so I'll only pray humbly that poor Devenish may be forgiven his evil deeds by Heaven, as heartily as he is by me. Is your heart at rest, darling?"

"No," she said, with a qualm that was rendered agonising by recollection and self-reproach, as a vision of Claude Powers, and what he would be justified in thinking of her, rose up before her; "no, my heart isn't at rest; it's shaking with such a feeling of fear as makes me long to go away somewhere, and hide myself."

"Not from me, darling!"

"Yes, even from you."

She spoke with bitter, sad, truthful emphasis. All the excitement, all the glow of love for this man, and gratification at his expressed and honestly avowed love for her, had faded out of her face. A weary, harassed-looking girl, she stood before him, resembling far more a woman who had lost all she prized in life rather than one who had just won her lover.

"I'll soon cheer you out of these fitful fears, my darling," he said, heartily; "your spirit has been weighted by the atmosphere of your home far too long; but you'll rebound into your best self permanently when you come to me and a brighter life, poor little pet! And you have been bothering yourself this last week by thinking that I should cherish malevolent feelings towards Mr. Devenish? But the dead past shall bury its dead, dearest; and you shall be the one to let him know that I will be neither his accuser nor his judge."

"You're very generous and forgiving," she was beginning, when he stopped her by saying:

"No, I'm very fond of you; that's the secret of it; I'd forgive the deadliest wrong that could be done to me for the sake of getting you, Harty. You've become like my life to me."

She heaved a passionate sigh. "You would forgive anything—anything?" she asked, eagerly, winning him to her more and more each moment with all the force and power of her semi-unconscious subtlety. "Would you forgive me anything, and love me just the same?"

Her coaxing voice fell softly on his ear,

her nervous, light, thrilling touch was on his arm, her winsome mobile face was bending towards him in pretty ardent supplication. What wonder that he was ready to promise her anything—anything!

"Forgive you, and love you the same, I should rather think I could," he murmured. "Why, Hartly, you couldn't do anything that would cost me an effort to forgive; you're too good, and pure, and true; what distrust of me made you say that, dear?"

"I have something else to tell you, something that I don't think you'll quite like," she said, tremblingly; "something that I ought to have told you before."

"Something that's about as important to us as your connexion with Mr. Devenish," he said, with a reassuring smile. "Well, tell it to me in your own good time, now or never." And then he drew her to him and kissed her, and Hartly felt that she could not tell him about Claude Powers now.

"Not now; I will be quite happy to-night," she whispered, looking up at him; "it's nothing very bad," she went on extenuatingly, "nothing that many other girls don't do."

"It is that you have been in love before, I suppose," he said, quietly; "never mind; do you remember what one of the girls does in one of Charlotte Brontë's novels? 'hurries her love-letters in a grave at the foot of a tree.' I prefer making the fire the last resting-place of such things; we'll each have a holocaust before we marry, for I have fancied myself in love before to-day, darling, and have written of my fancies; tell me, haven't I guessed the worst?"

"Very nearly," she said, beginning to look more leniently upon her own case and conduct to Claude, and still feeling strangely reluctant to tell out all that was to be told.

"Then now we'll say no more about it," he answered, lightly. "You're mine now, wholly and solely mine, aren't you, and I should like to tell your mother all about it to-night; may I go and speak to her?"

She shrank and shivered with a nameless, not to be defined terror. Her mother, in her amazement, would probably speak about Claude. Or even if maternal love and prudence made her mother reticent, malignant feeling would prompt Mr. Devenish to make some reference to the old bond. No, she dared not risk this being done to-night.

"No, no," she entreated, "come to-morrow in the daylight, when it will be

brighter, and I can bear it better; it will seem so sudden to them, that they may say something if they hear of it before they hear a word from me; I'd rather that no one heard of it to-night, because it is sudden, you know."

"Very well; no one shall hear of it to-night excepting Claude," he answered, cheerily.

"Excepting Claude!" she gasped out. "Oh, no, no, not Claude—yet."

"Why not?" he asked, with a little exhibition of surprise. "You hardly understand the sort of bond that exists between Claude and myself. He will be as glad for me almost as I am for myself."

"Glad!" she panted out.

"Yes, darling; glad. You women hardly understand this sort of thing. I know he was rather inclined to go down before you when he came home first, but he surrendered his chances to me."

"He did?" she questioned, in a fury.

"Well, that's a broad way of putting it, perhaps," Jack Ferrier said, easily. "We never talked about it, you see; but I could see that Claude understood what was going on well enough."

She was silent, tingling with mortification, raging against Claude in her soul. True that she was a recreant to the faith she had pledged to him. But then he was a man. It behoved him to be firmer and stronger than a weak "changeable" girl could be expected to prove herself. "Changeable!" Why on earth had he ever applied the epithet to her, and taught her to feel that she was so, without being utterly contemptible, utterly blamable? Changeable! He had known her to be so, had charged her with being so, and had gone on loving her just the same. It was her nature to be so. Was she criminal because she was natural? "If it's a demoniacal attribute he should have exorcised it," she thought, in a passion; "but he told me it was human, and Claude always taught me to respect humanity." Her being changeable, the fact of her having changed, was not one fraction so iniquitous as that he should have seemed ready to surrender her.

"And now, darling," Jack Ferrier whispered, caressing her as he spoke, "as you won't let me have it out with your people to-night, I'll go back, and leave you to have it out with your mother. Will you let me come to-morrow?"

Before she granted his request she professed one of her own.

"Don't say anything to Claude Powers to-night," she pleaded.

"Nonsense, nonsense; he's not one of the selfish bachelor friends you read of in unreal novel pictures of life, who hold that a man that's married is a man that is marred. He'll be heartily glad that I have won such a wife as you will be, Harty. Claude and I have promised each other that no woman shall ever come between us, and if I had fallen in love with a fool it might have gone hard with his fidelity to me. As it is, you'll cement the union, strengthen the bond between us."

How every word he spoke wrung her heart! How every mark of confidence he showed that he felt in her and her mere friendship with Claude, seared her soul! In her passionate, almost despairing, agony of self-humiliation and fear, she launched out the words:

"It will be a union in which there will be no strength; don't try to form it to-night."

"Perhaps his mood may not be auspicious, for I shall be late for dinner," Jack Ferrier laughed; "good-bye till to-morrow, darling, and in the mean time don't raise imaginary ghosts."

He went away then noisily, confidently, happily, stalking through the passage with a loud, self-asserting, determined tread, that seemed to be full of assurance of all manner of protection, and promise of refuge to her. And she stood in the doorway watching him, feeling fearfully proud of him, and of herself for belonging to him, and wondering tremblingly how it would all end.

She closed the door with a sigh and a shudder as he passed out of her sight. Not so ought she to have turned from the vanishing new love, but the fact was, that a vision of the old one had risen up before her. A vision of Claude as he would look when his eyes met hers for the first time after he had gained the knowledge of her perfidy.

She went into the drawing-room feeling like a criminal, laden with her books and newspapers, blessing these latter for that the sight of them took off Mr. Devenish's attention from her unconquerable agitation, and harassed-looking face. He was so eager for the latest intelligence, or at least for the sight of something sufficiently fresh to draw his thoughts away from the source of his eternal discontent, that he scarcely

glanced at Harty, who felt the abstinence from attention to be a sort of reprieve.

She was very quiet, very strangely subdued, very unlike herself for the remainder of that evening. The work which she held in her hand was an intricate design in point lace, which gave her a fair excuse for seeming deeply absorbed, and for bending her tell-tale face down very low indeed.

"How perseveringly you're keeping to that flounce, Harty," Mabel remarked. "I believe you have heard of some projected pleasant gaiety, and you want to deck yourself out for it; have you seen any one to-day?"

"Yes," Harty answered curtly, nodding her head.

"Have you seen any of the Court people?" Mabel went on, questioning with a slight increase of colour.

"Yes."

"Which of them?"

"Mr. Ferrier and Clau—Mr. Powers," Harty said, resolutely, throwing up her head, checking herself in the pronunciation of his christian name by the timely, bitter remembrance that she had forfeited all right to call him by it any more.

She faced Mabel's look of almost suspicious inquiry bravely enough, but her eyes fell by-and-by when she found herself alone with her mother, and knew that the moment had come for her to tell her tale.

"Mamma, don't exclaim or show much surprise," she began, speaking very rapidly. "I have to tell you of a great change—I have promised to marry Mr. Ferrier."

Of course, in spite of the prohibition, Mrs. Devenish did exclaim, and did express a vast amount of surprise. But through it all there ran a vein of satisfaction at Harty having at last relinquished the man who had wounded Mr. Devenish; and Harty dwelt upon this satisfaction, and strove to take courage from it. She winced a little, however, when her mother said:

"It seems sudden to me, you know, dear, startlingly sudden, for I had no idea of it; but I suppose Claude Powers saw it going on, and was prepared to hear it?"

"He doesn't know it yet," Harty stammered.

"What! You engaged to the other man, and Claude not know it yet! Oh, Harty!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXXII. A NEW FRIEND AND AN OLD ONE.

"WHAT! You live in Featherstone-buildings?" said Tony, when I asked him to come and see me there. "Really, you seem to have stepped into my shoes in a most surprising way. You sit at my desk in my uncle's office, and you live in Featherstone-buildings, where I lived when I studied law. I can quite believe that you occupy the very same rooms on the second floor."

And so it proved. Tony Wray had been the articled clerk of whom Vickery had spoken.

"I gave up the rooms," he continued, "when I gave up the law. The two were somehow connected in my mind, and so I abandoned both at the same moment. If you're going to make a change I always think it's as well to do it completely. Sweep everything off the board, and start fair and fresh. I've got a bedroom now at Hampstead, near the Vale of Health, for I've not been very well lately, and I've been recommended to sleep out of town, and the Vale of Health struck me as being just the thing. But I've a town residence also—I couldn't do without that—a kind of den in Staple Inn, Holborn, not far from you. You must come and see me. It's a little bit of a place, but it suits me until I really advance in my profession—I'm only beginning it at present—and a house in Cavendish-square—(I intend to move there some day—I have the exact house in my eye, indeed)—would be more than I could manage just now. My room

art there most admirably; that is, I think about pursuing it. The roof slopes a good deal, so that you might think yourself in a tent in the desert, for it would be wonderfully quiet if it wasn't for the cats. There's no view from the window; so you see there's little to disturb a studious mind. The place is something of a studio and something of a library. You'll like the look of it, I'm sure. My easel's there, and my paint-box, and a canvas or two, and my books—some legal, some medical, others miscellaneous. Altogether it's very complete and comfortable, if confined. But I don't want a large place, you know; and then it's cheap, and of course that's an object. For my means are limited. Did I tell you that I was an orphan? I lost both father and mother when I was quite a child—I can scarcely remember them. My uncle, Mr. Monck, was left my guardian. He deals with my little patrimony so as to make it yield as large an income as possible. And my wants are few, and some day I hope to be earning large sums by my professional labours; so you see, altogether, in a quiet way, I'm comfortable and happy enough. That's my story, Mr. Nightingale. But I can't really go on calling you Mr. Nightingale; I must say Duke, please, and if you could teach yourself to address me as Tony I should esteem it a favour. There's one advantage in having a long name, you can always cut it down."

I called him Tony thenceforward, and he called me Duke, and having heard his story, of course I told him mine. He was deeply interested, especially in the Rosetta episode of my narrative. This I disposed of briefly in the first instance, but as our friendship strengthened, I was not reluctant to discourse upon it very fully.

romance. And she was beautiful? But she must have been if she was anything like your description of her, and I'm sure that's accurate. And you loved her! How interesting! I wish something of that kind would happen to me. How I should enjoy it! But nothing like that ever has happened to me. I've never been in love. No, I've never even fancied myself in love; and certainly, so far as I know, no one has ever been good enough to fall in love with me. Unless——" he hesitated, his face flushed a little, then, with a light toss of his head, he seemed to put the subject away from him. "And so she became Lord Overbury's wife! I think I've heard of Lord Overbury's name before. I'm not sure that there was not once some business connected with him in Mr. Monck's office, before my time though. I've a dim recollection of something of that kind."

I suggested that, as Lord Overbury was notoriously much involved, Mr. Monck might well have been concerned on behalf of one of the nobleman's many creditors. Tony thought that very possible.

He showed me his drawings, and in turn I exhibited mine. We exchanged congratulations on our progress in art, though I could not conceal from myself that my friend's works, if graceful and dexterous to a certain extent, were yet rather deficient in force and substance. He read me his poems. I thought them weak, though I did not say so. I read him mine, including many stanzas addressed to Rosetta. He was loud in his applause, and warmly urged me to continue my poetic efforts. It was not long after my first acquaintance with Tony that I commenced writing a blank-verse tragedy in five acts, founded upon a Venetian story, and entitled *The Daughter of the Doge*. I gave readings of this work, act by act, as I progressed with it, at my lodgings in Featherstone-buildings. Tony was my only audience, for I don't count my landlady and fellow-lodgers, although they could not but overhear my declamation. Indeed, they complained rather angrily of its disturbing nature. But the play was not read to them, or designed for their ears, and I thought their objections certainly coarse and uncalled for. I said as much to my landlady. "I did so hope that you'd be steady, sir," was her only reply, as she shook her head at me with a disappointed air. Tony admired the tragedy exceedingly. I invited his criticism, and assured him that I should greatly value and fully consider any suggestions

he might have to offer upon the subject. But he found the work perfect. "I wouldn't have a line or a word altered," he said. "Touch it, and you spoil it. It seems to me one of the finest tragedies in the language." Could I ask for more cordial approval? What wonder that I loved him?

I see now that his absolute lack of critical or judicial faculty greatly endeared him to me. I took blame to myself that I was unable to applaud his labours as heartily as he applauded mine. Yet his candour and fervour were quite unquestionable. He had entire faith in his praises of me. He really believed that I was a great artist and a distinguished poet. Not that I wholly credited all he said of me, or ventured to think his opinion would prove to be the world's verdict; I promised to be fully satisfied if others would accept me at any approach to Tony's appraisal. But I began to think more of myself, if less than he thought of me. Nevertheless ours was not a friendship that depended upon mutual admiration. He gave liberally, but he asked for little in return. He was content with quite a modicum of approval. His estimate of himself was really humble. He was most unselfish. Such vanity as he possessed was of a most pleasant kind, and really seemed a becoming adornment of him; it was part of his genial good-natured view of all around him.

To me this new friendship with a young fellow of my own standing, little more experienced in the ways of the world, was of extreme comfort. My life in London was no longer tedious and solitary; it became replete with harmless, or not very harmful, pleasure. We were constantly together. We met at the dining-rooms in Rapert-street, and, my official duties concluded, we adjourned to my lodgings or to his chambers. Sometimes we went together to the play. And we talked on all kinds of subjects, notably upon art, literature, and the drama, with occasional wild incursions into the vague regions of metaphysics. Little injury resulted, perhaps, from these debates, except that we were tempted to keep unduly late hours, and to consume more tobacco, and to empty more glasses than was altogether advisable. Tony gave up his lodging at Hampstead, and contented himself with his town residence. His health was not benefited by this change of place.

Our friendship was made up of what Rousseau has held to be the best materials in that respect; similar sentiments, diffe-

rent opinions. Or it had perhaps a safer foundation in a reciprocity of kindly thoughts, words, and deeds. Our characters were unlike somewhat, yet each seemed competent to understand and appreciate the other. There was no rivalry between us; if we were both aiming at public recognition and distinction it was in so prospective and distant a way that no thought of competition disturbed us; it was rather as though we had joined forces against a common foe. And we were not critics of each other's capacity, even though I found myself less enthusiastic on Tony's side than he was on mine. On either hand there was, at any rate, no throwing of cold water—better, perhaps, if there had been. If excuse is needed for us—and perhaps only the cynical will insist upon apology in such case—we were both very young, and, seeing that youth must love some one or something, we were, for the time being, in the absence of other objects of affection, in love with friendship. Between us there soon took root and growth an agreement and pact of this nature, strong, effusive, and unreasonable, possibly, but yet, without doubt, sincere enough.

I wrote home glowing accounts of my new friend, and the solace and happiness he had conferred upon my life. My mother was much interested. She asked innumerable questions concerning him, even as to his looks, and manner, and mode of life. She was most anxious, it was clear, that I should make no unworthy acquaintance. She was more satisfied when I had fully replied to all her interrogatories. She looked forward, as I began to do myself, to his visiting the Down Farm in my company. I felt that she desired to contemplate my friend with her own eyes. Yet she transmitted him many kindly messages, and when a hamper of game, or poultry, or other produce of the farm was sent to me in London, there was now always an additional supply to be placed at the disposal of Tony Wray. The invisibility of Mr. Monck was no longer commented upon. It had given place to this new topic.

I was returning to the office one evening after dinner. I confess that I was rather late. I had, indeed, surrendered those habits of punctuality which had originally distinguished my career as an articulated clerk. I had rather taken up with opinions to the effect that the law was a loitering kind of profession.

The office was feebly lighted, but I perceived that a stranger was standing by

Vickery's desk. I could not see his face very well, it was shadowed by his hat.

"Bank-notes and gold for the full amount," he said, and it seemed to me that his voice was familiar to me. "For the full amount, including costs. You will be good enough to give me a receipt. I am also instructed to say that the claim would have been satisfied long since but that it was overlooked—by inadvertence, sheer inadvertence. We are much occupied by very important matters, and trifles of this kind are likely to be overlooked. We cannot always be bearing in mind the claims of tradesmen. They should be content with our recollecting them when we have need of their services. It was not right to issue a writ; it was wrong to serve it. I say so much on my account. I was not bidden to say so much. But I happen to have an innate and constitutional objection to legal proceedings of every kind. However, I tender you the amount due. I am instructed to give no trouble in that respect, although I am well aware—I speak from experience—that claims are not usually settled so promptly or so pacifically."

He spoke rather pompously, and as one enjoying the cadences of his loud, rich, but somewhat husky voice. Vickery was writing out a receipt for him.

"A lawyer's office," said the stranger, glancing round him, but his eyes did not chance to rest upon me. "I've seen one before; indeed, I have seen many. Lawyers' offices are the ante-rooms of debtors' prisons. That's my view of them. They are mouse-traps, easy to get into, hard to escape from."

He smiled, then took off his hat, with rather an exaggerated air of politeness, as Vickery handed him the receipt. His hair was thinly streaked over rather a bald head. He strutted out.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"I don't know. He's paid the debt due by the party you served the writ upon the other day. What does it matter who he is?"

It darted into my mind; the man, though considerably altered, was my old friend Mauleverer—Fane Mauleverer!

I hurried after him. The square and street were empty and dark. I turned to the right, and ran some yards. But I was too late. Mauleverer had vanished.

CHAPTER XXXIII. I AM WANTED.

It was clear that Mauleverer had not recognised me. I was really vexed that I

had failed to overtake him. I obtained no sympathy, however, from old Vickery. He evaded my questions and forthwith locked up all the papers connected with Messrs. Dicker Brothers' action. If I could have ascertained the name and address of the defendant, I might have discovered Mauleverer. There could be no doubt that he was in the employ of the gentleman I had served with the writ.

Of course I informed Tony of the matter. From my previous narrative he knew all that I knew about Mauleverer. He was amused with this supplemental news, and expressed his interest therein. But he would not admit that there was anything strange in the fact of my again meeting with my old friend the stroller.

"Of course you have seen him again," Tony said in his pleasant way, "and equally of course you will see him again by-and-bye. I often think the world was made round expressly to enable people to meet. If it was a flat plane, you know, we might all go travelling on in parallel lines and never meet a soul, and when we got to the brink tumble off into chaos, and no one know that we had ever existed or had ceased to exist. As it is we go round and round, and we must meet some one. Why not a friend, then, as likely as a stranger? My wonder is that we don't meet our friends oftener. Life is made up of meetings. It is true that there are partings, too; but then those partings are, as it were, preludes to further meetings. All the same I wish you had overtaken Mauleverer. I should really like to see him. You might have brought him up to my chambers. He was an artist, you say, as well as an actor? All the better. Not that I think black-shade cutting a very elevated branch of the profession. Still there's a good deal to be said for it, no doubt. I never tried it, but I question if it's so easy as it looks. Mauleverer should have cut out a black-shade of me if he felt so inclined. I'd have made a sketch of him, say, in chalks. And he might have read Shakespeare to us; you say he was a great hand at that. I should have much pleasure, I'm sure, in listening to him. Or better still, he might read out your tragedy. Not but what, old fellow, you know, you read it as well as it could possibly be read. And a finer work let me tell you——"

I omit his glowing and certainly excessive laudation of my performance.

"But you'll meet Mauleverer again," he continued. "You may be quite easy as

to that. Have you anything special to say to him when you do meet him?"

I admitted that I had not. But I owned to curiosity concerning him and his proceedings, and particularly I desired to know his connexion with the gentleman I had served with the writ.

It was some days after this. I was sitting at my desk, copying, or perhaps making believe to copy. Vickery approached me with a solemn air, and whispered mysteriously:

"I am to ask you, Mr. Nightingale, to step up-stairs to the first floor—the front drawing-room."

"Who wants me—Mr. Monck?"

"You will probably learn that up-stairs, Mr. Nightingale. The front room, please. You needn't mind about leaving your work."

Of course I did not mind about it. Up-stairs? I was to enter for the first time the secret chambers of the house; possibly to penetrate the strange seclusion of my master, Mr. Monck.

I mounted the stairs. I paused and tapped at the door I found facing me. "Come in," said a light voice.

A young lady, simply clad in a dark dress that fell in soft folds about her slender figure, was seated before a writing-table littered with papers. The light, strained through the dust-clouded window-panes, gleamed feebly upon her, failing to reach the corners of the room. I perceived, however, that she was young and refined-looking, with abundant dark hair smoothed over her brow, and gathered into rich coils and clusters at the back of her head. A narrow collar of white lace edged the top of her high dress. By contrast with it, her complexion seemed to be a dusky brunette hue, yet of fine satiny texture. When she spoke her pallor vanished, and as her large eyes kindled, an underflush of colour glowed in her face. It was a young face, animated and full of expression, earnest and intent, even somewhat sad.

The room was large; the furniture worn and very old-fashioned; the hangings of a faded dun colour; the wall paper and ceiling dim with smoke and dust; the carpet frayed and threadbare, all trace of pattern rubbed and trodden from it.

The lady rose as I entered.

"I must introduce myself, Mr. Nightingale," she said, with rather an embarrassed air, as she extended her hand. "My name is Rachel Monck—I am Mr. Monck's daughter."

I pressed her hand; it was very small, of

delicate shape, soft and cool, though it trembled a little in mine.

"Will you sit down, please. I have been anxious for some time past to see you—to speak to you; but many things have occurred to prevent this. And now I fear I have deferred it too long. I hardly know where to begin."

Her speech was something to that effect; but I was paying less heed to her words than to the soft music of her voice, and the subdued tremulousness which lent it a peculiarly touching quality. And if she was disturbed, I was still more so. I had not yet recovered from my amazement at finding myself in Mr. Monck's drawing-room, in the presence of his daughter, of whose existence I had until then been absolutely ignorant. Vickery had spoken no word upon the subject—had afforded me no hint. How could I suspect that in the upper regions of Mr. Monck's mysterious house there dwelt this beautiful young creature?

She paused for a few moments; then proceeded with more composure.

"You have been surprised, I dare say, that you have not yet seen my father—that you have indeed seen no one connected with his business but Mr. Vickery."

I answered feebly, as I felt afterwards. I owned to a little surprise, but said that it was really of no consequence. This was stupid; because it almost implied that I insufficiently valued the opportunity of seeing Miss Monck; whereas this was in truth most interesting to me.

"I take blame to myself that there should have been anything like want of candour in your reception and treatment here, Mr. Nightingale. I felt all along that you were not being fairly dealt with. I wished that you should have known the truth from the first. But I yielded to one of greater experience. He was mistaken; I thought so then. I am confident of it now. Still he did it for the best. I cannot censure him. I owe him deep gratitude. To his unceasing care and kindness and fidelity I am heavily indebted. He has aided and comforted me in a time of very great trouble. A truer friend never existed."

Again her voice trembled, and it seemed to me that her large, dark grey eyes were glistening with tears. She bowed her head, supporting it by one of her thin supple hands, as she leaned forward upon her desk. Her face struck me as exquisitely sensitive. It was partly in shadow now, the light falling sideways upon her glossy, silken hair, and clear

brow, and small pink shell-like ear, from which a tiny ring depended. Yet I noted that her every passing emotion found expression in her pale, and even somewhat worn countenance. Just as a secluded lake, for all it seems so peaceful, and motionless, and sheltered, reflects now blue sky, and now sombre clouds, and now is rippled into frowns by the breath of the wind.

"I am speaking of old Mr. Vickery, for many, many years my father's devoted servant and most steadfast friend. His great kindness to me I can never forget, can never repay, can never sufficiently acknowledge."

It was new to me to hear the old man spoken of in this way. I felt that I had much underrated old Vickery—that I had done him great injustice.

"My father is ill, very seriously ill." As she spoke a tear fell on the papers before her. "He has not been himself for a long time past. He is able to see no one; he can do little or nothing. It tries him severely to sign his name, even to the few papers and letters that cannot otherwise be issued from his office. I trust he may recover. But I have hoped so long now that my heart is grown worn and weary with waiting and hoping—in vain, in vain. Yet I do not despair. I hope, and wait, and pray still, and my faith in Heaven's mercy does not waver. When your coming here was first proposed, Mr. Nightingale, my poor invalid was not nearly so ill as he is now. There scarcely seemed injustice in his undertaking—I should say, perhaps, in our undertaking on his behalf—to receive you as his pupil, and to do all that might be done to enable you to perfect yourself in your profession. That, at least, was Vickery's opinion. But I see now it was not right, it was unfair to you."

She paused. I felt that I ought to say something. But my surprise, my confusion, let me add, also, my pity for her did not permit me to speak. I could only move uneasily in my chair, trusting that sympathy might be sufficiently expressed by my looks.

"I must go on," she said. "Plain words are best. We were tempted by the amount of the premium to be paid by your relations. In truth, we are very poor. The sum was much needed by us. We coveted it, and we sinned in taking it. You may believe how much it pains me to make this confession. But it is right that I should make it. Already my heart is the lighter for having made it."

She covered her face with her hands. Her tears were now falling fast.

"Pray, Miss Monck," I said, finding speech at last, in an abrupt and rather bungling way, "do not think so seriously of so poor a matter. No sort of injustice has been done. You judge yourself far too severely. I have nothing whatever to complain of. I am only deeply sorry for Mr. Monck's ailing state. I fervently trust with you that he may be speedily restored to health. Pray do not let this matter touching myself trouble you further. I am grateful to you that you have had confidence in me, and spoken to me as you have spoken."

"I wish I had told you all before. You are most kind, Mr. Nightingale. But—there are others to be thought of. Will your relations approve of this arrangement when they know all?—and you are bound to tell them. I had this to propose. That, if you, if they so willed, your articles should be cancelled or transferred, and your premium should be returned—not all at once. That, I have it not in my power to offer. But by degrees, a little at a time, perhaps a very little. Still, that it should all be paid, to the last farthing, I pledge myself, though I work my fingers to the bone. I would not be dishonest, though I fear I may have seemed so."

I could not listen to this proposal, it pained me too much. I said that, in any case, there should be no paying back, or talk of such a thing. I assured her that I was perfectly content. That I had no reason whatever to complain, that she had none for self-accusation. That, under the supervision of Vickery, I was really getting on with my profession; that I was advancing and learning more and more every day. (It was not absolutely true, but, seeing her distress, I could not be cramped by accuracy.) That Mr. Monck's illness, deeply as I regretted it, was no real hindrance to my position as his clerk. Finally, I implored her to command my services in any way, and to make certain that I did not lack willingness to prove my sympathy, and to be of use to her if she would but show me how.

She thanked me again and again, smiling through her tears, I think, at the hurry, and perhaps the clumsiness, of my address. But she knew, she could not but know, that, in intention, it was thoroughly earnest and sincere. Upon my entreaty, she consented, with some hesitation, that things should remain as they

were—for the present, at any rate—in the hope that Mr. Monck's health might amend, and that meanwhile I should continue under the supervision of Vickery. I promised that I would spare no pains to content him and her. She was apparently pleased by my speech, as, indeed, I hoped that she would be.

"You are a kind friend, Mr. Nightingale," she said, as she again gave me her hand. "Pray believe that I am sincerely grateful."

"I may see you again, Miss Monck?"

"Indeed I hope so." This, and the sweet grace with which it was said, stirred my heart strangely.

"One moment," she continued, as I moved towards the door, for I had no excuse to remain longer. Gladly I returned to her side. "It's but a trifle, but Vickery was so anxious that I should speak to you on the subject. He is distressed about your handwriting."

"I fear it is very defective. I find a law hand so difficult to acquire."

"Not so very difficult if you take pains."

"I do try, I assure you, Miss Monck. And I will try more than ever now."

"That's right. Practice is necessary, of course. Vickery, perhaps, is too exacting."

"If I could only write like that. But I never shall!" I pointed to a document on the desk before her. It was written in the perfect clerkly hand Vickery had so much admired, and had bidden me imitate.

"Oh, but you will. That's my writing." She smiled and blushed as she spoke.

The mystery was explained then. Rachel Monck was the secluded copying clerk. She had written the letters received at the Down Farm, and the many papers I had noted in the office. I glanced at her small taper fingers; there was not a speck of ink upon them. But I perceived that she wore over the sleeves of her dress loose cuffs of black calico, such as I had seen copying clerks assume in lawyers' offices and at law stationers.

"It is a beautiful hand," I said. Unconsciously my gaze wandered from the paper to her fingers. But she did not observe this.

"No, it's not beautiful," she said, simply. "But it's regular, neat, and legible. It has an official and business-like look; and it's not really difficult, though it took me some little time to learn. It is so different to the writing I was taught at school. But Vickery gave me lessons. He is quite

proud of his pupil now. He calls me the best copying clerk in London. But he only says that to cheer me."

She laughed pleasantly. It was wonderful how her face had brightened. I had thought her beautiful before, but she was to me still more beautiful now.

"You'll soon write quite as well—better, I'm sure, Mr. Nightingale."

In all she said and did there was a modest unconsciousness of meriting admiration, a graceful and tender humility that was singularly winning.

"If I can only write half as well I shall be satisfied. But you must find it very hard work, Miss Monck."

"No, indeed not. It's occupation. It doesn't try my mind too much, and yet it prevents me from giving way to painful thoughts. And then it's useful. I am helping my father. Really helping him, for if I did not do this some one must be paid to do it. It makes me happy to be of use to him. And I have to be so much alone, or watching by his bedside, for hours and hours together, day and night. But I can watch and write too. It was hard at first, perhaps, but it comes easy to me now. I would not give it up on any account. A woman, a girl, placed as I am, can do so little that's useful, really useful—in the way of earning money, I mean. But I talk too much of myself. There was one thing more I had to say."

I listened eagerly. Content, so far as I was concerned, that she should go on talking upon any subject. It was delightful to hear her, to look upon her.

She hesitated, turned from me to the window, pressed her hand upon her forehead, came back to her desk, and then said hurriedly:

"You know my cousin, I think, Mr. Wray—Tony Wray. You are his friend?"

I said yes. Tony was my dearest, my most intimate friend.

"You will be his kind, true friend, I'm sure. Besides my father, he is my only living relation. Naturally, he is very dear to me, and to my father. Pray take care of him. He is negligent of himself. He has lost both parents—both died young; and my poor boy—I always call him so, for I am to him as an elder sister; we have known each other from childhood—my poor boy is very delicate. I feel that he needs constant watching. He is light-hearted and careless, irresolute and unsteady, perhaps—though quite in a harmless way—unsuspicious, easily led by a stronger

mind than his own. Protect him, Mr. Nightingale—against himself. He should keep early hours, avoid over fatigue, breathe pure air. He fancies himself stronger than he is. Be a true friend and brother to him, Mr. Nightingale, for his own sake, if not for mine. Indeed, to me you have shown kindness enough already. I dare not ask for more. Yet this you will do, knowing now what perhaps you did not know before—for Tony's sake, for your own, as his true friend. He speaks of you in the highest terms. I am sure they are deserved."

There was an earnest, almost a passionate throb in her voice. I promised all she asked, and, as I took leave of her, pressed her hand to my lips. It was as though I had solemnly pledged myself to keep my word and sworn fealty to her.

As I descended the stairs, two things became clear to me. Rachel Monck loved Tony Wray. And I was in love with my master's daughter. Or if not absolutely in love, I was on the brink of it, and could not but go forward and fall in.

ROBERT JEFFREY OF POLPERRO.

If you are ever at Plymouth it will be worth your while to go westward along the coast as far as Fowey. The country is lovely; and it is remarkable, too, for having furnished much more than its proportion of gallant tars during the old French war. It was a grand place for smuggling all along there; and somehow smuggling and serving on board the royal navy generally go well together. They say poachers make the best gamekeepers; certainly scores of Cornish sailors must have had brothers and uncles in the contraband trade, and probably had run a good many cargoes themselves.

Well, just a little beyond Looe river, you will come to Polperro, as quaint a village—"town," I beg its pardon—as one could find anywhere round the coast of Great Britain. It has its history and antiquities. Leland, who is always exact about Cornwall, says, in his *Itinerary*, "From Pontus Cross" (now Punch's Cross, Fowey) "to Poulpirrhe about a six miles, wher is a little fishchar town and a peere, with a very little creke and a broke. There is a crikket" (flat sand—was the game originally played on such ground?) "betwixt Poulpirrhe and Lowe." This pier, supplemented in the seventeenth century by another at right

angles to it, enables the little place to exist. Even thus it has had a hard struggle. Do you know Dawlish? At any rate, you will have heard how many times last winter the sea-wall of that railway which Brunel traced close to the water's edge was washed away. Go to Dawlish when there is a good south-easter on, and you'll see that it is not the rocky "iron-bound" coasts which look best in a storm. I've seen a good deal of both, but I prefer being close to the waves instead of looking down on them; and so I give the palm to a low beach with cliffs some little way off. Such you have at Polperro; and the number of times the piers have been destroyed, and the ruins of the "palaces" (pilchard cellars) demolished by former gales, show how it must suffer in a storm, for all it looks so unlike "the thundering shores of Bude and Boss," or the granite bulwarks of the Land's End.

Everybody in Polperro either goes to sea himself or has a share in a boat. You can generally find on the beach a dozen stout fellows ready to talk to you by the hour. But I mustn't stop to tell you Polperro stories about pilchard fishing—how they shoot an enormous sean-net (say two hundred and twenty fathoms long and twelve deep) round the school of fish, and there keep them enclosed for days, while a little boat, the volyer (follower) goes inside with a tuck-sean, which is drawn round as many of the fish as the master seaner judges can be stowed away in cellar that day. This gradual clearing is a wonderful thing for everybody concerned; thanks to it the curing can be done properly, and a great many fish can be sold fresh; fancy, on the other hand, having to dispose all at once of a thousand hogsheads of dead pilchards! There would only be one way—a way in which too many of our takes of mackerel and sprats, as well as pilchards, are got rid of, in spite of ice and railways—to make manure of them. As it is, by this simple plan of keeping the fish enclosed in the big sean, you have time even to send a ship over to France for salt after the sean has been shot, and to get her back in time for curing. Polperro fishing, I'm afraid, has gone down—were you ever in a fishing place where they didn't tell you things are not what they used to be? Conger used to be largely exported (the trade is as old as King John's day). It was not salted, but cut through, sewn together, so as to form a flat surface, and then stretched on a frame

and dried. The process was an unsavoury one, and the loss from absolute putrefaction was heavy in wet seasons; but as live conger sold at five shillings per hundredweight, while "conger-douce" (sweet) as it was called, would bring thirty shillings, the trade lasted till the French revolution. It was then thrown out of gear, and now the conger is so scarce (like the herrings on the west of Ireland) that there isn't enough of it for home use. The Spanish and Italians used to eat the conger-douce grated into their soup. How they manage to eat the "fair maids" (firmados), salt pilchards with all their juice squeezed out to make cod-liver oil, I'm sure I don't know. I'm as fond as any one of a good fat pilchard, cooked fresh; even a salt one (cured like a Dutch herring) is not bad with new potatoes. You Londoners didn't show your taste in rejecting them last year when the railway took them up for nothing; but I don't think I could eat them in the firmado state. Popery, slavery, and wooden shoes used to go together in the old Orange toast; and I think you might well add dried pilchard as a climax. Nevertheless, it's hard to know how West Wales would do without pilchards. It has been a hungry land—albeit a hospitable—since the days when Andrew Boorde, Henry the Eighth's physician, and the original Merry Andrew, so emphatically condemned the Cornish eating, and above all the drinking, describing the beer as "thick whitish stuff, as though pigges had wrastled in it." The old rhyme,

Meat, money, and light,
All in one night,

is quite deserved; and working under tribute in a tin mine, even helped out by the cow and the potato patch, would be a sorry livelihood but for the yearly tribute of the sea, which brings a little ready money to everybody, for boys and girls and old women are all pressed into work as soon as curing fairly begins. That's the great blessing of this West Country, that the agricultural labourer, pure and simple, and the mere artisan, are alike unknown there. They may be rough (I am sure they are courteous too); they are bad at reading and writing; they are wild in their religions, and they are certainly too fond of speculating. But they don't put all their eggs into one basket. What with mining, and farming, and fishing, most of them have three strings to their bow—farming, please to remember, on a tiny scale; a farmer of five-and-twenty acres is a very big man down here.

And if the mine is "doing slight through the stuff turning out against you," while the potatoes are touched with the disease, why, then, it is a comfort to have the pilchards to look to. Years ago (as I said) smuggling was a fourth string; and stories are still told of those stirring days—how, for instance, one Potter, who shot a revenue man in the gallant defence of the Polperro lugger, Lottery, was hidden away for months, while Toms, his comrade, who had turned king's evidence, was captured under the very eyes of the dragoons, and got out of the way as far as Guernsey, where, unluckily for Potter, the government officers managed to recapture him. Other tales you may hear by the dozen in Polperro, tales in which teller and hearer can feel unmingled satisfaction—how the Providence, revenue cutter, was caught smuggling, sold by the revenue service to the Admiralty, rechristened the Grecian, and sent out to what in those days was the national rubbish-hole—the West Indies. Here the Grecians soon came across a pirate, had a gallant hand-to-hand fight with her crew, took the survivors into Kingston harbour to be hanged, and gained such credit, that orders came permitting them to return to their families or volunteer where they pleased. You will hear, too, how William Quiller, a well-to-do Polperro merchant, being in Plymouth without his protection, was seized by the press-gang, and hurried on board a frigate which was just sailing for Jamaica. Very fortunately the captain was a friend of his father's, so Quiller was appointed to the quarter-deck, and soon showed himself a fine smart fellow. His smartness was needed, for yellow fever broke out on board, the captain and all the superior officers died or were invalided, and Quiller had to bring the vessel home. He did it so well that he got the command of a despatch boat, which, with sixty men, he did not hesitate to lay across a Frenchman with a crew more than three hundred strong. He beat her, of course—we always beat in those days—and his share of the prize money was two thousand pounds! What will the Polperro men do, now that ships have no canvas upon them? What's the use of telling the new race of sailors about the lugger Unity, which, finding itself one daybreak between two French frigates, shortened sail to allow them to board, and while they were busy with sails aback, getting out their boats, suddenly spread its wings and flew out between them

without a scratch to any one on board, and with scarcely a hole in her rigging? The thing seems nearly as far off as the old belief in the pisky (the Devonshire pixy), that ungrateful creature who, if a farmer, thankful for having all his corn threshed out in one night, replaced the thresher's tattered suit of green by a new one, would disappear for ever, singing,

Pisky new coat and pisky new hood,
Pisky now will do no more good;

or as the Midsummer fires, and the "guary mirkl" (miracle play) in its modernised form of a Christmas mummary. No, one now, when afflicted with a plague of fleas and other "small deer," sends (as Polperro folks used to do) the town-crier to a witch's door to shout, "Take back thy flock! Take back thy flock!" And probably very few West Britons now believe in "Parson Dodge," a real man and a "very worthy minister," whose tomb, with the date 1746, is to be seen in Talland churchyard, but who is, Heaven knows why, both here and about the Lizard, inextricably mixed up with the "Wild Huntsman," of whom from Dartmoor to the Land's End there is in half a dozen slightly different legends a very lively tradition. Why the Reverend Richard Dodge should have become a sort of Michael Scott of West Wales, and should have stepped into all the honours of the prehistoric "Whistman and his wild dogs," it is hard to say; the fact proves that, in Cornwall at any rate, things did not take very long to pass out of history into the mythical stage.

But we mustn't forget Robert Jeffrey, blacksmith and privateersman. It was in 1807 that the privateer, Lord Nelson, sailed from Polperro, and putting into Plymouth for provisions, was boarded by Her Majesty's sloop Recruit, Captain Lake, and deprived of several of her best sailors, Jeffrey among them. Captain Lake was a wild young spark—we can fancy him a little like the noble sailor officers whom Macaulay describes as hectoring over the scurvy-worn seamen of Charles the Second's time. Well, cruising in the Caribbean Sea, he let the water supply run very low. So Jeffrey, thirsty and sulky, got at a barrel of spruce beer kept for the captain's table. "I'll have no thieves on board," said the captain. "Lower the boat instantly! Lieutenant Mould, you see that rock? Man a boat and set the rascal adrift on it." So Jeffrey was landed on his rock, and left there without food—with nothing, in fact, but his

knife, a handkerchief, and a piece of wood which a comrade gave him to signal any passing ship with. The rock, desolate and treeless, had no living thing on it except sea-fowl—no water, no shell-fish. But night was falling when he was left, and he naturally thought the captain was only bent on frightening him, and that they'd fetch him back next morning. What was his horror when at daybreak he saw the Recruit disappearing on the horizon? Hunger came on; the sea-birds were far too wary to be caught. To his great joy he found an egg, but it was so rotten that it sickened him. He took to gnawing drift-wood bark; but this, steeped in salt water, made him madly thirsty; and he must have perished but for a timely shower of rain. While he was sucking up the rain-pools through a quill, several ships appeared in the offing, but, though he frantically waved his flag, they all passed him by. He had been on the rock eight days, when the American schooner, Adams, came near enough to notice the signal. Jeffrey, so weak that he could scarcely speak, was taken on board, and carried to Marblehead, where he worked at his trade, quite forgetting how anxious they would be on his account at Polperro.

Meanwhile the Recruit, leaving Jeffrey on his rock, made for Barbadoes, and joined the squadron under Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane. But Jack was not likely to leave a messmate in such a fix as that without talking about it. The boatswain's mate of one ship told the fo'castle men of another, till at last the officers on the flagship heard of it, and then of course the admiral heard the story. Captain Lake was soon sent back, no very gentle language being used to him you may be sure, to pick up the castaway. The printed accounts of "The Wonderful Escape," &c., say it was two months before the Recruit got back; but the tradition in Polperro, traced up to an eye-witness, and in itself much more likely, gives the time as not much over a fortnight. Anyhow, Jeffrey was nowhere to be found. The ship stayed three days, though the rock—Sombbrero Island is its grand Spanish name; broad-brimmed hat island, with its central cone and flat low rock all round—might have been overhauled in half an hour. They found a pair of trousers (with somebody else's mark) and an axe handle; that was all. "He's got killed," said one, though by whom appeared uncertain. "He's gone mad through drinking salt water,

and then thrown himself clean into the sea," said another, with a greater eye to probabilities. Others, arguing as if they were living in the days of the buccaneers, "Tell you what, he's been found and murdered by the Spaniards." The admiral, however, set things at rest for the present, by making up his mind that Jeffrey had been picked up by some passing vessel. But things did not stop here; men will talk, and, two years after, the story of Jeffrey and his rock was talked of to such purpose, that a court-martial was held on Captain Lake, and he was dismissed the service. Not content with the sentence on the captain, Sir Francis Burdett, then in all his glory, kept worrying the House of Commons till a government order was issued to search for Jeffrey till he was found, or till cause could be shown why it was impossible for him to be found.

They might have been searching till now for anything Jeffrey did to let folks know what had become of him. He was quite content to spend his time between Marblehead and Beverley, Massachusetts, United States, and to bear the nickname of "Governor of Sombbrero." But one George Hassel, seaman, hearing what a fuss was being made, took an affidavit before the Mayor of Liverpool that he had often seen the said Jeffrey, and that at the places aforesaid the manner of his abandonment by the captain of an English sloop of war was quite notorious. Of course the searchers at once got into communication with the Massachusetts authorities; Jeffrey's deposition was taken, and, when called upon to sign it, the man, flurried by the number of gentlefolks about him, had somehow put a cross instead of writing his name, as he usually did, in a fair bold hand. "That's never my son, sure enough," said Widow Jeffrey, when the deposition was shown to her; and her letter to the Times (October the 9th, 1809) asserts that "the story has been got up by Captain Lake," why, no one but herself could imagine. The only way to settle the matter was to bring over the supposed Robert Jeffrey and get him identified. As soon as he was found to be the right man, the Admiralty gave him his discharge, and he was taken down to Polperro, where the whole village turned out, with music and tar-barrels, and all signs of rejoicing, to welcome one so strangely rescued. What of Captain Lake? It was soon hinted to the noble family, of which he seems to have been a not very creditable scion, that unless ample compensation was

made, an action would be brought—would it be “for false imprisonment”? So eventually six hundred pounds were paid over to Jeffrey, and with that sum he ought to have become one of the most thriving smiths in the West, or perhaps (as others down there have done with far less capital) to have set up a little iron foundry and made gear for half a dozen mines. But his life abroad had brought out that restlessness which is at the bottom of every Cornishman’s nature. Jeffrey “took the advice of his neighbours,” and went up to London, where the excitement about his “persecution” was still strong, and where some folks were ready to couple together “Lake and tyranny,” and to cry “Liberty and Jeffrey,” as if there had been any connexion between the two. So Jeffrey went on the stage to sing a song or dance a hornpipe. Those were times when a sailor had only to show himself in order to get his fill of honour and all other good things besides; the navy was popular as it has never been since. Much as we love and value our tars, we can hardly realise how much was made of them sixty and seventy years ago, when “the silver streak” was watched daily by thousands of anxious eyes, half expecting to see “Boney’s” flotilla in the offing. So no wonder “Jeffrey the sailor” drew immensely. He made money, going back in a few months to Polperro and buying a coasting schooner. But theatre life is not wholesome for sailors. Jeffrey’s morale (as they call it now) was not improved. His health, too, suffered; and when his coasting vessel went to the bad he fell into a consumption and died, leaving a wife and daughter in great poverty. The story is worth recording, because it shows how, even in those days of very imperfect publicity as compared with the times in which we live, things were generally found out if anybody took the trouble to make noise enough about them. Sir Francis Burdett was a wonderful man to have on your side—keen as a sleuth-hound, tenacious as a bull-dog; and in this case there was political capital to be made out of the affair. “See what our bloated (and Tory) aristocracy is capable of; they’ll not only imprison honest men on land, but they’ll even leave the glorious defenders of our freedom, those sailors to whose heroic devotion we owe our island’s safety, to perish on naked rocks.” One can fancy how the orator would have “sat upon” the whole peerage as aiders and abettors of “this well-born despot.” He got his end; and “the

public,” just then beginning to be rampant, was satisfied, and went and paid its money to see the rescued Jeffrey on the stage. But on the whole I think Jeffrey would have been better at Marblehead. He was ruined, as many a greater man has been, by having greatness thrust upon him. Ask about him if you ever go to Polperro; and if you go there in winter see if you cannot find frog-spawn about New Year’s Day, and vipers and young eels about the month’s end. M. Quetelet, in his *Comparative Temperatures*, says that Nature wakes up there before, it does in any other part of Europe. And he bases the statement on a naturalist’s diary kept by the ingenious Mr. Couch, of whom also you will be pretty sure to hear in Polperro.

NIGHT AND MORNING DREAMS.

I WAKE from dreams of the night,
And the stars aloft are coldly gleaming,
My dream is dark and strange with woe;
Oh foolish heart! dost thou not know
The dreams that are dreamed 'neath the stars' pale light
Are nought but idle dreaming!

I wake from dreams of the morn,
And the sun on high is shining fairly,
The lark in the blue is singing far,
Seeking in vain for the midnight star,
And buds of the roses newly born
Blush through their dew-drops pearly.

My dream hath fled from the light,
But my heart is warm where its face was shining;
Oh happy heart! thou knowest well
What the morning dream doth sure foretell,
Thine onward path will be glad and bright,
Arise! and forswear repining!

MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

A TALKING HOUSE.

WE are in a great hall with a domed roof. The hall is semicircular in shape; a great arc, of which the chord is formed by a long raised platform approached by steps on either side, and (behind and above the platform) open galleries. Opposite to the platform, and separated from it by a considerable space of carpeted floor, are rows of stalls rising amphitheatrically one above the other. The stalls are divided into blocks, between which run passages of steps, spreading like rays towards the outer edge of the semicircle, where in the lofty wall are doors of egress and ingress leading into a corridor. High above these again are other open galleries curving round from horn to horn of the crescent.

Hats off! Look, listen, and say nothing. This is the honourable assemblage of legislators—the elect of the nation—the parliament of the kingdom of Italy now sitting in high deliberation upon matters

important to the common weal. And although this be a Talking House, the talking is not to be done by you and me.

Let us look around us. We are in the "Aula della Presidenza," a gallery just in the centre of the chord of the arc, and immediately above and behind the presidential chair, and are thus well placed for seeing the whole hall. We have gained admission to the Aula della Presidenza by the good offices of an honourable member, whom we are fortunate enough to count among our friends. Fronting us, tier upon tier, rise the stalls of the deputies. Above them again are the galleries for the accommodation of the general public. On the left is the compartment for the ladies; on the right that for the members of the public press. The centre of the curving gallery is open to all his majesty's lieges. There is ample room. There are plenty of seats. There are no concealing gratings or wickets. Only—only the persons in the centre of the public gallery can see nothing but the backs of their honourable representatives, and will be, in all probability, unable to distinguish one word in twenty that is said. For the Chamber has grave acoustic defects, and there is no part of it where it is easy to hear the orators.

The whole place is handsomely appointed. The pillars springing from the galleries, which support the roof, are adorned with shields blazoned with the arms of the principal Italian cities. The stalls of the deputies are cushioned with dark blue velvet. In front of each one is a desk with writing materials, and a drawer for holding papers. The carpet is blue and stone colour in a rich pattern. The president's seat (equivalent to our Speaker's chair), which occupies the middle of the raised platform, is of blue velvet and gilding. In front of it is a table, also covered with blue velvet, whereon are disposed numerous documents, printed and written; inkstands on a massive scale, pens, wax, and pounce; a salver with a huge water bottle and goblet, and a basin full of powdered sugar; and lastly, a great silver hand-bell, almost as big as the bell of an English town-crier. This hand-bell plays a distinguished part in the proceedings of the Italian parliament, and is by no means placed on the president's table merely pro forma, as we shall by-and-bye be assured of.

Right and left of the president are tables for his secretaries and the quæstors of the Chamber, all upon the raised platform. In front of the platform, on the

floor of the house, is a long narrow table—adorned and covered similarly to the presidential table, minus the hand-bell—with nine chairs disposed along it so that their occupants shall all sit at one side of the table facing the deputies, and with their backs to the president; and this is the place of the ministers of the crown. Opposite to them is a curved table following the line of the semicircle, and here sit the members of the "Commissione," a sort of committee to whom bills are referred for revision, and in order to obtain any suggestions or improvements which the honourable Commissione may be able to offer thereupon.

And now it is two o'clock in the afternoon, and the sitting begins to be animated and interesting. Look at the amphitheatre before us. It is peopled with a large gathering of honourable members. The number of "collegi elettorali," or places which return members to the Italian parliament, is five hundred and eight; the actual number of members who ought to have been in their places during the present session is four hundred and thirty-five; and the legal number required to make a house is two hundred and eighteen. It is very seldom that that number is much exceeded. Sometimes it is not even reached, and then of course there can be no debate. But to-day there are more than four hundred members present: for to-day we are to have an important struggle, and an eager debate, on the result of which it is possible that ministers may go out. The question to be discussed may be briefly stated here, although reams of writing and floods of talk have been expended upon it "in another place." It is simply this: are we (Italians) to abolish the "case generalizie," or head-quarters of the generals of the various religious orders in Rome at one sweep, ruthlessly and absolutely; or are we, taking into consideration the peculiar circumstances of the case, to make provision for the maintenance of these said generals out of the revenues of the suppressed ecclesiastical corporations, and permit the present generals to inhabit their old quarters during the remainder of their lives?

To this question the Right, or ministerial party answer, yes; the Left, or opposition, no. And there is to be a battle.

The house is full of a half-subdued excitement, which ever and anon breaks forth in a burst of loud talking, which drowns any single voice. The amphi-

theatre of stalls looks like a kind of drawing-room Coliseum, fitted up with French upholstery, and seen through a diminishing glass. Come what may, we are sure that the gladiators who do battle there, however pathetically they may raise their glance to catch the eye of the president, will not need to exclaim, "Hail, Biancheri! Those about to die salute thee!" The worst that can happen will be a change of places. And if that should come to pass, no doubt ministers will vacate their thorny posts of honour with due resignation and—I had almost written dignity. But to say the honest truth, dignity—at least in aspect and bearing—is not a marked characteristic of the present Italian cabinet.

There sits Quintino Sella, minister of finance, on the whole, perhaps, the most intelligent-looking of those at the ministerial table. He has a square, powerful head and face, surmounted by a crop of thick brown hair, with a dull copper-coloured tint in it here and there, arranged à la scrubbing-brush. He is carelessly, almost shabbily, dressed, and altogether looks like a resolute, earnest man, who has a "power" of work in him. Near to him lounges Visconti-Venosta, minister for foreign affairs, who is tall and bearded, and wears a well-fitting frock-coat buttoned across the chest, and has altogether more the air of an aristocrat, as we English understand such matters, than any of his colleagues. To them comes in our prime minister, Lanza, who holds the portfolio of the interior. The prime minister is rather ungainly in his actions. He has a bald head, with a strip of black hair going oddly across it like a ribbon, and a heavy, sun-burned face. Altogether his bearing is rustic, and seems to belong rather to the provincial country doctor, which he was, than to the prime minister of a great nation, which he is. Lanza has a reputation for uttering famous "bulls," and certainly does not shine as a speaker.

The heads which fill the amphitheatre of stalls, each appearing on the blue velvet background behind his own desk, belong mostly to men past middle life. A large proportion of them are bald. There is nothing striking about the physiognomies in general. You may see a collection of such in any café, piazza, or theatre, where the respectable class of citizens congregate, anywhere, in short, except in church. Nor, except that they are much darker-skinned, do they differ much in appearance from an assemblage of British bourgeois. There

are, of course, notable exceptions. And, oddly enough, I think it would be found that these exceptions are mainly, if not wholly, to be found on the left of the Chamber. Here are more picturesque, singular, and what we should call foreign-looking faces than among their adversaries of the right. The Left displays decidedly more beard, more individuality, more Bohemianism of attire, and less shirt-front than its opposite neighbour. Which is cause and which effect—whether a hairy, flashing-eyed, eccentrically-dressed individual gravitates towards the opposition by some inherent qualities of his nature, or whether, having deliberately adopted the principles of the opposition, he thereupon becomes hairy, flashing-eyed, and eccentric in his garb through some subtle process of assimilation—I leave to some German philosopher to decide.

One characteristic Right and Left have in common; a copious use of gesticulation, namely, to enforce and illustrate their speech. No two deputies can chat together for five minutes without our seeing hands raised in the air with rapidly-moving fingers. Indeed, this play of eloquent hands is so universal all over the Chamber, that if you stopped your ears you might imagine yourself assisting at a séance of deaf mutes. The hands flutter and open, and shake themselves, and double themselves up, leaving only an up-turned thumb sticking out argumentatively, and are clasped together, and separated, and raised, with open palm and widely-stretched-out fingers, or are flung out disdainfully with the back of the hand to the spectator, in wonderful variety and expressiveness of movement. I have heard this flexible pantomime admired by foreigners, and our insular comparative immobility objected to. Certainly one can hardly conceive the spectacle of the British House of Commons dappled all over with raised fluttering hands, like a flock of grotesque birds. But perhaps we may be reconciled to such loss of the picturesque and dramatic as is involved in this fact by remembering that one may express a great many emotions in pantomime, but very few thoughts.

During the whole sitting, servants, dressed in plain black clothes, and wearing a scarf of the Italian tricolour round the left arm, pass backwards and forwards, up and down, hither and thither, along the gangways between the blocks of stalls. They carry notes, and cards, and messages

to and from the deputies. And every now and then a man in livery, with knee-breeches and silk stockings, appears, bearing a great salver, whereon are a decanter full of cold water, a goblet, and a silver basin full of powdered sugar. This he deposits on the desk of any honourable member who is about to address the house. For no man would think of attempting to make a speech without having within reach the refreshment of a copious draught of sugar and water. It is a little comic to observe the invariable routine. The speaker always has a friend at hand, who prepares the beverage for him and hands him the brimming goblet as he may need it. Many orators ask for intervals of rest in the course of a long speech, which are always accorded by the house, and thus fight their parliamentary battle in a series of "rounds," accepting the assistance of their backers in the shape of sugar and water (or, in extreme cases, a little syrup, or even a dash of marsala in the water), and coming up to time again with a fresh burst of eloquence.

Now rises General Corte to interrogate the president as to why his (Corte's) amendment has not yet been printed. The Chamber is not interested in General Corte's amendment, and breaks out into a veritable clamour of talking and laughing, and loud exclamations of "Basta, basta!" (That's enough!). Upon this the great silver hand-bell comes into play. The honourable Biancheri, President of the Chamber, rings violently for silence, all the while apostrophising the deputies in a loud scolding voice. He absolutely rates honourable gentlemen as though they were naughty school-boys, and is sometimes unable to restore sufficient quiet for the orators to be heard under the threat (uttered in an "if-you're-not-good-this-very-minute-you-shall-be-whipped-and-sent-to-bed" kind of tone) of suspending the sitting altogether.

As the debate waxes hotter and hotter the silver hand-bell has a hard time of it. And as to Signor Biancheri, he is as hoarse as a provincial actor after the third act of a melodrama. Now rises Ferracciù, member for Orvieto, and makes a severe speech against the ministerial propositions. The honourable gentleman has a keen countenance, a little vulpine, perhaps, but not in a bad sense, and considerable powers of facial expression. Especially he is able to express sarcasm and irony, with a subtle play of the mouth. But, alas! not only his voice is feeble, but he has a fatal habit

of dropping it at the end of his sentences, and thus depriving his hearers of the very point and sting of his epigrams. It is at once ludicrous and irritating to see that sarcastic mouth uttering, with evident relish, some culminating phrase of which you do not hear one word, whilst all the rest of the sentence, leading up to the climax, has been perfectly audible.

To him succeeds Zanardelli, of Brescia, member for Isco, and pours forth a fiery protest on the same side, swinging his arms violently, and getting himself into a condition to require several "goes" of sugar-and-water during the utterance of his speech. The honourable Zanardelli touches a patriotic chord in the breasts of myself and my companion, when he gives utterance to the venerable and time-worn quotation "Timeo Danaös et dona ferentes." We feel that Italy must now indeed be admitted to be a constitutional country, with parliamentary institutions of the most approved pattern!

The Chamber becomes more and more agitated. Lanza rises to speak, but is rendered absolutely inaudible by the increasing hubbub. Nobody listens to him. Everybody talks at once. And the president, who is seen to be roaring at the full pitch of his lungs, performs a triple bob major on the silver hand-bell! The subject has been sufficiently discussed in the opinion of the house, and members are impatient to come to a vote. But even at this moment of excitement, the house subsides into silence to listen to the speech of Baron Bettino Ricasoli, who rises on the right, and makes a brief discourse in favour of ministers. The old Tuscan is lean, tough, and brown. His clean-shaven face expresses practical sense, courage, and a certain dry pungency inclining to bitterness. He is a man to whom one would be shy of appealing on any grounds of exalted sentiment; but who is probably conscientiously convinced that honesty is the best policy, and who would certainly perceive and acknowledge that two and two make four, even though his enemy should say so—a rarer merit in Italy than you perhaps wot of, good reader. He speaks briefly, and to the point, in favour of leaving the generals of the orders undisturbed in their present quarters during the remainder of their lives, and his speech practically closes the debate.

Then comes the vote by apello nominale, that is to say, one of the secretaries of

the house reads aloud all the names of the deputies in alphabetical order from the presidential platform, and each man as he is called answers "si" or "no," according as his vote goes, from his place in the Chamber. This is a long process, but it is accomplished at length. Singular it is to hear the various tones—bold, indifferent, trifling, eager, defiant, shrill, harsh, musical, deep, soft, or sharp—in which the si's and no's come dropping in from the different parts of the Chamber, like a straggling fire of musketry, with here and there a blank cartridge when a member does not answer to his name at all.

And now when the list is all gone through, and whilst the secretaries are reckoning up the votes (which they do with incredible slowness), the deputies leave their stalls, and throng on to the floor of the house, chattering and gesticulating in noisy groups. Almost all are talking, and arguing, and jeering at, or denouncing their political adversaries' line of conduct—almost all, but not quite. One member remains in his stall constant to the occupation which has absorbed his faculties from the very beginning of the sitting—nearly seven mortal hours ago—to the present time, namely, the writing of letters! He must have written nearly a dozen, first and last, such has been his diligence. He barely responded to the calling of his name during the voting, and answered like a man who is vexatiously interrupted in the real and important business of the day. Now, whilst his colleagues are discussing the bill on the "case generalizie," he sits aloft in his place on one of the top benches, reading his letters aloud to himself with appropriate action! We cannot hear his voice, but we can see his lips move, and his hands wave up and down. It is to be hoped that his constituents will be as satisfied as his correspondents ought to be with the result of his day's labour.

Hush! Silence there! The numbers are at length added up, the result of the vote is about to be announced by the president. There is a stir, a turning of heads, a cessation of talk in the groups on the floor, as Biancheri reads aloud from a paper in his hand the following figures:

"Present, four hundred and fourteen members. Voted for Ricasoli's order of the day, two hundred and twenty; against it, one hundred and ninety-three; abstained from voting, one. Majority in favour of the bill, twenty-seven."

So it is over. The aged men who rule over the cowed army may remain in their old places until Death shall call their names on his apello nominale, to which there is no refusing to answer. The religious corporations are virtually abolished, and we have heard the decree which abolishes them made by a constitutional parliament in the city of Rome, capital of the kingdom of Italy. Strange times, my masters!

I wonder what the sneering monk at the Cappuccini thinks of it all.* I wonder so much that I am tempted out of my due course homeward through the sweet evening air, to look in at the grated window, through which I can see the silent conclave, motionless in their crumbling brown garments. A ray of silver moonlight streams through the bars and falls on the opposite wall. There is the mocking one, his forehead shadowed blackly, and his hideous jaws grinning in furtive derision. "Ho, ho! Your fine parliament," he seems to say, "is a mere puppet-show, a sound and fury, signifying nothing. Look at those yellow bones, that fleshless skull. A nimble tongue once wagged in that, too. But all his paters and aves didn't save him from coming to be like me. And neither will their prate of patriotism save your parliament men from the same fate. How I mock at it all, here in this cool charnel-house, and turn my head away from the crucifix they have vainly thrust into my hand!"

Oh, but you are ghastly and horrible in the moonlight, you sneering sinner! Let us look upon your neighbour, the old man who died over a century ago. Ah, he lies peacefully with closed eyes, and one could almost believe that he has turned over a little on his side since the morning. What is it that seems to sound from his slumbering mouth? "We are all frail and fallible, brothers," he murmurs, placidly, "but God is above all. If you do your duty as best you can, and stick loyally to your colours, and serve your best in the army you belong to, be it civil, military, or ecclesiastic, you may hope for an honourable mention in the last great order of the day. The captain up above there arranges the battle. We see it piece-meal, and have only to obey orders, each according to his conscience. Let us be kindly and simple, and brave and humble, and then, when the Talking House and the Silent House have both come to an end, we may stand side by

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. x. p. 488.

side in the common brotherhood of humanity. And meanwhile, good night; peace be with you!"

OBSTACLES.

THERE was a wholesome moral, rely on it, underlying the brisk narrative of that old fairy tale of the adventurous knight who sought to fill a pitcher at the enchanted fountain. As he climbed the hill, on the crest of which the wondrous water bubbled up, strange voices assailed his ear. There were the fierce threats of bitter foes, the roar of a raging crowd, the soft blandishments of gentle and upbraiding love. Yet the good knight pressed steadily on to the goal, while all around him cropped out in ghastly profusion from the fatal soil a number of tall black stones, representatives of fainthearted aspirants who had turned their heads, and had been petrified as a punishment. Every day's experience confirms the truth of the allegory. For obstacles are of two sorts, the soft and the hard, and of these, perhaps, the former, like sunken rocks in a ship's course, are the most dangerous.

The more familiar class of obstacles are solid stumbling-blocks, real, tangible barriers that proclaim "no thoroughfare," in unmistakable language, and that must be scaled by the daring, or hewn down by the strong. Sometimes these hindrances bar the way, not of an individual, but of a people. We see nations which seem from the outset to be too heavily weighted for the race of life. The Thibetian, cowering among rocks to escape the biting wind, can scarcely be blamed if the nineteenth century finds him as he was ages ago. A climate of imperious cold, a stony soil, a girdling wall of sky-piercing mountains, no roads, and it may almost be said no fuel, unite to keep Thibet the land of hunger and emptiness which it has ever been. The Icelander, who cannot afford fire except for cooking, and whose winter fare is an unwholesome diet of wind-dried fish and ill-fed pork, has positively retrograded since the days when his ancestors colonised Greenland. The old insular Scandinavians owned forests long since devoured by the lava of the giant volcanoes; their cattle grazed over many a square mile of pasture that is now but a cinder-strewn desert, for Nature herself appears to have served her writ of ejection on the dwindling population. There are other doomed tribes whose sum-total yearly lessens. The Esquimaux,

whose national life has been one long struggle with frost and starvation, are dying out, slowly but surely, like one of their own skull-lamps when the seal-oil runs dry. Maori and Hottentot, the black race of Australasia, and the red race of America, wane with startling rapidity. The Polynesian islanders were diminishing in numbers, even before Cook first sighted their bread-fruit groves and coral reefs, and their decadence has been, as usual, the quicker for the white man's visits. War and drought and slave-hunts are telling fast on the census of pagan Africa, and of all non-European races only those of China and Japan appear to retain their sturdy vitality.

Material obstacles, if not absolutely overwhelming, are precisely those which a vigorous nation confronts the best. Even here in England, a feebler stock than our own would hardly have crowded a forest of masts into their ports, or encumbered their wharves with heaped-up merchandise from every quarter of the globe. Our soil and climate do not enable us to dispense with skill and care. We must farm well, and make our coal and iron do us yeoman's service, and plough every sea with the keels of our trading-ships, if we would keep our place among nations. What is true of England may safely be said of more countries than one. Every hay-crop raised in Holland, every shipload of Frison cheese, or Guelders butter, represents a triumph of unflagging industry and dogged courage. Those who redeemed their country from the waves of the North Sea were surely competent to make the most of its resources, and the same may in a less degree be said of Flanders and the spade-husbandry that has turned a barren bed of sea-sand into a huge market-garden. The Rhenish vineyards are ugly when compared to those Tuscan enclosures where the graceful vines form fantastic arches from tree to tree, and where the heavy purple grape-bunches hang mixed with apple and plum, pear and chestnut, one tangle of variegated green and ripening fruit. But in Rhineland each terraced ledge that lines the tall river-cliff has been painfully won by hard work. It was no light labour to level those shelves of solid rock, to plant that system of ladders heedfully pinned to the crag-front, to carry up by basketfuls the very earth that should nourish the tender roots of the young vines, and to tend them in all weathers, jealously watching over every nursling shoot, and setting a nightly guard

to secure the maturing clusters from thieves, biped and four-footed. Here is no instance of nature's lavish bounty, but of a valuable crop reared by incessant and self-denying toil.

The instinctive ambition to rise in life, the desire of almost every man to better his worldly condition, have been viewed by many legislators rather as noxious weeds to be discouraged in their growth, than as the germs of future excellence and improvement. It is curious to mark how often efforts have been made to draw a hard and fast line that should never be transgressed, and to stereotype the position of different ranks in society. We may safely say that the lawgivers of Peru had never heard of Lycurgus, and that the heirs of the Peruvian Romulus or Cecrops, Manco Capac, were by no means cognisant of the laws of Menu. Yet they strove, and not unsuccessfully, to do what Dorian and Brahmin had done, and to crystallise a kingdom into an unchanging solid. There was the heaven-descended emperor, fit compeer of Ninus and Belshazzar, of Numa and of Ella, deriving much of his authority from his semi-divine ancestry, as Semiramis and Cheops had done. There were the priests, white-robed, burning incense to a Transatlantic Mithra, in temples more gorgeous with gold than those of the sun-worshippers of that Persia whose rites bore some resemblance to theirs. There were the great caciques, like so many provincial satraps of Xerxes or Darius, the minor nobles, who furnished the flower of the Inca's army, and the mass of the people, whose duty it was to work and obey. Here were none of the usual incidents of oppression. Compared with the serfs of feudal Europe, the peons of Peru had little to complain of. Poverty was unknown. The task exacted from each worker in the human hive was not excessive. All were fairly well fed, lodged, and clad; nor does there seem to have prevailed any of that capricious cruelty that blots the pages of ordinary mediæval history. But if there was little fear, there was no hope. Merit could not win promotion. The peasant must live and die in his original station, whatever his qualities or his claims. There was a dull dead level of enforced mediocrity which the bulk of the nation might not pass, and hence the ease with which the empire fell before the Spanish sword. The glittering image rested but on feet of clay.

India and China, unlike in most respects,

are at opposite poles as regards their social discipline. Labour, despised in India, receives high honour in the Flowery Land, where the deified emperor yearly puts his sacred hands to the plough. With an aristocracy of double-firsts and senior wranglers, with poets, judges, and philosophic viceroys, the Central Kingdom makes well-nigh all prizes the rewards of competitive examination. Chinese candidates are not hampered by nominations or by a stern limit of age. It is not only a lad of eighteen who may break a lance in that intellectual arena. Many an elderly-young man, often plucked, gets his pass at last, and wears the button of the lowest rank of mandarin. One or two degraded classes are supposed to be inadmissible, just as Cagots or lepers would have been hooted out of court during the feudal rule. But mere poverty and obscurity cannot keep a bright boy back from winning the blue ribbon of official Kathay. There are good schools to which the humblest have access; and the system of coaching and cramming is as well kept up, and far more cheaply, than with us.

Very great are the temptations to Ching and Chang, quick-witted urchins as they are, to stick sedulously to their books, and to invest their pocket-money, not in kites and candy, but in feeing some needy graduate to teach them how to paint courtly verses on vermilion paper. There is something deserving of sympathy in one part of a Chinaman's ambition. Should he rise in life his forefathers will be ennobled, and he will have the satisfaction, very dear to him, of burning incense and gilt joss-sticks before costly altars dedicated to his ancestors. But, independent of this back-handed fashion of founding a family, Ching and Chang have motives less sentimentally respectable. Familiar from infancy with the extortions and frauds by which the chief mandarins swell a moderate salary into an enormous fortune, these pig-tailed young aspirants cherish no fonder wish than to be taken up among the privileged, so that they—even they—may “squeeze” provinces, and tax merchants at their will. The prodigal splendour, the griping greed of the literary aristocracy, are tolerantly viewed by those in whose eyes it is the merest matter of course that persons in authority should play the part of King Stork, and who hope some day to see some nephew or grandson take his degree and enrich his relatives. Meanwhile, there are other channels for the nation's

activity than agriculture or government employ. Commerce is widespread and lucrative, capital abounds; and there are many very wealthy families, dwelling in palaces, with parks around them, that in cost and care may vie with any pleasure in Europe, who are content with the enjoyment of ample means, and seldom send their youths to compete for the peacocks' plumes and gold and silver embroidery of a mandarin.

Far different is, or was, the imposing structure of Hindoo society. The most elaborate precautions were in India adopted to keep every layer of the community in its due position. There were the hereditary kings, now extinct. There were the members of the sacerdotal caste, depositaries of all wisdom, holiness, and civil influence. There was the order of military nobles, ranging from the vassal princes and great feudatories to the rustic lord of some half-dozen ploughs, each and all of whom were expected to keep their sharp swords ready for the slaughter of the outside heathen. There were merchants and bankers, hereditary barbers and sweepers, village head men of long descent, immemorial watchmen and perpetual shawl-weavers. From the rajah to the washerman, each Hindoo had his allotted station, his duties, and his right. The accident of birth determined for him who should be his companions, what his pursuits, how he should live, from the cradle to the funeral pile. The immense servile class, on the labour of which this vast political structure was reared, was, in theory at least, utterly shut out from promotion, and dead to hope. This state policy, however, sorely breached by the Mahomedan conquest, was subjected to a new influence when the growth of the English power made itself felt in the peninsula. Savajee, son of a slipper-bearer, could set in motion more Mahratta squadrons than obeyed the Peishwa himself. Sudra ministers, Sudra governors, have been known to give their orders to Brahmin butlers and high-caste cooks. In India, as elsewhere, a hard head or a heavy purse won consideration for him who owned it, and the possessors of wealth or power became the patrons of those whose sole claim to notice was based on pedigree.

In Europe, whether Pagan or Christian, the spirit of the laws was less opposed to the individual's free passage from one condition to another than was its letter. The slave, in an Athenian's eyes, was not much above the present status of the gorilla, but he put on full humanity when set at

liberty. A Roman freedman was not the equal of a born Quirite, and more than one constitutional victory had to be won before a plebeian general could command an army, or an Italian ally claim citizenship. But this was merely due to the selfish desire of the possessors of good things to keep what they had got, and, certainly, not to any abstract abhorrence of change. Rome was a close corporation. Its patrician families formed a select club. It was not in human nature that they should be very eager to admit outsiders to share privileges which lessened in value as they became diffused. In the Christendom of the Middle Ages the main impediments in the path of him who sought to rise, in peaceful fashion at least, were due to some such jealousy as this. The guilds of merchants and of craftsmen were chary of welcoming a novice, and ready to buzz and sting, like angry wasps, if an imprudent competitor essayed to undersell them or outdo them. The schoolmen were too jealous of a too lucid theologian, the physicians of a doctor who presumed to cure what Galen had deemed beyond remedy. It was not easy, before the printing-press cheapened learning, to gather book-lore. Manuscript works of any merit were incredibly scarce and dear, and the possessors grudged a loan of them to their best friends, if residing at a distance. To dive into the arcana of natural science was harder still; all chemicals and apparatus being extravagantly dear and difficult of transport, while the student who collected a few retorts and alembics ran great risk of being pelted and misused for his devotion to the Black Art; and might, very possibly, expiate his over-familiarity with evil-smelling and explosive compounds by fine and imprisonment. For merit of a warlike order there was always a brisk demand, before gunpowder and standing armies combined to render soldiery the cheapest, instead of the dearest, of commodities. A feudal army, with its tumultuary levy, bound to give six weeks' service, was so awkward an instrument, that any valiant man, with strong muscles and tolerable brains, could make a fair livelihood of professional war. A trained cross-bowman, a skilled archer, a man-at-arms, who was thoroughly at home in his steel-plated war-saddle, could earn a competence, with considerable probabilities of plunder and ransom. Louis the Twelfth of France remunerated the heavy-armed horsemen of his gendarmerie at the munificent rate of seven shillings and sixpence per day, and this at a time when money was nearly

ten times as valuable as it now is. Our own Charles the Second allowed his life-guardsmen to draw pay equal in amount to that of a subaltern of the present day, and, of course, endowed with far greater purchasing power.

If the fighting man of the Middle Ages had any ambition beyond the attainment of creature comforts, its gratification depended very much on his own thews and sinews and fearless heart. Modern battles do not afford such a stage for the display of personal prowess as did the *mêlée* of the old days of hand-blows. Nobody knows whose rifle does execution on the enemy, and Hans, who has hurt nobody, perhaps receives the corporal's worsted stripes, that would have been better bestowed on the fatal sharpshooter Fritz. But there was no doubt about the man who hewed a road through the spear-hedges about him, beneath whose mace the hostile standard-bearer sank, or who brought in the rebel leader, unhorsed and unhelmed. To do justice to the sovereigns of the period, they were prompt to reward service such as this, nor did any prejudice against humble birth or rough manners cast a cold shade over the hero of the hour. Quick! the gold spurs and the knightly belt; clash, with steely clang down comes the accolade from the royal sword on the mailed shoulder of the champion; and as plain Dick of a minute since, Sir Richard now, rises from his kneeling posture on the crimson turf, strong hands are offered to his grasp, and friendly voices hail as a brother the new-made chevalier. The herald, who is devising a bearing for his shield, will charge him no fees for this exercise of his skill in blazonry; the pages at the king's banquet will serve him with as courteous attention as if he were a mighty baron instead of a landless banneret—not that he will be landless long, for the sovereign is guardian of many a rich heiress, and will find a well-dowered bride for Sir Richard, if he do but fight on as he has fought to-day.

The revival of learning did much to smooth the path for those who preferred to carve out their own fortunes otherwise than with sword and the battle-axe. Cæsar then thought it no shame to pick up the maul-stick of a painter. Purlind scholars, better used to palimpsests and mouldering parchments than to the ways of flesh-and-blood contemporaries, suddenly found themselves the petted oracles of enthusiastic princesses and maids of honour. It was more profitable to pen a copy of verses, and sing

them afterwards to some stringed instrument, than to overthrow a stalwart antagonist in the tilting-ring. Sorely did the big-boned, dull-witted cavaliers, who were fit for nothing but fighting, mourn that they knew no Latin, and could not, for their lives, turn a tune or put two rhymes together. And so we gradually reached the reigns of the last Valois and the two first Louises of the Bourbon line, when to write poetry was to be entitled to state pensions and sinecures, when a duke could hardly dispense with literary claims to distinction, and when a smart repartee, uttered within earshot of royalty, proved a goldmine to the utterer. Art, when once discriminating eyes were on the look out for its Avatar, was pretty sure to force its way to the front. No doubt but that exceptional good-luck befel that young Italian shepherd who, chalking his crude conceptions on the walls near which his flock fed, attracted the notice of a wealthy patron riding by, and so was spirited away to school, to the studio, and immortal renown. But when all pictorial power was rare and new, a lad with a great aptitude for drawing was likely to become the brag and marvel of the country-side, and through a probation of sign-boards to pass to the capital, present recompense, and future fame. More than one solemn impostor, more than one boisterous charlatan, sat at meat at that feast which prince and people designed to spread for the witty, the industrious, and the wise. But in the Renaissance itself, with its tender love of the poor student, its fostering care for budding genius, and its deliberate preference of refinement and reason to the old brutal standard of sheer violence, there was surely something touching as well as generous.

To rise, in the worldliest sense of the word, to attain to opulence and high station from the very bottom of the social ladder, is a feat hard to be performed, but which hundreds and thousands of financial acrobats have achieved with clean hands and a conscience of more than average purity. Unwearying patience, sublime self-denial, sound mother-wit, and a healthy capacity for work, are needed to push the climber of the slippery lower steps. Clear eyesight and a head that is not giddy at great heights do the rest. Every London prentice had not the chance, like the ancestor of the Osbornes, of leaping from the parapet of the bridge to the rescue of his master's daughter. It is a pity to think that dear Dick Whittington never slept under a waggon-tilt, or truded pennils along the

dusty road leading to the wonderful city that was paved with gold. Thrice lord mayor he was, and a civic Cæsus, whatever his mythical connexion with the cat, which some mediæval sculptor insisted on placing in the arms of his stone effigy; but it is to be feared that he rode up from Gloucestershire on a shaggy hackney, like any other freeholder's son, and only swept a shop as a necessary incident of his novitiate. There may have been clerks as intuitively thrifty as the quondam millionaire, Jacques Lafitte. It was well for him that when he picked up, out of innate carefulness, the pin that lay on the counting-house floor of that rich banker, who had just refused to employ the clumsy, hungry, country lad, such sharp eyes were upon him as those of the shrewd man of business who called him back to a desk and fortune. Sooner or later, however, work that is at once hard and intelligent, if not overweighted by some remarkable counterpoise in the disposition of the worker, does make its way.

One series of obstacles, more formidable to many of us than poverty, than ignorance, or ill-health, or the dull opposition of the slow-witted enemies of change, remains to be noted. There was truth in the old Æsopian fable of the traveller who wrapped his cloak the tighter round him for all the stormy wrath of rain and wind, but who flung it from his shoulders at the first kiss of the warm sunshine. Ease, comfort, idolence, are the rust and mildew of many a noble nature, and that man is strong, indeed, who always resists the Mephistophilean whisper that it is better to put off till to-morrow what may as well be done then, or any day. To enable us to overcome obstacles of this insidious species, even misfortune often proves a serviceable stimulant, and more than one winner of the world's prizes has lived to bless the day when the shock of some apparent calamity nerved him, at the pressure of need, to bring forth the talent that otherwise might have lain in the napkin, unheeded, until the final reckoning.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNAN," &c.

CHAPTER XII. BY THE LEATH FOR THE SECOND TIME.

WHEN Harty put her head down on the pillow that night it was with an insane wish that she might never lift it up again—never be called upon to front the confusion that she had brought upon herself.

"You must write to Claude to-morrow; you must write yourself, Harty," her mother had said to her, unconsciously sharpening the dagger that was being pressed home to Harty's heart by calling him "Claude," with the familiar intonation of old days.

There was fever in her heart, and fire in her brain, as she lay there tossing through the long watches of the night. The words, "You must write to Claude to-morrow; you must write to him yourself," repeated themselves with every variety of emphasis. What language could supply her with words, in which she should make known to him what she was, whom he had loved so well and long? "I wish I had died before I had loved another man," she thought, as many another woman has thought before her; "I wish I had been too old to care for Jack Ferrier, or to be cared for by him before ever he came across my path; I wish there was no such thing as love in the world; and I must write to Claude to-morrow."

In imagination she wrote at least fifty letters, wording the shameful truth to him in fifty different ways. She could not forget herself and the agony of her position for a moment. Even sleep shunned her as being "too base for its balmy, peaceful companionship," she told herself bitterly, and believed herself for the time.

There was no comfort for her, the poor hopeless, frightened little sinner, in the thought of the man she had promised to marry this last evening. Was he not the friend who was dear even as a brother to Claude Powers? What if she were the cause of the seeds of disunion being sown between these two friends, who had never been estranged before? What if Claude should condemn and denounce her as a perfidious light-loving woman whom no man should trust? What if she were branded by him as a jilt, a worthless, easily won and lost creature, who would make the race of life a losing one for the man who won her? What if all these things should be heaped in fact and in prophecy upon her humbled head, directly Claude received that letter which she must write to him to-morrow? How long the hours of the night were as she tossed through them whenever her mind drifted away from the unavoidable letter to the other points of the wretched case! How they seemed to speed when she thought of the truth her pen must trace in the morning. How should she ever write down the words of shame that would proclaim

her fickleness and frailty of purpose to Claude Powers.

The morning came at last, and with it came Mabel, full of inquiry and surmise, and with just an irritatingly slight tinge of condemnation in her manner. "I'm sure I wish you happiness with all my heart," she said, "but you'll live to repent it; how you could ever look at him after Claude, much more love him, is wonderful to me."

"I looked at him because he was right before me to be looked at, and I loved him for the same reason I suppose," Hartly answered, curtly; "it's useless your wondering about the reason why, Mab."

"It will be an awful blow to Claude," Mabel moaned on, the tears welling up into her eyes as she spoke; "his own friend too, the dearest friend he has. Oh, Hartly, have you weighed the consequences well? it's not a light thing to embitter a man's whole life for a fancy."

"It's such a heavy thing, that it's crushing the life out of my heart," Hartly said, and her face was pitifully ghastly with pallor and with pain. "Weighed the consequences? Well, no, I never thought of them until it had all gone too far, Mab. I wish I had died while I loved Claude better than all the world; I wish I had died faithful to him; but nothing I can do now can bring back the reality, and I can't sham—"

"Perhaps if Mr. Ferrier went away," Mabel interrupted, timidly, "your fancy for him would probably soon die out, and Claude would know nothing about it, and—"

"I should be a liar to both men," Hartly cried out, sharply. "What do you think I'm made of, to love and unlove backwards and forwards in that way?"

"Anything would be better than hurting Claude as you will hurt him if you marry Mr. Ferrier," Mabel pleaded eagerly. "I'm sure when I think of how he will look at you if he ever sees you after he knows it, I wouldn't be you for the world. Hartly, he's so much better and cleverer than anybody else. You'll hate yourself by-and-bye for having left him. You'll blame yourself—"

"Don't," Hartly broke in, impetuously. "I hate myself and blame myself already, and what good does my self-hate and blame do? I must go on, I tell you, now. Probably he knows it by this time, and is despising me as he can despise a woman who falls short of what she ought to be. The less we talk about Claude the better, Mab." And then she stopped abruptly,

criying tempestuously, for she remembered how desperately she had loved Claude Powers once.

A mountain of self-reproach and self-contempt weighed down upon her pen and mind when, at length, she got herself to her desk, and strove to write the words to Claude which should show her to him as she really was. She wrote, and destroyed, letter after letter, and at last dashed off the wretched truth in these words:

"Forgive me, and forget me. I have promised to marry Mr. Ferrier."

Only those who have sinned and suffered in the same way can realise the paroxysm of rage and shame which possessed her as she compelled herself to write this. Of rage against the circumstances which had led her along. Of shame that she should have been weak and wicked enough to be led by them. The feeble, commonplace, conventional remonstrances which Mabel had uttered to her rang in her ears as if they had been wise words of doom. "It's not a light thing to embitter a man's whole life for a fancy." The words danced before her eyes in characters of fire, pointing the way to a long vista of remorse and misery.

She despatched her note by a messenger, and then sat down to wait for the next blow—his answer to it. But her messenger passed his on the way, and before Claude heard from her she received this one line from him:

"Is it true? Answer, yes or no."

In the utter abandonment of her desperation she wrote back:

"It is true. And if I had a daughter I'd rather see her dead than see her what I am."

Even those who liked her least would have been compelled to confess that Hartly Carlisle made no attempt to glorify her degradation. Badly, meanly as others might think of her, she thought more badly and meanly of herself. Indeed, the only thing that lifted her for an instant out of the mire of humiliation in which she was struggling was a pang of fierce curiosity which nearly paralysed her now and again as she "wondered" about the way in which Claude had heard of it from Jack Ferrier, and marvelled in what words he had responded to the tidings. Had he betrayed and denounced her as she deserved to be betrayed and denounced? She conjured up a dozen mind-pictures of the scene between the two friends, and they were all of them faithful and utter, and like the reality.

There had, in fact, been no scene whatever. To his old friend, in the presence of Mrs. Powers, Jack Ferrier announced his recently-formed engagement to the "dearest little girl in the world," and Claude instantly lifted a glass to his lips, and firmly wished them both "all happiness through all time." That was all he said, but he listened with courteous attention to his aunt's statement of belief in Harty's power of inciting a man on to soar to any heights. "An invaluable wife for you, Mr. Ferrier; a clever, ambitious, bewitching girl. I do most heartily congratulate you." But even as she said these words Jack Ferrier noticed that she glanced at her nephew, and seemed anxious.

"Let's have a weed on the terrace," Jack petitioned when Mrs. Powers left them, and as soon as they got out into the free happy air he slipped his hand through Claude's arm, and, with almost boyish confidentialness, said:

"I say, old fellow, you loved her too, just at first, didn't you?"

"God bless her, I shall love her always," Claude answered, rather falteringly; "but it's all right, old fellow, if she loves you now. We'll let the dead past bury its dead."

"Her judgment must have been distorted when she refused you and accepted me," Jack Ferrier laughed.

"We'll drop all mention of me in the matter, please," Claude said very gently. He felt that his friend was guiltless of the great offence of having won her from him wittingly. But this being the case, how the girl must have misled Jack, or how false a part she must have played to him!

In the long watches of the night it came to him to feel and believe that there must be some mistake in the matter. It couldn't be Harty who had done this thing. Jack had spoken of her as "Miss Carlisle"—it might be Mabel.

He felt the full folly of clinging to this possibility, and yet he would cling to it. He felt the full folly of writing that one questioning line, and yet he would write it, though he knew that the answer to it would be confirmation strong, of the worst he could think of the woman who had warped his life.

Her answer came, and Claude Powers put her out of his heart, that is, he put away from him all thought of the possibility of ever loving her with a reasonable result. "I must go away," he told himself. "The English life is over for me, but the prospect of living a little longer in the sun

and the glory of the East smiles upon me still."

And while he was thinking this he looked out of the window, and saw Jack Ferrier riding away towards Dillsborough, looking so happy and successful, in admirably-made grey clothes, on a dancing chestnut mare, and Claude thought of the girl to whom Jack was riding, and of the greeting she could give to the man she loved, and in a storm of passion he cursed the insane esprit de corps which had led him to place such a hard alternative before the living love for the sake of the dead friend. But even in the first white heat of his passion and disappointment about her, even while that fair fabric of faith in her which he had erected was being shattered to pieces, he never had a harsh thought of, or gave one harsh word to, the girl.

The keenest hope that he had left to him concerning this matter was the one that Jack Ferrier might never come to a full understanding of the relations that had existed between himself (Claude) and Harty. "If he does his happiness will be poisoned, poor old boy, and he will never think the same of her again," he thought. And then he resolved that never a hint should be given by him of all the deep feelings which had made up a goodly portion of his life for the last few years. But to keep to this resolution it was necessary that he should get himself away, that he should not see her until years had tamed and withered the bloom off some of the feelings that were so cruelly fresh now.

The immediate difficulty of arranging a scheme by which he might get himself away from the atmosphere of the happy lovers without arousing Jack's suspicion as to the real cause of his departure, was, comparatively speaking, healthy exercise for him. It kept him from that stagnant mood which depresses one physically to a dangerous degree. For if his move was to be efficacious it must be made quickly. Nevertheless, though he believed it to be his only alternative, he rather dreaded making the announcement of it to Jack. For Jack would wonder, and surmise, and speculate with magnificent breadth and freedom about the why and wherefore of it.

In the mean time the man whom Harty was teaching herself to believe in as the real Happy Prince had ridden over to Dillsborough, and been thoroughly viewed and reviewed by the inhabitants of that sympathetic little town. Mrs. Greyling had seen him dismount at the Devenishes'

door, and her sharp vision had at once discerned about him the unmistakable air. "One of those girls has caught him," she observed to her daughter Agnes, "but we ought to be humbly thankful that it isn't Claude who has been taken in."

"If Harty is the catcher I wish it had been Mr. Powers," Agnes answered, "for then she would have stayed among us still; a good deal of life will go out of Dillsborough when Harty Carlisle goes away."

"A Powers of the Court can hardly marry the first wayfarer that comes along," Mrs. Greyling said, good-temperedly; "it's quite different with that young man his friend. I really hope it may be Harty; if it is I shall advise her mother not to permit a long engagement." And then Mrs. Greyling went on to wonder whether the Devenishes would be guilty of the folly, in their circumstances, of "having a show wedding." "I shall certainly advise," she said, "that they do not put themselves to the trouble and expense."

Mr. Devenish, it may be said, was feeling his tongue tied and his teeth drawn by his knowledge of the fact of the relationship between the poor boy who had died by his own hand, and this man who was going to take Harty out of bondage. He was therefore unwontedly quiet and non-exacting, even to the point of meeting Mr. Ferrier with something like deprecation in his manner. "Miserable circumstances which can never be explained without implicating others have surrounded me and given you a false impression," he muttered to Jack. And Jack in the flush of his new adventure into the unknown land of real love, was hearty in his assurances that by-gones were by-gones, and that he bore malice to no man. In short, there was so much sunshine in the home atmosphere that Harty felt her heart lightened of its gloom in a great measure, and ceased for a while to look upon herself as the most miserable of all sinners. For though Jack Ferrier had made but brief mention of Claude and Claude's reception of the latest intelligence, she knew that he had acted and spoken as Claude only could, as Claude ever would, generously, tenderly, chivalrously.

Once or twice the vile, mean temptation assailed her to bury it all in oblivion, and as Claude had held his tongue, to hold hers, and leave Jack Ferrier in happy unenlightenment. But her better, braver spirit prevailed, and she made a solemn vow to

her true colours as soon as she had an opportunity. "He will feel that I must love him best or I wouldn't marry him," she thought, "and so he will forgive me for what fate has made me do and undo." And half unconsciously she felt that it was possible Jack might feel gratified by the tribute it would be to his taste, that the woman he had chosen and won should have been so long and well loved by Claude Powers. In spite of her experience her knowledge of men was miserably weak and limited still. But by reason of her ignorance she tasted happiness and hope just a little longer.

They went out for a stroll along the Leeth meadows that afternoon, and there with its slow waters gliding peacefully along, Harty sought to make her opportunity. But before she could do it there was some pleasant heartfelt nonsense talked, and if had not been for occasional glimpses of the Court woods—wherein every leaf and twig reminded her of Claude—Harty would have been very happy.

"My imaginary bride has always been a brilliant blonde on rather a colossal scale, Harty," Jack Ferrier said, looking down admiringly at dasky-headed, brunette-faced Harty. Then he hammed Blumenthal's melody, and presently broke into the words of that sweet song, *My Queen*:

"I will not dream of her tall and stately,
She that I love may be fairy-light;
I will not say, she should walk sedately,
Whatever she does, it will sure to be right."

"Did you always think whatever I did right, Jack," she asked, trying hard to bring herself to the point of telling him of the greatest wrong she had ever wrought in her life.

"Well, yes, as a rule; just once or twice I thought you might have flirted less with dear old Claude."

"I never flirted with him in my life," she said, and then a ball rose up in her throat, and she knew she could not trust herself to give her explanation just yet.

"Do you know the last verse of *My Queen*," she asked presently; and when he said "Yes," she said "Sing it," and he chanted out:

"But she must be courteous, she must be holy,
Pure in her spirit that lady I love,
Whether her birth be noble or lowly,
I care no more than the spirit above.
And I'll give my heart to my lady's keeping,
And ever her strength on mine shall lean,
And the stars shall fall, and the angels be weeping,
Ere I cease to love her, my queen, my queen!"

He looked down into her eyes as he finished, looked down with a look that told her of his firm belief in her being the

realisation of this fair ideal. And the girl could bear it no longer. The moment had come, and the girl who was faulty, but never intentionally false, was ready.

"Do you think me all that, Jack?" she faltered. And when he told her, "Yes, and a thousand times better," she said, "Poor boy," with a face so full of pity for him, that it was like the shock of an earthquake to him.

"Harty, I wish you wouldn't conjure up imaginary evil spirits, my darling," he said, tenderly.

"They're not imaginary; they're so real that I must tell you about them, Jack," she said, softly and sorrowfully. "I'm not holy and pure in spirit; I have wickedly deceived, and weakly fallen away from a person, but I think you'll forgive me?"

How she clung to that hope still. How gratefully she responded to the reassuring pressure of his hand.

"It's rather a long story; it began when I was quite a young girl," she said, pathetically. Then, with a natural revulsion to her self-imposed task of self-accusation, she asked impatiently, "Jack, haven't you an idea of it? Hasn't Claude given you a hint of it, that may spare me some of the telling, at least?" she asked, vainly; and he still half laughed at her, and told her that he knew Claude had been lightly scorched by her charms when they first came to Dillsborough, but that she exaggerated the business in thinking that either he or any other man could possibly blame her for what was inevitable.

"Then you think it began here?" she asked.

He opened his eyes a little wider at this question, but did not open his mind for the reception of the full fact just yet.

"My dear child, I'm not a Sir Galahad myself, as I have assured you already; I'm not idiot enough to believe that you can have gone along all this time without having fancied yourself in love, and flirted a good deal. I don't mind that a bit; a girl may be as straight as a die, and yet get into a dozen fixes of that sort; what I couldn't stand in any woman I thought of for a wife, would be, that she had led a fellow on with lies, and then thrown him over; I couldn't——"

"Stop, stop," she cried out, sharply, under the influence of an utterly new pain. "You've worded it hardly enough, but, Jack, that is exactly what I have done to

Claude Powers; they weren't all lies, for I did love him so dearly once, and then you came, and it all grew, until it has come to this, that I'm bound in honour to stand here, and tell you what you'll hate me for."

She was so humble, she was so fascinating in her humility, that he wished to delay the probable repentance, which would be his portion, for a moment or two longer, and strove to make her say that it was her over-sensitiveness on the point which led her to try and shock him so, that it was her exaggerated love of the picturesque which was leading her to dash in this study of a storm on the canvas whence this portion of their lives was being painted.

For answer to this she gave him all the story, in words that proved to him how well she knew it, darkening no portion of it morbidly, but assuredly lightening no portion of it selfishly. She put herself in her true colours, with a passionate force that made him recoil from, and still love her more. And through it all he did so cling to the hope that her keen sense of honour, aroused fully now, was causing her to exaggerate her own weakness and failing.

As a drowning man catches at a straw, he caught at the belief that at least, since she had been giving him soft sweet looks, and words that would ring in his ears while he lived, that at least, since these had been her gifts to him, she had been decorously cold and un-Harty-like generally to Claude. And on this hope he stayed himself in silence for some time, while the girl went on saying bitterer words of herself than either of these men could ever be brought to utter of her. But at length, in an evil hour for her, he spoke the testing question.

"You have let him see latterly that you had found out your mistake, and that you cared more for me than you ever could for him, didn't you, Harty dear?" he asked, in perfect faith. And for answer Harty had to say: "He never suspected that I ever thought of another man until I wrote to him this morning, telling him I was going to marry you."

"You've kept him on till the last? You've kept him on after it began with me? No, no, Harty; you don't mean what you're saying. You're doing it to try me, to find out if I'm a scoundrel or not. No, dear, I wouldn't behave like a black-guard cur to Claude Powers, even for you."

"But I'm telling you the truth," she said.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. POOR RACHEL.

As I re-entered the office down-stairs, Vickery, without lifting his eyes from the papers before him, held up his hand as though warning me not to approach him. There was a frown upon his forehead due possibly to the intentness of his study; but I ascribed it to his disapproval of my admission to the upper chambers of the house and my interview with Miss Monck.

"Don't speak, don't interrupt me," he said presently. "I'm busy with these accounts for the Master's Office. Two and five and ten and four"—he continued to add up a long column of figures in a gasping sort of manner.

When at last he paused to take a pinch of snuff, I felt that I might fairly address him.

"I've had the pleasure of seeing Miss Monck," I said.

"Precisely."

"For the first time."

"It may be the only one. However, you've seen a most admirable and exemplary young lady, Mr. Nightingale." He seemed impelled unconsciously, or in spite of himself, to render this homage to Rachel.

"She spoke of you in the highest terms, Mr. Vickery." He looked pleased, though he took to scowling immediately afterwards.

"She's very kind—she's too kind. But we need say nothing more about that, Mr. Nightingale. If you've finished that brief copy you've been engaged upon so long, I shall be happy to find you further occupation. There's plenty to do in this office, I

can assure you, plenty to do; that is, supposing"—he hesitated.

"Supposing that I remain here? Of course, I remain here."

"Precisely. It was not by my advice the option was given you; but as it has been given you, and you've decided——"

"Quite decided."

"We need say no more about it then. Only it may be well for you to bear in mind that all that was said to you was strictly confidential. You will please to regard it in that light, Mr. Nightingale."

"Of course."

"You will show that you can keep a secret. No man can hope to be a lawyer who can't keep a secret. And you will not attempt to see Miss Monck again. Nor to go up-stairs unless you are specially requested so to do."

"For what do you take me, Mr. Vickery?" I asked rather warmly. "Can you suppose me capable of conduct so disgraceful? I shall see Miss Monck only when she expresses a wish to see me."

"Precisely. That is what I intended to convey. I meant no offence, Mr. Nightingale."

"Meantime I shall strive hard to write as well as Miss Monck does; without any hope of succeeding, however."

He said nothing, but by a petulant movement of his head, I judged him to be displeased that I had been informed as to Rachel's labours as a copying clerk. We had no further conversation on the subject. It seemed to me that he was like a miser who had been compelled to disburse. Certain of the secrets and mysteries he hoarded had been torn from him and disclosed, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary. He was angry and indignant that I now shared, although in a small degree,

his knowledge of matters he had hoped to keep concealed. In fact he was jealous and distrustful of me.

I certainly bore the old man no ill-will, however. Rachel Monck's high praise of him was still fresh in my memory. His advice had been adverse to my interests, and I could not but see that in so recklessly securing the premium paid upon my being articulated, he was open to the charge of disingenuous dealing. Yet she had commended warmly his kindness and fidelity. On that score he deserved to be forgiven much more than his sins against me, if, indeed, they could properly be rated as sins.

I longed to see Tony; to inform him of all that had happened. But, greatly to my disappointment, he was for some days absent from our rendezvous in Rupert-street, nor could I find him at his chambers. I had become now so accustomed to intimate communication with him, that I was really grieved at his non-appearance.

I had something to occupy my thoughts, however. I was continually reflecting upon, and rehearsing my interview with Rachel. I wished over and over again that I had more fully availed myself of the opportunity, and expressed with greater force and eloquence my deep sympathy with her, my sorrow for her father's unfortunate condition, my desire to assist and comfort her to the utmost of my power. It was distressing to me to think of her severe trials and troubles; so young and fair as she was, shut up in that gloomy house in close attendance upon a sick man, an almost helpless invalid as it seemed, and her only relief from anxiety and watching, the drudgery of copying the dreariest of law papers.

And then it was plain that poverty was beginning to vex and wound her. She had frankly confessed as much. My premium had been pounced upon and expended. She had protested against this proceeding, but had been overruled by Vickery; perhaps also by necessity. How was this to end? To think of her suffering from want, absolute want! And it might come to that.

What could I do to help her? I meditated sending her anonymously all the money I possessed. Would she suspect, discover me? It might be so; and then I felt that she would have just cause to be indignant at my conduct, to deem herself insulted, injured. Moreover, I found, when I came to examine my resources, that I had very little money to send.

Once I thought of writing to my uncle and applying for a loan of considerable amount with a view to its transmission to Rachel. But I knew that he would require, that he would be entitled to, explanations. Could I offer any? Was I at liberty to reveal all or anything that she had avowed to me? It was true that she had not pledged me to secrecy, but I was not the less bound to respect her confidence. I had promised as much to Vickery. Besides, what right had I to interfere in the matter?

I had no right except such as my love for her might confer upon me. And as yet, even to myself, I hardly dared to confess this love. For very shame I could not. Why, but a little while back I had believed myself devotedly attached to Rosetta! Had I no reason to mistrust my sentiments, my impulses? Was I not absurdly susceptible, and weak and fickle as well? Before, I had admired and deemed I loved. It was different now. But I was moved by pity, perhaps, and was mistaking that also for love. I was very young, that was the plain truth of it, and knew very little—certainly not my own heart.

Yet how fondly I thought of her, of her beauty, her intelligence, her exquisite sweetness of look, of speech, of bearing, her modest goodness! How devoted she was to her father! By what a spirit of self-sacrifice she was possessed! And all she did was so simply done, so absolutely without consciousness or assumption—gravely and gracefully, as a matter of course, without aim at applause of any kind or even recognition—asking rather for non-recognition: a heroine without knowing it, an angel sublimely forgetful of her divinity.

It was thus I thought of Rachel Monck, finding curious pleasure in making her the theme of many rhapsodical reveries. The while a certain fear, nay, a conviction, haunted and depressed my imaginings. She loved, not me, but her cousin, Tony Wray.

He appeared at last in Rupert-street. He looked somewhat pale and harassed I thought. But I was greatly pleased to see him again.

"I've missed you somehow these last few days, old fellow," he said. "I couldn't well help it. I've a lot of things I want to talk to you about."

I was vexed at the time, I remember. I desired to speak to him of myself. But he was hardly in the mood for patient listen-

ing to me on that subject. He was bent upon talking about himself. I felt that I could not pour my cherished confessions into reluctant ears. So I sat silent and unsympathetic—even ruffled somewhat. But Tony, happily, did not perceive this.

"How are you?" he said. "It seems quite an age since we met." (It was four days). "It's quite a comfort to get back to this place. I've been busy, that's the fact. Earning money, or trying to. I didn't want to mention the subject until I'd made a start. The truth is, you must know, I've been getting rather hard up of late. That was one reason, not the only one, for I hold you accountable in part why I gave up that lodging of mine in the Vale of Health. You see, my uncle, Mr. Monck"—he stopped a moment, then asked hurriedly: "By-the-by, did I ever tell you, or do you know, that he's very ill, a great invalid, and has been so this long time past?"

"You've never told me, but I happen to know it." Then I added, by way, perhaps, of interjecting a fragment of the story I had to narrate, "Miss Monck told me."

"Ah, to be sure, Rachel told you. Yes, of course, I'd forgotten; you've seen Rachel." He knew it already then; my story had been anticipated, undermined. "Yes, Mr. Monck's been ill, seriously ill for a long time past. I fear there's no chance of his recovery."

"You fear that, Tony?"

"My dear fellow, I may almost say I'm sure, if one ever can be sure in such a case."

"Poor Rachel!" I thought.

"Well, in his state, of course, I haven't cared to trouble him about the interest on the trust money he's bound as my guardian—I think I did tell you all that before—to pay to me every quarter. I couldn't press him, you know, and so the matter's fallen into arrear. Between ourselves I may tell you this, as you know so much already; my poor uncle, what with his severe illness, and one thing and another, has let his affairs fall into sad confusion, or perhaps I may say they've fallen into confusion almost of themselves, and in any case he couldn't well have helped it. In fact he's hard up, and that's the occasion of my being hard up. Rachel has trouble enough to keep things going. She's helped me, as far as she could, with a little money on account, now and then; but I felt it cruel to be taking it from her, knowing what pressing need she had for it."

"Quite right, Tony. I'm glad to hear

you say that. But it is only like yourself."

"I'm pleased you see it in that light, old fellow. It's what you would have done yourself in like case."

"Indeed, I trust so, Tony; I feel sure of it. Anything I could do to help——" I checked myself, for I felt my speech was growing imprudently excited.

"We're of one mind about it, I see. Well, to avoid taxing Rachel, poor child, I looked about to see if I couldn't earn a trifle for myself, for the first time in my life. I'm not extravagant you know; I've very few debts. A good sum was handed to me just about the time you first came to London" ("My premium," I thought), "and I then settled a good many outstanding bills. But it's wonderful how difficult it is to earn ever so little money; and without some money, you know, there's no getting on at all. The fact is, I've begun two or three professions, generally considered to be of a lucrative kind; but somehow I've never carried them on to what I may call the money-making point. Law and medicine were, of course, out of the question; I'm not a qualified practitioner in either of those walks; and when I tried to turn my art to account—I didn't attempt to sell my poetry, I'm not quite a fool, or without a certain sense of humour; but with my art I did think there was something to be done—would you believe it?—not a soul would look at my sketches or put a price on them even to the amount of twopence-halfpenny. I'm boring you, I fear, but I haven't much more to say. I did find something to do at last; it's very humble, and the pay is ridiculously small in proportion to the labour. You'll never guess what it is. I colour plates for a fashionable milliner's magazine—ladies in pink bonnets, with a dab of carmine on their cheeks, in green silk dresses, with fringed parasols and streaks of dead gold to mark out their chains, ear-rings, and necklaces—you know the sort of thing? Well, that's what I'm doing now, and making money by it: a very, very little. Yet you can't think, taking it altogether, what a comfort the thing is to me. In my joy I'm almost tempted to be extravagant and order a pint of wine, to be paid for out of the first money I've ever earned in my life. The very first! Think of that, Master Duke, and envy, or at any rate congratulate me."

I did congratulate him, as he seemed to wish it; but I felt that for one who had

entertained such lofty aspirations, who had dreamt of becoming President of the Royal Academy, and living in Cavendish-square, this colouring of fashion plates for the milliner's magazine ("La Mode," it was called) was rather inferior occupation, by no means to be preferred, indeed, as a question of art, to Mauleverer's craft of cutting out black-shade portraits. Tony perhaps read my thoughts.

"It isn't much I know, old fellow," he said. "But then it's a beginning; that's how it should be looked at. And unlike my other beginnings it brings in a little money, just enough to keep me going for awhile till I can do something better. Besides, you know, needs must when the devil drives; and the devil, in these cases, I take it, always stands for poverty. Perhaps altogether as diabolical a thing as could be wished. Now about this pint of wine."

But, of course, I would not hear of his dissipating his first earnings in this extravagant way, and I enjoined him to take care of himself, to avoid over-fatigue, and to let me help him in his new labours so far as I could. I said I could easily learn how to colour the plates, and I promised to rise early so as to have some hours' work at them by daylight before breakfast every morning. Moreover, I implored him when he wanted money to borrow of me, pledging myself to assist him in this respect to the utmost of my means.

"What a good fellow you are, Duke," he said with a tremble in his voice. "I'm sure I've done nothing to deserve this. But that only makes your kindness all the greater. Still, you know, I couldn't let you work in the way you propose, and take the money which would properly be due to you. That wouldn't be fair at all. But I see how it is. Rachel's been talking to you about me."

I felt rather guilty. Was my kindness to Tony due simply to my love for Rachel? Surely not altogether. Yet in part it was, perhaps. Nevertheless my regard for Tony was genuine enough. I believed myself capable of real sacrifices on his account. Only, when Love and Friendship ride together upon one horse, it is quite certain that Friendship has to accept the inferior situation, and ride behind. I would do much for Tony. Yet I now knew that I would do much more for Rachel.

But he was quite unconscious of my love for his cousin.

"Rachel is a good little girl—the best

of girls. But she's over-anxious. Poor child! Perhaps circumstances have made her so. She worries herself about me; indeed, I may say she worries me about myself. I know I am not particularly strong; I never was. Neither in body nor in mind perhaps. But she'd make me out to be much worse than I really am. I can take care of myself, and I do. I can't bear to be always coddled and cossetted, and wrapped up in cotton wool, as though I were a sick child, or made of glass. But that's poor Rachel's way. She's always looking after me and taking charge of me, and calling herself my elder sister, which is rather absurd, because, as it happens, I'm a year or two older than she is."

It was plain he did not love Rachel. Loving her he could not have spoken of her in this way. It was cruel of him, I thought. No wonder there was a sad look in her face. No wonder her tears were so prompt to fall.

"But you saw Rachel; what did you think of her, Duke?"

"I thought her very beautiful."

"No, no, not beautiful. Rachel's not a beauty. But she's certainly nice-looking." It was very clear that he did not love her.

"I don't think I care much for brunettes," he went on. "I like blondes best; golden-haired creatures, with deep blue eyes, cherry lips, and exquisite rose and pearl-tinted transparent complexions. That's my notion of beauty. Loveliness of colour. All the best paints on one's palette go to the portraying of a blonde beauty. But one doesn't often see a really perfect blonde; or, indeed, anything really perfect. Rachel's a pretty figure; her movements are all graceful."

"Most graceful," I couldn't help interjecting.

"You noticed that? Her head's well set on her shoulders too; she carries herself finely, like a little queen. And her hands are very pretty. Yes, altogether she's certainly nice looking. But not a beauty, to my thinking. I can't allow that."

I disliked his calm, critical, connoisseur way of speaking of his cousin, though it was really without doubt harmless enough. It jarred, however, with the tenderness of my sentiments, with the staunchness of my convictions. In my eyes Rachel was perfection. Yet it was pleasant, too, to constitute her the topic of our conversation; to hear her name mentioned; to have her praises sounded even in Tony's apathetic

way; the while he was quite unsuspecting of the state of my heart.

"And, beautiful or not, she's thoroughly good and true."

"I'm confident of that."

"A better, I'll say a nobler, little woman never trod the earth. Poor child, she's been sorely tried: but she bears it all with the noblest courage. I honour and respect her greatly."

"I'm sure she is deserving of your highest praises, Tony, of universal esteem."

"I'm so glad, you think with me, old fellow. That's one more subject of sympathy and agreement between us. Though, of course, I could hardly have expected that you would rate her as highly as I do, because I'm her cousin, and have known her as long as I can remember anything, and you have seen her but once, as I understand. But it seems you made a favourable impression upon her."

"I did? She spoke of me? What did she say? Tell me, Tony."

"How excited you are. One would think you were in love with poor Rachel. But that would be too absurd."

"Yes, too absurd. What did she say?"

"Well, not much. And I'm not sure of the precise words. But I think she said that she thought Mr. Nightingale was a gentlemanly young man—something to that effect."

It certainly wasn't much, and was, in a measure, disappointing. Still it was something.

"Girls, you know, are not very outspoken. I said it was nonsense talking about gentlemanly young men; that you were my friend, and a first-rate fellow. I gave her a good account of you, you may be sure."

I could have hugged him.

WEST RIDING SKETCHES.

TRESSY.

A LONG run of prosperity has permitted encroachments of selfishness in many Bington households, where otherwise the most perfect disinterestedness would have prevailed. For several years back the clash and whirl of the loom and the spinning-frame have known no cessation, except during the period prescribed by law, or on occasional feast-days. Wages have also been higher than at any previous period, so that many families, who once had the greatest difficulty in making ends meet, have been elevated into a sphere of plenty

such as, in the old days, they would have imagined unattainable. But, with the increase of money, with the extension of the power of being generous, in many instances there has been a corresponding increase of selfishness. Thrift is a fine old Yorkshire virtue, but when it expands into mere selfishness and greed it becomes a very objectionable vice indeed. It must not be imagined, however, that I would represent West Riding working life as being generally permeated with selfishness; I only wish to point out that the vice is strongly manifest—more strongly than it was in less prosperous times—amongst our factory operatives, though we have still sufficient large-heartedness, honesty, goodwill, and charity amongst us to entitle us to name those qualities as amongst the chief characteristics of West Riding life.

When the factory operative, who has all his life been struggling for a bare existence, suddenly finds himself and family earning "money enough and to spare," he is somewhat at a loss what to do with his surplus cash. If he be a man of an equable mind he will apportion that surplus variously. He will save a portion against that terrible rainy day with which the working man is constantly being overawed; he will devote something to the better provisioning of his table, and he will set apart other portions for improving the mind and adorning the body. Often, however, the recipient of good wages is too narrow in his ideas for this, so he seizes on one of these things only. He will, perhaps, keep on in his old way of scanty living, and carry every spare farthing to the savings-bank, or to the building society; he will, perhaps, avenge the hunger of the past by keeping a perpetual feast upon his table; or he may try to hide the remembrance of the rags of his youth by decking himself and family in costly garments and jewellery.

A parent who has really permitted himself to give way to any of the follies alluded to, looks upon his children as mere machines, whose working value is as much a matter of calculation as if they were so many looms or spindles. The law permits Johnny or Polly to be sent to the mill at eight years of age as a half-timer, and at thirteen as a full-timer, at such and such wages. Unless sickness intervenes, the calculation of their pecuniary value can be made with precision, and the parent whom I have in my mind's eye will be as exacting on the point as Shylock with his bond. On the other hand,

children of such parents do not get far into their teens before they begin to calculate also. Polly says to herself, "I am earning twelve or fifteen shillings a week, and paying every fraction over to my father, and seven or eight shillings a week will be as much as ever I shall cost him. I'll insist on paying for my board and lodging only, like Jenny Farsight and Ruth Blundell, and then I can get more clothes to go out in on a Sunday." Then comes the tug of selfishness with selfishness—the most bitter of all conflicts—and perhaps in the upshot Polly leaves her home, and prematurely sets up on her own account in lodgings.

At the head of this sketch is written the name of Tressy, which will at once be assumed to belong to some more refined creature than a common factory girl. Betty, Sarah, Jenny, Molly, or Dorothy might be all very well for such a girl, but Tressy, the diminutive for Theresa, applied to a girl who works in a mill, whose garments smell of oil, and whose language is broad and vulgar, would be a piece of presumption. So the "fine lady" would argue, but, fortunately for this world, "fine-lady-ism" is not allowed to rule, and the West Riding parent would very soon tell any one who interfered with his liberty on such a point that his child had as much right to a high-sounding name as anybody else. Of late years the Bettys, Graces, Phœbes, and Nancys, the Jonathans, Josephs, and Abrahams have been getting less numerous, while there has been a rapid increase of Lavinias, Lauras, Ethels, and Florences, Claudes, Algernons, and Augustuses, so that, after all, Tressy is not so surprising as at first sight it might appear.

Tressy, then, was a factory girl, the eldest of a family of four children. Thomas Drubford, her father, was originally an agricultural labourer in the North Riding, and early learnt the art of living on the smallest possible amount of food, but tiring, in course of time, of his hard life and scanty fare, migrated, in search of better fortune, to the manufacturing districts. There Thomas presently got employment, and began to feel what it was to live. Both he and his wife learned to mind a pair of looms, and were soon able to earn from twenty-five to thirty shillings per week between them. At first Thomas could hardly believe in his good fortune. On a Saturday, when he and his wife had got their wages safe home, he would be so overjoyed and surprised at being the possessor of such an amount of wealth, that he would

even fetch the neighbours in to feast their eyes upon it. As time wore on, however, Thomas got more accustomed to the sight, and began to have an ambition. Now ambition is a very fine steed to ride if you are a good equestrian, but it is calculated to upset the mental equilibrium of a rider who is not aided by a good ballast of intelligence and patience, and, it must be confessed, that Thomas was very poorly ballasted indeed. He started for a certain goal, it is true, but he only knew the hedge and ditch road to it. For awhile, the enriched agricultural labourer let his money go from him loosely, in the luxuries of eating, drinking, and wearing, but the moment his ambition seized him he settled into a parsimonious dolt. And what was this ambition? Was it to become a manufacturer, a member of a local board, or a magistrate? No, indeed; all that Thomas desired, was to become a cottage owner, a small landed proprietor.

Poor little Tressy early felt the effects of her father's ambition. While her mother was away at the mill, Tressy, who was put out "to mind" during working hours, was being alternately shouted at, shaken, and slapped by her nurse, who, besides minding Tressy and three others, washed the exceedingly dirty clothes of several mill-going families. At night she would be fetched home to be continually in the way of her mother, who had to scramble through her domestic duties, as best she could, in the small space of time allotted to her. Once in awhile, when it occurred to the father that Tressy would have to be taken care of if it were intended that she should live to earn any money towards buying his cottages, he would take her upon his knee, and in doleful tones "sing a song of sixpence" to her, or tell her the story of the little pig going to market, but, generally speaking, Tressy's happiest moments were those which she spent in sleep. Every morning, Sunday excepted, she would be dragged out of bed between five and six o'clock, summer or winter, hot or cold, and borne away to the soap-suds and the ill-temper, finishing her slumbers, perhaps, on a heap of dirty clothes, or tied in a chair. Thus the time went on, year succeeded year, until Tressy had reached her sixth summer, and three other Drubfords had been born to the soap-suds and the ill-temper. About this time Tressy discovered that there were such things as green fields, and woods, and rivers, and that there were such beautiful

objects as buttercups and daisies. How happy was little Tressy when she first fell in with the buttercups and daisies! How eagerly she plucked them! How tenderly she carried them! And how ruthlessly the she-dragon flung them into the street when Tressy, her little heart overflowing with joy, and her face radiant with smiles, held up her beautiful wild bouquet to the washerwoman's gaze! But, after that, Tressy seldom failed to make her escape from the side of the washing-tub when the weather was fine, and in this way she had a short experience of that fairy life which all children live at some time or other, whether born to the gutter or the palace. At seven years of age Tressy was sent to school, where for twopence a week she received the valuable teachings of a girl some three or four years her senior.

When Tressy was nearly eight her father and mother made her the subject of constant conversation, and, although the mother pleaded for something better than the mill for her daughter, Thomas would hear of nothing but Tressy being made a half-timer, in order that his store might be increased. At eight years of age, accordingly, Tressy "passed the doctor," and was introduced to the spindles. Corporal punishment was at that time much more in vogue than at present, and poor Tressy, who could not, try as she would, get through her half-days at the mill without an occasional yawn or sleepy nod, would frequently drop in for a smart "strapping" at the hands of the overlooker. Now and then her mother would see that she had been crying, and threaten to go and expostulate with the overlooker; but the father, who was in constant dread lest some unfortunate circumstance would happen to deprive him of Tressy's earnings, would generally put in his veto, by observing that he supposed she deserved all she got. As a half-timer, however, Tressy learned to read at last, and thereby discovered another new world. She also made companions, and, between reading and friendship, contrived to forget the discomforts of home. Thus matters went on until she reached the mature age of twelve, when her father and mother again laid their heads together. The father would have it that Tressy looked "fourteen, if a day;" the mother would plead that Tressy was "nobbt wake," and "couldn't eight hardly nowt," but Drubford, who had by this time (with his eleven years' struggling and pinching, and the sending to work of

two more of his children) saved about half the value of a cottage, insisted that his wife's pleadings were "all gammon;" so Tressy, by a not uncommon misrepresentation, was palmed off to the factory doctor as thirteen years old, and advanced to the dignity of full-timer. From spinning she was subsequently elevated to weaving, and in time could earn as much money as either of her parents. Thomas Drubford's income was thus largely augmented. Tressy worked hard at the loom all day, and at night worked quite as hard in washing, scrubbing, cleaning, or sewing, being permitted an hour or two now and then to walk in the fields with her companions, or to read the cheap periodicals. Before long, however, Thomas Drubford began to object to these companions. One of them "paid for her meat," and had a nice sum of money every week to call her own; and another had begun courting. These were examples which he must not permit Tressy to follow, if he meant to have his cottages, and that he meant that was more and more manifest every day, as the discomforts of his home amply testified.

But by-and-bye Tressy grew dissatisfied with her plain attire; she longed for brighter dresses and neater bonnets, and it soon became evident that a certain young man named Bob Dobson, who had hopes some day of being an overlooker, was the person whose eye she desired should see her in these better garments. Her father pooh-pooh'd her timidly-preferred requests. For Bob he expressed his unmitigated contempt, and would not allow him to enter the house. The combined influence of Bob and her female companions, however, made Tressy resent her father's selfishness, and, as many other girls had done before, she left home and went to live in lodgings. Her father first entreated and then commanded her to return home, but backed up by Bob and Co., she resisted. This was a sad blow to Drubford, but he tried to get compensation by extorting more work from the children who remained.

Drubford's wife, worn out by pinching and hard work, died soon afterwards, and Tressy went back to live with her father. Before another year was over he married again, taking to wife a woman who could perhaps earn a shilling a week more than his first wife. Tressy refused to live with her stepmother and went back to lodgings and independence, but not for long, unfortunately. One day she was obliged to leave her work and go home. Her health

seemed failing. Her cheeks had always been pale, but now they grew paler and hollower, and her eyes grew less bright. For a few months she lingered on at the mill, being off only a day now and then; but eventually she was obliged to hand the shuttle over to some one who had not undergone as much wear and tear as she had, and stay at home altogether. Month succeeded month and still she grew no better. Her savings went in doctoring, Bob's savings went also, and then her father, for whom she had in times gone by earned so much money towards the cottage he was now on the point of purchasing, was appealed to. "I shan't do a farthing!" was Thomas's reply; "she left my house of her own accord and has no claim upon me." Christian charity was invoked on behalf of the poor dying girl, but that did not hold out for long; then the law was appealed to by the sorrowing Bob, and that failed. The father was then hauled up before the guardians. His answer was, "She can come home when she likes, but I'll not do anything else for her." In this state of affairs the poor penniless girl went "home," but the peevishness of her step-mother and the groans of her father almost drove her mad. It was then that Bob came to her rescue again and took her back to lodgings, where she died of consumption a few weeks afterwards. Bob did his duty manfully. He had her buried in the quiet cemetery on the hill-side, cut a rude headstone for her grave with his own hands, and never afterwards opened his lips to Thomas Drubford, who has now got his cottage and his unpitied remorse as the reward of his selfishness.

This picture, with little variation, has been seen by most people who have been brought up in the West Riding factory district, and, I take it, that the wrong of the man who neglects his family in the way I have shown is almost as great as the wrong of the man who squanders the earnings of his family in drink. The latter has occasional intervals of kindness and affection, the former hardly ever.

KNOTS.

To the genuine West-Yorkshireman marriage is either a desperately serious or an immensely comic affair, a drama of deep pathos or a screaming farce. The denizen of the large town often learns to address his ladye-love in language polite, if not poetic, and is as desperately earnest a lover as can be instanced. But, then, the type

Lothario musters strongly in the town, whereas in the country it is comparatively unknown. To the country, therefore, we must go for distinctive features.

The farmer's man and the farmer's maid have a very limited lovers' vocabulary, consisting mainly of chuckles, grins, sheeps' eyes, and poutings. The foundryman and the blacksmith are also lovers who use few words; but those few are, as a rule, dreadfully emphatic. The factory lad and lass do their courting in a very systematic fashion. Once or twice a week, with the regularity of clockwork William Henry will present himself at or near the door of his sweetheart's abode, calling her out, perhaps, with a sharp whistle, and then the two will go for their evening's walk, in as methodical a manner as if they were performing some penitential duty. Very few words will be exchanged between them, and least of all will they talk of love, for it is the frequent boast of the women of the factory class that they would never, on any provocation, tell a man that they loved him. A girl who can be so imprudent as to tell a lover to his face that she is fond of him, is regarded as a bold-faced hussy who ought to be shunned, and of whom no good is possible. With such views prevailing, it is, perhaps, not astonishing that these country lovers should be such a tongue-tied race as they are.

There exists a time-honoured anecdote in the West Riding, illustrative of this silent style of courtship, which is worth repeating. A young man and young woman walked out together for the first time as lovers, by some mysterious understanding, felt but unexpressed. Only once during their walk was the silence between them interrupted, when the youth touchingly observed, "Treacle's risen, Mary." "Has it?" said Mary, affectionately. On they walked, through fields and country lanes, and nothing more was said until the time came for parting. Then the ardent lover mustered up courage to ask, "When mun I come agean?" "When treacle settles," was the calm response, and they went their several ways.

These silent courtships proceed more by divination than arrangement. After the pair have done the walking out penance for a length of time, the real intention of marriage will crop out by some such announcement as, "I've bowt a rocking-chair for thee, lass." This is sufficient; it is as effective as any fervent love avowal; and is followed by a general preparation

on the part of the girl as well. She will buy such things as looking-glasses, pots, pans, and ornaments out of her own money, and will perhaps also knit a hearth-rug or work a bed-quilt as her contribution to the furnishing of a home. But if any post-nuptial disagreement should take place she will bid her lord to "gi' me my awn an' I'll go," so that she never really sinks her proprietary rights in the effects got together by herself. Often this matter of furnishing will be indefinitely postponed, and the young people will get married, and live with "the old folks" of one side or the other. It rarely happens, however, that this style of living conduces to comfort. When a son takes a young wife home to his mother and sisters it is generally to make his bride's life unhappy. Any token of affection on her part will be ridiculed as "fond," while the slightest show of reserve will be regarded either as pride or coldness. The upshot invariably is, that the son quarrels with his kindred, and, rating himself for a fool that he ever married without first having "a home of his own," he is glad to settle in any poor cot that he can get, and furnish it by degrees.

In the matter of wedding, the villagers of West Yorkshire proceed variously, while in the large towns of the riding the customs attending the nuptial ceremony differ little from those of other populous towns. Marriage by banns is almost universal, and the act of entering the banns is styled "puttin' t' spurrins in." When once the "spurrins" have been put in, the friends of the parties concerned evince the keenest interest in the coming event. The wedding almost always takes place at the parish church, an opinion seeming to prevail that the knot connubial cannot be so securely tied at any other place. Each Sunday upon which the banns of marriage are published, friends of the contracting parties will go in numbers to hear "t' spurrins read over," and, as the clergyman reads out the two names, glances of delight will be exchanged, and the friends will go back to the bride or bridegroom elect with the joyful news that they have heard "t' names read aht." When the happy day arrives, the bride and bridegroom, and one or two other couples, set out on foot to the church, in the gayest of gay attire, the lads of the village crying after them:

"A wedding a-wool, a clog and a shoe,
A pot full o' porridge, an' away they go."

The ladies of the party will be dressed in

raiment of very decided hues—blue, yellow, and green being favourite colours—and will wear bonnets exceedingly gorgeous as to trimming. The gentlemen will be sure to have white waistcoats and "flaming" neckties, and, wet or dry, will carry umbrellas, their hands grasping the stick half way up. All kinds of fun will be poked at them as they proceed in awkward procession; but they will go on their way, unconscious of any feeling but that they are cutting a tremendous dash. On reaching the church the bride will probably be chaffed on the "I will" subject. She will be told to clear her voice for the promise to obey, and she will threaten to say nothing of the kind. Perhaps, after the ceremony, she will pretend to have evaded the promise by substituting the word "bay" for "obey," or something of that kind. Sniggering is the rule during the performance of the ceremony with this class of people, and the parson is frequently called upon to admonish them for their levity. When the knot has been tied the wedding-party will parade the town, do a large amount of staring in at shop-windows, and then get away home for merriment.

Now and again a locality is put into a state of excitement by the marriage of the son or daughter of some rich manufacturer or merchant, when the wedding usages of society will be observed as closely as at St. George's, Hanover-square. Large numbers of spectators will be attracted to the church; bride, bridesmaids, and bridegroom will be almost stared out of countenance; the bells will be set a ringing; and, while the "happy pair" are speeding away to some distant honeymooning land, the parents will be giving a ball to their friends and a dinner to their workpeople.

Occasionally certain spots in the West Riding will be made lively for a day by a wedding of another description. Rusticity is, above everything else, fond of fun, and if a real rollicking wedding-party can be got up, it is delighted. Such an occasion presented itself not long ago in one of the villages of the northern division of the riding, when Sammy Trotters, the old besom-hawker, took to wife the greengrocer's widow, Betty Blobs—two ancient personages, whose persons and donkeys were as familiar to the inhabitants as was the old church-tower itself. When it became known that Sammy and Betty had "made a match of it," the people roared with glee. A deputation, representing the inhabitants, and consisting of a coal-dealer,

a railway porter, a blacksmith, and a landlord—a landlord is always essential to the success of an affair of this description—waited upon Sammy and Betty, congratulated them upon the conclusion of such a distinguished alliance, and assured them that their besoms and potatoes had left such an impression upon the hearts of the townspeople that they could not think of letting so important an event pass without an attempt being made to do honour to it; they begged, therefore, to be permitted to get up a triumphal marriage procession for the happy day. Sammy replied feelingly on behalf of the besoms and potatoes, and assured the deputation that he was overwhelmed, that he had never expected such a proof of their affection, that he could never forget their kindness, and that they might thenceforward command him, in respect of besoms and potatoes, to be lower than any other house in the trade. Betty wept until there was hardly a dry spot upon her apron, and then told the deputation to “get aght!” after which the deputation courteously retired, and did not burst into laughter for more than three minutes. At the end of the three minutes, however, the blacksmith sat himself down on a door-step, and held his sides, while his three companions gathered round him, shouted, roared, and doubled up.

When the wedding-day arrived, the promised procession was organised. The pot and pan band (twelve in number) headed the procession; a halberdier followed on horseback, and then came the representatives of various trades; a salt hawker with his wheelbarrow; a milkman carrying a pump handle; a hot-pie merchant holding one of his own pies on a toasting-fork; a vendor of “long strong leather bootlaces” wearing a collar of unlaced boots; a toffee-hawker with a dripping tin in one hand and a pot of treacle in the other; and many others. On the heels of the trades representatives came six variously-minded donkeys, pulling the old besom cart, which had been suitably decorated with pieces of broom, besom-handles, potatoes, cabbages, and turnips, emblematical of the union of the two houses of Trotters and Blobs. On this cart sat the bride and bridegroom, smiling and bowing. The rear was brought up by a number of male bridesmaids decked out in the bonnets and cloaks belonging to their grandmothers. The whole of the village turned out to see the procession start off, and half the village accompanied the revellers to the town

where the nuptial rites were actually performed. The clergyman not improbably scolded them for their unseemly conduct, but he did not, at all events, decline to perform the ceremony.

It is a wedding custom in the West Riding for the bridegroom to provide what is termed a “hen-drinking,” a tea in honour of the bride. The bridegroom will perhaps contribute a sovereign or a half-sovereign towards this hen-drinking, and the friends who constitute the party will each subscribe a small sum in addition. Rum and tea, and possibly that indigestible compound of lard and flour known as “fatty cake,” will be amongst the things which will go to form the success of the “drinking.”

The standard of matrimonial morality is much higher in West Yorkshire—especially in the rural districts—than in many other parts of the country. This is due in a great measure to the fact, that, in a village, everybody minds everybody else’s business as well as his own. If a case of conjugal infidelity be discovered—and it is almost sure to be discovered if it exist in such places—the “lads of the village” will not neglect to avenge it. The offender’s effigy will perhaps be paraded through the village and burnt at the culprit’s door, amidst shouts of contempt and derision, two or three nights in succession; and in very flagrant cases the antiquated practice known as “riding the steng” is resorted to. I have myself witnessed this practice within the last five years. The “steng” is a long pole, upon which the offender is set astride, and marched shoulder-high through the village, anybody being at liberty to salute the victim with a missile as he is borne along. A man rarely remains in a place after having been subjected to this humiliating punishment, preferring to take his “diminished head” to some remote region where he can live unknown. The feeling from which such practices as these were engendered has not yet departed from the races who inhabit West Yorkshire, and so long as it survives the morality of people must necessarily remain high.

THE FOUNTAIN.

UNDER arched interlacings of green boughs,
Glad with the joy of June,
Shred silver sliding with a tinkling tune
From the curved shell lip, falleth, falleth over
Down rocky runnels, while the west wind soughts
Perpetual refrain low.
Loved haunt to be forgotten never, never,
While her birds warble, while her best loved roses
blow!

Here lit the snow-plumed doves that knew the fall
Of her unhasty foot.
Here at the still, dusk-haunted cedar's root,
Sat she and sang when evening hush'd the air
To listening quiet, and the lilies tall
Lifted pale moonlit faces,
Through the soft shadows, mystically fair
Like seraph sentinals that watch in heavenly places.

The roses, ah! the roses; how they throng
As then, when she would stand,
Bloom-hidden shoulder high, while her white hand
Tenderly, lingeringly, would pluck and pile,
As though she did her darling blossoms wrong,
That she their sweetness stole.
Which yet on the fair pilferer seemed to smile,
Seeing that at so gentle hands death scarce were dole.

The fountain flows, the roses throng, the birds
Trill changefully as of old;
But grey is summer's green, the sun-flush cold
That bathes the red-rose heart. In vain I listen
For sweetest lips that ever spake with words.
Ah, fount, erewhile so glad,
Thy silvery spray-drops that so shake and glisten,
Show now like tears, thy tinkling song is strangely sad!

She loved thee fountain, and would stoop to lave
Her rose-flush'd finger-tips
In thy cool waters. See! a linnæet sips,
Where oft with back-drawn tresses spray besprent,
And budded lips whose kiss made glad the wave,
She too would bend to drink.
Ah me! how oft at eve we twain have leant,
Silent with very love above thy mossy brink!

How oft when shadows hid thee, and thy song
Alone betrayed thee near,
That shyly nestling head, so dear, so dear,
Lay warm where now my lonely heart is cold;
And virgin passion, innocent of wrong
As some white seraph's prayer,
Spake from those stainless lips that love made bold
What time the night bird's flutings filled the odorous
air.

The brimming wave that fills the flower-kiss'd font
Is not more chasteley clear
Than were those radiant eyes. Shall I not fear
A common sorrow, fond, tear-weak, despairing,
Should wrong thy free fine spirit? Thou wert wont
To scorn a feeble love,
A sickly self-bound passion. Art thou wearing
That same high dauntless look, in those bright fields
above,

With which thou loved'st here, when birds were waking
To face the Orient sky?
For thou hadst faith true love could never die,
But was a fair possession for all time,
A gift to greet the gods with, little shaking
In presence of cold death;
Sole amaranth of the earth, whose flower sublime
Blooms deathless through the night that stayeth mortal
breath.

Thou art, thou lovest, and I may not dare
Too brokenly to mourn.
I would not those sweet eyes should shade with scorn,
That watch me from the heights I may not scale
By any road save sorrow's toilsome stair.
I would not thou shouldst deem
Darkness and distance cause my faith to fail,
Or that thine absence makes thy life, thy love a dream.

Loved we? Nay, but we love. Disloyal I
To wed thee with the past.
Thou art. I find thee through the shadow cast
By yon slow sailing cloudlet o'er my face,

What time I lift my gaze to thy calm sky.
Thy fountain floweth still,
Thy roses bloom, and thou in that fair place,
Art waiting me. Ah! love, I wait but Death's good-
will.

A LONDON PILGRIMAGE AMONG THE BOARDING-HOUSES.

I. FAIRLY LAUNCHED.

How did the Wandering Jew employ his evenings; how and where did he spend his nights? No doubt his day's work was often harassing in the extreme. His feet must frequently have been tender, his back racked with lumbago, his knees bending with fatigue; and yet he travelled ever onward along the weary predestined route by day—but what happened to him after the sun had set? In all countries, eastern or otherwise, labour, however severe, except that of bakers and printers' devils and so forth, ends with set of sun. Surely the hapless wanderer was no exception to the rule. Where then did he doff the dust-worn sandals of toil to don the list slippers of ease? Was he given to public-houses; did his proclivities lie in the direction of gin palaces; or did he not rather seek out some homely cot where apartments were provided for single gentlemen, and snore peacefully between the blankets until the newborn sun should arouse him for the labours of the morrow?

Though not a Jew I am a wanderer—not, it is true, among peaks or icebound glaciers. I am not a member of the Alpine Club, or a holder of Cook's coupons, but only a humdrum cockney wayfarer, groping amid the throng of fellow-mortals, seeking to illumine with humble penny rushlight the coigns of vantage of my neighbours, flicking its flame into a flare on discovering some worthy trait, sadly quenching it into blue smoke in the presence of short-comings. I am in London an infinitesimal speck on a huge ant-hill, enjoying, like the rest, my own corner with a proprietor's love, staring vacantly as I pass at the hundreds on hundreds of blank streets that form our metropolis, which seem to return my stare defiantly. Yes, these rows of tenements occupied by passions, vices, and virtues such as mine, have hitherto been a closed book to me, but shall be so no more; and so of a sudden, with an impulse worthy of a new Columbus, or of a blossoming Alexander, bright with visions of new fields to conquer, I gird up my limbs, trim my net, arrange my pins and cork, and start on a voyage of adventure in search of

specimens from the crowds of strangers I jostle daily in the street. By nature I am cynical, not to say morose, and knowing well that society is absolutely needful for the lightening of the shadows of my character, and the softening of those wrinkles that will net themselves about my brow, I came at length to settle in my own mind that I would mix with those who had hitherto been in my world, not of it, that I would seek out a boarding-house in some unimpeachable but remote locality, where I might hear the music of the human voice warbling a new tune, and study fresh phases of that interesting insect without wing-cases whose generic name is Man.

I took a cab and a carpet-bag and culled names from the list in the Directory, for I did not then know, what sad experience taught me later on, that the real boarding-house never advertises, but keeps up its connexion in some mysterious manner, like a branch of a secret society, by means of winks and cabalistic signs. Neither, in those early days, was I aware that boarding-house keepers are fastidious people, requiring an exchange of unexceptionable references before they will consent to receive into their bosom any traveller, however dust-stained or needing rest. Thus I set forth on my travels, clothed with innocence as with a garment, plunging compassless into the vast desert of Bloomsbury, meandering around the square oases, past the purling drinking-fountain brooks, until in a grim street of awful respectability, quite locked up with a petrified layer of antique patrician ice, I stopped at a frozen door, over which in stalactite characters stood the words, "Furnished Apartments for Gentlemen." I rang a ghostly peal; two faded maids peered from an upper window. Presently, as with the reverberating echo of a tomb, the portal swung upon its hinges, and a middle-aged female with sallow cheeks demanded my business. "Well," I murmured to myself, "at all events everything is en suite. That's a comfort, for I like my local colour well preserved," and proceeded to apply for a furnished apartment for a gentleman. "Oh," she said, with a hectic flush, and a sigh like a draught passed through a refrigerator, "so you want to come to us. I'll call mother." I waited in a terrible dining-room, where a small jug of blue milk, stranded side by side with an emaciated French roll on a waste of oil-cloth, told of some prospective spectral feast, until presently a rustling skirt announced the advent of the lady of the

house. A forbidding, pinched old lady in a chestnut front, glorious in a high mauve cap with nodding bugles, a wrinkled old pair of gloves, and a grand silk shawl. "You want a room," she softly purred. "A guinea a week on the fourth floor with partial board if needed. My daughter attends to the gentlemen, who are nearly all away now on their holiday. One only left, a foreign one over here to learn the language. You speak French of course, and German. Every gentleman should do that. Who is your reference? He must be unexceptionable."

I stammered feebly that I had none, and began to feel dreadfully like a characterless servant out of place, when my meditations were summarily cut short by the velvet voice, which said implacably, "Oh, no! thank you. In London we can't do that. A respectable house with a widowed mistress must keep its place, and no one without references comes in here. I could not do it, really. Eliza, show out the person," and, before I knew where I was, the gorgon of respectability had swept away, the terrible "Shut, Sesame," had been spoken, and I stood ruefully in the pale street beside my hansom cab. A few houses down, a similar placard attracted me, and the door soon opened to my ring. After a word or two with the maid, a shrill voice called from above, "What? A lodger? Wait a minute," and a counterpart of the gorgon skimmed down, wreathed in smiles, and minus the respectable appearance. "He, he!" she grinned, displaying an outrageously false set of teeth, "a young brother you want to place with us?" for wisdom had by this time taught me to invent a fable. "How old is he? Eighteen, you say; coming to town to study, of course, and wants society to keep him out of mischief. I understand; and you want to try the place a day or two to see if it would suit? Well, my gentlemen prefer keeping to themselves; it's more aristocratic-like, if not so gay; but if you wish it, he shall live with me and my husband, and the two girls. He's not dangerous, I hope?" and the old wretch giggled fiendishly, as I caught sight of the husband through a door—a heavy man in shirt-sleeves, with receding forehead and underhung jaw, drinking bottled beer. "Heavens!" I thought to myself, "if my fiction were true! If I had an inexperienced lad to cast rudderless on the town, into what better company than this could I throw him, to insure that *facilis descensus*

which should break his country mother's heart. The poor ladies pray and weep over the ducklings fluttering away into the great troubled pond. Would they ever let their cherished boys go at all if they realised the harpies so ready to swoop down on them? "Thank you, no," I answered curtly, and turned on my heel, leaving the old harridan leering in the passage. A long drive, up one street and down another, round all the still squares in Bloomsbury, with their heavy tranquil shade, and buckramed air, and packs of stealthy cats; up and down Gower-street, round endless crescents, into queer, blind alleys, till at length I espied a brass plate labelled "Apartments," on the door of a house with a thoroughly typical boarding-house exterior. An almost hopeless knock is answered by a slatternly maid-of-all-work, who says, "Yes, come in, mussis will speak to you." This time quite a different landlady presented herself, a highly-coloured, full-blown woman, a trifle scant of breath, with curtains of neutral hair flapping untidily around her face, relieved by ambushes of tufts and hair-pins, who ushers me into a dark parlour strewn with a confusion of berlin-wool, and canvas, and knitting. She founced down on a wheezy sofa, took up a stray piece of fancy work, and apparently settled down to a cosy chat, dreamily working on, and smiling through me at the wall. "Yer brother? Oh, I know the sort of thing. Bless you, I've had lots of 'em thro' my hands. Now do make yerself comfortable. If he's like you I know we should get on. I cook and look after the house, though you wouldn't think it in these clothes, but I tidy myself up, and get quite smart. Yes, I'm dearly fond of woolwork. Do you ever look at the patterns in the Queen newspaper? Very pretty. No, I can't bear hemming; put out my husband's things. Can't do them, you know. He grumbles a little at times, but there, if I cook and drudge all morning, surely I may amuse myself my own way of an afternoon. Excuse me, but what's that going on outside? Ah, yes, two boys fighting as usual. They always seem to come here to fight. Very provoking, you know. I do like gentlemen—wouldn't have lady lodgers for the world, oh dear no. Too much trouble. But I can always make gentlemen comfortable. They're dear creatures. Oh dear no! Not foreigners. I hate 'em. Black wool comes off on the fingers, don't it?" And so she gabbled on unceasingly, oblivious

apparently of the fact that I was not paying a morning call. "The rooms? Bless me, yes. You shall see 'em. Dear, dear, I've greased my gown again. Preparing for Sunday dinner, you know. So busy on Saturday and Friday—cleaning up day. Really it's too bad that I should do such work—was born to better things. Here is one of my gentlemen's rooms. A piano, you see, and concertina. Don't mind the litter. I tell him to put unsightly things under the bed, but he won't you know. Very distressing. Can't bear soiled linen. Very pretty garden, if small. You'll come yourself and try? Oh, do. It would be nice. Oh dear no, they have tea in their rooms, and sit in my parlour when they like. But I won't have their horrid smoking there, and they put their boots upon the cushions, which makes them look so tumbled. This is the room your brother will have. Airy and nice. You see one of my gentlemen's linen laid out here now. I wish they wouldn't quarrel so sometimes! Nice shirts, ain't they? Oh, bless you, he's well off, and never complains, and uses wax candles that he buys himself, and windsor-soap, and scent, and things—quite the gentleman. You don't think it'll suit? Why not try? Partial board. Tea, sugar, toast, and that sort of thing, eighteen shillings a week. You won't come? Very well," and the listless, garrulous lady, smiling blandly, shaking her hairflaps from her face, returned to her sofa and her berlin-wool, as I bowed myself out, and evening was darkling to night.

Another turn brought me to a large establishment opposite a church, the centre of a network of winding little streets. Not a light glimmered through any window, although it was barely half-past ten o'clock. I knocked, however, and presently a dim flicker was observable through a fanlight, a trailing footfall became audible scrunching from below, and a vision of a dirty girl appeared with a black smudge across one eye, and a nautical hitch of hanging garments. Then her light having playfully been extinguished by a passing gust, we were left to commence our colloquy in tenebris. "You want a bedroom. Yes; I dare say you can come in, though it's a queer time of night to call. Your room; two shillings must be paid in advance, please, as you've no reference. You can settle the rest with missus in the morning." Half-way up a bare unlighted stone staircase she paused, my bag in one hand, a tin candlestick with half an inch of tallow

dip in the other, to contemplate my outer man through her unobliterated visual organ. "If missus don't like you, you'll have to step it, you know." "All right," I acquiesced, and followed. On the next landing she stopped again, while I examined rows of phantom boots, marvelling at such early retiring to rest, and said, doubtfully trimming the candle with her fingers, "We're serious people. No goings out at night. This is temperance, you know." Being fairly in for it, I bowed my head, and she finally landed me in a little garret occupied by an iron bed, a chair, a washing-stand, on an uncarpeted floor, and an immense text from Scripture framed upon the wall. Under this again hung a smaller placard, enunciating strict temperance principles, combined with early hours, and a certainly very moderate tariff of prices. "Have you many lodgers?" I asked, wishing to shake off the feeling of inhospitality which glared from every flower of the wall-paper. "Two shillings, please, paid in advance, and no smoking allowed," was the uncompromising rejoinder. "No use a going down-stairs now. Gas turned off at eleven. Prayers and breakfast at eight. Good night." The door was closed, the trailing tread echoed through darkness into silence, and I was left alone with half an inch of tallow candle to inspect my filthy garret, and shudder over getting into bed. "A pilgrimage into the unknown is all very well," I thought, "but I would that some other deity than dirt would preside over my footsteps." Although matriculating for a stoic, I confess at this juncture to visions of childhood, to unpleasant reminiscences of first night at school, and its attendant horrors, which took so firm a hold upon me that I found myself arguing inwardly that I was in no way imprisoned, that even now, if I chose, I could seize my yet unopened bag, and depart to some rollicking disreputable little club, where joyous souls assemble, where spirits and water perfume the air, and clouds of tobacco smoke roll lazily through open windows. But it was silly. A fine traveller, forsooth, to break down at the first stage! The feeling must be overcome, and an examination of the premises might not prove unamusing. What a gloomy house! Each wall appears to turn its back on you, each grim chair and table to turn its head away. What serious-looking boots along the breezy passage, square-toed, heavy, country-made! What desperately clammy woodwork, guiltless of "doing-up"

for years! And what an undelectable couch, with thin paillasse, whose interior had become hardened into knotted lumps from long neglect, and ceaseless wear and tear. A pillow worthy of Mrs. Bouncer, and those singular-looking sheets—what strange thing was the matter with them? They seemed clean and tidy enough, and yet— The single towel was the same. Heavens! It was too true. For economy's sake, the linen had not been washed since used by the last occupant, had only been ironed and the creases smoothed away. Then these abstainers drink up all their water, leaving none to mix with soap. What a hideous creed! If temperance induces such habits as these, let us wildly rollick, let us drown care in the bowl for evermore, and die hopelessly in debt to our washerwoman. But the half-inch of candle had dwindled into a greasy mash, and flickered out, leaving behind an evil smell, and so there was nothing for it but to bless the darkness, and seek oblivion as best one might.

Long before seven o'clock I had ceased playing at being asleep, had tossed myself into headache, and was reconnoitring the dead-alive thoroughfare which so fitly framed my teetotal boarding-house. It was Sunday morning; doors opened and closed, and I remembered that prayers and breakfast were at eight. All the rows of shoes had disappeared, my own among the rest, and not having with me a second pair, I was forced to bawl for them over the banisters, as my garret boasted of no bell. Presently, breathless, arrived my unsympathising friend of the night before, with another smudge across the other eye, so that she appeared to wear blinkers, armed with a large pair of list slippers, such as would have been insulting to an elephant. "Shoes? oh yes," she said, "you'll find them down-stairs;" and off she whisked herself, leaving me to follow in the slippers with a very good imitation of her own slatternly trailing tread. The newspapers of which I had caught a glimpse the previous evening had been piously removed, to be replaced by the Unitarian Freeman, the Baptist Record, and the like, while around a long table sat some sixteen persons, remarkable for their angularity, gazing at a tall Scotch divine, who appropriately occupied a chair under Mr. Cruikshank's amazing cartoon of The Triumph of Bacchus. After a text had been read and expounded, breakfast made its appearance, a few late ones slunk into

their seats, and every one assumed an interest in his neighbour's health. Different places of worship were discussed. An old lady, who ought for very modesty to have covered up her poll under a cap, but who preferred emulating the wizened corkscrew curls of Aunt Sally, asked me, with threatening brow, what church I proposed attending. My answer of Westminster Abbey met with a murmur of general condemnation, until the Scotch divine, who really seemed affable enough at bottom, suggested leniently that to a stranger in London the sight might not be unedifying. A pale, thin gentleman, with weak eyes and hair, volunteered to cut up the brown bread, and hacked away right manfully, until nipped in the bud by a tart observation from his better-half, to the effect that if he didn't wait for the eggs "it would get dry;" upon which he subsided into benevolent inanity, reflecting probably that Sunday morning's stale bread could not become much drier than it already was. One old gentleman was very deaf, and insisted upon every trivial remark being translated into his ear in stentorian tones.

"What do you say, sir—what?"

"I said I hoped you had slept well."

"What?—I am hard of hearing."

"Slept well."

"What?"

"Slept well—oh, dear!"

And the would-be hewer of bread blushed up to the eyes and simpered into his teacup. But now began a wonderful ceremony. All the gentlemen got up and gravely proceeded to don their boots, leaving an avenue of slippers all round the room, the ladies looking on the while with a critical air, until I felt red all over, and somehow couldn't get my shoes on, but at last every one was ready and vanished from the scene, to be seen no more until one o'clock dinner, when they all resumed their places with a self-satisfied odour-of-sanctity aspect, combined with a precise demeanour and elaborately adjusted hair. Cold beef, pickles, salad, cucumber; nothing warm but the drinking water, the only beverage apparent. The divine who sat on my right hand observing my distaste for this tepid fluid, suggested temperance champagne, a bottle of which I accordingly ordered, although a single sip made me vow a vendetta against that holy man for life, a feeling by no means modified when he appropriated the sickly mawkish stuff, taking to it apparently very kindly. It was like cider and brown sugar, with a

dash of soda to infuse a sparkle. I watched in hopes of his being taken ill, but the exhilarating draught only unlocked his tongue, for he launched incontinently into anathemas against licensed victuallers and their newly-elected M.P.'s, vowing that beer was death and sherry destruction, whilst as for whisky, pains yet unimagined would follow its use, in this world and the next. But he approved of the divine weed, declaring that the rule was ridiculous which obtained in the establishment under whose roof we sat, and that tobacco moderately enjoyed hurts no one. "No more does beer," I felt inclined to add, but prudently held my peace. Washed down with tepid water, cold beef and cucumber is unappetising food, and so I recklessly told my friend that our meal once over I should proceed to the nearest public-house and order a glass of brandy.

"Come up to the lavatory," he said, "and wash your hands, and we will enjoy a pipe presently together."

I followed, and to my extreme surprise saw him draw from a lock-up receptacle an unmistakable black bottle, containing undeniable logwood port. He gave me a tooth-glass full, and when I had swallowed it, imbibed one himself, and sighing, replaced the bottle in its lurking-place.

"But how," I said, timidly, "do you combine your principles with your actions, for I think you said——"

"My friend," he answered, confidentially, "I take it medicinally. I see no harm in you and I, who are educated men, and who will not exceed, taking a glass of wine after dinner just to comfort ourselves. But the line is fine and easily distorted, and so for the sake of example, and for the edification of the weaker brethren, I usually go without."

"And so do most of you," I ejaculated to myself; "you go without, for you go outside and do it on the sly."

Of course there are good temperance men, as there are good and earnest men in every movement belonging to every class or grade of life. But my own experience on this occasion told the other way, the occupants of that boarding-house seeming a self-sufficient, hypocritical set, weighed down with their own perfection, attending overmuch to the outside of the cup and platter, and thinking nothing of the dirty beds up-stairs. In the visitors' book which lay in the common room, there were some very odd remarks. For instance, Jane

Holloway wrote, "Peaceable and quiet. A home away from home. Persons of serious turn will find all they need." A lady, whose signature was Mary B., had evidently found all she wanted, for she wrote, "This place is full of tender remembrances to me." Could she be the chosen one of the gentleman who gushed forth on another page, "On my former visit I enjoyed myself much more than on this occasion. I had just married, and had my dear young wife with me." Another said, "Remarkably good attendant; she gives a hearty response to any remark." One individual at least appears to have shared my own feelings, for he jotted down, "Fearful affair altogether. Never coming again"—a sentiment which I so cordially echoed, that, holding in dreadful remembrance the terrors of my dormitory above, I forthwith paid a modest bill of some nine shillings and put forth upon the world once more.

IMAGINATIVE MEDICINE.

WE may reasonably give this name to the medicines, panaceas, elixirs, charms, and amulets which, if they act at all upon bodily and mental maladies, do so through the medium of the imagination. The curious volumes by Mr. Jeaffreson and Mr. Timbs concerning doctors, quacks, and patients, are crowded with illustrative instances; and the medical journals are always adding to the store, chiefly for the purpose of exposing and denouncing quackeries. Patients, strongly impressed with a belief that a particular medicament will do them good, often persuade themselves that this result has really been attained by taking the substance in question; and it becomes somewhat difficult to disentangle the actual facts of cure or no cure. Unfortunately quacks are also ready to take advantage of this credulous state of feeling. In some cases, however, practitioners are as honest in their belief as the patients themselves.

Bishop Berkeley, a hundred and thirty years ago, published a work *On the Virtues of Tar Water*, and a few months before his death he published *Further Thoughts on Tar Water*. That he honestly believed all he said is manifest enough. His recipe was to put a quart of tar in a gallon of water, stir them well, allow the mixture to settle, pour off the clear liquor from the sediment, and to drink five or six glasses of this liquor or tar water per day.

That tar is useful in many forms of disease is known to medical men; but the good Bishop of Cloyne went further, and credited it with the qualities of a universal panacea. He believed that tar contains a large percentage of the "vital element of the universe," pure invisible fire, "the most subtle of bodies." He mixed up much of the mysticism of the Neo-Platonic philosophy with the functions and maladies of the human body; the learned studied his philosophy, but the unlearned were much taken with his tar water, which speedily had an enormous success. There was a "Tar Water Warehouse" in Bury-street, St. James's; and the reputed cures were prodigious. If people imagined themselves to be cured, it was hard to tell them that they were not; and yet the maladies for which this tar water was taken as a specific included many which physicians now-a-days' believe would be quite untouched by it. Medical men, philosophers, men of science, wits, satirists, attacked the bishop's theory. Walpole wrote an epigram on it:

Who dare deride what pious Cloyne has done?
The Church shall rise and vindicate her son;
She tells us all her bishops shepherds are,
And shepherds heal their rotten sheep with tar.

The fame of tar water gradually died out.

The Mandrake had a long reign of popularity. The Chinese physicians assert that this plant possesses the faculty of renovating exhausted constitutions. Some nations have believed that the root of the mandrake, if wholly dislodged from the ground, becomes the good genius of the possessor, not only curing a host of maladies, but discovering hidden treasures, doubling the amount of money locked up in a box, keeping off evil spirits, acting as a love-charm, and rendering several other notable services.

The Earth-bath once had an amazing run. About a century ago a London empiric opened a "Temple of Health" in Pall Mall, where he gave lectures on health at the extravagant charge of two guineas for admission, which fee many wealthy simpletons were willing to pay. Among other attractions he enlisted the services of a beautiful woman, said to have been that equivocal person who afterwards became Lady Hamilton. Many kinds of mountebank fraud were exhibited at this place; the last of which was earth bathing. He and the Goddess of Health immersed themselves to the chin in warm earth, he with his hair full dressed and powdered,

she with the fashionable coiffure. How many dupes honestly believed in their own cure by such means, history has not recorded; but the admission to the "Temple" gradually fell from two guineas to one shilling, and then the earth-bath died out—not, however, before the "lady" had run much chance of ruining her health by this peculiar kind of bathing.

The Toad has had its day of importance, in the minds of those who look for specifics against diseases; and so has the toad-stone, which was described by Joanna Baillie in a letter to Sir Walter Scott as "a celebrated amulet, which was never lent to any one unless upon a bond for a thousand marks for its being safely restored. It was sovereign for protecting new-born children and their mothers from the power of the fairies; and has been repeatedly borrowed from my mother for this purpose." This amulet was described as being a convex circular stone, rather less than three-quarters of an inch in diameter, semi-transparent, dark grey, and apparently silicious composition; it was set in a massive silver thumb ring. Besides its virtues as a charm for keeping off wicked fairies, this toad-stone was believed to be a specific against diseases of the kidney's; it was immersed in a cup of water, and the water then quaffed off.

The Eagle-stone bore some analogy to the toad-stone. Pliny the naturalist, who had an abundant belief in wonderful medicines, gravely stated that a round perforated stone, if found in an eagle's nest, will prove to be a specific against disease, and a charm against shipwreck and other disasters. Mr. Timbs quotes a passage from Charlotte Smith, to the following effect: "An acquaintance of mine possessed an amulet of this description, for which his mother had paid a considerable sum. It was small, brown, and when shaken rattled as though another stone was enclosed within it. A riband was usually passed through its perforation; and it was said to possess more virtues than I can pretend to enumerate."

Fish charms have been met with among many nations. The fish called the bull-head is used by some of the Russian peasants as a charm against fever. Again, if suspended horizontally, and carefully balanced by a single thread, while allowed some freedom of motion, the fish is credited with the power of indicating, by the direction of the head, the point of the compass from which the wind will blow. Many

kinds of fish have two hard bones just within the sides of the head; and one species, the maigre, has these bones larger in proportion than most others. These two bones, called colic stones, are in some countries regarded to possess medicinal virtues; mounted in gold, and hung round the neck, they are a specific for the colic. But this peculiarity attaches to them: they must have been received as a gift; if purchased, they do not possess the magic virtue.

The Lee Penny has had much celebrity among curative agencies. It is a dark red triangular stone, measuring about half an inch along each side; and is set in a silver coin. This coin, though much defaced, is supposed to be a shilling of Edward the First, and has been in the possession of the Lee family for centuries. It used to be believed that if this stone were dipped in water, the water, when drunk, would cure all diseases in cattle, and the bite of a mad dog. Once, when the plague was at Newcastle, the inhabitants begged the loan of the Lee Penny, leaving a large sum of money as bond for its safety; it "did so much good," that the citizens wished to purchase and retain it for the sum deposited; but this the owner declined. One Lady Baird, of Saughton Hall, near Edinburgh, was bitten by a mad dog, and was in a sad way about it; she begged the loan of the Lee Penny, steeped it in water, drank the water and even bathed in it, and continued this course for six weeks; either by the effect of the water or of her imagination, of her natural good health or of an improved regimen, she recovered; but the Lee Penny received all the praise. In one year (the date unfortunately not given), Mr. Hamilton, of Raplock, cited Sir James Lockhart, of Lee, to appear before the Synod of Glasgow, and answer to the charge of encouraging and indulging in superstition by the use of the Lee Penny. The Synod found on inquiry, that the virtue was attributed to the water in which the stone was dipped, that no words were uttered such as are used by charmers and sorcerers; they, therefore, acquitted Sir James, on the ground that "in nature there are many things said to work strange effects, whereof no humane wit can give a reason: it having pleased God to give unto stones and herbes a special vertue for the healinge of many infirmitie in man and beast."

Medicinal rings were at one time very seriously believed in. Physicians were

went to wear finger rings, in which stones were set; and these stones were credited with the possession of many virtues. Sometimes the patient was simply touched with the ring; sometimes he put it on his finger for awhile. Many a patient has worn such a ring to stop an hemorrhage, which sedatives, absorbents, and astringents alike failed to allay; if the desired result followed, the ring was unreservedly regarded as the healing agent; if the cure did not follow, we are told nothing about it; for in these matters

What is hit is history;
But what is miss'd is mystery!

A wine-coloured amethyst, set in a ring, was a specific against intoxication and its consequences; a hyacinth stone, similarly set, acted as a charm to produce sleep; an agate had wonderful power in curing amaurosis and other diseases of the eye; a jasper showed its value in cases of dropsy and fever; while a coral was an antidote against nervousness and causeless fears. That many imaginative cures have been wrought by such means, who can deny? Even if the patient only gets a little better, and attributes the healing influence to the stone in the ring, he may be right so far as this—that the influence exerts itself through the imagination.

The Touch is, historically speaking, one of the most curious examples of imaginative cures, on account of its attributed connexion with the Royal Family of England. A belief prevailed for many centuries that the British sovereign had the power of curing disease by touching the part affected. Especially was this the case in regard to the disease known as scrofula or king's evil. Edward the Confessor, nine centuries ago, "touched" many of his subjects. Chroniclers differed in opinion on the question, whether this power was due to the special piety of Edward, or whether it was inherent in the blood of the Saxon kings. To what extent the Norman kings followed the example is not known; but Henry the Second certainly "touched." The ceremony was more or less continued to the eighteenth century. The Stuarts believed in it, or at any rate accommodated the belief of it in the minds of other persons. William the Third did not. Macaulay says that, when the king heard that his palace was besieged by a crowd of sick persons towards the close of Lent, he exclaimed, "It is a silly superstition; give the poor creatures some money, and send them away." And when, on a particular occasion, a patient was importuning for a

touch, William said, "God give you better health—and more sense." How far the hope of some little pecuniary advantage influenced the patient, it would be difficult to decide; for Charles the Second, who "touched" no fewer than twenty thousand persons in the first four years after his restoration, is believed to have been rather liberal in giving money to them; and the applicants were many more in number than those who were really afflicted with king's evil. One form of the belief was that, if the sovereign touched a particular coin, it became thereafter a panacea against king's evil; several such coins, called royal touch-pieces, are preserved in the British Museum. Queen Anne touched no less a person than Doctor Johnson, or, to speak more exactly, a child of three years old, who afterwards became the great lexicographer. In a prayer-book of the Church of England, printed during the reign of that sovereign, there is printed a service "At the Healing," in which these instructions are given: "Then shall the infirm persons, one by one, be presented to the queen upon their knees; and as every one is presented, and while the queen is laying her hands upon them, and putting the gold about their necks, the chaplain that officiates, turning himself to her majesty, shall say the words following: 'God give a blessing to this work, and grant that these sick persons, on whom the queen lays her hands, may recover, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'" Here the touch is at once a royal and a religious ceremony. An old man, witness at a trial, averred that when Queen Anne was at Oxford, she touched him (then a child) for the evil; he added that he did not believe himself to have had the evil, but "his parents were poor, and had no objection to a bit of gold." If this means that a bit of gold accompanied the touch, we need not wonder that the touching was popular among the poor. The Pretender, in the time of George the First, had a touch-piece cast or stamped for him, in order that he might exercise the mystic power of the royal touch as well as the (hoped-for) substantial power. Touching for the evil does not appear to have been practised in England after the demise of Queen Anne. A similar healing power was claimed by many of the French monarchs, from Clovis the First down to Louis the Fourteenth. Even below the rank of royalty, the attribution of this power may be met with in persons of distinguished rank or exceptional piety; and there may

still be found old women in our country villages who claim to be able to cure warts and other skin affections by simply stroking the affected part with the hand.

The Caul is one of the most remarkable existing evidences of the belief in a curative influence which, supposing it to be possessed at all, can only act through the imagination. Those who search the columns of the Times for curiosities will meet with advertisements such as the following: "A child's caul for sale." "A child's caul to be disposed of; a well-known preservative against drowning, &c.; price ten guineas." "To mariners, &c.; to be sold, a child's caul, price fifteen guineas." "To be sold, a child's caul; to save gentlemen trouble, price thirty pounds." "A child's caul to be sold for fifteen pounds." Persons who know nothing of this subject may wonder what a child's caul may be. This name is given to a membrane which is sometimes found on the head of an infant at birth, nearly encompassing the head. It is a rare occurrence, and the rarity has led to great importance being attached to it. The child itself will be lucky; and the owner of the caul in after years will be shielded from many troubles that affect his neighbours. The superstition came from the East, where it had its origin in remote ages. Many diseases were believed to be curable by the wearing of a caul; and to this day some sailors—even English sailors in the second half of the nineteenth century—have a faith in the efficacy of a child's caul to preserve them from drowning at sea. Sir John Offley, of Madeley Manor, in Staffordshire, bequeathed a caul as a heirloom, in a will proved in 1658: "I will and devise one jewell done all in gold, enameled, wherein there is a caul that covered my face and shoulders when I first came into the world, the use thereof to my loving daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Jenny, so long as she shall live; and after her decease, the use likewise to her son, Offley Jenny, during his natural life; and after his decease to my own right heirs male for ever; and so from heir to heir to be left so long as it shall please God of his goodness to continue any heir male of my name; desiring the same jewell to be not conceded nor sold by any of them." A child two years old fell into a well near Romford, and floated face uppermost on the face of the water, whence he was rescued by his mother. The good woman at once attributed the preservation of her boy to the fact that he had been born with a caul.

The readers of Hood's Whims and Oddities will remember *The Sea Spell*, in which, imitating the style of the old ballads, he narrates a sea story, but pokes his fun in every stanza at the superstition of the child's caul.

Charms, amulets, talismans, and phylacteries all belong to the list of articles which produce imaginative cures; seeing that the persons who trust to them believe in some good obtainable from them, in purse or in person, in health or in welfare; and if the good does come, most assuredly the imagination is the channel through which it approaches. Two or three years ago, at a town in Worcestershire, after the inquest on the body of a man drowned in the Severn, a woman applied to the chief constable for permission to draw the hand of her son, a boy of eight or nine years of age, nine times across the dead man's throat, in order to bring about the removal of a wen from the boy's neck! In another instance, in the same county, this was actually done, with fatal results; for the man had died of typhoid fever, which was in this way communicated to several living persons. A ring made of the hinge of a coffin, and a rusty old sword hung by the bedside, are (in some districts) charms against the cramp; headache is removed by the halter that has hung a criminal, and also by a snuff made from moss that has grown on a human skull in a graveyard. A dead man's hand, and especially the hand of a man who had been cut down while hanging, dispels tumours. Warts may be removed by rubbing them with a bit of stolen beef; the chips of a gallows, worn in a little bag round the neck, will cure the ague; a stone with a hole in it, suspended at the bed's head, will prevent nightmare. Many verses are known, which, if repeated aloud, are credited with curing cramp, burns, and other bodily troubles. When you have the whooping-cough, apply for a remedy to the first person you meet with riding on a piebald horse—a ceremony that Doctor Lettison, the physician, was fated more than once to become acquainted with. Amulets, hung in a little bag around the neck, are very widely credited with the power of warding off disease; the list of such substances is an ample one, but need not be given here. The anodyne necklace, which was a profitable affair for one Doctor Turner in the early part of the present century, consisted of beads made of white bryony root; it was believed to assist in cutting the teeth of infants around whose neck it was hung.

One peculiar kind of amulet is the phylactery, a bit of parchment on which a few sacred words have been written; if worn on the person, it is a safeguard against disease and calamity. The Jews in the East used to carry such an amulet written with a Hebrew verse from the Bible; and some of the Mahomedans with an Arabic sentence from the Koran. A horseshoe is a perennial favourite, as a bringer of success. Doctor James picked up a horseshoe on Westminster Bridge, and put it in his pocket; that same evening he made a profitable commercial arrangement concerning his famous Fever Powders, which he ever afterwards attributed to the horseshoe. Strange provincial nostrums, for which no intelligible reason can be assigned, are too numerous even to name; as in the other cases here mentioned, the cures by their means, if cures they be, are no doubt entirely through the imagination.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER XIII. "BUT IF OTHERS SHARE WITH ME, FAREWELL TO HER WHO'E'ER SHE BE."

"CLAUDE has had a business telegram calling him to town; he was sorry to start without seeing you, but he was obliged to go."

Mrs. Powers delivered herself of these words blandly—she, at least, was well satisfied with the turn affairs had taken—when Jack Ferrier came back to the Court after that heart-rending exposé which Harty had made of herself.

"Gone! why?"

He asked the question vaguely. A faint sense of relief at not having to face Claude immediately stole over him; but the relief was instantly submerged in an ocean of regret that Claude should have felt it necessary to get himself away. "No woman will ever come between us." How mockingly the memory of those words, which he had uttered in perfect faith, rang in his ears now!

For a woman had come between him and the best friend he could ever have in this world. A woman who had twined herself so closely round his heart, that though his respect for her was gone, though his belief in her was gone, though his desire to marry her was gone, he could not cut himself adrift from and forget her utterly. The memory of her dear wistful, changeful, pleading, mobile face would rise up before him as he recalled the words in which she

had made plain her perfidy. Would rise up maddeningly, making him long to draw it down on his breast, and bid it repose there and find rest. He almost felt again the firm nervous pressure of the little flexible hand that had surrendered itself so freely to the caresses of his lips. "How many other men had kissed that hand?" he wondered. "To how many other men had she seemed the soul of candour, purity, and integrity? How many other fools had fallen into the net that she feigned to be unconscious of spreading?" All these questions he asked himself, in his first wrath against her, for having come between Claude and himself, and still some deep conviction told him that the girl was to the full as much sinned against as sinning.

"But"—he couldn't help remembering this—"she had feigned terribly well; she had played a double game, she had embittered Claude's life, and she had put him (Jack Ferrier) in the position of a mean sneak; probably her love for him was a mere sham—a mere pastime!" His rage grew as he conjured up this possibility, and he vowed a vow of weight that she should not hang his scalp up in her wigwam to show to the next passer-by (possibly a "friend" of his own) whom she might prefer to him.

All his recollections of her womanly charms and graces rose up and damaged her cause with him now. Her lissom, supple, rounded form, how he hated its graciousness as he reflected that another man—probably other men—had embraced it. The hazel eyes, down into whose depths he had gazed, in the vain belief that he was reading her soul, had probably given their apparently truthful glances just as gladly to others—to Claude certainly. The impulsive gestures, the light touch of the hands that were always fluttering about, the quick vivacious change of mood and manner. All these things which had won him to love and believe in her graceful untamed nature, rose up as evidences of her artfulness before him now, and made him shrink from her.

He really had indulged in a vision of a girl whom he could guard as the apple of his eye, in perfect confidence as to no portion of her delicate bloom having been brushed away by a rude previous hand, and now this vision was blurred and marred by the revelation that she herself had made to him. It stung him to his heart to feel that no time had elapsed between Claude's day and his own. They had

been running simultaneously for her favour, and she had made each one believe that he had it.

Like the majority of men who know a good deal about the world, and the women who tend to demoralise it, Jack Ferrier was very little inclined to be lenient to anything that even looked like laxity of principle in girls of his own grade. "Women who are fit to be wives and mothers should marry the fellow they love first, and have done with it," he had always held until he had met Harty Carlisle. It never occurred to him to provide for the contingency of "the men they loved first" declining to marry them. According to his idea a first meant a final failure, therefore he had stretched a point when he magnanimously accepted the position of being Harty's second lover.

But to be Claude's superseder and successful rival—to be the ultimate choice of a girl who had been balancing herself between them, was a depth of degradation to which he could not descend. He tried to turn away resolutely from the thought of her pleading eyes, and supple grace, and winning gestures; he tried to fling from him the alluring memory of the little hand he had kissed and clasped so passionately; he tried to deafen himself to the pathos she would infuse into her tones when he made known to her his intention of giving her up for honour and friendship. And he failed miserably in all his efforts, for he loved her with the desperate love that girls of the Harty Carlisle type do inspire.

Such a number of wretched little interruptions came between him and the fulfilment of his determination to have done with the woman who had deceived his friend. Claude's going away, though it removed from him the onus of offering, and hearing, an explanation that would have been infinitely distressing to them both, was awkward, inasmuch as immediate action was called for in his case, and Claude might have been able to say something which would partially have exonerated Harty. As it was, "I must go through it in the dark," Jack Ferrier told himself. "At any rate it shall be all square between Claude and me; but how to keep it square I don't see exactly."

"I have come to congratulate you, Harty," Agnes Greyling said, coming in with a hearty, girlish, enthusiastic rush the next day. "Dear Harty, several people thought it was the other one, but I'm so glad it's Mr. Ferrier."

"And I am very glad that it's Mr. Ferrier, too," Mrs. Greyling put in graciously, coming round to Harty, after having administered a congratulatory pressure, that hurt her horribly, to Mrs. Devenish's hand. "You puzzled us a good deal, young lady. Oh yes, you have been a little sly, you know; but all's well that ends well; and, for my own part, I think it better for girls to marry in their own sphere than to look very high——"

"And die of honours unto which they were not born, like Lady Burleigh," Harty interrupted. "As for marrying in my own sphere, we can't be sure that I'm going to do that yet. Mr. Ferrier may be a ticket-of-leave man for all we know. I have taken him on trust."

"My dear Harty, he is Mr. Powers's friend."

Harty laughed impatiently. "Do you think that Mr. Powers holds a talisman that saves him from being deceived by either man or woman?" she asked, bitterly. "Don't be frightened, Mrs. Greyling; I have not the slightest grounds for my supposition that Mr. Ferrier may be a ticket-of-leave man; but don't charge Claude with the responsibility of my marrying Jack if it all turns out badly."

"I recommend a very brief engagement," Mr. Devenish said from the sofa. "I know the old adage about marrying in haste; but it's better that the repentance should set in after marriage than before in this case."

"Much better," Harty cried out recklessly. She was sorely driven, poor girl, acutely anxious as to the result of her confession to Jack, and intensely mortified by the tone Mr. Devenish had taken about her new engagement.

"I think she's wise to marry any fellow who will have her," that gentleman had said, "damaged as she has been by Claude Powers hanging about her when he has had nothing better to do." Harty had a vivid recollection of these words having been used at her, and so now she grew reckless, and said:

"Much better; you have had an experience of the misery of the other alternative in my case already, haven't you? Let us be grateful that Jack Ferrier is blinder, less sensitive, less true to the memory of that poor unhappy boy than Claude Powers is."

"Let us be grateful that he doesn't know what a lunatic he has linked himself with," Mr. Devenish muttered, but only Harty caught the words, for Mrs.

Greyling was chirruping affably about "young ladies who were just engaged being just a little privileged to talk in enigmas;" and Mrs. Devenish was feigning to listen to her guest, the while she was in reality trying to look Harty into resignation to "Edward's way."

Having taken the leap, having screwed her moral courage up to that point that in anticipation had been so exquisitely painful to her, namely, the telling Claude Powers that she had left off loving him with that hot love she had professed so freely, Harty's spirits had rebounded, and risen in an almost unaccountable way. She would not believe that Jack Ferrier would dream of giving her up after a few hours' temperate reflection. She could not believe that he would ever really seriously condemn her for having preferred him to another man, even though that other man was his friend Claude Powers. She had such faith in her sway over his soul that no prophetic tremor thrilled her when hour after hour passed, and still he did not come. Half Dillsborough called at the house at the corner, to congratulate her, and find out, if possible, if it was to be a long or a short engagement, and whether or not it was to be a show wedding. And Harty even went through the tedious ordeal of these callers and their platitudes graciously and brightly. She knew herself to be anything but without reproach as regarded Claude, but she was absolutely without fear as regarded Jack Ferrier. She had formed an estimate of the latter's character which was wonderfully reassuring at this juncture. His strong physique, a certain bold audacity which distinguished him, a slight vein of recklessness which ran through his conversation and conduct at times, had led her into the belief that he would be far more lenient to any womanly swerving from the perfectly straight line than Claude would ever have been. She wished with all her power of wishing that she had been faithful to the latter, but since her faith had failed, Jack was not the type of man to resent the failure that he himself had caused. Unconsciously, too, she was strengthened in her satisfaction with her position with Jack, by the confident feeling she had that he could not kill his passionate love for her. So she received the congratulations, and listened to the surmises of her friends with charitable calm, and even allowed Agnes Greyling to advise her about her wedding-dress.

"I'll only have Mab and you for my

bridesmaids," she said at last. "I don't think he has any girl-people of his own."

"Mr. Powers will be his best man, I suppose," Agnes interrupted, blushing a little. She had not absolutely surrendered her heart to Claude, but she had it in her hand ready to surrender, should he ever ask for it. The prospect, therefore, of officiating together with Claude at so suggestive a ceremony as the wedding of Claude's most intimate friend, had its charms for her.

A scarlet wave of colour swept over Harty's face. It is one thing for a girl to free herself from an engagement, and quite another thing for her to contemplate the presence of the one with whom she has broken, at her wedding with another man.

"I hope he won't be," she stammered out. "I should like Jack's best man to be quite a stranger, one who wouldn't look either glad or sorry, but only properly bored, as all men ought to look at a wedding." Then she got herself out of the room, for her vivid imagination had conjured up a vision of how Claude would probably look if he saw her being given over to another man. She had given the pain, the poor little unstable coward! But the prospect of witnessing it was very agonising to her.

"Do you know," Agnes Greyling began slowly, speaking to Mabel, as soon as Harty had left them, "people thought—mamma did among others—that Harty cared for Mr. Powers?"

"I think she did, at one time," Mabel answered, lifting her softly suffused face eagerly towards Agnes; "but you mustn't think that Claude has been thrown over for Mr. Ferrier; even Harty would hate to think that anybody thought that about Claude."

She spoke in a flush of enthusiasm, letting the words "even Harty" ring out with almost condemnatory emphasis, and breathing Claude's name in softly caressing tones.

"Even Harty," Agnes cried promptly, in defence of the absent. "I should think so! Harty's the last girl to wish anybody to think that any man has ever cared for her. She'll speak of her love for any one freely enough, but as for talking of any one's love for her, she couldn't do it; but any one could see Claude Powers was fond of her; you must have seen it."

"He is very friendly with us both," Mabel said, gravely.

Now that it was definitely at an end

between Claude and Harty, Mabel was allowing her hero to assume his proper proportions in her heart. She had kept the feeling at bay for months, while she still believed him to be legitimately Harty's property. But now that Harty had wilfully and blindly preferred a lesser man, the feeling knocked her down, and trampled upon her good resolutions, and seemed about to eat up her sisterly love and generosity. Her love, for him, she suffered herself to think, was of a higher order than Harty's had ever been. She would make any sacrifice, overstep any obstacle for him, if he only suffered his heart to be caught in the rebound. This being the case, she did not wish Harty's to be a long engagement, nor did she desire that it should get bruited abroad that Harty had thrown Claude over.

"He is very friendly with us both, Agnes. I assure you often when we have been riding together, I've feared Harty might think that I was monopolising him, because we always seemed to have so much to say to each other; for there is no doubt about it, at one time Harty was very fond of him."

Mabel had not the smallest objection to making open mention of Harty's liking for Claude, but she was beginning to feel conscious of a little pang of jealousy at the mere recollection of Claude's fondness for Harty.

"It must be delightful to be on such brotherly terms with him," Agnes said.

She, too, was sighing for her innings. It did seem a little hard that after all that had been said and done by her mother to make her think of Claude, that he should be a mere shuttlecock between these two sisters. Agnes Greyling was not at all of the husband-hunting and manœuvring order of girls; but she was a woman to be won, and it did occur to her that it would be very pleasant were Claude Powers to win her.

Very probably she would have thought the same thing even had her mother not been perpetually thrusting the bow and spear into her hand, and bidding her put the war-paint on. But, as it was, added to the slight love-disappointment which the girl was feeling, there was the sense of ignominious failure. She had been hawked and offered, and she knew it, and her sisters knew it, and her mother, who had hawked and offered her, knew it. She had rebelled against the system, and the rebellion had been in vain; and now at last she had succumbed to it, only to find that, as far

as Claude was concerned, both struggle and surrender had been fruitless. Clearly, now, if Harty had put herself out of the pale, Mabel was quite ready to have him relegated to her! Agnes did not exactly repine, but she was not quite ready to acknowledge the certain working of the law of compensation.

Meanwhile, Jack was striving to work out the wretched problem which his love for Harty and Harty's deception of him had put before him, and rendered it necessary he should solve. It really hurt him more to feel that she was unworthy, than it did to give her up. The thought that she had carried on the game with two men contemporaneously, like a skilful chess-player, stung him into a paroxysm of gladness (in which there was a good deal of pain) that he had not made this bewitchingly traitorous girl his wife before he discovered her treachery. "She seemed to think so little of it, too," he muttered to himself; and he thought that the bloom was off that peach with fell certainty.

It was a sufficiently disagreeable ordeal that which he had to pass through, to have expiated any number of minor sins. He felt horribly sure that Harty would try to tempt him from the barren path his own self-respect compelled him to take. Now that he had discovered one flaw in her, he went to the extreme of believing her to be a very imperfect being altogether. "A woman who will let two men love her at the same time, and show and express love for them both in return, will not limit herself to two for long," he told himself; and his brow burned as he reflected that, perhaps, already he had been but a bit of mere "padding" in Harty's very badly edited miscellany.

He got himself away from Mrs. Powers as early as he could in the day. Her deftly delivered praise and admiration of Harty grated against his knowledge of Harty as she was. As has been already told, Mrs. Powers really liked the girl in a sort of non-understanding way, and therefore, like many another human being, she conceived that she had fathomed some of the depths of Harty's nature. "You'll have a wife who will never care to descend to subterfuge for the sake of pleasing any one, and that's something in this world of humbug," the old lady said to the young man, who had found Harty out in what he rigorously denounced in his own mind as a basely acted lie.

His heart misgave him sadly as he rode away at last, late in the day, to "have done

with her." Poor little, sensitive, proud Harty, how she would smart for this folly of hers, for which he had no forgiveness, when it came to be known in the town that he had "ridden away," however dearly he had once loved her. About her sensitiveness and power of suffering he had no doubt. There was no manner of deception about that. If it had been any fault or folly but this which she had been guilty of, he would have passed it over and blotted it out. But that she should have been lavishing expressions of endearment and vows of affection on two men at the same time, shocked him away from her with a repellent force which he knew he would be unwise to combat.

"No, no; she'll have the triumph of knowing that she has spoilt my life, but she shall not have the further one of feeling that I'm ready to shy over all my ideas of what a woman ought to be, for her sake," he told himself. And fraught with this determination, he went into the presence of his affianced bride.

She was bending over a table looking at a newspaper, with her mother and sister, reading an account of some garrison-ball which had lately taken place in one of the many places at which they had been quartered in the old regimental days. Familiar names, familiar expressions, had conjured up a host of old associations, and a fiercely vivid vision of "what might have been." Harty almost always broke down under the spell of retrospection, and she was breaking down now. There were no tears in her eyes—she did not wish to greet her new lover with a red nose—but the lines swam before her, and she had a pain in her throat, and her face felt hot. Mabel, who had loved the gay part of the past to the full as well as Harty, was far better able to babble cheerfully about it in the present. She was delivering a running commentary on the account, when Jack appeared, and she barely paused in it to greet him.

"See, Harty, Withers was there—Captain H. P. Withers—how well he used to go with both of us, and those horrid Molyneux girls who persecuted Claude so at Southsea; what pork-pies they wore at him, because he had happened to say we looked well in ours. They got them smaller than ours, and their faces were five times as big; so they're about still!—odious garrison hacks."

"They're about still—as we should be if we had the chance," Harty said.

She had given her hand to, and a smile, and a long sweet look at Jack; and Jack had just touched the hand; and had disregarded the smile, and had turned from the look.

"I'm no Merlin, and I'll be shot if she shall do me with the Vivien trick," he said to himself; but the determination cost him more pain than he had ever felt in his life before.

She marked it all, she ached at it all, but by never so much as a tender inflection of her voice—by never so much as a quiver of her nervous, sympathetic mouth—by never so much as a pleading movement of the hands that could be so eloquent, so touchingly graceful, did she seek to win him from it. In one respect, at least, he was soon made to understand that he had wronged her far more bitterly than she had disappointed him. If lifting her finger would have brought the man who deemed her erring back to her feet, she would not have lifted it now.

She concentrated all her energies on the one endeavour to keep perfectly quiescent, perfectly composed, until she could turn to him when they were alone, and spare him all further trouble concerning her. She stood with her arms stretched down, and her fingers interlaced, her head bent, and her eyes fixed on the newspaper, in which she read nothing now save a portion of the story of her life. And he watched her, as one does watch a thing that is more than precious to one when it is fading away.

Watched her, taking in every detail of the grey, softly falling dress that clung so closely and easily to the swelling bust and slender waist. Seeing as he had never seen before the grace of the brown-haired head, and the winning power of the earnest hazel eyes. Longing as he had never longed before to prison the tiny resolute hands, and unseal the silent mouth with a kiss!

On the 11th of October will be commenced,

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," &c.,

ENTITLED

AT HER MERCY,

To be continued from week to week until completed.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXXV. AT THE PLAY.

It was about this time, I remember, that I suddenly encountered my old tutor, and—I am doubtful whether I should add "my old friend" or "my old enemy"—Mr. Bygrave. In any case my disposition towards him was certainly of a friendly kind, when I saw him again after so long an interval of separation. And then he was no longer my preceptor—I was no longer his pupil. We met now upon a different footing—upon equal terms. I had been to Doctors' Commons upon some official errand. I found him wandering about St. Paul's Churchyard—for he knew little of London—in quest of the Chapter Coffee House. He had, as he subsequently explained, an appointment there with the agent or representative of a scholastic establishment in the North that stood in need of a classical master. Mr. Bygrave had answered an advertisement, and had been duly summoned to attend, armed with such certificates of his qualifications for the post as he could furnish.

In appearance he was little changed, except that his thin whiskers were now somewhat grizzled, and his old gaunt hungry look seemed to have gained force. He was not, I judged, in very prosperous circumstances. Indeed, he revealed to me that he had been for some time without permanent occupation. He had held curacies in various districts, but only for brief periods. He confessed that he had not won the favour of his rectors, nor of his congregations. I found this credible enough. Even at Purrington—a most uncritical parish—Mr. Bygrave had not been popular.

I knew him at once; but I had great difficulty in persuading him of my identity. He viewed me with extreme suspicion. I think that for some time he took me for a pickpocket bent upon nefarious objects, or a member of the swell-mob—if indeed he had ever heard of that mysterious body.

"You're not Duke Nightingale," he said simply. "He was a mere child."

I had to explain to him that time was ever a flying, and that children gradually grew up—as a rule. Still he doubted.

"They'll be glad to hear at the Down Farm—my mother and my uncle, I mean—that you're well, Mr. Bygrave."

"Ah, yes. The Down Farm—at Purrington. Your mother and uncle—of course. Mrs. Nightingale and Mr. Orme. They were always very kind to me. I trust they're well. Yes, I remember them. And you're Duke, you say."

He did not believe me, it was clear.

I asked him to dine with me in Rupert-street, appointing the hour. He consented, upon my urging him, though he was greatly perplexed at the proposition. I reminded him of the studies I had pursued under his guidance. I told him I still possessed and cherished—which last was not strictly true, at any rate I had not looked into it for months—the pocket Horace with manuscript annotations he had given me on his quitting Purrington. Still he was incredulous.

He promised to come to dinner, however, and I induced him to write down in his pocket-book the place and the hour of meeting. That done, I conducted him to the Chapter Coffee House, which I felt sure he would never have discovered for himself, and there left him in the custody of a waiter.

I perceived with some little surprise that

the measure of awe and reverence with which, as a boy, I had once regarded Mr. Bygrave had diminished: even to vanishing. I could scarcely credit that I now stood in no fear whatever of his disapproval; that he seemed to need my assistance rather than I his; that, indeed, wandering, lank, wan, and bewildered in St. Paul's Church-yard, he presented a figure appealing strongly to my sense of the ridiculous. And yet I found that I liked him now better than I did. He was associated with my early home-life, and in such wise was deserving of toleration and even kindness at my hands. That was my coxcombical view of our relative positions.

He was half an hour late in presenting himself in Rupert-street. He had lost his way it appeared, and strayed almost as far as Hyde Park. I introduced him to Tony—whose attendance I had taken precautions to secure—and set before him as ample a dinner as our favourite establishment could provide. I was glad to find that Mr. Bygrave's appetite was in excellent preservation. He ate with great avidity. His quick clearing of the dishes reminded me of his visits of old to the Down Farm, when my mother was wont to insist that the curate was starved in his Purrington lodgings. He mentioned, by way of excuse for his ravenousness, that he had eaten nothing since breakfast time.

He was, for him, in high spirits, which perhaps bore considerable resemblance to the depression of other people. He had it seemed obtained a promise of the appointment as classical master at the northern school. But he was far from talkative. With a young host's redundant bountifulness I filled his glass repeatedly. The wine flushed his pale, pinched cheeks a little, but did not much loosen his tongue.

Tony, I could see, was at first greatly amused. "It's quite a treat," he whispered me, "to see any one at once so learned, so dull, and so hungry." But the dinner was not very lively altogether. As a festive entertainment it might even be counted a failure. Somehow, sympathy failed to find a place at the board. It was not only that he was a man, and that we were comparatively boys. Mr. Bygrave retained his old inability to converse. He would rise to no topical bait, though our angling did not lack painstaking and good intentions. Even Tony's most zealous efforts were of no avail. My guest's appetite appeased, he sat dumb: exactly as I so well remembered his sitting, years back,

in the little parlour of the farm-house. Yet his dumbness did not disconcert him. He was quite content to be speechless, being assured, possibly, that his subjects of discourse were ill-suited to us, as ours to him.

He was as a library of which we did not possess the key, and which perhaps contained books we did not at that moment care to study, however excellent and precious they might be. In a state of desperation I proposed at last that we should adjourn from the dinner-table to the pit of Drury Lane. Mr. Bygrave, almost to my surprise, consented. He said that he had not been to the play since his undergraduate days. I thought this looked promising. Tony brightened; he had been rapidly sinking into a despondent state.

As host I paid for our admissions, overruling all Tony's objections to that proceeding. Mr. Bygrave was not, I think, aware that payment was necessary before entering a theatre.

I called his attention to the vast size, and fine proportions of the house. He inquired how many people it held. I said between three and four thousand probably.

"The Athenian theatre must have held between thirty and forty thousand," he observed. It was clear that he did not think much of Drury Lane.

"They could not have heard or seen much on the back benches," Tony remarked.

Mr. Bygrave explained to him how the cothurnus added to the height of the actors, while their flowing draperies enhanced the importance of their aspect; how they wore masks contrived to swell the intonations of the voice; and how brazen vessels were ingeniously disposed about the theatre to increase the volume of sound. He had not a doubt that all could see and hear perfectly; even the occupants of the back benches.

"Then it must have been terribly noisy for those in the front row," said Tony, affecting a remarkable air of innocence, which completely deceived me until I found him winking at me behind Mr. Bygrave's back. The suggestion that the representations upon the classic stage could be fairly described as noisy was not agreeable to Mr. Bygrave. He shook his head, but he did not pursue the subject further.

The play was *The Stranger*. I could have wished for a more animated entertainment.

"The actors still wear masks in pantomimes," continued Tony.

"Then I should have preferred a pantomime to-night," said Mr. Bygrave, simply.

"We don't find them very audible, though, when they speak in masks."

"The art of constructing masks is probably lost," said Mr. Bygrave, "with many other admirable inventions of the ancients. They were made of wood——"

"They make them now of pasteboard," interposed Tony.

"That accounts for it, probably. The old system was far preferable. The masks were made of wood encrusted, as Pliny tells us, in the first instance with thin plates of brass, but subsequently, it would seem, with portions of the stone called calcaphonos, or brass-sounding. By these means the voice issuing from the mask acquired extraordinary volume and sonority. They were of extreme beauty—aggrandised and idealised faces of the noblest Grecian form. They must have been wonderfully imposing."

"But rather heavy for the actors to wear. As it is, the poor fellows suffer terribly with their pasteboard heads in the pantomime. What they'd do if their masks were made of wood, and brass, and stone, I can't think."

"The Greeks were a superior race," said Mr. Bygrave. And then he inquired of me whether Kotzebue, whose name he had not before met with, was highly considered as a dramatist.

I informed him that the playwright had enjoyed at one time exceeding popularity; that his works, which were very numerous, had been translated into every European language, and been universally esteemed for their moving and pathetic character. But still I thought it was now generally held that Kotzebue's merits had been overvalued, and that his plays were in truth but tedious and dull productions. Upon the subject of their morality I did not think it worth while to enter. Mr. Bygrave was a clergyman, and could judge of that matter for himself at his leisure.

"The Stranger wants action," I said, with a critical air.

"I can't say I agree with you," he replied. "It seems to me that there is too much action. There is want of repose, indeed. In the Greek drama there was no action. Deeds of violence—such as murder—were banished from the Greek theatre, not because, as some suppose, they were too shocking for representation, but because they were action. All that should take place, or should be supposed to take place,

away from the spectator's presence. On the stage there should be absolute repose."

"No passion?"

"Not in its violent stage. Suffering may be exhibited; but not sudden conflicts of emotions. The play is divided into acts expressly that action may be supposed to go on, and time elapse in the intervals."

I felt that Mr. Bygrave would not be a sympathetic or appreciative critic of my tragedy of *The Daughter of the Doge*.

Altogether, our visit to the theatre was not very successful, except in that it had extorted a measure of speech from Mr. Bygrave. But Tony at last declared to me in a whisper that my friend's speech was more trying than his silence, and leant back and went to sleep. Mr. Bygrave continued his remarks upon the entertainment with repeated reference to the characteristics of the classical theatre. He agreed that the language of the play was too prosy, colloquial, and commonplace. The drama, he maintained, should have its own peculiar phraseology. Solemn, massy, remote from ordinary use, exalted, almost archaic. And he found grave fault with the players. They were too restless, and they grimaced overmuch. He would have had them still and expressionless; and thereupon he returned to the advantages of masks. They concealed natural irregularities and defects; substituting an unchanging perfectness of contour. They varied according to the characters represented. The face of Niobe was intensely mournful; Medea's announced her vengeance; valour was depicted on the mask of Hercules; on that of Ajax, transport and fury. How portray change of feeling, did I ask? It was not needed. Or the actor could avert his face, or ruffle it in his robe. What could be more awfully impressive? Of the chorus, and of its solemn office to point the moral of the scenes enacted, and to guide and interpret the sympathies of the audience, he had much to say. He regretted that no chorus had appeared in *The Stranger*. He had looked, he said, for its rich, passionate, and religious music, accompanied by its solemn and symbolic dances—the strophe and the antistrophe—full of mysterious and inscrutable meaning.

"Danced, did they?" said Tony, waking up. "The chorus does that in *Macbeth*. It always strikes me as rather comical."

Abruptly, Mr. Bygrave concluded his instructive observations.

"It was all very clever and improving, no doubt," Tony remarked to me afterwards; "but you know, old fellow, we didn't go to Drury Lane to hear that. The Stranger wasn't very cheerful, but as for your friend—well, he's your friend, and a very good fellow of course—so I'll say no more about him."

"And you're little Duke Nightingale!" said Mr. Bygrave, as I parted from him under the shadow of Drury Lane's portico. He was still unconvinced of my identity.

I never saw him again. He died some years later, as I heard, of small-pox, which had broken out furiously in the school in the North. Poor Bygrave! He declined to avail himself of the opportunity for escape which was proffered him, and remained at his post tending his pupils to the utmost of his power, until he was himself stricken down. A tablet to his memory was placed upon the wall of the district church. The inscription was in English; a fact to be regretted perhaps. He would so much have preferred Greek. But in that case his merits and his sad fate would not have been made known to nearly so many. Poor Bygrave!

Arrived at my lodgings, certainly sober enough, after the first entertainment I had ever given in the nature of a dinner-party, I turned to my pocket-book to ascertain of what funds I still stood possessed. A bank-note or two remained, I was glad to find.

Suddenly I discovered in an inner fold of the book a letter I had long overlooked.

It was the letter of which my uncle had spoken on the morning of my departure from home. I had forgotten all about it. Already it wore almost an old and faded look. It was sealed with black wax, and addressed to "Sir George Nightingale, Harley-street, Portland-place."

CHAPTER XXXVI. SIR GEORGE.

I WAS surprised and vexed that this letter should have escaped my attention so completely. But my uncle had said little enough concerning it, and in the excitement of my quitting the country I had not particularly heeded his words. I had not even glanced at the address of the letter, but, allowing it to remain ensconced in a safe fold of my pocket-book, had straightway forgotten all about it. Was the matter of any importance? It could hardly be. No reference had ever been made to it in the many communications I had since received from the Down Farm.

Who was this Sir George Nightingale? A relation, of course—my uncle had said as

much, I thought. But I had certainly never heard of him before. I decided that he must be a cousin of my late father's—cousin being a convenient term, comprehending various degrees of consanguinity. It had been deemed advisable that I should seek out this unknown kinsman and apprise him of my existence. He might not regard that information as of any worth; but on the other hand it was possible that he might exhibit a friendly disposition towards me.

Still it would be difficult to explain my negligence and delay in presenting the letter, which I took for granted was one of introduction. I consulted Tony upon the subject.

"Sir George Nightingale!" he exclaimed. "A relation of yours—and you have never seen him yet, never even heard of him? How strange that seems! Why I thought that everybody had at any rate heard of Sir George. My dear fellow, Sir George is a very great personage."

The word "swell" was not in vogue at that date, or Tony would probably have employed it.

"And he's a relation of yours?"

"So I understand."

"To think of your having any doubt about it! Of course he's a relation of yours. That explains many things. Your love of art, for instance."

"Sir George is an artist then?"

"To be sure he is. He's serjeant-painter to the king. He was knighted, I believe, at the last coronation. He's quite famous in his way—highly esteemed on all sides, especially by the world of fashion. He's a man of fashion himself. He is *the* portrait painter of the time. To be painted by Sir George is like presentation at court—evidence of gentility all the world over. He has the whole peerage at his beck and call. The most lovely women in the world crowd to him, imploring him to record their loveliness upon canvas—to bid their fleeting charms live for ever by the magic of his brush."

"A successful portrait painter?"

"Most successful. And you'd never heard of him! Your relation, and you've never seen him! Such is life. Such is fame. But a man is never a prophet among his own kinsfolk. I wonder the name never struck me before. But I thought of course you'd have mentioned so important a fact. Why Sir George can throw open the world of art to you. With his aid your success is assured, if you ever think of abandoning the law and taking up with

art as a profession. With your talent for it, too! Sir George Nightingale! Art runs in your family. These things are in one's blood, you know, and they will out. I always hold that one's forefathers are in the main responsible for one's follies, even for one's sins. And of course they should have credit for one's successes and good deeds. Origin is a mysterious thing. And it may lead to extraordinary and complicated results. I don't know much about my own family. My father was a doctor, however. What was yours?"

"I never heard. He died when I was very young. I never saw him that I remember."

"Just my case. But I know that he was a doctor. Now possibly—I say possibly, because I'm not at all sure about the facts—possibly his father was a lawyer, and his father's father an artist. I won't carry it further back. But that would account for my being possessed, temporarily, with a disposition towards those three professions. And my ultimate choice of a vocation would thus depend less upon my own volition than upon the question as to whether the influence of my father, my grandfather, or my great-grandfather predominated in my nature. It's really an interesting inquiry. Then again the influence of the mother and her progenitors has to be taken into account. You see it's a wide subject."

"My mother was a farmer's daughter," I observed, "but the fact didn't induce me to take very kindly to farming."

"Perhaps not. Still you did take to it for a time, and thought you liked it. That bears out my argument. My own case exactly. You were governed for a time by the influence, say, of your maternal grandfather. Then a stronger influence intervened, and you turned towards the law. It may be that your father was a lawyer. You say you don't know what he was. Why not a lawyer?"

"I think I should have heard of it if he'd been a lawyer."

"Depend upon it there's been a lawyer in your family at some time or other."

I could not gainsay this possibility.

"And now we have it for certain that a Nightingale, a relation of yours, your father's cousin, you suggest—and that connects them with a common ancestor—is an artist, really a famous artist. I wish I could feel equally certain that among my father's family, the Wrays, or my mother's family, the Moncks, there had ever been

Nightingale. I should hail it as a guarantee of my future success. I should look upon my fortune as made. Yours, my dear Duke, I count quite as a matter of certainty from this time forth."

"But I'm not a painter yet, Tony."

"There's an element of doubt in the case, of course. Certainty is only a way of speaking. There's doubt in everything. To my thinking it's doubt and not love that makes the world go round. You're not a painter, as you say: meaning that you have not yet obtained universal recognition in that character. But that may come, or the world may some day acknowledge you to be the true poet and fine dramatist that I already know you to be. Or to go back to one of my original convictions—which I have not yet by any means abandoned—you may stick to the law and become Lord Chancellor. It will depend, as I said before, upon the influence brought to bear upon your nature by those concerned in your descent."

"But a man may strike out a line for himself, I suppose, which none of his ancestors had previously followed?"

"No doubt. Yes, I must grant you that. I must admit a phenomenal creature every now and then, though it's disturbing to my line of argument. For even if we trace back to Adam, he did not follow all the professions, though I have no doubt that he was a thoroughly accomplished and well-informed man. And if you care to set up for being a phenomenal creature, my dear Duke, I won't say you nay. Indeed, I think you're fully entitled, better than any man I know, to be that sort of exceptional personage. But I see that I must alter my own ambition in some respect. Even if I'm President of the Academy when you're Lord Chancellor, I shall hardly be able to claim the privilege of painting your portrait. Your relation, Sir George, will have an absolute right to accomplish that. And he wouldn't be likely to forego it. In decency I could not ask him to."

"You think that I should go and see him?"

"Of course you'll go and see him. You can't question that. He'll be delighted to make your acquaintance. Who wouldn't? Take my word for it, my dear Duke, he'll be delighted."

"But this unfortunate delay——"

"What does it matter? An accident—easily expressed. Beside, better late than never. It couldn't be helped. You've been busy—he's always busy——"

"Rich? My dear fellow he coins money. Every stroke of his brush is like printing a bank-note. He's the most prosperous portrait painter that ever lived."

"Tony," I said, after a pause, "I'll not go to him."

"Not go? Why not?"

"He's my relation, and I've never seen him, never heard his name mentioned until now. And he's successful and rich. If I go to him, to introduce myself to him, to tell him my name, and explain my situation, I shall seem as though I were asking for a share of his prosperity, imploring alms of him almost."

"Imploring alms? I never heard you say anything so illogical before. Nonsense. I'm sure you do Sir George, though I've never seen him, injustice—grave injustice. He'll be pleased to see you, proud of you, of course he will."

"But it's plain that all these years he has kept apart from me and my family."

"Why not? He's been living in London, and you have but lately quitted the country. How could you meet?"

"At any rate I'll write home first for instructions."

"Nonsense. Haven't they intrusted you with a letter to deliver to him? Your people at home have long ago made up their minds that you're on intimate terms with Sir George by this time. As you should be; as you will be."

"I'm sure they'd no notion that he was so famous and prosperous a man as you describe him."

"What difference does that make among relations—well, then, among artists? Art is a republic. Besides, you can but see him. You're bound to see him. If you don't like him there's no need to go near him again. Doesn't curiosity tempt you to see this great man? Thousands would jump at such an opportunity. He's famous, I tell you: the most distinguished portrait painter of the time. And this letter, it really belongs to him. You must deliver it. Really I never heard of such extraordinary scruples. My dear Duke, are you taking leave of your senses? Seeing Sir George will be an event in your life, a most precious experience. It may have almost an historical importance. Painters of the future may select the subject for illustration, and it would really compose and paint uncommonly well. 'First Introduction of Duke Nightingale to his Kinsman, Sir George.' In my mind's eye I can see such a work hung upon the line at the Ex-

hibition of the Royal Academy, and receiving extraordinary applause."

Of course, after this, there seemed no help for it. I went to Harley-street.

I found the house without difficulty. It was a stately, but rather sombre-looking mansion, with wide door-steps and entrance. Above the olive-green coloured double-doors, with scowling lion-headed knockers, rose an arch of twisted ironwork, converting the portal into a sort of metallic bower, with large extinguishers of a decorated pattern on either side for the convenience of linkmen, when such functionaries were in existence. A handsome yellow chariot with a purple hammercloth stood at the door.

I was admitted. Sir George was at home. I intrusted my letter to the care of a grave but polite servant wearing powder in his hair, and a dark livery, with black silk stockings. I was ushered into the dining-room.

Presently the servant returned to say that Sir George would see me shortly if I would kindly wait. Of course I would wait. I surveyed the room. It was handsomely but heavily furnished, and wore somehow a dusty and neglected look. Many pictures in massive frames hung upon the walls. I judged them to be the works of the old masters, those vague patriarchs to whom so numerous and unworthy a progeny has been attributed. But there was a deplorable absence of light; the windows were obscured by dense crimson hangings, and I could really see little of the paintings, except that they were very black and highly varnished.

It was a cheerless room, cold and grim. I thought, though really there was little fault that could be found with its fittings, which were, without doubt, costly enough. But it had an unused look, as I fancied. A dining-room in which no one ever dined.

"Sir George will see you, sir, in the studio, if you will kindly follow me," said the footman, softly, and with a deferential air.

A VISIT TO THE "SERPENT."

"LET us go and see the Serpent," said my friend, Herr von Whackenfeldt, Doctor of Law and of Philosophy, and Professor of Sanscrit and other Oriental languages at the University of Pumpernickel.

"By all means," replied I, "and let us pic-nic on the animal's back."

"Good idea," said the professor, "and don't let us have any ladies of the party. They are very charming, I don't deny it, but they are always unscientific, and as ours is to be a scientific expedition, that may involve hard work, which ladies don't like, and exposure to the elements, which disarranges their finery, we shall be better without them."

"Agreed," said I, "but we'll ask M'Tavish to come with us. He's a good fellow, speaks Gaelic, and is a capital caterer. And we three will make a day of it, and combine instruction with fresh air, novelty, and pleasure."

This edifying conversation was held upon the Corran—or strand—at Oban, the prettiest, cosiest, and, I may add, most beautiful little seaside town in the Scottish Highlands, and within a convenient distance for walking, rowing, sailing or riding, of some of the grandest scenery in Europe. Next day, the weather being delicious, and the outlines of the magnificent hills of Lorne and Mull standing out clear against a sky as blue as ever over-arched Italy, Greece, Algeria, or any other part of the globe, where blue skies are said to be the rule, and not the exception, we started in a neat little carriage and pair from Oban to Loch Nell, to visit the Serpent, and find out, if we could, all about him.

M'Tavish justified his reputation as a caterer. We had, thanks to his watchful and experienced care, abundant store with us—two cold fowls, a neat's tongue, a dozen of hard-boiled eggs (which no orthodox pic-nic should be without), biscuits, oat-cake, cheese, butter (and such butter as there is to be got in the Highlands the world cannot excel), together with sundry oranges, and a capacious flask of the "wine of the country." Water we did not require, as in Argyllshire, and all through the Highlands, there is always an abundant supply, derivable from the copious "burnies," or streams that trickle, or rush, or roar down the sides of every hillock, hill, or mountain in all the lovely land.

The drive from Oban to Loch Feochan and Loch Nell (between which lakes, but nearer to Loch Nell, or the Lake of the Swan, stands, or lies, or sprawls the Serpent that we had set forth to visit), is as variously beautiful as any one can desire to enjoy. It is but six miles, but such a six miles as only the Highlands of Scotland can afford; six miles of hill and glen, heather-tufted, golden and purple, musical with the voice of running waters,

disclosing every now and then a burst of the glorious sea, and a burst of the equally, or perhaps more glorious mountains, crowned in the far distance, looming purple, and grey, and green, and brown, by the triple peaks of Ben Cruachan—most picturesque of all the hills of the Highlands.

"I don't understand much about the Serpent," said M'Tavish, as we bowled merrily along. "Isn't it a myth, a hoax, a humbug, a dream, an absurdity, something 'got up' by the scientific folks to talk and maunder about?"

"Out upon you, Philistine!" said Professor Whackenfeldt, very emphatically, throwing away the end of his cigar, as if disgusted. "The Serpent of Loch Nell is one of the most remarkable remnants in Europe of a civilisation that passed away close upon two thousand years ago. The Serpent is no myth, but a relic of Druidism, the oldest religion in the world; and a grand and magnificent religion too. Please throw no doubts upon the Serpent until you have seen him, and heard what I have to say about him, when standing on his back, as we shall do in half an hour, or I shall be compelled to think you are an ignoramus, in spite of your skill as a caterer for a pic-nic."

"Tak' a dram," said M'Tavish, to allay the professor's wrath.

"I'll take a dram, as you call it," answered Whackenfeldt, "tempered with aqua pura. But an' you love me, express no disrespect to the Serpent till you can justify your disrespect by knowledge superior to mine."

They had their dram, and I had mine, tempered by a bountiful dash of the cold stream that ran down the hillside. M'Tavish prudently avoided all further discussion about the Serpent, for the professor's wrath was rising, and it was unsafe, or, at all events, uncomfortable to be the object of a disputation with him on any subject on which he had strong convictions. Thus fortified and mollified, we drove quietly along till we came to a turn of the road, and saw an inscription: "To the Saurian Mound."

"The 'Saurian Mound!'" scornfully ejaculated Whackenfeldt. "I wonder who put up that inscription? How does *he* know that there is what he calls a mound? And why does he call it the Saurian? Bah!"

The professor's bah! was very emphatic. He was evidently indignant.

"What's in a name?" said I. "We don't come here to quarrel about catch-penny inscriptions, but to see and judge for ourselves. Let us dismount and examine what there is to be examined, which I don't imagine will be anything very extraordinary."

"Don't be too sure," said Whackenfeldt; "don't jump to conclusions. But here we are. Shall we lunch first? or see the Serpent, and lunch afterwards?"

"Lunch first," said M'Tavish. "Fortify yourselves for the Serpent, and take him afterwards."

"The Serpent first," said I.

"The Serpent first," said Whackenfeldt. "Two to one, the ayes have it."

So we went to the Serpent, and found it to be a mound of earth, either natural or artificial, about ten feet high, three hundred feet long, and unmistakably serpentine in its form. The learned Doctor Whackenfeldt affirmed it to be a visible representation, formed by men's hands, two thousand, three thousand, it might be four thousand years ago, of that great mysterious object of the early worship of the fathers of mankind, the Serpent—a symbol of medicine and of eternity.

"The head of the Serpent," said Whackenfeldt, as we stood up and took our stand upon it, "is formed of a cairn of stones, which was opened in October, 1871, by Mr. Phené—the discoverer of this relic of the past—in presence of the proprietor of the estate of Glen Feochan, and several other gentlemen."

"And what was found? Anything, or nothing?" inquired I.

"A vault or chamber of huge stones, possibly intended for a grave, and some charcoal and burnt bones, together with a few charred nutshells, and a flint instrument beautifully serrated at the edge. Turn your eyes towards the lake, and you will see the serpentine form, ending in the tail, which points direct to the triple-headed peak of Ben Cruachan. Do you see?"

I saw. The mound was certainly of a serpentine form, and looked like a huge python, though I speedily began to doubt whether it were artificial, and whether it had not been formed by the action of the waves of Loch Feochan at some remote geological period, when the sea rolled its waters at the very basis of Ben Cruachan away to the shores of Loch Etive, and converted this corner of Argyllshire into an island, or a cluster of islands.

I suggested this idea to Whackenfeldt.

"It is possible that you are right," he replied. "Though if the supposition be correct, it is clear to me that Art built itself upon Nature, and that the Celtic Druids and their people converted the heap into a stronger resemblance to the mystical serpent than it originally possessed."

"Was the serpent an object of worship among the Druids? And was this particular serpent here represented—if serpent it be—not a place of sepulture?"

"The serpent was an object of worship, or rather was a symbol and representative of one of the multifarious powers of Nature which the Druids, in common with the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Phœnicians (who, like themselves, adored the sun as the prime source of life, and the only visible representative of the Deity), paid divine honours to—not as God—because they acknowledged but one God, but as emblematic of one of God's attributes."

"Isn't it odd," said M'Tavish, "that all the ancient nations revered or paid homage to, or otherwise considered the serpent a somebody? A somebody superior to man, or if not superior, a somebody that owned and possessed the world before man came into it?"

"Mr. M'Tavish," said the professor, "the question does you honour. The serpent inhabited this world before man. Geology shows it. Tradition affirms it. The idea percolates through all the ages, and has come down even to the Elizabethan age in England. Hercules made war upon hydras, pythons, and dragons; St. George, in the ballad, killed the dragon, and a very hard job he had of it; and Moore, of Moore Hall, a prosperous English gentleman, who might have hobnobbed with Shakespeare—or at all events with Chancer—did he not slay, after a hard, and I should say a most pestiferous and pestilential battle, the famous Dragon of Wantley? Depend upon it, there is much yet to be learned about serpents; the very big serpents that infested the world before man came into it, and whom the first tribes and nations first feared, afterwards revered, and finally improved off the face of the earth."

"Professor," said M'Tavish, admiringly. "In every work of genius we recognise our own rejected thoughts. What you have just said, I have often thought. You are a great man. So am I. Let's tak' a dram."

"Joking apart," rejoined the professor, "a history of serpent worship and its origin, if truly and well done, would be a valuable contribution to the history of the human intellect."

"Write it," said I, "in fifty volumes."

"Bah!" replied he. "You jest at serious matters. The serpent idea is a great idea—somehow or other—though I don't pretend to have got to the root of it. Whence, for instance, comes the word serpent? The dictionary makers, all fools, or mostly so, derive serpent from the Greek *erpo*, to creep. Bah!"—(here the professor took a pinch of snuff)—"but *erpo* is not *serpo*. The old Oriental languages—of which our modern languages are the great-great-grandchildren—call the serpent *ob*, *oph*, *auph*, &c., and the Celtic languages, and Gaelic, fountain of them all, has *snaig*, to creep, the English snake, and *nathair*, a serpent, whence by corruption in English, a *nathair*, or an *adder*. But serpent is a word of more abstruse and recondite etymology. In the old Celtic, the child of Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldean, and Phœnician, serpent resolves itself into *Sar* (lord or prince), and *Pian-tadh*, painful, or of pain, whence the adoption of the serpent by Esculapius, the great mythical physician of antiquity, as the symbol of medicine, the lord or conqueror of pain! Do you see? You do! Very well. If you have travelled on the European continent you must have noticed in all countries—and I think I have seen it even in England—the serpent set up as a sign, symbol, or ornament in druggists' shops, to notify that inside are sold the drugs that remove, alleviate, and conquer pain."

"Very good—very ingenious; I don't deny the theory, neither do I accept it," said I. "But how about the serpent as the symbol of eternity?"

"Easily accounted for," replied Whackenfheldt. "The circle—no beginning, no end. The creature has its tail in its mouth—a very early hieroglyph—perhaps the earliest ever drawn or imagined by man. But there is another meaning of the word serpent, or, as it ought to be pronounced, *sarpent* (in which pronunciation the vulgar are more correct than those who think they are not vulgar), which is *Sar*, the lord or prince as aforesaid, and *painttir*, a trap or snare—that is, the lord of the trap or the snare. You see how this derivation fits into the temptation of Eve by the serpent in Paradise?"

"Far fetched," said M'Tavish. "Tak' a dram."

"I'll take no more drams," said the professor, "until after lunch. If I cast my pearls before swine there is no blame to me for casting them, and no particular blame to the swine for not appreciating that which is beyond the swinish nature."

"Shut up, M'Tavish," said I, "and let us hear the professor."

"Well," said Whackenfheldt, "we'll leave etymology alone. We stand here amid a Druidical circle (we shall explore it presently), and on this obvious representation of a serpent, with its tail towards a triune mountain, must confess, if we be unprejudiced and earnest searchers after truth, that we stand upon a remarkable monument of past ages, whether that monument be wholly natural, wholly artificial, or partly natural and partly artificial. You will admit that?"

"I admit it," said I; "and, moreover, I admit that the Druids worshipped the serpent, after a certain modified form of worship, as the ancient Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Chaldeans did, and that by the serpent they typified both pharmacy and eternity."

"But how the blazes," said M'Tavish, irreverently, "did the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Phœnicians come here?"

"Peace, man! Peace!" said Whackenfheldt, with a majestic wave of his hand. "You might as well ask 'how the blazes' the English, Scotch, and Irish ever found their way to America. It is not further from Cairo and Babylon to Argyllshire, than from London to New York and Wisconsin. You don't suppose, do you, that the earliest nations of three or four thousand years ago, or longer, did not suffer from a plethora of population as we do in our time, and that the overplus had not to find its way, or die, into new regions, just as the swarming millions of Europe do at the present time? These early emigrants brought their religion, their laws, and their language along with them. You will admit that?"

"Certainly, I admit it," replied M'Tavish, "and are we all Phœnicians, Chaldeans, Persians, and the descendants of sun-worshippers and fire-worshippers?"

"Unquestionably," said the professor, with an air of triumph; "but let us explore the Druidic circle and the cromlechs. This is a remarkable place. This serpent is as old as the time of Moses, and it would be a pity to leave it without learning more

about it from personal examination. The guide-books have not got into it yet, which is an advantage, for there never was a guide-book that was not written by an ignoramus, or a copyist, or that did not lead people astray who trusted in him."

So saying the professor led the way to a cromlech—a megalithic chamber—which had evidently been the burial-place of a person of importance, a king, a priest, a bard, or a prophet among the Druids. A little shepherd-boy, who fastened himself upon us as a guide—a smart lad enough—volunteered the information that it was the grave of the great Cuchullin, the Ossianic hero. The dolmen, or transverse stone, had very recently been blown asunder with gunpowder, to form the raw material of a grindstone for some barbarian of the neighbourhood. As if there were not material enough for grindstones in thisland of stones, without destroying a monument of remote antiquity! "Anathema maranatha!" was my exclamation against the perpetrator of the outrage. "Curse them in their kail, in their potatoes, in their meal, and in their malt, in their uprising and their downlying. Ameen."

There was a smaller cromlech, which the shepherd lad said was the grave of Cuchullin's child, information at which Whackenfeldt turned up his nose, and bade the boy begone, with a sixpence to expedite his departure.

After an exploration of an hour of the very interesting Druidical ruins, amid which the Serpent stands conspicuous, we returned to the Serpent's head and had our luncheon, and listened to a learned disquisition from Whackenfeldt, on the religion of the Druids, on their sanctification of the serpent, and on the immense antiquity of the Gaelic language. "The Druids," said he "were the priests of the Chaldeans and Assyrians, who worshipped the sun and the heavenly bodies, and were the great astronomers of their time. Mountains were necessary for the observations they made of the stars, in the absence of telescopes and other optical instruments, and when, by the increase of population, and the failure or scarcity of the means of subsistence in their own mountainous country, they were forced to overflow westward into the flat country of Egypt, they built the Pyramids to serve instead of mountains."

"Whew!" said I. "A startling assertion. "Where is the proof?"

"There is no proof," replied Whacken-

feldt. "It is only a surmise, of which I defy any one to show the improbability or the error. As population increased in Egypt, as I have already remarked, it still flowed westward until it reached Gaul, Spain, and the West Highlands of Scotland."

"Where there are mountains, and to spare," said M'Tavish.

"Yes," continued Whackenfeldt, "and among all the mountains suited for the observations of a sun-worshipping and astronomical people, none were more admirably formed for the purpose than the triple-peaked Ben Cruachan, which we see before us. Here, in the midst of the Druidical circle of which the remains are scattered all round us, they found or made, I am not certain which, a representation of the serpent; and used it as a place of sepulture."

"With some occult or inchoate idea of the immortality, or the eternity, of which the serpent is the emblem?"

"Most probably."

"But what surprises me is that the ancients, who undoubtedly paid divine honours to the serpent, should have chosen so ugly a beast."

"And how the serpent came to signify medical skill, puzzles me quite as much," said M'Tavish. "In the island of Lewis, the serpent is called Righinn, which signifies a princess, a nymph, a beautiful woman, a queen, from a tradition of some ancient metamorphosis."

"Moses learned in Egypt that the serpent symbolised medicine; for when the Jews in the Desert complained that they had been bitten by fiery, that is to say, I suppose, by venomous serpents, Moses made a serpent of brass, and set it upon a pole, and it came to pass (see Numbers, chap. xxii. v. 9) that if a serpent had bitten any man, the man was healed if he looked upon the brazen image."

"What I should like now," continued the professor, after refreshing himself with a glass of claret, "what I should like more than anything else, would be permission from the proprietor of the estate of Glen Feochan to dig down into the vertebræ of this serpent, if he have any vertebræ, to discover whether other parts than the head were used as places of sepulture."

"The discovery has already been made," said I, "by Mr. Phené."

"I should like to make it for myself," replied Whackenfeldt, "and shall try the experiment some day."

From my knowledge of Whackenfeldt's character and tastes, I am pretty sure that he will keep his word. If he does, I hope I may be there to see.

GRAVING REST.

Oh! for the leisure to lie and to dream
By some woodland well, or some rippling stream,
With a cool green covert of trees overhead,
And fern or moss for my verdurous bed!

To rest and trifle with rushes and reeds,
Threading wild berries like chaplets of beads,
Letting the breeze fan my feverish brows,
Hearing the birds sing their summery vows.

Oh! for the leisure to lie without thought,
Upon the mind's anvil the ingot unwrought;
The hammers that beat in my temples at rest;
Calm in life's atmosphere, calm in the breast!

To loll or saunter, to laugh or to weep,
Waken the echoes, or silence to keep,
With no human being at hand to intrude,
Or question the wherefore of man's or mood.

Oh! for such leisure to rest and to stray
In green haunts of nature, if but for a day,
Through leaves to look at the sky from the sod,
Alone with my heart, my hopes, and my God!

WITH A COUPON.

No expression of smiling astonishment was more often repeated to us at St. Grundy's than one which intoned as it were the phrase:

"Dear me! so you have never been abroad!"

The sting of the gibe was in its truth. And it certainly was mortifying that every soul in the St. Grundy hierarchy, from the bishop down to the cathedral beadle, had travelled, or, at least, had made what they called an excursion. Neither papa—the well-known Canon Perkes, whose faint tenor voice once reminded Lady Backwater "of the angels singing in the choir"—nor mamma, nor my sister Charlotte, had ever gone, I suppose, twenty miles from St. Grundy's. The fact is, that I, who relate this narrative, am the only one with anything like energy in the family. This is really signified in my name Augusta, which might seem at the first blush to belong to a person of languid temperament, but which my quick, sharp ways long ago shortened into the more serviceable Gus. Charlotte, always too dreamy, remained Charlotte; no one would have dreamed of cutting her down into Lotty or Char. Papa and mamma were, indeed, sadly helpless; he being too gentle, always looking at everybody through his glasses with a wistful benevolence that is quite provoking. Those glasses I really believe to be at the

bottom of his timorous, retiring way, for the frame is so delicate that the glasses seem to float before his eyes without palpable support—their balance and structure are so frail, that half his life goes in nervously preserving them in position. Canon Blowman (who takes the bass at St. Grundy's, and gives out "The people that walked in darkness" somewhere down in the bowels of the earth) says that this criticism of mine shows "a nice knowledge of human character." It may be so, but the fact remains that the three are altogether too nervous and shrinking to get through life, and that I am the only one with a spark of energy.

Above all, I wanted to travel. Above all, I was dying to see Curebath. At St. Grundy's one might as well be buried in its old crypt for any chance there was of meeting suitable people—or, I have no false modesty in saying it, the suitable person that every young girl of spirit and proper ambition desires to meet. I am not one of those persons whose helplessness is but another name for selfishness, and who do not scruple being a burden and a charge on their families. Still I worked on that one idea, trying, as it were, to "educate my party," as they say in politics, but it was hopeless. A sort of terror of travelling weighed on my family like a nightmare—Mr. Perkes, I am sure, fancying that some box, or projection, would certainly dash against his perilously adjusted glasses, which he would never be able to bring successfully across the water.

At last I had begun to despair, when an event occurred which removed a chief difficulty. A maiden aunt shuffled off the mortal coil, though she had been so leisurely in her attempts at extrication that it seemed likely that she would remain in a state of permanent entanglement. This worthy relative left me and Charlotte fifty pounds apiece. I resolved, before the will was proved, that should be spent in foreign travel—every stiver of it, as Mr. Blowman was fond of saying. My plans were received with a sort of alarm, yet I could see that curiosity and interest had been awakened. I persevered, and had the pleasure of seeing that way was made. But there were appalling difficulties remaining. They shrank from the conflicts of travel, the bargaining, ticket taking, paying of bills, and discussion in foreign tongues, in which we were all, including myself, utterly deficient. However, by some interference, this obstacle was also to be

removed in the happiest and most satisfactory way.

Mr. Blowman had been to town to see a spinster cousin, who admired his underground voice vastly, and to whom he paid a visit regularly every half-year. He always came to us on his return to relate his adventures, which were of the most entertaining kind. On this evening he was more than usually excited. He was going away for his health. The doctor had ordered Curebath, and "the spinster," as I always called her, had behaved in the most liberal style. "She says," continued Mr. Blowman, "that I must take care of my voice, and that she will take care of me. How I wish that we were all going to Curebath!"

The feebly organised members of the family looked at each other wistfully. In their hearts they wished they were going to Curebath. But my father thought of the delicate balance of his glasses, and shook his head. "The worry," he murmured, "and the hurry, the paying the bills, and the fuss at the railway offices! I never could get through it."

"Exactly my view," said Mr. Blowman, eagerly. "I have never travelled either, and should be like a child among the foreigners. So my spinster said. And——"

"And was she so very liberal?" said my mother, faintly. "Was it a handsome present, if I might ask?"

"She did not give me a halfpenny, nothing that I could jingle on a tombstone, or even—for I have too much respect for my cloth to be seen so engaged—upon some more becoming gaming-table."

"Some Bank of England notes would save you from employing your time in such a pastime," said I, a little smartly. "Her benefaction I suppose took that shape."

"Not got it yet," said he, humorously. "I mean the solution. No, I'm not to have any cash. Yet she pays all expenses. See here," he said, pulling out two little books.

"Not tracts?" I said, scornfully.

"No," he said, "though I am to give them away piecemeal. They are the talismans, or talismen. In short, they are coupons."

"Coupons, what are they?" We all looked at them with a mysterious curiosity, as though expecting they would change suddenly into precious metal or notes.

"You know," he continued, "I am methodical in my ways, and the moment I heard of the famous coupon system I

hailed it as being made for me. In fact the whole of human life ought to be transacted in coupons. It would save a world of trouble and anxiety."

"But," said my father, mildly, "you have not explained. What is a coupon? What do these things in your hand mean?"

"See here. London to Dover; no money or ticket, but merely tear out and present coupon. Packet ditto, T. O. and P., that is, tear out and present, coupon. (I abbreviate). To Paris, T. O. and P. coupon. At hotel, breakfast; garsong, bill. Here you are, coupon. So with dinner. So with bed. Coupon here, coupon there. Coupons to the right of them, coupons to the left of them. Fire 'em off in all directions. And so you see you can travel, board and lodge for a month, be taken away, kept, and brought back, without putting your finger into your purse once the whole time."

We were enormously interested. Was there not something piquant and engaging in this ingenious subversion of all ordinary forms of human arrangement? There was, as he said, a beautiful simplicity in the system; and it was certainly the first successful attempt at doing without the root of all evil. The vulgar element was eliminated, and one could at last travel without losing all sense of romance. How we wondered, as he explained how the director of the system lived and directed in town, whence he despatched, every day and every hour, crowds of travellers to the ends of the earth, furnishing each with nothing but his little book of tracts. He then unfolded a sort of broad sheet or programme of the arrangements, in which, besides giving information, the founder chats agreeably with his patrons—rather was he not their patron?—tells them his prospects, what he is going to do, and what he has done.

"So there is the way it stands," said Mr. Blowman, rising, "and I am to be transported to Curebath by boat and rail, maintained there at the Golden Stork a fortnight, and returned to my friends, without any expense or trouble beyond offering a little slip of paper as I come or go."

This revelation made a deep impression. The seed was sown, the difficulties vanished of themselves. The system commended itself as something almost fascinating. Before the next evening all was arranged, and though my father naturally felt some trepidation as to the fate of his glasses, still the danger he felt was re-

duced almost to a minimum. We were to go with Mr. Blowman. To carry out the principle in its most perfect style, Mr. Blowman declared that "not more than a few shillings in cash" were to be brought by the party, just to defray the charges of cabs, portage, and so forth. We should trust ourselves implicitly to our coupons, and, as we agreed, give the thing fair play. It should be the coupon, the whole coupon, and nothing but the coupon.

In a day or two the die was cast, or rather a post-office order was despatched to the coupon-founder, who by return of post promptly returned three stout little pamphlets, and one for each of a smaller little tract, each having a portrait like an enlarged postage stamp, which was to be in common for the hotels. We set to work, got on packing, and at last started, my father slightly tremulous about his glasses. But Mr. Blowman, who was to accompany us, liberally guaranteed their safety.

Everything was delightful and worked admirably. Coupon here, coupon there; up, down, everywhere, they were all graciously honoured like cheques. It was universally agreed that it was the most charming way of travelling that could be. We—that is, I and Mr. Blowman—heartily wished the principle could be introduced into all the transactions of life. Dover, Ostend, Brussels, all were strictly couponised; then on to Cologne and the Rhine, where coupons were administered largely. The only drawback was that our small cash for cabs, porters, and so on, began to disappear with alarming rapidity, and we discovered with alarm that it would not hold out to the end of the journey.

We were in great spirits, which we bestowed—that is, I and Mr. Blowman—liberally on a dry, elderly, wiry-haired Briton, one of the true type we all know, who has the air of taking his bank abroad with him. That sort of commercial superiority is really unendurable, and we noticed that he smiled contemptuously as the guard came in and tore out our coupons.

"You find all that sort of thing answer, I suppose?" he said.

Mr. Blowman answered him readily. "It speaks for itself," he said; "it is the one, the only system, and depend upon it we shall all have to come to it, whether we like it or no."

"I am fond of the old ways," said the Briton, "at least until the new ones are fairly established."

"That was what all the social Tories said when steam came in. We'd never have had a railway if those principles had prevailed."

"Perhaps so. I only wished to know how the thing answered. Have you found it satisfactory?"

We had all the ardour of neophytes, and answered. Had we not gone in for the thing thoroughly? Could we show a greater proof of our confidence than having embarked so great a stake in the matter?

"Look here, sir," said Mr. Blowman, "we are couponed through and through, over and over again. See this and this. Boat, rail, breakfast, coffee or tea, with eggs, all coupon; meat ditto, a separate or supplemental coupon. Dinner, bed, we are all coupon, sir. We deal with our fellow-man in no medium but coupons, and look here, I suppose the united contents of the purses of the whole party would not amount to the sum of five shillings. What do you say to that, sir?"

"It only seems to me that you have burned your boats, as the saying is, and that you are determined to give the system its fullest trial. Such faith ought to move mountains."

"There are always sceptics in every age," said Mr. Blowman, with spirit. "This is an age of scepticism."

"Not an age for putting all your eggs in one basket."

On this we all set on this stuck-up Briton, and, as Mr. Blowman said happily, "couponed" him with a will. I must, however, think he was tolerably good-humoured under our roasting.

"Perhaps I am old-fashioned," he said, "but, at all events, you cannot blame me for waiting. I ought to tell you that Curebath is full to overflowing now."

"We are independent, sir," said Mr. Blowman, "and are provided for."

The day passed over. Gradually our spirits began to flag a little, for we were growing tired. Papa and mamma both showed signs of weariness, and, I must say, pettishness; mamma wishing that "she was back at St. Grundy's." Towards ten o'clock we began to draw near to Curebath. The starched Briton was asleep. At last there we were! and the exiles of St. Grundy's, as Mr. Blowman amusingly called our party, found themselves set down in Curebath.

It was very bewildering—the strange town—the lights—the foreign language—the odd people; and I own, for the first

time, I felt my heart sink a little, and wished myself, as mamma did, again in St. Grundy's. Mr. Blowman, who had been appointed—rather he had appointed himself—director-in-chief and coupon-holder of the party—seemed to exhibit signs of despondency, and was quite helpless and bewildered. A number of German porters were clamouring noisily round him, I suppose demanding payment for the luggage. He was quite cowed, and came to us to the cab door.

"Give me some money for these fellows," he said. "I haven't a halfpenny left, not as much as I could jingle on a tombstone."

This poor jest he delivered with a ghastly smile.

"You know I have none, Mr. Blowman," I answered somewhat tartly. "You should have kept some for this occasion."

"How could I?" he answered as tartly. "What am I to do with them?"

Papa, in an agitated way, said:

"Offer them the coupons—they are received everywhere, you know."

"Stuff and nonsense," he answered, roughly. "They wouldn't take 'em, know nothing about 'em. What are we to do?"

It was embarrassing, and all his fault. Still it was really the only thing to be done. They might accept them. So he drew out a "breakfast with meat" coupon, and tendered it. It was received with a chatter and a howl. Mamma suggested, what oddly enough proved to be the only sensible course, that we should bid them accompany us to the hotel, where the host would satisfy them. This was explained to them by signs, and seemed to be cordially accepted with many a "ja! ja!" and Mr. Blowman assured them, in the same language, that at the Golden Stork they should be handsomely remunerated.

Strange to say, this was received with a chorus of rude laughter, and a roar of "Nein! nein!" It was growing intolerable. In a moment of rage, and seeing that Blowman was of no more use than an old woman would be, I bade the coachman drive on quickly, which he did, with a loud crack of his whip.

I felt that we were attended behind by our persecutors, but it was a release. Inside in the dark interior, Mr. Blowman and I fairly quarrelled. I said he ought not to have taken on himself the direction of the party, if he felt that he could not be equal to such a little difficulty as that. He said that, if I hadn't interfered, all would have gone well. It was not a pleasant

drive. We were now passing through dark streets; every one seemed to be in bed. I wished again that I was back in my own snug one at St. Grundy's.

We had stopped in a long dark street before a gloomy arch, with closed gates like a prison. There was a gold stork over the door.

"Here we are," said both I and Mr. Blowman, uttering an undeniable truism at the same moment.

The coachman got down, and voiced some unintelligible sounds.

"Tell him to ring the bell," I said.

Mr. Blowman pointed to that mode of attracting attention, uttering vehemently the words, "Bell, bell!"

He did not, or would not understand.

"Ring it yourself," I said, impatiently.

He was becoming more and more stupid every instant, but he got out, and did so. The man stamped impatiently, and poured out a volley of gutturals. At the same time the porter persecutors arrived, and, crowding round the window, gesticulated violently at the large gate, as if they were threatening the golden stork.

"They are touts for the other hotels," said Mr. Blowman, in his stupid way, "and infuriated that we did not go with them. What are we to do now?"

"Ring again, of course," I said, thoroughly disgusted with him.

Catch me taking an underground bass abroad again. Of all the spectacles of effete stupidity! He tried to ring the bell, but they interposed, and gesticulated more furiously still. They would not allow him to touch it even. It was growing serious. My mamma began to cry. Suddenly a gentleman pushed through the crowd. I stood at the window. With what joy I recognised him as our travelling companion, the starched Briton.

"I saw you were in some difficulty," he said, "so I followed. Can I assist you?"

"Oh do, kind sir," I said, in despair. "Get rid of these wretches."

He spoke to them in German, and a dozen voices, including that of the cabman, answered him. The wretches used their arms to point excitedly at the walls and gate, the coachman followed suit with his whip.

"It seems," he says, "that the proprietor of this hotel died last week, and it has been shut up. His heirs are not carrying on the business. It is going to be pulled down, and re-opened as the Grand Hotel of the Golden Stork."

A cry of despair broke from the interior of the cab. The coupons!

He spoke again to the porters. Again gestulations.

"Not a room to be had in the whole town," he said. "The Crown Prince arrived this evening to open the new bath-house. All the other hotels are full to bursting."

"But we have our coupons," said Mr. Blowman, in his idiotic way. "They are money cheques; they must take us."

"I fear not," said he.

What was to be done? We had coupons, but not a farthing of money, nothing that "we could jingle on a tombstone."

"Look here," said Mr. Blowman, imbecile to the end. "Here is a breakfast coupon, with or without meat; a dinner ditto, a bed do——"

"I fear they would be of no use to you," said our rescuer. "The only thing that I can suggest is this. I telegraphed to secure a room at the Eagle, which is quite at the service of the two ladies. The gentlemen must rough it."

What gratitude we felt. Our rescuer satisfied the porters, and we drove away from the closed Stork to the Eagle, Mr. Blowman being turned out on the box-seat to make room for our noble preserver. We spent a miserably uncomfortable night at the Eagle, but were told that we ought to consider ourselves lucky. And, indeed, we were grateful.

The next day, however, things brightened a little. The Crown Prince was going away in the evening, and comfortable rooms were given us. And such was the esteem in which the worthy coupon-issuer—who was not responsible for the accident—was held, that his little drafts were promptly honoured by the proprietor of the Eagle.

We shall never travel, however, with Mr. Blowman again.

TREASURE.

"But if you admit the supernatural, if you allow its intervention in the circumstances of actual life, what—I take the liberty of asking—what is there left for sane reason to do?"

So saying, Anton Stepanytch magisterially folded his arms. He was a ministerial counsellor in some department; and as he had a deep bass voice and italicised his phrases, he was considered by some as an oracle.

"I agree with you," said Monsieur Finplentof, the master of the house, in his small fluty voice, as he sat in his corner.

"I must confess I don't, seeing that I have had myself some experience of supernatural events."

This dissent proceeded from a stout and bald gentleman, of middle height and middle age, who had remained hitherto close to the stove without uttering a single word. Everybody stared at him, and there was a moment's silence, broken by Anton Stepanytch. "Really, my dear, sir, do you mean to tell us, seriously, that anything supernatural ever happened to you?—that is to say, anything not in conformity with the laws of nature?"

"I give you my word for it," replied the dear sir, whose name was Porfirii Kapitonovitch, ex-officer of hussars.

"Not in conformity with the laws of nature!" thundered Stepanytch, evidently proud of the expression.

"Yes, to be sure. Exactly as you do me the honour to describe it."

"Very extraordinary! What do you say to it, gentlemen?" The departmental ministerial counsellor tried to put on an ironical look, but his features rather indicated the presence of some very offensive smell. "Would you be good enough," he continued, "to oblige us with a few details of so curious an adventure?"

"You wish to hear what occurred? Nothing is easier. You are aware, gentlemen, or perhaps you are not, that I have a small property in the district of Kozelsk. There is a little farm, a kitchen-garden to match, a little fish-pond, little barns and stables, besides a little lodging—I am a bachelor—just sufficient to give me decent shelter.

"One evening, some six years ago, I came home rather late. I had been card-playing with a neighbour, but I assure you that I walked quite straight. I undress, get into bed, and blow out the candle. Fancy, gentlemen, that as soon as the candle is out, something begins to stir under the bed. What is it? Mice? No, it can't be mice. It scratches, walks, kicks about, shakes its ears. 'Tis plain; 'tis a dog. But what dog? I don't keep a dog. 'It must be some stray dog,' I say to myself, 'treating himself to a night's lodging here.' I call my servant, 'Filka!' He comes with a light. 'What's this?' I ask him. 'You're a poor creature, Filka; you attend to nothing! A dog has hid himself under the bed.' 'A dog?' says he. 'What dog?' 'How should I know? 'Tis your business to provide your master with pleasant entertainments.' Filka looks under the bed with the candle. 'There's no dog

there,' says he. I look too, and in fact there's no dog to be found. I stare at Filka, and he bursts out laughing. 'Stupid ass,' I say to him, 'when you opened the door, the dog shot out. You can attend to nothing. Do you suppose I have been drinking?' He was going to answer, but I told him to take himself off. I rolled myself up into a ball in the bed-clothes, and that night I heard nothing more.

"But the following night, fancy, the sport begins again. The minute I blow out the candle, he shakes his ears. I again call Filka. He looks under the bed. Nothing. I send him away, and blow out the light once more. Whew! the deuce! Here's the dog. 'Tis really a dog; I hear him snort, as he grubs in his hide after fleas. There's not the slightest doubt. 'Filka,' I shout, 'come here without a candle.' He comes. 'Well. Do you hear it?' 'I hear it,' says he. Without seeing him, I know by his voice he is in a fright. 'How do you explain that?' I ask him. 'How should I explain it?' 'Tis a temptation—a bewitchment.' 'Hold your tongue, with your nonsensical bewitchments.' But we both of us shook, as if we had the ague. I light my candle; no more dog; no more noise; nothing but me and Filka, as white as sheets."

"'Tis plain you are a man of courage," interrupted Anton Stepanytch, forcing a smile half of pity and half of contempt. "'Tis evident you have served in the hussars."

"I was afraid then," replied Porfirii Kapitono-vitch; "but excuse my saying that I shouldn't be afraid of you on any occasion. But listen a moment, gentlemen. This game had gone on for about six weeks, and I began to get used to it. I put out my candle every night, because I cannot sleep with a light in the room. One day my card-playing neighbour drops in to dinner, taking pot-luck, and I do him out of fifteen roubles. He looks up. 'It is getting dark,' says he; 'I must be moving.' But I had my plan. 'Sleep here, Vassi Vassiliitch,' says I. 'To-morrow I will give you your revenge.' Vassili Vassiliitch considers, and remains. I order a bed to be made for him in my chamber. We go to bed, we chat, we talk single men's talk—nonsense in short. Vassili Vassiliitch blows out his candle, and turns his back, as much as to say 'Schlafen sie wohl.' I wait a minute, and then blow out mine. And fancy, before I had time to think of it, the sport begins; the brute stirs, crawls from under the bed, walks

about the room—I hear his claws upon the floor—shakes his ears, and then, patatras! upsets the chair that stood by Vassili Vassiliitch's bedside. 'Porfirii Kapitono-vitch,' says he, and, mind, quite in his usual tone of voice, 'you have set up a dog. Is it a sporting dog?' 'As to dog,' says I, 'I have none, and have never had.' 'Not a dog? What is it, then?' 'What is it, indeed? Light your candle, and you will see.' 'Not a dog?' 'No.'

"I hear him try to light a match, fr-r, fr-r. All the while he was doing it the dog went on scratching himself with his hind-leg. The candle is lighted. Nothing! Vanished! Vassili Vassiliitch looks at me, and I look at him. 'What's the meaning of this?' says he. 'The meaning is this, that if you put Socrates and the Grand Frederick together, they can't explain it.' And I tell him the whole history. You should have seen him jump out of bed, like a scalt cat. 'Put my horses to,' says he. 'I won't stop here another minute. You are a lost man, under a spell. Bring out my horses instantly.'

"I managed to quiet him; his bed was shifted into another room, and lights kept burning all the rest of the night. Next morning he was considerably calmer. While drinking our tea he gave me his advice. And I must tell you, gentlemen, that my neighbour is a man—a superior man. He brought his mother-in-law to reason in a most extraordinary way. She became as gentle as a lamb; and it is not everybody, you know, who can get the better of a mother-in-law."

"I see you are a philosopher," again interrupted Anton Stepanytch, with the same compassionate and disdainful smile.

"Philosopher!" repeated Porfirii Kapitono-vitch, this time knitting his brows and twisting his moustaches angrily. "I don't pretend to that. But I can give lessons in philosophy, and good ones too, upon occasion."

All eyes were turned on Anton Stepanytch, in expectation of a terrible reply, or at least a withering look; but the ministerial counsellor merely changed his contemptuous smile for a smile of indifference, yawned, crossed his legs, and that was all.

"Well," continued Porfirii Kapitono-vitch, "Vassali's advice was, 'Leave home for a few days, and go to the town of Belev. There is a man there who may assist you. If it takes his fancy to help you, well and good; if it doesn't, there's nothing to be done. Ask for Prokhorytch Pervouchine, and tell him you come from me.' I thanked

him for the recommendation, and immediately ordering out a tarantass, told Filka to drive me at once to Belev. For I thought to myself, 'Although, up to the present time, my nocturnal visitor has done me no injury, it is nevertheless a great annoyance, and, moreover, quite unbefitting a gentleman and an officer.' 'What's your opinion?'

"And you went to Belev?" murmured Monsieur Finoplentof.

"Straight, without stopping. I find out Prokhorytch—an old man in a patched blue vest, a tattered cap, busy planting cabbages, with a goat's beard, not a tooth in his head, but never did I see such piercing eyes. He stares at me fixedly; so; then he says, 'Have the goodness to step into the house.' House! a hovel; not room to turn yourself about in; on the wall an image as black as coal, and heads of saints, black, too, except their eyes. 'You want to consult me?' 'Indeed I do.' 'Very well; state your case.' And my gentleman sits himself down, takes a ragged cotton handkerchief out of his pocket, spreads it on his knees, and, without asking me to take a seat, regards me as if he were a senator or a minister. And, what is strangest of all, a sudden fright overtakes me. Before I can make an end of my story, my heart sinks down to my heels. When I have done, he says nothing, but knits his brows and bites his lips. At last he majestically and deliberately asks, 'Your name? Your age? Your parents? Married or single?' Then, again knitting his brows and biting his lips, he raises his finger and says, 'Prostrate yourself before the holy images of the pure and gracious bishops, Saints Zoizimus and Savvat of Solevetz.' I prostrate myself at full length, and, if he had told me to do anything else, faith! I should have done it. I see, gentlemen, this sets you a laughing, but I didn't feel the least inclination to laugh.

"'Rise, young man,' he says, after a time. 'We can help you in this matter. It is not sent as a punishment, but as a warning; that is to say, your friends have reason to be anxious about you. Happily there is some one who prays for you. Go to the bazaar, and buy a young dog, which you will never suffer to leave you, night or day. Your ghostly visitations will cease, and, besides that, the dog may render you a service.'

"You can fancy what delight this promise gave me. I made Prokhorytch a profound salutation and was going away, when it struck me that it would do no

harm to offer him my acknowledgments. I took a three-rouble paper out of my pocket, but he pushed back my hand, saying, 'These services are not sold for money. Give it to a chapel, or to the poor.' I saluted him again, bowing down to his girdle, and immediately set off for the bazaar.

"Would you believe that the first thing I see there is a man in a grey smock-frock carrying a puppy two months old, brown, with white fore-feet and muzzle. 'Hola!' says I to the grey smock-frock. 'The price of your animal?' 'Two roubles.' 'Take three.' He gaped with astonishment, thinking me mad, but I stuffed the note between his teeth, and ran off with the dog to my tarantass. The horses were quickly put in harness, and the same evening I reached home. All the way, I nursed the dog on my knees, and when he whined I called him Treasure! Treasurouchko! I fed him and gave him drink myself. I had straw brought and a bed made for him in my chamber. I blew out the candle. I was in the dark.

"'Let us see,' says I. 'Is it going to begin?' Not a sound to be heard. 'Come on. Do you give it up? Show yourself, rascal.' I was growing brave. 'Give us another specimen, if only for the fun of the thing.' I could hear nothing but the puppy's breathing. 'Filka!' I shouted. 'Come in, stupid.' He came in. 'Do you hear the spectre dog?' 'No, sir, I hear nothing;' and he began to laugh. 'Ah! you hear nothing now; nothing? Here's half a rouble, to drink my health.' 'Permit me to kiss your hand,' said the rogue, feeling his way in the dark. I leave you to guess how glad I was."

"And is that the end of your adventure?" asked Anton Stepanytch, but this time without his ironical grin.

"Yes, as far as the noises are concerned. But I have something more to tell you. My dog Treasure grew tall and stout; well set on the legs, strong square jaws, long hanging ears. His attachment to me was wonderful; where I went, he went; he never let me be out of his sight.

"One summer's day—and there was a drought unknown to the oldest inhabitant—the air was laden with hot flickering vapours. Everything was burnt up. The farm-labourers, like the crows, stood gasping in the heat, open-mouthed. The day was dull, with the sun hanging in it like a red-hot cannon-ball. The very sight of the dust set you sneezing. I was tired of remaining shut up in the house, with the

outer blinds closed to keep out the heat; so as soon as the afternoon became a little less sultry, I started to see a lady-neighbour of mine, who resided about a verst from my house. She was very charitable, still tolerably fresh and young, always well-dressed, only just a trifle capricious. I don't know that that's any great crime in women; both parties gain by it.

"I manage to reach the flight of steps in front of her house, although the road had seemed deucedly long; but I was kept up by the thought that Ninfodora Semenovna would bring me to myself with cranberry-water and other cooling drinks. The handle of the door was in my grasp, when all at once I hear from behind a peasant's cottage the shouts of men and the screams of women and children. I look. Gracious Heavens! there rushes straight at me an enormous red brute, which at first sight I could not suppose to be a dog, open-mouthed, with bloodshot eyes and bristling hair. The monster mounts the steps, and, stupefied with terror, unable to stir, I am conscious of the rapid approach of some big white tusks and a red tongue covered with foam. But, the next moment, another solid body flashes past me like a shell from a mortar. 'Tis Treasure, come to my assistance, who seizes the beast by the throat and clings to him like a leech. The other gasps, grinds his teeth, and falls. I open the door and jump into the entrance-hall without hardly knowing where I am. I close the door with all my strength, and shout for help while the battle is furiously raging outside. The whole house is upside down. Ninfodora Semenovna rushes forward, with her head-dress all awry. I peep through the door, opening it just ajar. 'The mad dog,' an old woman screams from a window, 'has run off to the village.' I step out. Where is Treasure? Ah, here he is, poor fellow, lame, torn, and bleeding. People have flocked up, as they would to a fire. 'What's the cause of all this?' I ask. 'One of the count's famous dogs, gone mad. He has been prowling about the neighbourhood since yesterday.' We then had for a neighbour a dog-fancying count, who procured all sorts of breeds from all sorts of places.

"I run to a glass, to see if I am bitten. Thank Heaven, not a scratch, only, as you may guess, I was as green as a meadow, and Ninfodora Semenovna, stretched on a divan, sobbed like a clucking hen. You understand that. First, the nerves; then, sensibility. Good! she comes to herself, and asks me in a husky voice, 'Are you

alive?' 'I believe so,' says I, 'and 'tis Treasure who saved me.' 'What a noble creature!' says she. 'Has the mad dog killed him?'

"'No,' says I, 'he is not dead, but badly wounded.' 'In that case,' says she, 'you must shoot him immediately.' 'Nothing of the kind,' says I. 'I shall try and cure him.' At that moment, Treasure comes and scratches at the door. I open it. 'Good Heavens!' says she, 'what are you doing? He'll eat us all up.' 'Pardon me,' says I, 'that doesn't come on immediately.' 'Gracious goodness!' says she, 'is it possible? You are gone mad too.' 'Ninfodora,' says I, 'make your mind easy, calm your fears, be reasonable.' All to no purpose. She begins screaming. 'Get out, quick, you and your horrid dog.' 'That's it?' says I. 'Very well, I will get out.' 'Directly,' says she, 'not another minute! Be off with you! You are a monster. I haven't the slightest doubt the man is as mad as his dog.' 'Well and good,' says I, 'only give me a carriage. I don't mean to run the risk of going home on foot.' 'Give him a calash, a droschky, whatever he will, only let him be off at once. Ah, mon Dieu! What big eyes he has! How he foams at the mouth!' Thereupon, she ran out of the room, gave her femme-de-chambre a box on the ears, and fainted away. You may believe me, gentlemen, or you may not, but from that moment all intimacy between Ninfodora Semenovna and myself was broken off; and, upon calm consideration, I feel that, for this sole service, I owed Treasure a debt of gratitude which could never be repaid.

"I took Treasure into the calash with me, and drove straight home. I examined him, washed his wounds, and determined to take him next morning at daybreak to the midwife of the Efreim district, a wonderful old man, who mutters strange words over a glass of water with which, they say, he mixes vipers' venom. You swallow that and are cured in a twinkling.

"While making these reflections, night came on; that is, it was time to go to bed. So I went to bed, with Treasure close by, as a matter of course. But whether it was the heat, or the fright, or the fleas, or my own reflections, no sleep was to be had. I drank water, opened the window, played the Moujik of Komarino on the guitar, with Italian variations, all to no purpose. 'This chamber is insupportable,' says I. 'With a pillow and a pair of sheets, I have only to cross the garden, pass the night in the hay-shed, and breathe the fresh breeze

from the open fields. All the stars are shining, and the sky is covered with little white clouds which scarcely stir.

"Nevertheless, I couldn't find sleep on the hay any more than in my bed. My head kept running on presentiments, and what old Prokhorytch had told me. Impossible to comprehend what, in fact, is incomprehensible. But what does Treasure mean by whimpering and whining? His wounds, doubtless, smart. But the real impediment to sleep was the moon, staring me full in the face, flat, round, and yellow. She seemed to do it out of very insolence. The doors of the hay-shed stood wide open. You could see the country for five versts in front of you; that is, you saw everything bright and yet indistinct, as is the case with moonlight.

"I looked till I fancied I saw something moving, a shadow passing to and fro, not very near, then a little nearer. What is it? A hare? No, it is bigger than a hare. It crosses a silvery meadow in this direction. My heart beats, but curiosity masters fear. I get up, stare hard, with wide-open eyes, and feel a cold shudder, as if somebody had clapped a bit of ice on my back. The shadow rushes forward, like a hurricane; it is at the hay-shed door; 'tis the mad dog of yesterday. He howls, and flies at me with flaming eyes. But brave Treasure, who had kept watch, springs up from the hay. They fight and wrestle, mouth to mouth, bounding hither and thither, one snarling, yelling ball.

"All I remember is that I fell over them, and ran across the garden till I reached my chamber. After the first fright, I raised the house. Everybody armed themselves with something; one had a lantern, another a cudgel. I took a sabre and a revolver, bought when the serfs were emancipated, in case of need. Shouting, and hearing nothing, we ventured to enter the hay-shed, where we found my poor Treasure lying dead.

"Then, gentlemen, I began to bellow like a calf. I went down on my knees before the faithful friend who had twice saved my life, and kissed his dear head. When my old housekeeper, Prascovie, found me in this position, 'What do you mean, Porfirii Kapitonovitch,' she angrily said, 'by taking on so about a dog? Yes, you ought to be ashamed of yourself; you will catch your death of cold.' (It is true I was but scantily clad.) 'And if the dog has lost his life in saving yours, he ought to be very proud of the honour.'

I returned to the house. The mad dog was shot next day by a soldier of the garrison, because his hour was come; for it was the first time that very soldier had ever fired a gun, although he wore a medal for saving his country in 1812. This, gentlemen, is why I told you that something supernatural had happened to me."

The speaker was silent, and filled his pipe.

"Ah, sir," said Monsieur Finaplentof, "no doubt you led a holy life, and this was the recompense of——" He stopped short, observing that Porfirii Kapitonovitch's eyes grew smaller and his mouth broader, as if irresistibly tempted to laugh.

"But if you once admit the supernatural," insisted Anton Stepanytch, "if you once allow its intervention in the circumstances of actual life, so to speak, what is there left for sane reason to do?"

Nobody could find a suitable reply.

Such is an abbreviated upshot of Tourquéneff's Dog, which occupies but a very small space in the *Nouvelles Muscovites*, done into French partly by Prosper Mérimée, and partly by the Russian author himself.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," &c.

CHAPTER XIV. BY THE LBETH FOR THE LAST TIME.

THERE seemed no probability, as far as human foresight could reach, of Mrs. Devenish and Mabel coming to an end of the record of that ball. They perused the two long columns of the names of those happy ones who had attended it, carefully, and then went back and made long pauses over special persons, and related circumstantially to one another details (with which they were both already familiar) concerning them. They "wondered" that So-and-so hadn't married. They wondered even more that some other So-and-so had. For the first time since her marriage Mrs. Devenish allowed herself to experience a sense of relief at her husband being out of the room. Had he been there she would have checked the interest, and hidden the paper, and deprived herself of the womanly delight of raking over the ashes of the dear dead past.

For it was a delight to her, though some of these same ashes scorched her a good deal. Even she was obliged to admit that the bygone days had been better than these.

highly while she had it. She had been a pretty, happy, flattered young widow with two girl-children, whom she adored in those days, and she had always been sighing for those days to be over, and she free to show the love and devotion she felt for Mr. Devenish. That blessed privilege had been hers for many years now, and on the whole it was not surprising that she should give a sigh to the memory of the other times.

So she pondered over the paper, and chatted with Mabel, and never regarded Harty's dumbness, or the brevity with which Jack Ferrier responded to any chance remark from his future sister-in-law.

Mabel was delighted with the new masculine element which was about to be introduced into the family. She had saved her conscience by administering that one rebuke to Harty about the latter's fickleness, and now felt at liberty to rejoice in her heart about what she could but feel to be an excellent thing. It was delightful to her that Harty should be going to marry a nice fellow, for whom she (Mabel) had not a particle of affection, more than she would have been ready to proffer to ninety-nine out of a hundred other men, who might have presented themselves as candidates for the office of her brother-in-law. And it was more than delightful to her that Harty could now never marry Claude.

All this balmy satisfaction with things as they were, made her very gracious, and frank, and agreeable to Jack Ferrier. At the same time she was very unobservant of him, and of his moods. She did not see now that he was constrained, disinclined to speak, awkward, miserable. She only thought that he, having secured his own happiness, might be ready with a little information respecting Claude and Claude's movements. "But most people are selfish," she thought, with a sigh of regret for the prevalence of that besetting sin of mankind. And then she having exhausted her own interest in the ball, asked him:

"How are they at the Court? What is going on there?"

"Nothing," he answered, briefly. He did so hope to avoid all mention of Claude, until he had had that explanation with Harty which should end all things between them.

"How is Mr. Powers?" Mabel persisted; "we haven't seen him for some time."

"He's very well, I believe," Jack answered unwillingly, and, as he said the two last words, Harty winced and looked up.

"'You believe;' don't you know?" she asked.

"He left the Court yesterday morning for town; he was very well then."

"Left the Court—not for good?" Mrs. Devenish exclaimed.

"Left the Court so suddenly, how odd," Mabel cried. But Harty merely looked down at the table again, and said never a word. The friends had come to an open explanation about her; Claude had denounced her as the shallow-hearted, fickle, foolish woman she must appear to be in his eyes, and Jack had taken his friend's view of her, she thought, and she heaved one short, strong sigh of determination to make no appeal against it all, for was she not rightly served?

"How very odd," Mabel repeated, presently, in an abstracted mood; "he'll soon be back I suppose?" she added, anxiously.

"I can't say. I didn't see him before he left," Jack replied, curtly. Mabel's curiosity on the subject of Claude seemed to be such an utterly idle, futile thing, that Jack Ferrier could hardly constrain himself to gratify it.

Mrs. Devenish felt her bosom filling with wifely hopes that Claude might indeed be gone for good. If he were, a sense of peace and freedom might once more relax the peevish brow of her lord and master.

"It seems a pity that a young man with no ties, and who is so fond of travel, should shut himself up in a place like Dillsborough," she said, softly. "I for one should be glad to hear that Mr. Powers was not coming back."

She looked questioningly at Jack Ferrier as she spoke. But he was engrossed with the trouble that was lying straight in his path, and so had neither time nor inclination to assuage her lesser one.

"I can give you no more information about Claude than I have given already," he said, and with that meagre crumb of comfort Mrs. Devenish was fain to be content. Presently she took it away to offer to her husband, and at the same time Mabel thought she would go over and give the "latest information" to Agnes Greyling, and so at last Harty and Jack were alone.

He felt with a thrill that righteous, justifiable as his decision against her was, he would be very weak in that woman's hands if she brought that strange, subtle, undefinable power of hers to bear upon him now. A mere beauty spell would have been far more easily broken, he half unconsciously recognised, as he gazed at the girl whose strength lay in the wonderful expression that made hers a more danger-

ous face than that of a Venus. He did not attempt to define the "reason why" she could wield the winning power so well, but he knew that she had it.

Could he give her up? How could he ever say the words that would make his intention clear to her? Even as he hurriedly asked himself these questions, or rather let those thoughts rush through his mind, she spoke.

"You've come to make an end of what only began the day before yesterday? I think you're so right," she said, speaking very distinctly, but without the faintest touch of defiance or indifference in her tone.

"Let me speak," he said, starting up, not knowing in the least now what he really wished to say, or ought to say, only feeling that come what would he could not be cruel to this girl, who seemed so ready to place the knife in her own heart, though she made no pretence of its not hurting her.

"No, no," she interrupted, stepping back from him, making no movement with the pliant little hands—hands that he had pictured wreathing themselves about his arms.

"No, no, Jack; you'd say something now that you didn't come to say; what you meant to do when you came in was the right thing, and you shall do it."

"Let me tell you what I have thought. I would give the world to hear you say something that would make me feel you had done yourself injustice. Harty, come to me—speak to me—"

"That I may hear over again your reasons for doing what is right! Oh, Jack, be satisfied as things are. I know what I am, and I know what you think of me, and I tell you I feel you're right; let it end here without another word."

"Harty, has this been nothing to you that you can make it all end in a moment?" he asked, forgetting for the moment that it had been his set purpose to make it end at once when he came in.

"Never mind what it has been to me," she said, impatiently. "You're right, I tell you, to break it off now at once; all I ask is, don't give me reasons for it, because I know them all, and they—do—sting, Jack—though I know they're good ones."

Her voice broke with a dry sob—if she had only cried the end would have been different. But Harty had no taste for those triumphs which are won with tears.

"I'll tell you something else, too, because you're a good fellow, and will often feel sorry for me—if you had married me after hearing that I did what you think

you than I do of Claude; now I can't do that—good-bye."

The gesture with which she held out her hand to him was so sudden, so definite, so final, that he found himself taking it, and echoing her last words, "Good-bye."

He drew her nearer to him, and bent his head down and lifted her hand to his lips, pressing it passionately, and feeling that he could not give her up; that he could not render up this right. It was a hand that seemed specially made to be kissed, this of Harty's. No flabby, nerveless, incapable, limp-fingered thing, but a little, delicately made, essentially feminine hand for all that—a tiny thing to sway a man's soul truly. Yet at this moment the idea of relinquishing all right to be the legal caresser of that hand was bitterly painful to him.

"Harty, Harty," he said; "we have both been too hasty."

She drew her hand away at this, and stood off from him.

"No we haven't," she said; "after what you felt when you found me out, we couldn't have married, you know; but Jack, I'm sorry you felt it."

There was one more brief "good-bye" exchanged between them, and that last farewell was harder than Jack Ferrier had ever expected it would be.

He went away miserably enough presently, anything but rejoicing in that liberty which he had come there determined to reclaim; and then Harty, with a mad desire to have it all over as soon as possible, went to look for her mother.

For the last two days poor Mrs. Devenish had been breathing more freely than she had breathed for years. Harty, the best beloved but most difficult to deal with of her daughters, was about to be removed, the mother believed, to a more congenial sphere, and this in a way that must be gratifying to any truly maternal heart. The girl was going to marry; to marry a man she loved, who had money enough to maintain her; to marry well, in fact, and to be a bone of contention in the Devenish household no longer. "I shall miss my child, but the relief to poor Edward will be incalculable," the mother avowed in the first half of the sentence. The wife spoke in the latter part. Mrs. Devenish bemoaned, from the very bottom of her affectionate heart, that antipathy which existed between her husband and Harty. But she could not blind herself to the fact that it did exist, and therefore the prospect of Harty's speedy marriage

And Hartly knew all this by intuition, and admitted to herself that it was only reasonable that it should be so. But this full knowledge added poignancy to the pain she felt in going to her mother with the tidings of the dissolution of the scheme that had seemed so fair, and that had promised such peace.

"Well, dear," Mrs. Devenish began, when Hartly came to her, "where's Mr. Ferrier?"

She asked the question cheerfully, pausing in her occupation of looking out some better glass and china that was destined to grace the dinner table that night in honour of the son-in-law elect. And as Hartly answered, "He is gone, mother," a ghastly memory came back of a bygone day, when, with feelings for another man that were almost identical with those that were thrilling her now about Jack, she had gone to her mother with a similar story of being left.

"Gone! I thought he would have stayed to dinner," Mrs. Devenish said, looking dejectedly at the china and glass which would now go back unused.

"All the horrible old story will have to be told over again—the same humiliating theme with just a few variations," Hartly thought, with a queer mixture of bitterness and amusement. The tragedy and comedy of it all were so very patent to this girl. It must not be supposed that because she was not blind to the humour, she was insensible to the pain.

"He is gone, mamma, and he's not coming back again to dinner, or ever," she said, softly. "Dear mother, dear mother! don't heap questions upon me just yet; I'm found wanting a second time; that's all."

The disappointment, the indignation for her child, the wounded motherly love and pride, could find no vent in words. In utter prostration of spirit, and despair of a brighter day ever dawning for them, Mrs. Devenish laid her head on her daughter's shoulder, and did what Hartly would not do, wept bitterly.

"Do you remember," Hartly went on, dreamily, "when I was a child how I used to hate that fable about the girl who counted the chickens before they were hatched, as she carried the eggs to market? It must have been a presentiment of what was to happen to myself that made me shrink from hearing of those smashed eggs I think. Don't you, mother?"

"I can't think," Mrs. Devenish moaned; "it's all too dreadful, too dreadful to be true, surely."

"All the dreadful things are true, if you observe," Hartly replied, with a sigh. "Dear mother, it must be awful for you; you must feel as if you had brought a monster of iniquity into the world from whom all men turn eventually."

"Mr. Ferrier must be as weak as he is worthless," Mrs. Devenish cried, passionately.

"He's neither weak nor worthless," Hartly said, flaming up instantly in his defence; "if he had been weak he would have taken my view of my conduct, and I didn't think so badly of myself at first; and if he had been worthless my worthlessness wouldn't have shocked him as it has."

"My poor child," Mrs. Devenish said, piteously, "you're crushed indeed. Oh, Hartly, some of us owe you a debt that we can never pay."

What words can properly portray the misery this girl endured during the ensuing days? This sharp, stinging pain of being as openly left as she has been openly loved is one that is sacred to refined and sensitive and affectionate women only. If golden silence were only observed by outsiders about the possible crime and the positive punishment, it might be borne more easily and patiently. But outsiders invariably look upon this special subject as their legitimate prey, and worry it well. It is one of those miserable facts that cannot be kept in the dark. A rumour arises, Heaven knows how, that the match is off, and forthwith the beldame conjecture is rampant in the atmosphere that surrounds the unfortunate object, and she is speculated about and commiserated out of her mind, and generally compelled to take a colossal portion of her Hades upon earth.

The servants saw that there was something wrong that same evening. Deadly gloom cannot settle down upon the drawing-room without the kitchen being duly cognisant of it. Our faithful servitors are far more alive to our joys and woes, and to the causes of the same, than we find it agreeable to believe at all times. And they never act the miser's part with any information they may surreptitiously become possessed of respecting their employers. They circulate it freely among their compeers; and as it is in the nature of vapours, however noxious, to ascend, it floats up into other drawing-rooms, and goes through no sort of purification in the process.

All Dillsborough soon looked askance at the young lady who had "so nearly

caught" Mr. Powers's friend, and a sufficiently depreciatory version of the story was current in the place before long. The one person who sympathised with Harty with the only sympathy that can be endured under such circumstances—perfect silence, namely—was old Mrs. Powers.

Six weeks had passed away since the closing in of that dismal day which had witnessed the farewell scene between Jack Ferrier and Harty. He had left Dillsborough, of course, was gone entirely out of their life, utterly out of their orbit, and no one had heard a word about Claude. The stagnation of feeling, the dulness of the mediocre routine, the terrible desolation that reigned in the house at the corner, was an appalling thing to them all. To Harty it was simply horrible in its intensity. After such lovers, and such experiences as this girl had known, to be left to herself and the memory of them, was a punishment far too ghastly for any of her errors. Heaven help the women who, having had these feelings called into life, find them suddenly hurled back upon their own heads, for neither man nor woman can!

One morning Mrs. Devenish appeared among them all with an air of constrained, harassed resolve that was a new thing in her. Harty saw that her mother looked at Mabel now and again, and seemed to gather momentary strength from Mabel's reassuring, approving glances. "What did it all portend," Harty wondered, lazily, and she felt miserably that it couldn't be about Jack, for he would "never have appealed to me through them," she thought, unconsciously putting them all in their proper places.

There always came a specially dreary hour in the morning in that household when the morning fuss was over, the breakfast cleared away, and the dinner arranged, and Mr. Devenish established with his newspapers in the most comfortable place that could be found for him. A specially dreary hour, because in it there was nothing definite to do, and no noise could be permitted about anything indefinite. This hour in the winter the girls generally spent in their own bedrooms "putting things to rights," or reading over the books they had read dozens of times before. But this day, just as Harty was getting herself away to this harbour of refuge, her mother stopped her.

"It's quite clear and fine, Harty; come out for a little walk with me, will you, dear?"

Harty stared; it was the first time since Mrs. Devenish's marriage that she had issued such an invitation to either of her daughters. The thought that she might be needed by "dear Edward," always kept her hovering near to him, even while he was skimming the cream off the daily news, and not thinking about her.

"Where shall we go?" Harty asked, as she picked up her hat and jacket; "not through the street; they all look at me as if they expected to see me perform an impromptu Ophelia pas in the public places; let us go down through the meadows."

So down through the meadows they went, talking about the beautiful green of the grass, and the pleasant warmth there was in the air, and the comfort it was to have such a "nice walk" so close to their own gate. Talking about everything, in fact, but that which was nearest to their hearts.

They got down by the slowly crawling Leeth at last, and walked along its banks in silence, each of them steeped in a relaxing flood of recollections. Harty clenched her hands tightly together in the kindly concealment of her muff, as she recalled some words which she and those others had spoken there, and her heart swelled with pain, and a despairing expression came into the clever eyes that saw so clearly how desolate was the lot of their owner. But still, though memory was making the silence so painful, she shrank from its being broken.

She had become so absorbed that she gave a perceptible start when her mother spoke at length.

"Give me your arm, Harty, I am older than I was, and not so well able to walk. Why, child, how nervous you are."

"No, I'm not," Harty replied, promptly. "I should consider myself fit for nothing but the grave with a vengeance if I got nervous."

"Good nerves are a blessing for which one ought to be humbly grateful, I'm sure," Mrs. Devenish said, devoutly; "poor Edward's get worse and worse; it's heart-breaking to see the change in him."

"I don't see any change in him," Harty said, uncompromisingly.

"Ah, my child, you are not his—well, you'll believe me there is a change in him, a very sad change indeed; and I feel convinced that nothing but a change of scene and society will restore him at all."

Mrs. Devenish paused, and to Harty's surprise she saw that her mother's tears were falling fast.

"Dear mother," she said, "what is the matter?"

"I have something to say to you, Hartly, and my dread is that you may misunderstand me; yet loving you as I do, I ought not to distrust you in that way; I ought not to fear that you will do me the wrong of misunderstanding me."

"No, I won't," Hartly said bluntly.

"It is this, my darling: Edward and I have talked it over, and come to the conclusion that we ought not to sacrifice his health by living here any longer; health is a precious gift, and we have no right to wilfully squander it. He ought to go abroad to a more genial climate, and I must go with him."

"Yes?" Hartly said, interrogatively.

"But as he says, the dear thoughtful fellow, we have no right to drag you two girls about in the sombre train of an invalid."

"You propose leaving us behind you then, mother?" Hartly asked, calmly.

"Yes, dear, with how much pain you will never know; but it's better so, it's better so, my child," the poor, driven woman faltered.

"Do you think I shall stay in Dillsborough, mother?"

"No, dear; I have arranged already. An old friend of mine is living at Margate. You have seen her, my dear, Mrs. Vernon, a truly sweet woman" ("An old wretch," was Hartly's mental commentary), "and she, having a larger house than she requires, is quite ready to make a home for Mabel and you; and—and—I hope and think you will be happy there, darling," she added, wistfully.

For a full minute Hartly could not speak. That separation which she had made such a sacrifice to avoid was being forced upon her now by the hand that was so dear to her. But she knew that her mother was driven to take this course by the point of a dagger that she was powerless to blunt.

"It must all be as you say, mamma," she said after that pause, and for her mother's sake she did strive so hard to speak cheerily. "All but one thing; you don't think I'm going to live with Mrs. Vernon?"

"My child! where will you go?"

"I don't know; not there."

"Oh, Hartly! you would be so safe, so cared for—"

"I won't go," Hartly interrupted. "Trust

me, mother dear, I'll be safe anywhere for your sake, and as for being cared for, I don't want that; if Aunt Ellen will have me, I'll go to her and teach her children the little I know myself; if she won't have me, I'll——" she hesitated, and her mother asked anxiously:

"What?"

"Be a circus-rider," Hartly said with a laugh. "Mother, dear, let us go back now; you have told me the grim truth, and you're longing to be home. Does Mabel know?"

"Mabel knows, and has agreed to go to Mrs. Vernon's, and thinks it a very good plan on the whole."

"So do I on the whole; an excellent plan, and quite in keeping with the rest of my highly successful career," Hartly said, bitterly. "When do we all go?"

"Next week," Mrs. Devenish said, timidly.

"That's good—the sooner the better; mother dear, there is a great comfort in the thought that you'll have an easier time of it."

"And Mabel likes Margate," Mrs. Devenish said, with a faint accent of hopefulness, "if only you——"

"There's Mr. Devenish looking for you at the garden door," Hartly interrupted, and as her mother hurried on to announce that it was all settled, Hartly turned round and stood by the Leeth for the last time.

"I'm four-and-twenty," she said to herself, "and may live forty years longer; what a mercy that I'm not like the river, doomed to go on for ever."

Now, though this record of her ends here, and though there seems to be a very despairing note in that last speech of hers, it must be remembered, for the comfort of the few who may have taken an interest in Hartly, that such a nature as hers is sure to rebound in time. And also that the faculty of loving does not desert a woman even after two failures, at four-and-twenty.

END OF NO ALTERNATIVE.

Next week will be commenced,
A NEW SERIAL STORY,
 BY THE AUTHOR OF
"LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," &c.,
 ENTITLED
AT HER MERCY,
 To be continued from week to week until completed.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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AT HER MERCY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "A PERFECT TREASURER," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I. A MEDICAL OPINION.

IN the heart of England lies Dunwich, loveliest village, not of the plain, but of the hill-top. You must climb up from the rich levels where the hop-gardens lie, through half a mile of hanging wood, ere you arrive, on an August morning such as this, refreshed and cool, in that "haunt of ancient peace," and (what, alas, is more rare) of plenty. For there are no poor at Dunwich—absolutely none. Small as the place is, it contains two venerable almshouses, which absorb the Aged and Infirm, who having done their life's work, or having failed in doing it, fold their wrinkled palms, awaiting the Divine summons, and whom we call our surplus population. These dwellings have no affinity to the almshouse of the nation—the workhouse. Except that they are one-storied, they resemble colleges, each with its green court within it, like a huge emerald in a fair stone setting; the grey walls are overgrown with moss and lichen; even the ivy is cut away with no remorseless hand, for all things that are old, or have an attachment to what is old, are here held sacred. In Seymour's Home, the smaller of the two, the doors have grey stone porches, in which the inmates sit on summer eves, and knit or read, or, since the building commands the valley, look down upon the happy autumn fields, and think, or do not think (probably only doze and dream), on the days that are no more; a thoughtful spectacle enough to others at all events.

Every dwelling on the south and north of straggling Dunwich-street, commands

a lovely prospect; and the houses are happily not contiguous, so that between the gaps, the wayfarer has glimpses of both landscapes, the one, at this time, shining with the gold of harvest, and the green of the hop-crops, the other waving with woodlands as far as eye can reach. Even the windows that give upon the street have a fair outlook, and not only through these gaps aforesaid, for before every house is more or less of garden, and in almost every garden is a tree. It seems as though instead of desolating a village to make a hunting-ground, as his fellows too often did, the feudal lord of Dunwich had permitted the village to be built in his own leafy demesne, with the sole proviso that his trees should be spared.

The great gates of the modern park stand close to Seymour's Home, in the very centre of the hamlet, and are open night and day to all comers. Thus without descending from their high-placed Paradise, the happy Dunwich folks can pass from their own doors into a world of verdurous "dip" and upland, with groves of stately oak, and dells of fern, where the couched deer, accustomed to such harmless visitors, scarce lift their branching heads to watch them pass. Here and there, beneath some spreading tree, or on some hillock whence the leafy avenue prolongs itself to one green arbour, are rustic seats "for whispering lovers made," or at all events such intention is taken for granted, and they are used accordingly. In place of high blank walls, which the baser Rich too often build about their beauteous homes to bar their fellows' eyes from all fruition of them, and bolted gates with cold uncivil menials to reflect their master's harshness, the Lord of Dunwich permits all to share his woodland trea-

sures; nay, better than those "great sirs," who

Give up their parks a dozen times a year,
To let the people breathe,

he welcomes them the whole year through. On the whole, then, with their common park, and the fair prospects from their doors, and their almshouses to retire into, if the worst came to the worst with them, we might well suppose that the inhabitants of Danwich had little cause for complaint; yet, if so, one would be very much mistaken. With Mr. Angelo Hulet, for instance, a bachelor or widower (it was not quite understood which) of some substance, who had been settled in the village these ten years, and had, therefore, some right, he imagined, to speak with authority upon the subject, this very openness of the park was a grievance.

"I call it a deuced impertinent thing," he would argue, "of my Lord Dirleton, or of any other lord, to offer his patronage in this sort of way. It is only an underhand way of making slaves of the people. He first lays them under an obligation, and then expects to see them on their knees before him; but he will never catch Angelo Hulet in that position."

Why "Angelo," none but this independent gentleman's godfathers and godmothers (long since dead) could have explained, if even they; but, as to the "Hulet," he had a great deal of information to offer. In his little study, as he calls it, a charming apartment opening on a smooth-shaved lawn, from which three fair counties are visible, as you sit under the tall cedar in its centre (from which the house derives its name, the Cedars), there hangs a picture, whereby hangs a tale. It is the representation of a man in a vizor, with a long grey beard, who leans on a headsman's axe. He is standing on a scaffold with the block beside him, and beneath it there is a great crowd of people, chiefly soldiers; and this scaffold is, so to speak, the proprietor of the picture's "platform," whereupon he dilates to an impatient and unsympathising world upon the death of that perfidious monarch Charles the First, whose head was cut off by William, sergeant in Colonel Hewson's regiment, and founder of the race of Hulet.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the present descendant of that hero inherits in any way his truculent character. Mr. Angelo Hulet is the mildest-mannered man that ever scuttled ship of the state

in traitorous speech; a hypochondriac and a valetudinarian. His study contains a bookcase stoned not with republican works, but with all the classical literature upon indigestion; and beneath the bookcase is a cupboard, filled with every sovereign cure for the nerves, from "digestive tablets" to prussic acid. At the time of our introduction to him he is a little over sixty years of age; but presents the appearance, possibly from too free an indulgence in those excellent remedies, of a man of seventy. He is tall and spare, with a slight stoop. His face is handsome but deeply lined, and, to a disciple of Lavater, the resolute fixity of jaw contrasts itself curiously with the indecisive expression of the eyes. These are never still, and when you speak to him, instead of concentrating themselves upon your own eyes, they shift and wander as though to escape their gaze. To judge him as dishonest, and afraid to look you in the face on account of this peculiarity, would be, however, to do him a great injustice; it is only a nervous habit, which he uses with a stranger neither more nor less than with Evy, his niece, and the ruler of his comfortable little household.

Eva Carthew had lost both her parents in a single day. They were on their way from India, chiefly to see the daughter they had sent to England quite a child, and of whom they had heard such glowing accounts from time to time from the schoolmistress to whom they had confided her, as made their hearts to leap for joy, when, within two days' sail of home, their vessel foundered. Eva's father had been an officer of rank, and in the enjoyment of a good income; but with him it died, and it would have gone hard with the orphan girl, then but just fifteen, had not Uncle Angelo held out his helpful hand to her. It had never been offered to her before, nor even had she so much as seen him. Colonel Carthew and his brother-in-law had not been on good terms; indeed, they had despised one another very heartily, a state of things which had had its origin nearly two hundred years ago, for it arose out of that very "Chop at the King's Head," as Angelo irreverently termed it, or "the murder of our most gracious sovereign Charles the First," as the colonel designated that much-debated historical catastrophe. The hatchet that they could never bury was the one with which William Hulet slew his king. The subject had been always a bone of contention between

them, and, on one occasion, the colonel, being his brother-in-law's guest, had so far forgotten that circumstance in the heat of controversy, as to rise and prick with a hot poker, not his host, indeed, but that which his host valued above himself, the counterfeit presentment of his regicide ancestor. If you looked at the picture carefully, you might observe in the abdomen (for the assailant had no time to be particular) a large square patch, which had been let in to conceal the wound. Angelo Hulet never forgave that act of desecration; never spoke to his sister's husband nor his sister afterwards; and hated the innocent cause of that estrangement, Charles the First, more cordially than before. If, however, his heart had not yearned to go and see his little niece, exiled from her parents, and passing even her holidays under the roof of her schoolmistress, it had often reproached him with his neglect; "if Eleanor had only written a line to ask him to go, or if that idiot, Carthew, had had the grace to apologise for his brutal violence;" but there came no letter till that sad one from the schoolmistress which told him that his enemy was gone whither Charles Stuart and William Hulet had gone before, to Heaven's judgment, and with him the sister with whom Angelo had been playmate, companion, counsellor (in all except her marriage; he had "never liked the man"), and the only one of his own blood (save one other) in the world. Then, to do him justice, Angelo Hulet put away from him all remembrance of the quarrel about the merits of that False Tyrant or Blessed Martyr, and leaving orders that the wound in the picture should be neatly healed (he had hitherto kept it open, to keep his wrath alive and active, by constant contemplation of it), had set off forthwith for the genteel academy in Linden Grove, Battersea, where sorrowing Eva was, to lay his home and purse at her disposal.

He had found her a lithe, slender slip of a girl, with an abundance of rich brown hair, which, with her soft hazel eyes, had formed her chief charm at that time; but the promise of beauty had now ripened into full performance. At eighteen, Eva Carthew was the ornament of her uncle's home, the pride of his heart, and the acknowledged flower among the belles of Dunwich. Nor, though her beauty was of a dainty and even delicate sort, was she one of those hot-house plants of "the garden of girls," who shrink from the winds of heaven, and pass their lives wrapped up

as it were in cotton-wool. No matter for snow or rain, she rarely failed to take her daily walk, or at least to step across the street to Allen's Almshouse, and visit the ancient dames, to whom her coming was as a streak of sunshine in a waste of cold grey sky. Doctor Burne, the long-established medical authority of Dunwich, protested that she did more good in the village than all the drugs in his dispensary, and that without any "un-English mummery;" a contemptuous expression which was understood to comprehend not only the institution, habit, and profession of Sisters of Mercy, but organised charity of all kinds; for the doctor was of the old school, and if he had had to paint an angel would have made her carry, instead of a palm branch, a bottle of port wine, and instead of a crown on her head, two half-crowns in her hand, to be given away where they seemed to be most wanted. But for Evy, it is doubtful whether the honest doctor could have kept on good terms with her Uncle Angelo, a man with whose opinions, and even with whose numerous maladies (though their existence, real or supposed, was much to his own interest), he protested "he had hardly common patience."

His patience must have been a good deal tried, for every morning it was expected that he should present himself at the Cedars, feel Mr. Hulet's pulse, and examine his tongue. When this professional interview was over, the doctor was wont to pay a complimentary visit to Evy in the drawing-room, as happened upon the particular morning we have in our mind.

"How are you, Doctor Burne? How is my uncle?"

"Excellent, my dear. I have persuaded him that he has a brand-new disease, unknown before to the human species, and he is consequently in the highest spirits."

"Oh, doctor, how can you? When you know, too, that he is really far from well."

"That is very true; but the state of his nerves is chiefly owing to his foolish apprehensions about them, and to the quarts of rubbishing stuff that he takes to cure them. Any means that succeed in making him give up those doses of prussic acid, for instance, of which he takes enough daily to poison the whole company of Dunwich Rifles, their captain included (how well that little blush becomes you, Miss Evy!) are more than justifiable. If I can only persuade him to take my medicine instead, I will answer for it it will do him no harm."

"Nor good, I suppose you mean, you wicked impostor!"

"Bread pills, my dear; honest bread pills, with a little powder over them to smell nice and nasty, are what your uncle shall have." And the doctor rubbed his fat hands together as though he were already concocting them, and chuckled till his red face grew purple.

"I am afraid he will only take all the other things as well," observed Evy, sighing.

"Perhaps; I told him, however, it would be dangerous—with all the gravity I could muster, and quoting the sentiments of a hanky-panky homeopathical book that I got hold of the other day—'It is highly unadvisable, sir,' said I, 'to continue simultaneously two courses of medicine, each of such considerable power.' And then, what do you think? I recommended him to take a brisk walk daily in the park. You know how he loves Dirleton Park." Here the jolly doctor fairly roared with laughter, and had to take out his pocket-handkerchief to dry his tears.

"Hush, hush; or my uncle will hear you. It is too bad of you to behave so to him; I don't like it, doctor."

"It's all for his good, my dear; it's all for his good," answered the old fellow, with something of serious apology in his tone, for he saw that his companion was really annoyed; "beside which, Miss Evy, I put in a word on your own account. When I said, 'You must take to walking in the park,' of course he flew into a dence of a rage, and swore that he would see the park—well, in a state of conflagration, first, and that he wouldn't then; to which I replied that of course he would please himself, but that there was nothing so wholesome as the smell of deer. ('Ah, but that's musk deer, isn't it?' said he, gravely—when I really thought I should have had a fit.) And that I attributed your own excellent health to the frequent walks that you took in Lord Dirleton's coverts. Now wasn't that a good stroke of business for you? and yet you were just now upon the point of being angry with me; you know you were."

"I wasn't angry, doctor; but I don't like to hear dear Uncle Angelo made such fun of. He has been very good to me, you know."

Her large hazel eyes grew liquid as she spoke; not as the doctor's had done, however, but quite differently. The tears did not fall, but formed clear pools, in whose

depths you could see, or at least her companion could, glistening infinitely fairer than any Sabrina, gratitude, love, pity.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Evy," said the doctor, who, though he was overfond of banter, and had an unbecoming habit of wetting his thumb when he dealt at whist, was in feeling a gentleman, "forgive me for forgetting to whom I spoke. There is none better aware than myself that your uncle has a good heart, and that it is only his digestion which is out of order. Well, when I spoke of your health, it seems I was only just in time, for he told me that he had had it in his mind this very morning to stop your walking in the park altogether. There would have been a pretty kettle of fish! Why? Do you suppose, then, I don't know all about it—I, who am the walking repository of all the gossip of Dunwich! 'Why,' indeed? Is it possible that a being can be so young, so fair, and yet so desperately hypocritical! You positively beat your ancestor who hangs in the study yonder, my dear Miss Evy, when he dropped a tear upon his regicidal axe, and begged the king's pardon before cutting his head off. Of course I know all about it—the walks in the greenwood glade, and the talks on the seat beneath the chestnut—so that when your uncle put this question categorically, 'Are you certain that the air in the park does her any particular good?' I replied, most honestly, 'The heir of that park is essential to her.' A doctor, fortunately for you, does not write out his opinion, or else he must needs have discovered at once that I meant Captain Heyton."

"Captain Heyton is not Lord Dirleton's heir—at least, not necessarily so," observed Evy, coldly.

She had blushed and trembled at first, like a rose when the warm south wind blows, at the doctor's too significant rallery; but she was calmly contemptuous of it by this time, and, after the manner of her sex, had seized upon his last words to make a diversion in the embarrassing topic.

"He is the heir presumptive, however, you little prevaricatrix," answered the other; "and presumption (especially where there is a great deal of it, as in his case) goes a great way. The idea of his standing yonder at this moment under the porch of Dame Swithin's cottage, without the excuse of a drop of rain, and staring up at the Cedars—no, no, he is not there" (for Evy's love-lit eyes had been unable to resist a furtive glance out of the window); "but the idea

of his doing so (I was about to observe) would not surprise me. There, I am a nasty disagreeable old Teaze, you are thinking, perhaps; but the fact is, my dear Miss Evy, I had a reason for my cruel conduct; I wanted to make myself quite sure, for your own sake, of how matters stood between you and the captain. I had never seen him when walking with a fair companion in the Home Wood press her willing hand, or heard him murmur like a dove—a ring-dove—that there was ‘none like her, none,’ though the presumption was that he had done it; but now that you have confessed as much—nay, pardon me, you have—I know how to proceed in your interests. Your uncle is thinking of leaving Dunwich.”

“Leaving Dunwich!” echoed Evy, with a piteous stress on the name of the beloved village where she had known nought but happiness, and which for the last three months had been Paradise itself (for the doctor’s diagnosis had been correct). “What reason can he have for doing that?”

“Well, not a very strong one, my dear, in one sense—it’s his nerves. He has heard from somebody that Balcombe—a place on the southern sea coast somewhere—is good for his complaint; I mean his old one; and that is why I found out a new one for him this morning, to which Balcombe air will be very disadvantageous—that is, if you choose it so to be. He is to have my opinion to-morrow, when I shall have thought the matter over. Of course I want you to stop here; but I would not have humbugged your uncle on my own account; my principles are too strong for that; whereas for your sake I am prepared to enter upon a career of unblushing deceit. Now am I a cruel old inquisitor? Now am I a hard-hearted wretch, eh?”

“Indeed, doctor, I know you have the kindest heart in the world——”

“Softest you mean; soft as fresh butter, with your sweet image imprinted on it. Well, go on.”

“I was going to say, doctor, that if you are quite sure that Balcombe would do dear uncle no good, I would very much rather we did not leave Dunwich.”

“Very good, my dear. Then if my medical dictum can decide the affair in Dunwich, you shall stop—— But, I say, do look out of window. It is not an idea this time, for such a thing would never have entered into my head. No other man in the parish treads so gingerly over

the stones as that. It is he himself—Lord Dirleton is coming across the street, and, if I am not mistaken, to the door of this very house; and that’s his ring.”

CHAPTER II. WHAT DUNWICH THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

It must not be supposed from the interview between Doctor Burne and Eva, that the latter was of a disposition underhand, or even unduly reticent. She loved her uncle well, but he was not one to invite any one’s confidence, and certainly not the tender confession of a girl’s first love. Upon his own affairs he kept an unbroken silence. Of his former life his niece knew absolutely nothing, save what, as a child, she had learnt from her mother’s lips; that he had once been married, and that his marriage had turned out “unfortunately.” As she grew up, the term had found a meaning for her that had hushed all questioning. Whatever had been the nature of his matrimonial catastrophe it had, without doubt, rendered him very hostile to the married state, and prone to jest with bitter cynicism at love and lovers. Upon the whole, then, it was not surprising that Evy had kept her affection for Captain Heyton a secret from her uncle, and, as she had vainly hoped, from all the world.

As a matter of fact there was nobody in Dunwich, except Mr. Angelo Hulet, who was not aware that there was “something between” his pretty niece and the gallant captain; though opinions were much divided upon its nature. Most people thought it was only a flirtation, and those who did not, with a few exceptions, pretended to think so. The five Miss Colvilles of the Grange, who held a highly respectable county position, and might themselves have made alliance with the noble house of Dirleton without “incongruity” (that was the term), affected to pity “that poor girl,” Miss Carthew, with whom John Heyton was “making himself so ridiculous.” Lady Wapshaw, on the other hand (widow of Sir Richard Wapshaw, late alderman of London), of Dunwich Castle, a very modern mansion, with an architectural salt-box at either wing, and an architectural watch-pocket with turrets in the centre—and who possessed one rather pretty and very marriageable daughter—protested that Evy would “deserve whatever she got,” that is, she was understood to imply, provided it was something of a disappointing nature. She had no patience with young women who threw themselves at the heads of young

men in a superior station of life to themselves, and, for her part, thanked Heaven that Captain Heyton had never met the girl under her roof. Even Mrs. Mellish, the rector's wife, with whom Eva was a great favourite, was compelled to admit, under the influence of these great authorities, that "the whole affair was to be regretted," though she positively declined to accept the position they would have forced on her of volunteer Mentor, and adviser "for her good," to the young lady in question.

"It is your bounden duty as wife of the clergyman of the parish," urged Lady Wapshaw, "to depict to this motherless girl the abyss upon which she stands."

"Without going so far as that," said Mrs. Colville, "I think a word in season from you—or, perhaps, some little convincing tract upon ambition—might be of the greatest service. Or could you not get your husband to point seriously out to her that she has set her heart upon a Dead Sea apple, with nothing inside of it?"

"Oh, as to that," interposed the titled lady, contemptuously, "she would jump at it all the same. What does she care whether Captain Heyton is clever or stupid?"

"I was speaking rather in a metaphorical sense," explained Mrs. Colville. "I think the unreasonableness of her pretensions should be dwelt upon—her uncle coming as he does from nobody knows where—"

"And going to a place about which there can be no possible doubt," put in Lady Wapshaw, acidly. "A man who walks out of church because he won't listen to the service about Charles the First, and kicks over the basket of oak-apples that is brought to his house on the twenty-ninth of May!"

"And of whom so little is known that it is doubtful whether he is a bachelor or a widower," continued Mrs. Colville. "Think of the gulf—the social gulf—between such a man and Lord Dirleton."

Good-natured little Mrs. Mellish looked nervously from one to the other, like a bright-eyed bird in a cage between two cats. "It's very unfortunate, certainly," she murmured, "and much to be deplored."

"Pray say it's 'injudicious,'" sneered Lady Wapshaw, "as you said of those wretches who poached in the Home Wood under his lordship's nose."

"Indeed, my lady," replied Mrs. Mellish, with some dignity, "I cannot honestly say much worse of it. Eva Carthew is a

very sweet girl, and the daughter of an officer of distinction. Of course it would be a great advancement to her—perhaps an unwise advancement—"

"You are surely not supposing a marriage, my dear Mrs. Mellish?" interrupted Lady Wapshaw.

"I am certainly not supposing anything less, my lady," returned the little woman, her bright eyes glancing scorn. "And in this house, you must give me leave to say, that I will not have anything less suggested. You don't know Evy Carthew as I know her. She is as simple as a—dear me," said Mrs. Mellish, looking about for a metaphor, for flights of eloquence were very unusual with her, "think of the very simplest of Heaven's creatures—"

"Such as the fox," muttered Lady Wapshaw, fortunately beneath her breath.

"I honestly believe," continued Mrs. Mellish, eagerly, "that if that dear girl has fallen in love with Captain Heyton (mind, I don't say she has), that she loves him for his own sake, and without a thought of his brilliant expectations."

"And I honestly believe," said Lady Wapshaw, rising from her seat, with a contemptuous smile, "that if the present Lord Dirleton, in his sixtieth autumn and his twentieth fit of the gout, was to offer Miss Eva Carthew his hand, she would drop the nephew like a hot potato, and marry my lord to-morrow. What do you say, Mrs. Colville?"

"Yes, what do you say?" echoed Mrs. Mellish. She had hopes in the squire's wife, a woman who never refused a soupticket or a yard of flannel to one "recommended" by the rector, and appealed to her with the doubtful confidence exhibited by some heroine of melodrama when addressing "the gentler-natured" of two ruffians. "I am sure you can never be so hard on this poor girl."

Mrs. Colville drew her shawl about her, as a judge twitches his ermine before delivering judgment, and assumed a very dignified air indeed.

"My dear Mrs. Mellish, I have nothing to say against your protégée, personally; nothing whatever; she may be, as you say, the simplest of created beings. But as a woman of the world, I must say that I think a girl in her position must be very simple indeed not to understand that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and to accept Lord Dirleton if he asked her. For my part, I think it is just as likely that his lordship should ask her, as

that Captain Heyton will ever do so; and it is entirely on the girl's own account, and to preserve her from humiliation and disappointment, that if I were, like yourself, an intimate acquaintance of Miss Carthew's, I should think it my duty to open her eyes."

Mrs. Mellish opened her own eyes very wide indeed, dropped her little head on one side in semi-approval, and promised "to think about it;" but no further could the combined eloquence of her two visitors compel her to go.

"What do *you* think of it, my dear?" inquired she of her husband, before whom she laid the matter so soon as he came home from his parish round. He was the first rector of Dunwich that had ever worn a beard since Bishop Latimer's time, an innovation which had at first been desperately resisted. The Colvilles had called it "incongruous." Lady Wapshaw had even stigmatised it as "indecent;" but he had carried his point, and now wore moustache as well. It was literally impossible to move him from any position he took up on principle, a hair's-breadth.

"What do I think of it, my dear," repeated he, stroking "the manly growth that fringed his chin," as he was wont to do when engaged in deliberation; "well, I think that Mr. Carlyle's observation with respect to the population of England being 'mostly fools,' is particularly applicable to Dunwich. Where we differ is, with respect to the public advantage likely to flow from the influence of the female aristocracy. He was really a great man—a very great man—before people of fashion began to make a fuss about him."

"My dear George, how you do fly off. I want to know what to say to Mrs. Colville and Lady Wapshaw."

"Just so, my dear; it's of them I'm thinking, for I'm quite sure it never entered into your sensible mind to speak to Eva. Of course the marriage of a girl like that with Heyton is a very serious thing. Let well alone is a very wise saying, and to bring brains into a family that have got on so uncommonly well without them for three hundred years, is without doubt a risk. But you can't tell her that without wounding her feelings on the captain's account. Besides, I do think their intelligence is growing; he is not nearly such a danderhead as his uncle."

"But I can't tell Mrs. Colville that, George," urged Mrs. Mellish, piteously.

"Can't you? I would much sooner tell

her that, than tell Eva Carthew she wasn't good enough for John Heyton. A tract on ambition, indeed! Those two women should be sent to Colney Hatch. Well, tell them that you consulted me, and that I recommended for your guidance the golden rule of life that ought to be printed in colours in every national school-room, and placed immediately beneath the Ten Commandments in every parish church—speaking of which reminds me that we have a vestry meeting at four, and that I must be off."

"But what is the golden rule?" pleaded the little woman, clinging to her husband's arm as he was about to hurry away. "I don't know what I am to tell them now."

"Now this is shocking," said the rector, kissing his wife's forehead; "this is what comes of subscribing to missionary enterprise in the Frozen Islands—yes, you did, for Lady Wapshaw showed me the half-crown in triumph; well, you may tell her from me to 'Mind Her Own Business.' Colney Hatch, indeed! that woman is positively dangerous, and ought to be sent to Broadmoor."

Thus, as has been said, opinions differed in Dunwich as to the match, if match it was to be between Miss Eva and the captain; for the little debate at the rectory was only an example of what had taken place at twenty tea-tables every evening since the unconscious pair had been seen walking together in a certain sequestered "drive" in the park. They had met more than once, indeed, at the tables of common friends, where the captain had not failed to show a marked interest in the young lady; but that had been explained (to their own satisfaction) by the five Miss Colvilles as a momentary infatuation, and by Miss Wapshaw, even still more charitably, on the ground of the captain's delicacy of feeling. He had paid attention to her because he perceived she was of inferior social position to the other guests, just as a gentleman of fine courtesy is particular to notice his host's governess. But "those clandestine meetings in the Home Wood"—as a matter of fact the pair had met but twice, only one of which occasions had been designed—were not to be explained away. Even in a rank of society where young folks are not punctilious about the proprieties, "the young man as I walks with" is a phrase of intense significance. Imagine, therefore, the excitement that reigned in Dunwich when it was reported that old

Lord Dirleton, who rarely set foot out of his own park—and, indeed, the gout seldom permitted him to set it anywhere—had been seen to call in person at the Cedars!

A LONDON PILGRIMAGE AMONG THE BOARDING-HOUSES.

II. "ONWARD."

In a shady sequestered square in Bloomsbury, where modern footfalls reverberate reproachfully, where large green-blinded windows once gay with brocades and beaupots now seem dipped to the lips in learning, where once cheerful fronts have stiffened into buckramed vistas of seminaries for young ladies, and where ancient rheumatic pianos are forced to tinkle, tinkle, wheezily with their poor scant breath, meekly droning Beethoven's sonatas, or writhing out Chopin's coruscations on the summer breezes, there stands a large house bedizened with a brass plate, upon which is inscribed, "Mrs. Finch's private boarding-house." A most indiscreet house for all its decorous aspect, for it is a kind of amateur whispering-gallery; words spoken confidentially appear to crawl and wriggle themselves along the broad stretches of walls, gliding under chinks and through keyholes, repeating to themselves their sense as they progress lest it should be forgotten, and at some unexpected corner shouting it out triumphantly to the extreme discomfiture of the speaker, and the surprise of persons on other floors. If you slam a door it bellows aloud, crying out its pain to other doors, announcing it to walls and ceilings, which each take up the complaint, passing it on from one to another until it makes its final exit by the skylight in an indistinct murmured rumble. In such a house nothing disreputable could live. Decorum and mummified nobility ooze from the plaster, pride of ancient lineage festoons itself along the cornice, a flamboyant reproach to all that is low and vulgar. As we move up and down its princely stairs we hold our breath, shrinking up our cubic inches into smallest limits, feeling that our frock-coat and muddy boots have no business where whilom silk stockings glistened and perfumed feathers waved. Our paper cuffs and collars may be very white, but what are those cheap substitutes for cleanliness to yellow unwashed lace, to glorious Point, or fairy-fibred Brussels? Verily, such houses are painful to live in, chafing our little inno-

cent vanity at every turn, grinding our cherished conceit out of existence.

At that blue-blooded door I meekly knocked, and presently it was opened by a tall spare woman in black silk, with a widow's cap closely framing her thin face. Her hands played nervously with a watch-chain, her eyes had a trick of looking backwards with a sudden movement like some terrified animal being run to death. "You have rooms?" I asked. "Yes," she twittered, holding the door half shut between myself and her, with an expression of face as though I were a burglar. "I wish to see them," I rejoined, pushing past her and standing on the mat. "You want to live here?" she exclaimed, as though none but ghosts could inhabit such a chill abode, and I began to think that probably most of these places are inhabited by phantoms of old days, who sit silently of an evening over spectral loo, discoursing in hollow accents about the Prince Regent, or the pump-room, and the last Bath scandal, popping up the chimney at grey dawn to rustle down again for another Sabbath as twilight deepens. "Yes, I want to live here. Your card is in the window, so you must have room." "Dear me, yes," she murmured, "I'm all in a flutter, you're so prompt. Let me think. We're very quiet people, and I'm a widow." "I have no matrimonial intentions," I premised. "No; oh no! of course not. Come in then, and we can talk," and she led me into a grim dining-room, furnished in the inevitable way with horse-hair glistening, venerable furniture, and shadowy, colourless moreen curtains. "Yes, I have room, but I don't know you, you see. Have you a reference to anybody I know?" "It is not probable, but I will refer you to my banker, Messrs. Rothschild, will that do?" "Rothschild!" she repeated, vacantly, and I found myself for about the first time before a lady who had apparently never heard that celebrated name. "I live so retired, you see," and her thin hands moved uncertainly among the cups and saucers laid out for tea, "that a stranger—but of course, if you like, you can come; yes, you can come, I suppose," and then as if seized by a happy thought, she produced a card from a reticule and said, her wan face lighting up, "here's my reference, give and take, it is a solicitor, a most gentlemanly man, and I'm sure he'll say I'm quite respectable." But I declined her card, hinting in my turn that a reference to a stranger was worth nothing, and that I needed none.

"Dear, dear! not want one. Very unusual, isn't it? Call to-morrow some time, or the next day, and then I shall have thought a little. So very sudden, you take my breath away, and a young gentleman too——" But I sat down with a resolution that appalled her, depositing my bag and wraps, and declining to move, trying on her as I did so the taming power of my eye. That stern organ was not apparently without its effect, for by degrees the trembling hands waxed calmer, and, after communing with herself awhile, she produced from the reticule a bunch of keys worthy of a Newgate warder, and led the way up-stairs. A wonderful house it was of a hundred years ago, rich in exquisitely-carved panelling, in stucco-worked ceilings of the best period, and finely-sculptured marble mantelpieces. Great rooms, lofty and well-shaped, strewn with untidy adjuncts of the present day, opened one out of another by folding-doors, with vistas of once cosy little boudoirs and quaint corkscrew private stairs. My bedroom was extremely lofty, adorned with wreaths of flutes and tambourines in relief, and a polished floor more adapted for twinkling dancers at a ball than for the sober stockinged feet of a wanderer. At the back was a garden with Inigo Jones stone seats and old trees, under the shade of which sat a number of gentlemen in black, like the council meeting of a rookery. "Those are my boarders," said Mrs. Finch, "mostly clerical gentlemen and missionaries from foreign lands. My connexion is entirely among the clergy, English and American. That is the Reverend Mr. Poke," she continued, rolling out the trisyllabic title and turning it in her mouth like some choice bonbon, "there, in the centre, looking so venerable and good, bless him. He's just returned from Zanzibar. Next him the Reverend Flick, also a missionary, a most excellent gentleman, whom you'll come to love, I am sure. And that other gentleman, dressed like an Australian digger, is an admirable man, though eccentric. But you'll meet them all at tea. Meat tea at seven; seven and sixpence a day the room. I try to make my house as like a Christian home as possible. No show or liveried servants, or earthly vanity of that kind. Two maids and I, and a reclaimed sinner of a shoe-black boy, do all the work, and give general satisfaction. It shall be my earnest endeavour to secure your comfort, sir, and if there is anything you specially fancy I

only hope you will say so. I will send one of my boys to you when tea is ready." And the timid lady glided noiselessly from the room.

"What an enormous house for two maids to keep," I thought, remarking on the excessive spotlessness of curtains and linen; "but probably missionaries straight from the undiscovered islands have learned to wait upon themselves. And what a cataleptic, desolate square, with rank grass actually sprouting between the stones in front of the hall-door!" This was caused by our end of the square being closed up with railings so that no carriages came our way unless bound for one or other of the neighbouring houses, a contingency likely to occur on an average once a year, judging from the general aspect of affairs. Two fossil ladies sunned themselves in the square opposite, near a toppling old statue, one with a book, the other occupied with some kind of worsted work. A beadle, glorious in red waistcoat and gold hat-band, paced monotonously round as though no one ever provoked him to move them on within the dreamy precincts of his authority. Many sleek cats reconnoitred from area and balcony, there was a distant wheezing of a piano, a scarce perceptible far-off hum of the outer world, and a large notice-board opposite to the effect that no children would be allowed to play, and that all street musicians would be prosecuted. Surely an ideal resting-place for over-tasked brain-workers.

A knock at the door, and a pretty little boy neatly dressed in black announced that tea was ready. Round a long table sat the gentlemen in black, at its head the twittering landlady, flanked on either side by little boys, her sons. A large urn, no tablecloth, tea, toast, muffins, sliced cold beef, and eggs; jam of several sorts, and condensed Swiss milk. The gentlemen in black devoured voraciously, with much clatter and jaw-rattling, varied by snorts and sighs of satisfaction. It struck me that this must be their first meal since leaving the South Seas. The Reverend Mr. Poke got through three eggs, a muffin, a rackful of toast, and unlimited cold meat. How he must have mulcted the savages in kind in those distant lands! The gentleman attired like a gold-digger roused my curiosity. A tall, handsome American, about forty-five years old, with full beard and sad thoughtful face, a victim to monomania. He is convinced that in two thousand years the sun will crumble away, and

hat our present globe will burn to take its lace; that between this and then there will be great earthquakes, culminating in a monster one, the friction of which will set the world on fire. Although he places the catastrophe so far beyond our day, he insists that people must be warned of his discovery, to which end he is always writing pamphlets, which he persecutes his friends to publish. Once possessed of a considerable income he has carried out to the letter certain precepts of the New Testament, by giving his money to whomsoever asked for it. His principles becoming known, he did not unnaturally become the centre of a crew of harpies, who only abandoned him when he parted with his last dollar; but he regrets it not. Looking upon money only as a means not an end, he is perfectly content, calmly arguing that having kept others so long as he was able, it is now their turn to keep him. Nor has he suffered as yet from the result of such eccentric doctrines, having whilst travelling in Palestine fallen upon an Englishman who, perceiving him to be thoroughly sincere, and compassionating his position, actually does pay for all his frugal wants. Should his landlady need payment he tranquilly sends her to his friend, nor deems the proceeding the least unusual. Once he wrote to Horace Greeley offering a series of newspaper letters upon the destruction of the world, which were politely refused as being 'ahead of the time.' He is just such a calm enthusiast as might, possibly may some day, be the founder of a new religion, carrying unstable minds away by the sheer force of his convictions and spotless life.

As the meal progressed, the little boys, averaging from twelve to nine years of age, began to look weary, and to fidget on their chairs, whilst their mamma gazed ecstatically at the missionaries, trickling forth a feeble little dribble of reverence. The children, I afterwards discovered, were already launched upon the world, earning their pittance, although they looked no more than babies; one as invoice clerk at a City haberdasher's on four shillings a week, the younger ones as errand boys. No wonder they looked tired, poor little men; knocked about and banged all day at the beck and call of every one; too weary to eat, only looking wistfully at the clock, and wishing for bed. But the timid old lady here unaccountably displayed a contradictory facet of her character, being quite a martinet in her own circle, insisting on the small creatures carving for and waiting on the

boarders. Such carving as it was, too! It was pitiful to see the fragile wrists and dusky little fingers bending and battling with a great carving-knife and fork for the behoof of the insatiable gentlemen in black, who seemed images of the grave—dark, mysterious, silent, and devouring all things alike relentlessly. The cloth once removed, the youngsters were free to go to rest, whilst the missionaries sat down with the old lady to whist or cribbage and warm drinks, enlivening the performance with travellers' tales of Zanzibar and the Fiji Islands, which I quite burned and itched to dispute. Presently other boarders dropped in one by one, American professors and professoresses on their travels, and one or two young gentlemen from shops, who having sipped idiotically across the counter all day, were proportionately sulky during off hours, clamouring rudely for dinner in quite another accent from "What other article to-day, madam?" and reducing the widow into a semi-hysterical condition. And so the evening passed, a jumble of cards and hot meat, clattering of knives, rattling of plates, and edifying conversation, amazing legends of South Africa tangled with retailed remarks of customers, the last brilliant sally of the Emperor of Timbuctoo cheek-by-jowl with the latest joke from the Cave of Harmony, until, candles being produced, all trooped off up the grand echoing staircase through the resounding, rambling corridors. At cock-crow, while the gentlemen in black still snored, the little boys were off to their respective avocations, carrying each his packet of bread and jam into the great world, and I, feeling chilled by this embalmed abiding place, resolved to follow their example, and migrate Strandwards.

Quick! A hansom that shall rattle us away from the galvanised corpse of Bloomsbury into the reviving whirl, the noise and bustle of the practical nineteenth-century Strand, whose roar shall cause our half-congealed blood to start and leap and tingle in our veins. Away from suggestive glamour of the past to the commonplace and bathos of the present. Let us think no more of sacks and ruffles, but allow instead our thoughts to revel over cheap excursions to the seaside, to gloat over members of the shoe-black brigade, to glory in pictorial announcements of the Nabob pickle, to bring themselves among the matter-of-fact but delightful surroundings of to-day.

In a few moments my Jehu whisked his horse round a sharp corner, down a steep streetlet leading to the Embankment, and drew up with a jerk before a strange medley of several houses battered and jammed into one, into which I was forthwith received. A strange honeycomb of a place, where irregular landings shunt you down a couple of steps here, coax you up half a dozen more there, betray you down a winding stair leading only to a cupboard reeking of candles, and mops and brooms, then lead you up a darkened way that abuts on nothing but a blank wall, until you would fain demand a clue and vow that you will insist on a private housemaid being especially told off to you as guide through the extraordinary labyrinth. A muscular, good-humoured tomboy of a maid with dusty hair, surmounted by a muslin blister, clutched my bag out of my hand, exclaiming: "Room? Yes, one in the sky parlour; right up atop in the tiles among the cats. Missus is out, but it's all right. Who come here? Why, doctors chiefly, bachelors, stray young men, and budding soldiers training for their exam. Ladies? No! Lor bless yer, we don't want no women folk here no more nor we can help, and that's ourselves. Five bob a day this little room, and cheap at that. Drat them bells! Common room down-stairs. Breakfast at half-past nine. Smoking? Rather. Like chimbleys. Come in at any time you like before two. Missus always sits up herself to let the lodgers in, but goes to bed at two, and after that you don't come in no more. What does she do alone? Why, knits. What a heap of knitting that blessed woman do get through to be sure. There. I can't stand gossiping all day." And off she bounced, clattering down several steps at a time. My room was small certainly, but scrupulously clean. There was carpet on the floor, a real modern washhand-stand, a dimity-curtained bed, and a homely lavender-bag air about it not to be expected from the grimy, brassy mask of the outer street. At breakfast I found an array of doctors, army surgeons, and country practitioners crowded around a tiny table, with a sprinkling of raw, jaded-looking lads in all the anguish of cramming for examination, looking like wild Pauls whom much learning was driving mad. History and geography mingled, it seemed to me, with their bread and butter; an atmosphere of Lemprière surrounded them, a subtle odour of recondite classics, a

musty savour of petrified wisdom long since stewed down for high-pressure use by cunning hands. A real officer sat there just returned from India, aged about twenty-five; quite a veteran and a hero in the eyes of the sandy-haired boys. The guests were all in slippers, munching for bare life, glowering the while as only Britons can, some indulging in tea and toast, others reviving themselves with soda and B, and others again pulling themselves together with an effort by means of curaçoa and brandy, and dissipated cayenne sandwiches. During the day these gentlemen sally forth like locusts on the town, returning at various hours of the night to discuss adventures in concert over a friendly pipe and bottled Bass. Although naturally cynical, I am pleased to consider myself also gregarious, and consequently hesitated not to join the midnight smokers, observing, as one would observe the habits of silkworms in a tray, the manners of our entertaining race until the small hours swelled ominously into great ones. It was distressing that we should have been called upon to endure a whole Joe Millerful of antique medical anecdotes, diversified with a garnish of inane school remembrances and legends of Indian prowess. But there was no help for it. One by one the smokers at last retired to rest, until through tobacco billows nothing was to be discerned save the stalwart young Indian and a certain evil old shadow with a parchment-covered cranium and Hebrew nose, whom I had known well for years as a certain bill-discounting vulture, with a fledgeling of even shadier reputation than his own. While they conversed I wondered to myself as to what that ill-omened gentleman could be doing there, knowing, as I did, that his own house was in altogether another quarter of the town. What could induce him to leave his sumptuous mansion at Haverstock-hill, with its irreproachable claret and train of obsequious domestics, to vegetate in a two-pair back down by the river-side? What was the meaning of his sitting for hours of the day crooning over a violin alone in his miserable little den? Was he like me, studying mankind, or had his conscience got the better of him, and had I lit at last on the real original Wandering Jew? I had but to watch his slimy ways and the glassy veiling of his wicked cormorant eyes to be speedily enlightened. The young man opposite was a good specimen of an ordinary son of Mars. Irish, young, handsome, broad-shouldered, free

of thought and speech, garnishing his conversation with polite oaths ingeniously constructed; addle-pated, empty-headed, guileless, and open as the day, but with an overweening conviction of his own shrewdness and a religious belief in boxing as the noblest of fine arts, he offered a fair bait for the foul bird perched so deferentially beside him, ready to pounce should occasion only offer. Achilles, of the close-cropped golden hair, rattled pleasantly along, ingeniously prattling of his amours, his billiard-room triumphs, his street rows, while the Jew joined in as chorus, echoing with delighted applause his every sentiment. "Ah, sir," he said, with a deferential half-bow, "how I wish you knew my son Joseph, the very companion for you, all alone here in town. Dotes on the ring, an admirable hand at pyramids, broad of chest, and strong of arm. You must know one another. You absolutely and positively must. He's rich too," he added, spreading a confidential net; "I'm not; I'm a ruined man. He has lots of money, and knows how to spend it too. Don't give none to his poor old father, though. But ah, well, he makes it by his brains, and has every right to spend it himself. If you should ever be in want of a hundred or two—" but seeing symptoms of displeasure gathering on the other's face, he warily skated off on another tack. "He does lend money sometimes, but it breaks my heart, and makes me feel quite ill. I often say to him, Joseph, my boy, why can't you be content with a little won fairly and above board? But he's too bright and energetic to listen to poor old dad. Boys will be boys. Yet he's a fine fellow with it all, and I know you'll like him. We all have our little faults, you know. Why, the muscles on his arm—" "By dash, dash, look at mine!" interrupted young Achilles, fairly off on his hobby, rolling up his sleeve to the shoulder; "a sculptor told me once" (this in a low, awe-stricken voice) "he'd like to model it. Feel it now. Hard, isn't it? Do you know I knocked a fellow's dashed teeth down his throat the other day who trod accidentally on my toe. See the marks on my knuckles now. Dash, dash! Though he said he was sorry I tell you I mauled him well, sending him to bed for a week. My shirt-sleeves were covered with his blood." And the young innocent smiled good-naturedly, his excellent heart dimpling out into sunlight all over his healthy face as though he really had done something clever. And why not, poor fellow, con-

sidering his bringing up? He informed us that his father taught him the noble art of self-defence while yet toddling with unsteady feet; that this worthy sire amused himself with sham fights, bestowing pennies on his baby adversary whensoever that infant succeeded in punching the paternal proboscis; that one day when the pennies had become half-crowns, and the young knuckles were swelling hard and large, he knocked his father down, drawing much claret at the same time, whereupon that gentleman sat ruefully on the floor awhile, half angry and half pleased, until at length the gallant creature conquered his feelings, shook himself with a grunt, drew a sovereign from his pocket, and bestowed it, with his blessing, on young scapegrace. What marvel that a boy so educated should learn to look on Jemmy Shaw's as an Elysium, on beer at the Hampstead Chicken's as nectar worthy of gods; that he should daily frequent doubtful billiard-rooms, should dally over Haymarket bars, and brawl with waiters at night houses? Such wasted careers are more often the result of wrong impulse at starting than of natural perversion of character. It is interesting to remark how such young men, being of sterling worth at bottom, talk with bated breath and wide-open reverent eyes of science and art, instead of reviling them in their ignorance as real swine would do, as though they instinctively recognised awful intangible deities whose shoes' latchet they knew themselves unworthy to approach. Well, well, as some cynic once observed, such sparks would, on the battle-field, make as pretty corpses as better men. But is it not a dreadful thing that tempters should be enabled to dog their inexperience even under their roof-tree; that not satisfied with importunities by post, evil beasts of prey should purr at their breakfast-tables, ready at slightest encouragement to guide them to their ruin; to pop down à propos notes of hand upon their plates, and smilingly present a pen, mumbling out benevolently the while sixty per cent at least? Dwellers in boarding-houses must of course take their company as they find it, but it does nevertheless seem hard that the lamb should be expected to lie down with the wolf, the fly to couch with the spider, and yet to come away with an unpunctured skin. Do we not feel terribly old, you and I, as we sit watching this youth struggling in the toils so deftly wound about him, listening to his artless cunning, pitifully surveying his knowing

winks as he babbles merrily, with his musical straightforward voice, of the downy manner in which he bilked the billiard-marker for fun, and paid him double afterwards as a salve for wounded amour propre, knowing as you and I do the while that the real downy one is seated with itching talons at his elbow, ejaculating complimentary remarks, and filming over with impenetrable veil of falsehood the glittering eyes in which he might haply otherwise discern the dangerous truth, and flee from it.

BY THE FIRE.

DEAD eyes are gazing on her from the pictures on the wall,
 Dead voices in the wailing winds that sweep the upland's call,
 Dead feet seem pattering round her as the raindrops lash the pane,
 Till she stretches hands of greeting, dumb hands that yearn in vain.

Like one in fairy legend, like one in dreamland lost,
 At every turn by dead men's steps her onward way is crossed,
 The very flowers whisper, of who plucked them long ago,
 The very birds have echoes in their trillings soft and low.

The chords she touches breathe for her the music of the past,
 On every page the shadow of old memories is cast,
 The "brooding sense of something" gone falls solemn all around,
 Making the common paths of life her hushed heart's holy ground.

On the table-ground of middle life the dull and dreary band,
 Where shadowless as sunless lies the stretch of beaten sand,
 She stands alone and listens, all behind her veiled in mist,
 In front dim hills beyond the vale, their summits promise kissed.

Sob on, oh wind, sigh on, oh rain, sweet faces form and die,
 There, where amid the caverned coals the fairy fancies lie,
 For in sleeping as in waking, till she crosses the dark stream,
 The sunshine of her lonely heart from the peopled past must gleam.

OUR FORMER WARS WITH THE ASHANTEES.

THE FIRST WAR.

WE have just plunged into a dangerous war with a brave and powerful African people, who have twice before defeated us. In fighting against the Ashantees, it must be remembered, we have to fight against climate as well as man, and fever is a terrible enemy to encounter; we shall, moreover, have to battle against great odds, and in a country comparatively unknown. It is well, therefore, to arm ourselves with as

much knowledge as possible of the antecedents of these savages, and not to forget our past disasters on the Gold Coast. It is always better to overrate than to despise an enemy. The Ashantees on Salisbury Plain would, no doubt, soon succumb to our shells and bullets; but on their own mountains, and near their rivers and forests, aided by fevers and local diseases of all kinds, by climate, reptiles, and almost impassable woods, they will prove, we fear, very formidable adversaries indeed, and require all our generals' foresight and intrepidity to overcome them.

It was in 1806 that the English first came into personal relationship with the warlike and aggressive people of Ashantee. To understand the causes of this collision between black and white we must plunge into Ashantee politics. At the time of the war the Assin country, which lies at the back of the Fantee land, and borders the Ashantee territory, was divided into two states. Over one part reigned King Amoo, over the other King Cheboo and King Quacoe Apontay, both vassals of the King of Ashantee. Now it so happened that a rich man died in Amoo's town, and according to custom was buried in state, with his golden ornaments, according to the custom of his people. One of Cheboo's people being present at the ceremony, yielding to a lust for the gold, at night robbed the grave and decamped with the treasure. King Amoo laid the case before his suzerain, the King of Ashantee, who decided in his favour, and detained Quacoe Apontay as ransom. When set at liberty, the faithless Quacoe, however, refused to accede to his suzerain's award. Upon this King Amoo attacked his town and routed his army. The matter was then again brought before the King of Ashantee, and a palaver appointed, but Quacoe, the incorrigible, now brought an armed force secretly, and a pitched battle was the consequence, which led to the death of the rascal who opened the grave and stole the gold from the dead, and to the total defeat of Quacoe the unjust. At this crisis, Ashantee again stepped in and sent two gold ornaments (manillas), one to Amoo, and the other to Quacoe, directing them to cease hostilities. Both men took the manillas and affected to obey. Amoo laid down his arms, but Quacoe, robber to the core, again attacked Amoo, and drove him from his capital. Amoo, justly indignant at this repeated treachery, soon obtained succour and overthrew his antagonist. The King of Ashantee, still disposed for peace, presented

Amoo with two gold swords and a gold axe, as proofs of his confidence, and recommended him to conciliate Quacoe Apontay and terminate the feud. In spite of this the incorrigible Quacoe presently attacked and totally defeated Amoo's army, and, worst of all, carried off the Ashantee golden swords and hatchet; further, he killed every one he met in Amoo's country, even the messengers from the monarch of Ashantee himself, who at last proclaimed war upon him.

Quacoe and Cheboo, dreading their monarch's vengeance, now fled into the Fantee country, thereby dragging a fresh people into misery. The king, seeing this, sent a present of twenty ounces of gold to the caboceer, or mayor of Assecoomah, professing peace to the Fantees, but a wish to pursue and punish the wicked Cheboo and the infamous Quacoe. The foolish Fantees, however, would take neither side, and refused to deliver up the fugitives. Upon this Ashantee broke into a not unnatural fury with a nation that harboured its rebellious vassals, and Appia Dunqua, the Ashantee general, flew at the enemy, and in a great two days' battle at Buinka, in Fantee, defeated the two kings and their new allies. Quacoe, thus baffled on all points, now offered submission to Ashantee on the singular proviso that all his debts should be paid on his return home. The king, graciously relenting (and indeed the Ashantees appear to advantage in these early wars), sent presents of peace to Cheboo and Quacoe, who, however, bad to the last, beheaded the messengers. This wicked and ungrateful act naturally roused the king to renewed madness, and he now vowed eternal war on the perfidious ingrates. Accoom, the caboceer of Assecoomah, who had already treacherously released some of the king's Fantee prisoners, was applied to for provisions. Six times he sent them with business-like readiness, but the seventh he seized the six hundred Ashantee porters sent for the food, and sold them for slaves. Upon this the king declared war against him also, and, after defeating him, went in search of that bad couple, Cheboo and Quacoe. The Fantees, Braffoes, and Annamaboes opposed the king's march, but were repeatedly defeated.

It was now that this war touched upon our frontiers, and we first came into collision with the troublesome people against whom we have just now, for the third time, declared hostilities. The governor of Cape Coast Castle, being under apprehen-

sion for the safety of the British settlements, was inclined to send a flag of truce to the King of Ashantee, who was now (May the 6th, 1806) at Abrah, only fifteen or twenty miles from the sea; but the Annamaboes, objecting, refused to allow the governor's messengers to proceed to Ashantee. They were, in fact, placing too much reliance on their own name and strength, fully expecting to be able to capture or destroy the King of Ashantee and his whole army. But the whale unfortunately is not to be easily caught in a simple fishing-net.

The Ashantee army soon after arrived at Cormantine, and, defeating the inhabitants, destroyed the town. The Ashantee captain, pillaging the Dutch fort, took up his residence there in full dignity. Governor White, the English governor of Annamaboe fort, now felt the time for negotiation was come, and at once sent a flag of truce to the Ashantee general to ask the king's motives for marching to the coast, and proposing himself as a mediator in the dispute.

In the mean time the Ashantee general, elated at obtaining a footing on the coast, the long ambition of his people, on arriving at Cormantine, had dipped his sword three times in the sea, and sent to his king calabashes of sea water as a proof of his victories. The Ashantees were in no mood now for negotiation; they bore to Governor White a haughty message that when the English governor had sent him twenty barrels of powder and a hundred muskets, he would be told what the king's designs were. The governor, like a true Englishman, unwilling to show alarm, feasted the messengers, but told them politely that he regretted the king, their master, did not appear inclined to conciliation, yet that if he told him in what manner the Annamaboes had offended he would endeavour to obtain satisfaction for the injury, but that till he knew how they had transgressed he should grant them the protection of the fort if they sought it; and, finally, he said that if the king's army approached the fort with hostile intentions, it would be fired upon. On dismissing the ambassadors, the governor, hearing they would certainly be murdered by the Annamaboes on their return with the flag, sent them to their own quarters guarded by an escort. Before leaving the fort the Ashantee heralds were (as a precaution) taken to see some heavy guns, loaded with shot, to give them some idea of the destruction artillery could cause.

Annaboe was now put on the defensive, and the courage of the Annaboes rapidly oozing away, the townspeople claimed the English governor's protection. Mr. White assured them of assistance, but at the same time urged them to vigorous exertions for their own defence. Strong parties were then placed on the look out, every avenue leading to the town was guarded, and on the first alarm the old men, women, and children were to be sent inside the fort, while those that could not be accommodated were to keep close to the walls, and under the shelter of the guns.

At this time it is a shameful fact that Governor White, after twenty-seven years in Africa, had been so intent either on commerce or idleness, that he had never taken the trouble to ascertain the Ashantee character. He did not even know they were brave and daring, but supposed they were like the small tribes near him, who would not face musketry, much less cannon; and when bullets began to whistle near, would creep into sand holes. After a lull of a week the Ashantee general, who proved to be the King of Dinkara, suddenly moved forward and took possession of Agah, a village situated on a point of land eastward of Annaboe, and an important point for observing the town. The Annaboes, irritated at this, marched out on the 14th of June to recover the place. A battle ensued. The Ashantees fired with some regularity and aimed well, while the Fantees blazed about wildly. The Ashantees retreated in good order, retaining, however, part of the village which lay in a valley where the Annaboes did not seem to care to venture. During this fight the king, with the main body of the army, was craftily busy, three miles off, securing all the passes leading to Annaboe.

Early on the 15th the town was attacked, and every Annaboe who could carry a musket went out to meet the enemy. The firing soon began to be very hot and heavy, and smoke arose from various parts of the surrounding country. Alarm and confusion, the sure precursors of defeat, prevailed in the town, and the old men, women, and children crowded into the fort till it was full, and the gates were bolted. As the sound of musketry was advancing fast, and the Fantees were already retreating in great disorder, the governor fired one or two big guns over the town to alarm the assailants; but they were too resolute and elated by victory to care for mere noise, and about eleven o'clock bullets began to whistle in

poured into the town in all directions, pursuing the Fantees even to the beach, where the slaughter was incessant, terrible, and indiscriminate.

The Annaboes had relied on their canoes and their skill in swimming for escape, but they were pursued too closely by their relentless enemies. During this carnage the governor was very active with his small garrison in trying to repel the black swarms of assailants. A twenty-four-pounder, that pointed westward along the beach, swept down hundreds of Ashantees with grape-shot, while a three-pounder which flanked the gate eastward, poured grape into the flocks of blacks, who, however, trampled on over the dead, and came under the very walls to carry off the women who stood there in frightened heaps. At this juncture the English governor was shot in the mouth and left arm, an officer and two men were wounded, and one man killed. Our garrison consisted of only twenty-nine men, including the governor, four officers, and four free mulattoes; the rest being soldiers, workmen, or servants. The whole force of the Ashantees were now directed against the fort, where they expected to find great booty. But the walls were high and well flanked, the gates sound and well barricaded. There was still hope for resolute men even against these howling black myriads, drunk with human blood, that beleaguered them. The senior officer who had taken the place of the wounded governor, was cool and prudent. Finding the gunners at one part frequently being shot at the embrasures, he resolved to rely entirely on his musketry. About noon the garrison was reduced to only eight men, including the officers, and the Ashantees were using every effort to force the west gate, even after two previous repulses. The third time they brought fire, but the man who carried it fell dead upon the brands, and so extinguished the flame. The attack and defence continued till six o'clock, when darkness came and stopped the fighting. The last twilight was spent by the brave garrison in repairing injuries and preparing for possible night attacks.

The day dawned on a horrible scene of blood and devastation. Eight thousand Fantees had perished by the fire, the sea, and the sword. Heaps of dead and wounded lay round the walls, and for a mile along the surf-beaten eastern shore, the houses were all unroofed or in flames. The old men in the fort hung their heads, the

cried piteously. About two thousand Annamaboes had taken refuge in the fort, while about two hundred had escaped to a rock, a pistol-shot from the beach, and surrounded by the sea.

Although the Fantees had been attacked by three times their number, their resistance had been as feeble as their previous self-confidence had been extreme. The attacks on the fort were soon resumed, the warlike Ashantees advancing with bold shouts coolly and resolutely up to the very muzzles of our guns. At the east side of the fort two well-served three-pounders destroyed numbers with grape-shot, but the cannon which flanked the gate at the west side could not be fired, from the gunners being exposed to the excellent marksmen of the Ashantees. Two of our officers stationed at this post expended nearly three hundred rounds of ball-cartridge in keeping this gate clear, firing till the pain of the recoil prevented them using their muskets. The enemy suffered severely, twenty or thirty often falling at a single discharge of grape, and our muskets often killing and wounding at the same time, so crowded were the besiegers.

The garrison was now in an alarming position, blockaded on the land side, and with an imperfect communication with the sea, only a few weeks' provision in store for two thousand and eight people, and the dead bodies fast putrefying. The few defenders were terribly fatigued. Luckily for them, the Ashantees also had had nearly enough. Neither party, however, wished to be the first to offer terms. Fortunately, about four p.m. on the 16th two vessels arrived with succour from Cape Coast Castle. By the governor's orders, a white flag and union-jack were then lowered over the wall as a sign of truce. The rejoicing among the Ashantees was great at seeing this welcome emblem; crowds collected round it, and it was with difficulty the King of Ashantee's officers (known by their golden swords and axes) could clear a way to his quarters through the shouting multitude.

The enemy paid all respect to the flag of truce, although some of them began to try and get at the rock where the trembling Fantees were; but a musket-shot or two soon brought them back. The flag of truce returned from the king about seven p.m. The king was pleased at its being sent, and gave the soldiers who carried it a fat sheep. The king was urged to go to Cape Coast Castle to meet Governor Torrane, but eventually the governor agreed

to come to Annamaboe and see the king. This interesting interview, which gives us an authentic view of Ashantee ceremonies, has been well described by Mr. Meredith in his Account of the Gold Coast, who was present.

"The governor was obliged to visit each man of rank before he could be received by the king, a ceremony that could not be prudently denied, and which occupied some time, for these men had their several courts, and collectively had formed an extensive circle. Every one of them was seated under a big umbrella, surrounded by attendants and guards, with young persons employed in fanning the air, and dispersing the flies, which were numerous and troublesome. One of these men and his attendants excited some curiosity and attention. His dress and appearance were so different from those of the others that it evidently proved he must have come from countries situated a considerable distance inland. He was a tall, athletic, and rather corpulent man, of a complexion resembling an Arab or an Egyptian. His dress was heavy, and by no means adapted to the climate. He wore a cap that came down below his ears, and, being made of yellow cloth, it did not contribute to diminish his tawny complexion. He was a follower of the Mahomedan religion, possessed much gravity, but was communicative, condescending, and agreeable. He had about him a great number of sentences from the Alkoran, which were carefully encased in gold and silver, and upon which he set a high value. He was a native of Kassina, a country which appears to be situated to the south of east from Tombuctou. He said he had been at Tunis and at Mecca, had seen many white men and ships, and described the method of travelling over the great desert. This person commanded a body of men who fought with arrows, as well as muskets; four of the arrows were found in the fort; they were short, and pointed with barbed iron. He had many persons in his train who were of the same colour, but varied a little as to dress; they were all habited in the Turkish manner, but did not wear turbans. After the ceremony of visiting these persons was over, the governor was conducted towards the king, who was surrounded by a number of attendants, whose appearance bore evident signs of riches and authority. Chains, stools, axes, swords, flutes, message-canes, &c., were either of solid gold, or richly adorned with that metal; these dazzling appearances, added

to damask, taffety, and other rich dresses, gave a splendour to the scene highly interesting. When the governor approached the king, and when an interchange of compliments had passed, the air resounded with the noise of musical instruments, such as drums, horns, and flutes. After some conversation, during which much politeness was observed in the behaviour of the king, the governor wished this ceremonial visit to be returned, which was agreed to, and a convenient place was found to receive the king and his train. The governor, his officers, and attendants were formed in a half-circle, and seated under the shade of some trees, and a passage of sufficient breadth was formed by the soldiers for the king and his attendants to pass through. It was full two hours before his majesty was announced, so numerous was his train. Each man of rank, as he advanced, paid the necessary compliments agreeably to the custom of his country, and then filed off. It was previously directed that the king should be received with arms presented and the Grenadiers' March, when passing the soldiers. This mark of distinction and respect appeared to give him much satisfaction; he halted to observe the orderly behaviour and uniform appearance of the soldiers, and the martial air that was playing seemed to produce the most agreeable sensations on his mind. The writer had an opportunity of seeing this man. He was of the middle size, well formed, and perfectly black, with regular features, and an open and pleasing countenance. His manner indicated understanding, and was adorned with gracefulness; and in all respects he exceeded the expectations of every person. His dress was plain; it consisted of a piece of silk wrapped loosely about him; a wreath of green silk ornamented his head; his sandals were neatly made, and curiously studded with gold. He was not distinguished by any gold ornaments, as his attendants were. One man, who was dressed in a grotesque manner, and who appeared to act the buffoon, was literally loaded with gold."

The king confessed that he had lost three thousand men at Annamaboe by our fire and by disease. He inquired politely after Governor White's wound. Peace was then proclaimed. No person residing at our British forts (provided he preserved neutrality) was to be molested, and respect was to be paid to the British flag. The king at first claimed possession of all the fugitives in the fort, but eventually he

The war with the Fantees was, however, sternly pressed forward, for King Acoom was marching towards Annamaboe to give the Ashantees battle. They met and fought on July the 4th. Acoom was defeated with his men, and would have perished had he not had a river at his rear, the fords of which were known to the Fantees and not to the Ashantees. After this the Fantees carried on a predatory warfare, cutting off small foraging parties. The Ashantees laid almost every town and village they came to in ruins, but disease had before been among them in Annamaboe, and they now lost such vast numbers, that the king at last left a force at Accra to collect prisoners, and returned reluctantly to his own country.

Cheboo and the infamous Quacoe, who brought ruin wherever they came, now fled with five hundred followers to Cape Coast, where the natives were too disposed to give them protection. On hearing of the attack on the Annamaboe fort, the governor had resolved to secure these men, and by that means, if possible, end the destructive and cruel war, and win the king's friendship. The attempt partly failed, for the slippery Quacoe escaped, leaving behind him, however, his regalia, but Cheboo (after several men had been killed on both sides) was captured and sent to Ashantee. This conciliated the king, and gave him a good opinion of the British, and, as it afterwards appeared, prevented a plot being carried out which had been already planned. The king, eager for revenge for the frightful loss his army had sustained, had selected six thousand men, half of whom, at a given signal, were to mount the walls of our fort, while the other half set fire to powder at the foot of the ramparts. These explosions it was calculated would shake the fort and create confusion among the garrison, who would be galled besides by an unceasing musketry fire.

The Ashantees invaded Fantee again in 1811, and a third time in 1816. These invasions reduced the Fantees to beggary. Not many were killed in battle, for the cowed and frightened people seldom fought, but the butcheries in cold blood were ruthless and incessant, and gangs of thousands of slaves were dragged into the interior to be sacrificed at the Ashantee's great annual yam feasts in the early part of September, when the yam harvest begins. Famine and pestilence followed in the footsteps of the savage conquerors till the wretched remnant of the poor Fantees gave themselves up to despair, and deemed themselves rejected

had our African Company gained much generosity or courage by experience. Their only aim seems to have been to secure trading stations. The honour of England was to them of less value than a cask of rum or a calabash full of gold dust. The only weapon they wielded was conciliation—conciliation at any price, peace, however grovelling. The government had already given gold to buy off the Ashantees. They now determined to send an embassy to conciliate so great a monarch, and to plead for an extension of commerce.

In 1817, the African Committee sent out a store-ship with presents for the King of Ashantee, and desired the governor of Cape Coast to send an exploratory mission consisting of three gentlemen. They were to try and induce the king to cut a path not less than six feet wide from his capital to the coast. They were also, if possible, to take hostages. Wise company to think the king such a fool as to cut a road for the passage of our troops, and to give hostages to a handful of men whom his army had recently blockaded!

The interview of the mission with the King of Ashantee has been very admirably described by Mr. Bowditch, a pushing young "writer," who seemed to have imposed on himself the duty of spokesman on the occasion. "The prolonged flourishes of the horns, a deafening tumult of drums," says Bowditch, "announced that we were approaching the king. We were already passing the principal officers of the household; the chamberlain, the gold horn-blower, the captain of the messengers, the captain for royal executions, the captain of the market, the keeper of the royal burial-ground, and the master of the bands, sat surrounded by a retinue and splendour which became the dignity and importance of their offices. The cook had a number of small services covered with leopard's skin held before him, and a large quantity of massive silver plate was displayed before him, punch-bowls, waiters, coffee-pots, tankards, and a very large vessel with heavy handles and clawed feet, which seemed to have been made to hold incense. I observed a Portuguese inscription on one piece, and they seemed generally of that manufacture. The executioner, a man of an immense size, wore a massive gold hatchet on his breast; and the execution stool was held before him, clotted with blood, and partly covered with a caul of fat. The king's four linguists were encircled by a splendour inferior to none, and their peculiar insignia, gold canes,

were elevated in all directions, tied in bundles like fasces. The keeper of the treasury added to his own magnificence by the ostentatious display of his service; the blow-pan, boxes, scales, and weights were of solid gold. A delay of some minutes, while we severally approached to receive the king's hand, afforded us a thorough view of him; his deportment first excited my attention; his manners were majestic yet courteous; and he did not allow his surprise to beguile him a moment of the composure of the monarch. He appeared to be about thirty-eight years of age, inclined to corpulence, and of a benevolent countenance. He wore a fillet of aggrary beads round his temples, a necklace of gold coakspar shells strung by their largest ends, and over his right shoulder a red silk cord suspending three sapphies cased in gold; his bracelets were the richest mixture of beads and gold, and his fingers covered with rings. His cloth was of a dark green silk; a pointed diadem was elegantly painted in white on his forehead; also a pattern resembling an epaulette on each shoulder, and an ornament like a full-blown rose, one leaf rising above another until it covered his whole breast. His knee-bands were of aggrary beads, and his ankle-strings of gold ornaments of the most delicate workmanship; small drums, sankos, stools, swords, guns, and birds clustered together; his sandals, of a soft white leather, were embossed across the instep band with small gold and silver cases of sapphies. He was seated in a low chair, richly ornamented with gold; he wore a pair of gold castanets on his finger and thumb, which he clapped to enforce silence. The belts of the guards behind his chair were cased in gold, and covered with small jawbones of the same metal; the elephants' tails, waving like a small cloud before him, were spangled with gold, and large plumes of feathers were flourished amid them. His eunuch presided over these attendants, wearing only one massive piece of gold about his neck; the royal stool, entirely cased in gold, was displayed under a splendid umbrella, with drums, sankos, horns, and various musical instruments, cased in gold, about the thickness of cartridge paper; large circles of gold hung by scarlet cloth from the swords of state, the sheaths as well as the handles of which were also cased; hatchets of the same were intermixed with them; while the breasts of the ocras and various attendants were adorned with large stars, stools, crescents, and gossamer wings of solid gold."

There was evidently no lack of "loot" in Ashantee in those days, whatever may be the case now.

LADIES' FEET IN CHINA.

In his interesting and instructive work on the Chinese, Sir John F. Davis remarks that "in no instances have the folly and childishness of a large portion of mankind been more strikingly displayed than in those various and occasionally very opposite modes in which they have departed from the standard of nature, and sought distinction even in deformity. Thus while one race of people crushes the feet of its children, another flattens their heads between two boards; and while we in Europe admire the natural whiteness of the teeth, the Malays file off the enamel, and dye them black, for the all-sufficient reason that dogs' teeth are white!" In the present paper we desire to say a few words on the first of these national peculiarities, and to describe briefly the *modus operandi*, the effect of the practice on the women of China, and, as far as may be, the origin of this fashion, which condemns so many millions of our fellow-creatures to permanent disfigurement.

Some writers have ascribed the introduction of this extraordinary custom to the Manchu Tartars, but this is a very great mistake, as will be seen when we come to give some of the prevailing native accounts of its origin. It undoubtedly existed long before their advent, and, moreover, their women do not distort their feet at all, and wear the same shaped shoes as the men do, the only distinction being that the sole is much thicker. Further, there is a saying that death is the penalty for any small-footed female who is found within the precincts of the imperial palace at Peking; and this is certainly a tolerably strong proof of the aversion of the Manchus to the practice. It is not at all improbable that this cramping of the women's feet may, in some measure, be due to the same feeling which often makes a Chinaman let his finger-nails grow to a hideous length, his notion being that he thereby shows the world that he is not obliged to earn his living by manual labour; and, indeed, a small-footed woman cannot, by any possibility, do very much hard work, though some of them do contrive to labour in the fields, &c. It must be imagined that all Chinese women necessarily have small feet, for large numbers of the poorer classes, who are

likely to have to earn their livelihood by heavy work, are brought up with their feet uncramped, and of the natural size, though (as we are told in the *Social Life of the Chinese*) "many poor families prefer to struggle on for a precarious living, bringing up their daughters with small feet rather than allow them to grow as large as they would grow, and oblige them to carry burdens and do heavy work, in order to obtain a more competent support, small feet being an index, not of wealth, but of gentility. Parents whose daughters have small feet are enabled to marry them into more respectable families than if their feet were of the natural size."

The operations necessary for distorting the feet generally commence between the ages of six and nine, and the later it is deferred, the greater is the pain inflicted on the girl. Long strips of native calico are bound round the foot, going from the heel over the instep and toes; they are then passed under the foot and round the heel, and are fixed very firmly. The operation causes much pain, and takes a long time (usually two or three years) before it is perfected, for the only agent employed is the long bandage of cloth; the feet remain extremely tender and useless for all practical purposes till the bones, &c., have become set in the new shape into which they are forced. It is said that after the lapse of a few years, if the operation has been skilful, there is no pain, and the foot becomes, in a manner, deadened, the effect of the bandaging being to check the circulation of the blood, and to prevent the further growth and development of the foot. A medical observer tells us* that "there is a class of women whose vocation it is to bandage the feet of children, and who do their work very neatly; and, from what I have seen, the Chinese women, who in childhood have undergone skilful treatment, do not suffer much pain, beyond the weakness of the foot, from the destruction of the symmetrical arch, and the inconvenience of being unable to walk when the foot is unbound and unsupported. If the feet have been carelessly bound in infancy, the ankle of the woman is generally tender, and much walking will cause the foot to swell and be very painful."

Without going too deeply into surgical minutiae, the following seems to be the consequence of the compression of the foot: the instep is bent on itself, the heel-bone is thrown out of its horizontal position,

* Leekhart's Twenty Years' Experience in China.

and what ought to be the posterior surface is brought to the ground. The ankle is thus forced upwards, and the great toe is the only one that remains, the four smaller ones becoming, in course of time, mere useless pieces of skin. The foot, too, becomes narrow, and tapers off to the end of the great toe; it is placed in a short narrow shoe, which is pointed at the toe, and very commonly the heel is elevated by means of a block of wood, the consequence being that the woman seems to be standing, as it were, on tip-toe, or, to be more precise, on the tip of her great toe. The following paragraph will give a fair notion of the effect produced by the force of fashion on the Chinawoman's foot under varying conditions: When the process is begun at the proper age, and the bandaging is properly attended to, the heel sometimes comes down to the ground, or rather to the level of the end of the large toe. The heel seems to elongate under the process of bandaging; but, when the foot is large and almost full-grown before the compression of it begins, the heel often cannot be brought down to a level with the end of the toe. Under these circumstances, a block of wood is put in the shoe under the heel. So that the bottom of the block and the end of the toe are nearly on the same level when the individual is standing. We would here add that the fashionable shoe which the Chinese lady wears is not much more than three inches long, and that strips of cloth are wound round part of the foot and the lower leg.

Nature has given Chinese women very small hands and feet, but according to our English ideas the latter are robbed of all their symmetry and beauty by the disfiguring process which we have described. To us it was always quite a piteous sight to see the women in China hobbling along with tottering gait—for they do not exactly limp as some put it—and with their arms extended, seemingly to balance themselves, one hand often grasping the long bamboo stem of a pipe, which, when viewed from a distance, an uninitiated observer not unnaturally concludes must be a walking-stick. The Chinese, however, apparently admire the helpless gait of the women, for they compare them, when hobbling along, to “the waving of willows agitated by the breeze.” We think it a mistake to assert, as some do dogmatically, that Chinese women cannot walk far, for they undoubtedly can hobble along for very considerable distances, and do not, as a rule, seem much distressed; they take their time about it, it is true, and

do not get over the ground very fast. The misery that is supposed to arise from the practice has been absurdly exaggerated, and, judging from the observations of those well qualified to form an opinion, we are inclined to think that when disease of any kind follows upon the operation, it is mostly due either to unskilful manipulation or some constitutional infirmity. It may be interesting to mention here that actors on the stage, when playing the part of women (for there are no actresses in China), have their feet bandaged to make the spectators believe that they are in the fashion.

The origin of the custom is wrapped in obscurity, and the common people generally appear to have no notion how or when it first arose, and the better educated classes are, it would seem, almost equally ignorant on the subject, and look upon it rather as a matter beneath their investigation. We believe, however, that it is by no means of so ancient a date as might have been supposed, judging from the great antiquity of most of the social customs of the Chinese. One tradition only refers it so far back as B.C. 1100, when it was said to have been introduced by one Tan Chi, the dissipated wife of a wicked emperor named Chou. She is said to have been born with club feet, and to have persuaded the emperor to order that all female children should have their feet distorted, so that thus her infirmity would be thought nothing of. Not much reliance is to be placed on this fable, for if there were any truth in it, some allusion would have been made to the practice in the Chinese Classics, and we believe we are correct in stating that none is to be found there at all.

Doctor Macgowan—an American gentleman of great experience in Chinese matters—gives a somewhat different account of the origin of the practice, placing it three centuries later. The custom, he says, is of comparatively modern origin, and owes its existence to the whim of Li Yuh, the licentious and unpopular prince of Keangnan, whose court was in Nanking. He ruled from A.D. 961 to 976, and was subdued and finally poisoned by the founder of the Sung dynasty. It appears that he was amusing himself in his palace, when the thought occurred to him that he might improve the appearance of the foot of one of his favourites. He accordingly bent her foot, so as to raise the instep into an arch, to resemble the new moon. His figure was much admired by the court, and he began at once to introduce it into their families. Soon after a province of

Keang-nan again became an integral part of the empire, from which point the new practice spread throughout all provinces and all ranks, until it became a national custom. Many lives were sacrificed by suicide; those females whose feet had not been bound, were persecuted by their mothers-in-law, and despised by their husbands; so much so, that they hung themselves or took poison. About one hundred and fifty years after the origin of the practice, we find a poet celebrating the beauties of the "golden lilies;" and from his description it would appear that seven centuries ago they were of the same size as those of the present day. According to the upholders of the development theory, such continued compression for centuries should have occasioned a national alteration in the structure of the Chinese foot, but nothing of the kind is observed.

The laws of China say nothing on the subject of the curious custom of which we have treated in the present paper, and though it is one which is deeply rooted and extremely popular throughout the length and breadth of the empire, there is no doubt that the present (Tartar) dynasty could abolish it with as much ease as, on their accession to power two centuries ago, they compelled the Chinese to shave their heads and wear queues; and it is greatly to be hoped that, in course of time, the humanising influence of European civilisation may lead them to take that step, and thus save millions of innocent children from needless torture and life-long deformity.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII. SERJEANT-PAINTER TO THE KING.

I WAS led up a broad and imposing flight of stairs. I noticed with regret that even on the soft carpet my boots creaked noisily—vulgarily, I thought. I envied the grave footman his silent, cat-like tread. I felt nervous and ill at ease—I scarcely knew why. But it occurred to me, I remember, that this servant of Sir George's was in bearing and appearance a much more refined, and polished, and graceful person than I was—his master's kinsman and visitor.

The footman quietly opened a door and bowed as I entered a large room lighted by one very high window that seemed to trench upon the floor above. It was a studio, handsomely furnished with much picturesque litter about it in the way of

armour, tapestry, china, metal work, and other artistic paraphernalia.

"Turn that canvas to the wall, Propert, if you please," said in a polite tone a gentleman who was leaning against a high mantelpiece with his back towards me.

Propert, the servant, dexterously removed a large canvas from an easel standing in the centre of the room, and then, after a moment's pause, as though to make sure that his services were not further needed, noiselessly withdrew. I was left alone with the gentleman: Sir George Nightingale, as I could not doubt.

He was tall and slight, but of most shapely figure. I was struck by a certain grace of line that attended his every movement and posture. And his elegance of form was displayed to advantage in the court-dress he wore of silver-edged black velvet, with cut-steel buttons and sword hilt, and embroidered white satin waistcoat. There had been that morning, as I afterwards learnt, a levee or drawing-room, and Sir George had been in attendance upon the court. He was quite bald, but for a narrow fringe of iron-grey hair at the back of his head.

He held in his long white Vandyke looking hands the letter I had brought from the Down Farm. There were rings upon his taper fingers I noted, and rich ruffles of yellow lace round his wrists. He read the letter more than once as it appeared to me, or he was musing over it, and only seeming to read it. Presently, he turned to me.

"So you are young Mr. Nightingale." He spoke firmly and deliberately, but there was a most pleasant musical ring about his voice. "We have met before, I think, Mr. Nightingale?"

Then I recognised him. He was the defendant in Messrs. Dicker Brothers' action; he was the gentleman I had served with a writ, on the steps of the club-house in Pall Mall. I felt so confused and dismayed that I remained speechless.

"I see," he said, "you have not forgotten me." He folded up the letter and placed it upon the mantelpiece. He then took from his pocket, and lightly tapped, a gold snuff-box, with a jewel-set, oval miniature decorating its lid.

"I am very sorry, Sir George——" I began in an awkward way an attempt at an apology.

"There is nothing to regret, Mr. Nightingale," he interposed. "You had a simple duty to perform. I can find no fault with your manner of performing it. It was not a pleasant duty."

"It was not, indeed," I murmured.

"It was pleasant to neither of us—it was the less pleasant to me. But I was alone to blame. I think I explained so much at the time. The matter had escaped me. It should not have escaped me. I can only plead my numerous engagements, the many calls upon my attention, the duties of my position. However, the thing is over now. So I am assured. I am to be troubled with no more writs on that account. That is your view of the case also, I may presume, Mr. Nightingale?"

"Yes, Sir George. The claim upon you has been discharged. There is an end of the matter altogether."

"That's well. We'll dismiss the thing from our minds then. And, if you please, we will date our acquaintance from our present meeting. I will only trust that you may not again have to serve me with a writ."

"I hope not, indeed, Sir George."

"That's well," he repeated. "And perhaps the fewer writs you serve upon others it will be the better for the world in general, the lawyers of course excepted. But we need not care for them. They care sufficiently for themselves. I beg your pardon, I forgot at the moment that you are to be counted among them—a recruit of the unholy army of attorneys."

He spoke pleasantly, and there was a kindly look in his bright dark eyes, which seemed to me to be almost of a bronze colour, with a certain metallic brilliancy in their sparkle as they caught and reflected the light; they were much shadowed, however, by his rather heavy brows and long thick black lashes. His complexion was pallid, and his features sharply shaped and very handsome in their extreme regularity. There was the look of carved ivory about his colourless symmetrical face. I could not but admire him exceedingly. While yet I felt that for all his friendly air and agreeable talk there was something repellent in his smile. It was, I thought, cold and cynical; though not so in any pronounced degree. Still, I could not but suspect him of mocking me a little, and assuming towards me a cordiality of manner that was not wholly genuine. I was not certain of this, however. But I knew that we stood apart from each other somehow, and that he closely watched me the while he spoke, as though noting the effect upon me of his aspect and address. I could, indeed, scarcely sustain his observation of me, it was so persistent and scorching, and yet I could hardly say that it was deficient

in courtesy. It was certainly very different to ordinary point-blank staring.

He took a pinch of snuff with an adroit air, but without any apparent enjoyment of it, as I judged, but rather as though he were complying merely with the dictates of fashion. The snuff fell, for the most part, upon his waistcoat, and was lightly brushed off by a dainty movement of his beautiful jewelled hand, which was thus very fully exhibited. But the action was accomplished without effort or show of consciousness.

"Young Mr. Nightingale," he said, musingly; and then he asked me how old I was. I told him.

"Is it possible!" he said; and his strongly marked eyebrows arched with surprise. "You have not been long in London, I suppose?"

I answered that I had left the country now some months, and went on to apologise for having so long delayed presenting him my letter of introduction. He took it from the mantelpiece.

"I had not observed the date," he said, carelessly. I could not but doubt the truth of this statement. He had certainly seemed to read every line of the letter most carefully. And I could not divest myself of the notion that his manner was rather unreal, that he was in some measure playing a part; though with what object I could not conceive. "Yes, I see; it should have been delivered months ago. You thought it of no importance probably." And he crumpled up the letter, thrusting it into his pocket.

I said that in truth I had completely forgotten it, and explained my receiving it from my uncle at the moment of my departure from home, and its lying since hidden in my pocket-book.

"It is of no importance, no real importance, Mr. Nightingale. I refer, of course, to your delay in presenting it, not to the letter itself. I am happy to receive it. I am most pleased to see you. You have good news, I trust, from your relations at—the Down Farm, Furrington—that is the name of the place, I think? Yes. Your uncle, Mr. Orme, is well, I hope?"

"He is quite well."

"And your mother?"

"Quite well also, thank you, Sir George."

"I am glad to hear it. When you are writing to them you can—but that will not be necessary. You will write, of course, what you think proper. As I said, I am pleased to see you. I shall be happy to be of any service to you, should the op-

portunity of serving you ever present itself. It may or may not. You bear the name of Nightingale. If only on that account, I am bound to show you such attention, such kindness even, as I may. But as yet I scarcely know what my power may be in that respect. Tell me: they spoke to you concerning me at your home, the Down Farm?"

"No, Sir George."

"You rarely heard my name mentioned?"

"Indeed, Sir George, I never once heard your name mentioned."

"It is not to be wondered at," he said, after a pause. "It is often so; especially in England. The members of a family are parted by chance, by circumstances, quite as much as by choice. Town and the country are like distinct nations, engaged in different pursuits, forming different opinions, habits, and tastes, speaking a different language almost."

It seemed to me that he was referring to a certain Purrington accent that I knew to be still traceable in my speech. He read my thoughts, and smiled.

"Yes, you possess, I notice, something of a provincial accent, though I was far from alluding to that at the moment. But you may as well correct it if you can. Not that I object to it myself. It reminds me of fresh air, and green fields, and bright flowers. But London prejudice, I know, holds country dialect, or any suspicion of it, somewhat in contempt. And living in London one must recognise its foibles and follies of all kinds. But the thing is but a trifle. And so you are a lawyer?"

"I'm but a student at present—a very young one."

"And this profession of the law—it was of your own choosing?"

"Well, I began to learn farming first, Sir George—"

"And you wearied of it? I am not surprised. Though doubtless farming has charms for many. And then it was proposed to you that you should become a lawyer. And you jumped at the plan. It offered you liberty, London, a new life, and escape from the country—from home. Isn't that so?"

I confess that the case was much as he had stated it. He smiled graciously.

"Yes, there comes a time when home seems dull, especially a home miles away from town. Yet your home was a happy one, I suppose? You were kindly treated by your parents—I should say by your

"Yes, indeed."

"I do not doubt it. But you were as Rasselas; your home as the Happy Valley; you longed to find a way out of it, for all its happiness. They were loth to part with you?"

"Yes, I think so; I am sure so. You do not think me ungrateful in quitting them as I did?"

"I think your conduct perfectly natural. Very likely in your place I should have done as you did. Ingratitude is very natural, I think—at any rate in some measure. At a certain period of life home loses its magic and value; it seems to mean restriction, confinement, apron-strings. It's not so much one's own home as one's father's and mother's. By-and-bye perhaps the old appreciation of its returns, or memory invests it with a kind of fanciful and romantic worth. Or one establishes a home of one's own. But you, at your age, can hardly have dreamt of doing that. Where are you living?"

I told him.

"Featherstone-buildings," he repeated, with an almost imperceptible shrug of his shoulders. "The Down Farm is your uncle's own property, I think, his freehold?" he asked presently.

"Yes, the greater part of it. Certain of his land, however, he holds under lease from Lord Overbury."

"Lord Overbury. So I understood. And Mr. Orme is a bachelor still? He is not likely to marry now?"

"Not at all likely, I should say."

"Probably not. You must find it a great change from the farm to Featherstone-buildings. But it may be convenient for you. Mr. Monck is the name of the gentleman you are articled to? So I understood." He trifled with his snuff-box again. "Are you considered to be like your mother?"

"Not very like, I think."

"She was dark with black hair, if I remember rightly?"

"Her hair is almost white now."

"Indeed! But time flies so."

"You have seen my mother, Sir George?"

"Yes, I have seen her; many years since, however."

"You knew my father, perhaps."

"Yes, I knew your father."

"I regret that I cannot remember him."

"You cannot, of course."

"I have seen his picture. A miniature in my mother's possession."

of him. It was thought like him at the time it was painted. You are fond of pictures? You care for art? You draw yourself perhaps?"

"Yes, a little."

"You have studied? Under what master?"

"I had a few lessons, a very few, some time ago now, from a Mr. Mauleverer."

"Mauleverer? I don't know the name—in connexion with art."

"Fane Mauleverer."

"I know nothing of him."

"And from a Monsieur Dubois, a Frenchman, settled for a time at Steepleborough."

"You must show me your drawings. I should like to see if you possess any real ability for art. Pardon my rudeness. But art is my métier. The world is kind enough to think that I really know something about it. I may be able to help you in that way, if in none other. Though in your case art will be merely a pastime. You have already determined on your profession. Still even a lawyer can hardly dispose of his leisure time more advantageously than in devoting it to art. I doubt not you will find painting a source of refined pleasure, an elegant accomplishment, even though you may not pursue it so persistently as I am bound to do. I confess that it is to me less delightful than it once was. I am too much its slave, the slave of the public, and I am very sensible of my bonds, though perhaps I should not speak of them. And now, Mr. Nightingale, I beg to thank you for your kindness in calling upon me. I am pleased that I have seen you. You will come again? You promise?"

I said that I would certainly come again, if I might, and bring my drawings.

"By all means, bring your drawings. I shall be delighted. Now, you will excuse me? I must divest myself of this masquerade suit." He smiled, and, with a wave of his white hand, drew attention to his court-dress. "I am compelled to observe forms and etiquettes of this kind. Good-bye, Mr. Nightingale."

He pressed my hand most cordially, moving towards me very gracefully, and keeping his dark eyes fixed upon me with his air of closely noting how far he had succeeded in impressing me.

"One moment," he said, as, making my best bow, I was quitting him. He touched the bell. "You may care to see such pic-

tures as are now here, though there are none of much importance, I think, and the light is but indifferent." Probert appeared.

"Probert, be kind enough to ask Mr. Mole if he can come here for a minute or two." Probert withdrew.

"You will understand, Mr. Nightingale, that at any time, at all times, my gallery, my studio is open to you. You may perhaps in such wise gather some instruction in art. At least, you may learn to detect my errors, and so to avoid them in your own case."

The door opened; a man entered.

"Ah! Mr. Mole," said Sir George, "I am sorry to trouble you. I will not detain you. I have but a word to say. This is young Mr. Nightingale, a relation of mine, from the country, who has done me the honour to call and introduce himself to me. This, Mr. Nightingale, is Mr. Mole, a most valuable assistant of mine; I really do not know how I should possibly get on without his help. You will kindly, Mr. Mole, take a note of my young relation's address, in case I should have occasion—and doubtless I shall have occasion—to communicate with him on some future day. And you will at all times allow him to have free access here, and show him the gallery, and the works we have in hand, and, in short, everything there is here to be seen, or that he may think worth looking at. You understand? Thank you. Again, Mr. Nightingale, excuse me, and good-bye."

Sir George bowed and smiled, and, his hand resting upon the hilt of his slender court sword, he moved, with a light and elastic step, from the room.

Mr. Mole was Fane Mauleverer.

He had not recognised me at first, or he had retained very full command of his facial expression. He now winked, the door having closed after Sir George.

"Master Duke," he whispered, hoarsely. "Of course! And his relation! To his of that! Hush!" He pressed his forefinger against his lips. After a moment he said, still in a whisper, "Not a word till he's out of hearing. All right. He's gone. How are you, my dear boy? God bless you. Who'd have thought of our meeting here!"

We shook hands most heartily. Indeed, in his excitement, he threw his arms round and embraced me. He had not abandoned his old theatrical ways.

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CHAPTER III. A DUEL BETWEEN PRINCIPLES.

"SHALL I go, or shall I stop?" said the doctor to Evy, as she stood with her hand upon her fluttering heart, listening for the front door to be opened to his lordship's ring. "I suppose there is no doubt what he is come about, and if you feel nervous, my dear, you shall retain your medical attendant."

It was kindly meant of the little doctor; for in his eyes Lord Dirleton was one of the greatest men upon the earth's surface. He had submitted to be sworn at by him—to be sure the gout is an excuse for anything—on more than one occasion when he had been called in professionally at the Hall, and had put up with various other indignities, as he acknowledged them to himself to be. The "nobody minds what Lord Dirleton says," which was the salve that many persons used under the like circumstances, did not prevent him from feeling galled. He felt less of a man in his lordship's company than in that of any fellow-creature; and would therefore have willingly avoided it on the present occasion. But if, as it flashed across him, Lord Dirleton was coming to speak face to face with Evy, and give her a piece of his mind, he was prepared to stand by her, at the sacrifice of never being invited to meet Sir Toby Ruffles in consultation (over his lordship's toe) again. This determination was chivalrous but unnecessary. He did the great autocrat of Dunwich wrong in supposing him capable of such an outrage. The fact was that his lordship would not have been the social tyrant he was, but for the volunteer slaves that he met with among the

neighbouring population. His relation to his Dunwich neighbours had always been, thanks to themselves, that of a stick to a basket of eggs, with two exceptions; the rector was not one bit afraid of him; and in Mr. Angelo Hulet's case a cockatrice had been hatched, who ignored his authority, and even his existence. If, when he had used bad words, the doctor had "stuck up to him," with "Say that again, and, damme, I'll tread on your toe"—and especially if he had carried out his threat—it would have done his lordship more good than a pint of colchicum. Doctor Burne, however, was upright enough to everybody else; but whenever he paid a professional visit—and he paid no others—to the park, he left his independence in the hall along with his umbrella.

"I am not at all afraid of Lord Dirleton," said Evy; and indeed it was not with terror of that great man that her heart went pit-a-pat. "Moreover, his visit can be scarcely intended for me."

"I don't know that," replied the doctor, suspiciously. "Hush!"

The front door bell was being "answered," then, after a pause of a few seconds, another door was opened and closed.

"He has gone into the study to your uncle," said the doctor, taking up his hat with a sigh of relief. "God bless you, and fulfil your hope; but don't build upon it, dear Miss Evy, for I fear the old lord is not here for any good."

With a wave of his hand and a kindly smile, the doctor left the room and cautiously descended the stairs. As he passed the study, he heard voices within which seemed to him already in altercation. "By Jove!" muttered he, as he let himself out of doors, "how he'll shatter poor Hulet's nerves for him!"

Eva, alone in the drawing-room, sat huddled up in a corner of the sofa. What had her late companion meant by supposing that old Lord Dirleton had called on her account, and why should his visit bode no good to her hope? What right had the doctor to refer by implication to what she had deemed a sacred secret, but which it now seemed was one that everybody knew? Doctor Burne was correct in his surmises, no doubt, though it was so cruel of him to speak. "Dear Jack" had told her that his uncle would be sure to oppose himself to their engagement, and that therefore it would be better not to disclose it, at all events at present. And now the old man had found it out. Lord Dirleton had never crossed the threshold of the Cedars before, and it could be no light thing that had brought him thither. She had seen him afar off in church, and he had stared at her very hard, though by no means with disfavour. But he was a gentleman who looked as if he could be easily "put out," and she had Jack's word for it, that when that took place, he was "a caution." She had marked his red and swollen face, in which the blue blood of the Heytons could be so plainly discerned, and the ungloved hands that had rested on the edge of the pew, all gnarled and knotted like the trunk of a tree by his cruel malady; and she pictured him maddened and storming with the rage that she and Jack had kindled. How angry, too, would her uncle be to be informed for the first time, and by such means, of Jack's courtship! What a terrible interview must be now going on below stairs! What a trouble she had brought upon her generous benefactor, to whom even small annoyances were wont to be a worry and a trial, beneath which his digestion easily succumbed!

Certainly Evy did not overrate the unpleasantness of that quarter of an hour which was being spent by her uncle in the study. When the doctor had left him to go up-stairs, he had repaired to his medicine cupboard with the intention of recuperating himself after the fret and flutter, which the detail of his symptoms always caused him, with a dose of quinine. He had placed the bottle on the table, and had filled his glass, when there came that ring at the front door which had filled his niece with such alarm.

"Some tattling woman come to call on Evy, I suppose," was his contemptuous reflection. Whoever she was, however, his servant knew better than to admit her

into his sanctum, which was tabooed to all such folk. Lady Wapshaw, indeed, armed with her subscription list for the Tonga Islanders, had on one occasion tried her right of way thither, but it was not likely she would attempt that experiment again. He had offered to give his guinea if she would subscribe a similar sum to the "Association for Compelling the Legislature to erect a Statue to Cromwell in Westminster Hall," and had favoured her with such an exposition of his political sentiments as had led her subsequently to compare him to Jack Cade. Mr. Angelo Hulet chuckled as he recalled the circumstance, and was holding the quinine up against the light, like a gourmet with a glass of yellow Chartreuse, when his door opened, and the servant announced Lord Dirleton.

The next instant, and before he could even set down his glass, this most unexpected visitor was in the room.

"Hum. I'm not at all surprised. Drinks," were the first words that dropped from his lordship's lips. It was one of his peculiarities, and especially when much excited, to think aloud; his speech, however, was at no time very distinct, and this remark, though it reached the footman's ears ere he left the room, fortunately escaped those of his master. "I have called on a—um—very unpleasant business, Mr.—um."

"My name is Hulet," observed that gentleman, with dignity.

"No, no, it isn't; that wasn't the name." He drew a slip of paper, which he carried in aid to memory from his waistcoat pocket. "It's Carthew."

"Miss Evy Carthew is my niece," explained Mr. Hulet, frigidly.

"Just so. It's her I am come about. No, I will not take a chair."

It was plain that he would have preferred to do so, but for some social consideration, the nature of which could be guessed from his peevish and irritable tone, even if you had not caught his muttered soliloquy, "Can't sit down with such a fellow;" his legs trembled under him, through weakness or passion, or perhaps from both, and he placed one gouty hand flat on the table, where it looked very like a dish of truffles, to steady himself thereby.

"Look you, sir; I have lived on good terms with all in Dunwich for many a year, as did my fathers before me. No cause of quarrel between myself and my neighbours has ever occurred; they have kept their places, and I have kept mine. Now you

are comparatively a new-comer here, and may not understand—um—ha—our respective positions.”

“I understand them very well, Lord Dirleton, though the probability is we should not agree in my definition of them. A peer of the realm is, in my opinion, neither better nor worse than any other man.”

“I have no wish to hear your opinions, sir,” interrupted the old lord. “But if they are such as you describe them, there is all the more reason that you should listen to me. It behoves me to point out to you how absurdly impossible and absolutely out of the question it is, that anything serious can come out of this affair, upon which you are perhaps congratulating yourself. My Jack has nothing of his own to speak of, and will have nothing except what I choose to leave him. My Jack is impulsive and high-minded, it is true, but he is not a downright idiot. My Jack——”

“One moment, Lord Dirleton,” interposed his companion, blandly; “I beg your pardon for interrupting you, but would you be good enough to explain yourself—to this extent at least. Who *is* ‘your Jack?’”

“I—um—ha—curse his impudence—— Sir, it is ridiculous to pretend to be ignorant of what all Dunwich has been talking about for weeks, though it came to my own ears for the first time this morning, namely, that your niece—um—well—I suppose I must put it the other way—that my nephew, Captain Heyton, is making love to Miss Carthew.”

“Whether it seems ‘ridiculous’ to you or not,” replied Mr. Hulet, reddening, “or whether you choose to believe me or not, are matters quite immaterial to me, Lord Dirleton; but it is a fact that I have heard nothing whatever about this circumstance. It distresses me to hear it; excitement always makes my heart ‘go’—permit me to take just half a glass of sal volatile. Well, it is but right to say that I have never heard anything to the disadvantage of ‘your Jack,’ as you call him; he seemed to me an inoffensive, if somewhat dull young man, with a most splendid appetite, and I have no doubt most girls would call him good-looking.”

“You have never looked upon him as the heir presumptive of Dunwich Park, and heir-apparent to the title, I’ll wager,” responded the other, sarcastically. “It is upon those grounds, however, Mr. Hulet, that I have come hither to have a

few words with you. You plume yourself on being what is called a Radical, I believe.”

“Then you have been misinformed,” was the other’s curt rejoinder. “From the first moment that I began to think for myself I have been a Republican Anabaptist.”

“I did not know there was such a thing in England,” observed his lordship. “I should as soon have expected to hear of an Anaconda.”

“There was a time, however,” remarked Mr. Hulet, pointing to the picture of his ancestor above the fireplace, “when England could boast of many such; John Bradshaw, the Lord-President of the Council, who condemned yonder king——”

“The devil take Bradshaw,” exclaimed his lordship, irascibly—“though for that matter he must have taken him long ago—and listen to me. It may be that you are altogether out of your mind, but it also may be that you are a very cunning fellow. For argument’s sake I will take you at your word, and suppose that you conceive yourself—um—the idea of such a thing—my equal; that birth and blood and title are all moonshine, and that a simple ‘Mr.’ is as good as ‘my lord.’”

“If you conceive all that, you are right in every particular,” rejoined the other, quietly.

“Very good. Then look you here; there can be no advantage from your point of view in your niece’s marriage with my Jack; for if that happens, so sure as I stand here, nothing but my bare name shall he ever inherit from me. When I am once ‘grassed in’ I cannot hinder him from becoming Lord Dirleton; but not an acre of my land, not a shilling of my money shall he ever inherit. Do I make myself intelligible?”

“You are perspicuity itself, Lord Dirleton; and if I were your family lawyer, these details of your intentions would doubtless be most interesting. I thank you for your confidence, but the disposition of your property does not concern me in any way. It seems to me a matter solely for the consideration of your Jack. My fortune is sufficient, even without the preliminary of my being ‘grassed in,’ to support my niece and her husband too, in comfort; and though I make no sort of promise about the matter, if I find the young man unstained with the vices generally incidental to his position——”

Lord Dirleton’s countenance was habitually purple, but it now grew black. He

imagined that to be a personal reflection, which was in fact only a general censure, and the shaft went home. "Go on, sir," he gasped out; "go on."

"I say, if I find your nephew no debauchee, and that his fancy for the Turf, of which I have heard something, has not degenerated into a passion; if, in spite of his want of wits, in short, Captain Heyton turns out to be a good-hearted young fellow and a gentleman, I for my part, as my niece's guardian and only relative, shall not oppose her choice, however much I may regret the direction it has taken."

With trembling fingers Lord Dirleton put on his hat. "I perceive I have made a mistake," said he, "in supposing you to be playing the fool, Mr. Hulet. It is impossible that any man in his senses can seriously entertain the views that you have expressed, and therefore I must believe them to have been assumed for an object. The fortune of which you have spoken is not so sufficient perhaps but that you wish to see it increased. It would have saved a great deal of time to have stated that at first, but it is a satisfaction to have reached something tangible. Jack is dear to me I don't deny; but he has been dear to me in another sense on more than one occasion; so therefore let the ransom be reasonable. What sum will you take to withdraw Miss Carthew's pretensions to my nephew's hand?"

Mr. Hulet rose and rang the bell; the perspiration stood on his pale face, and he kept his hand pressed to his heart as though in pain.

"You shall have your answer, my lord, immediately."

It was the first time he had addressed his companion by that title throughout the interview, and the sneer with which he pronounced it was equal to a folio of contempt.

"Charles," said he, as the servant answered his summons, "show that person out of my house."

"You shall repent this, you Hulet, to the last day of your contemptible life," gasped the old lord.

"And never let him enter it again," added Mr. Angelo Hulet ere the door closed upon his outraged visitor. "That old wretch has murdered me," groaned he as he sunk into a chair. "These palpitations will kill me outright if I don't take my prussic acid, and yet I dare not trust my hand to drop it from the bottle. As for calling Evy, the very thought of the

girl brings it all back. Pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat—I'll try another glass of sal volatile. Oh dear, oh dear!"

CHAPTER IV. A LOVING FAREWELL.

It is often said that we owe a debt of gratitude to our ancestors for this and that, when it is pretty clear that they accomplished the matter in question at least as much on their own account as on ours, but there is one thing for which we have undoubtedly to thank them, as done for our especial benefit, namely, for the planting of trees of slow growth. No man, however justly proud of his constitution, can hope to get much advantage for himself out of putting acorns into the ground. All honour, then, to that early head of the house of Heyton, who caused the famous avenue in Dunwich Park—so long that the parallel lines seem almost to meet, so broad that the huge branches that fling themselves across it cannot touch by forty feet their opposite fellows—to be first "dibbled in" without hope of selfish fruition. So straight does it run, so thick are the woods on either hand of that broad green space, of which one spacious side-walk is always in grateful shadow, that you might think the avenue had been cut by skilful hands out of the solid forest, a highway to the terrestrial paradise that lies beyond it. For at the end remote from the Hall, there lay deep down in the far-stretching valley such a scene of richness and beauty as is only to be seen on English soil, with an ever-present haze in the eastern distance, which, to those who had dwelt beneath it, enhanced the glories of the rural scene tenfold—for it marked the site of the Great City, all its roar and tumult hushed by distance. A broad grass terrace, backed by a wall of trees, extended right and left of the avenue, and commanded this fair prospect, and in the wall was many a gap, where cool green rides through ferny haunts of deer, and brakes where woodland creatures of all sorts would stand and gaze—so seldom was the Home Wood startled by dog or gun—crossed and re-crossed one another in well-designed confusion.

In one of these rides, on the afternoon of the day, the events of whose beginning we have described, a young man is pacing up and down with visible signs of impatience. He has cast his restless glance to westward, in which direction lies the village, a dozen times, and half as many has pulled out his watch, and consulted it ap-

parently to little purpose. He is dressed in country costume, but by no means "horsily," and the only touch of foppery about him, if such it be, is the exceeding closeness with which his black hair has been cut, and the elaborate symmetry of his small dark moustache.

A very good-looking young fellow, of three or four and twenty, as we should judge him, is our greenwood friend, though his sunburnt brow is clouded with dissatisfaction just at present, and his lips are a little compressed, as young gentlemen's who have had their own way in the world are apt to be, when their hack, or their sweetheart, is behind their time.

There is no doubt which it is on this occasion; for see, at last, from the direction of the terrace, in which he is not looking for her, trips a young girl, graceful as a gazelle, with her large hazel eyes, soft and tender with recent sorrow, and timid with present fears.

"So, my darling, you are come at last," cries he, moving his hat at sight of her, so reverently that it seemed less in courtesy than in thankfulness to the god that had sent him such a prize, and then moving hastily to meet her; "but you look tearful, frightened; nothing serious, I trust, has happened to detain you?"

"Nay, but there has, Jack; something very serious, and I am frightened, or at least I was until I met you." And then she nestled in his arms as though, to be quite sure that she had found her haven.

"Which shows we ought never to be separated, my darling," observed the young man, appositely.

"And that is just what we are about to be, dear," she sobbed, "and perhaps for ever."

"My dear Evy, what is the matter? Pray, pray, don't cry like that. You don't mean to say that your uncle has found us out, and cut up rough about it; that is impossible for anybody to do with you."

"It's impossible for him, Jack, that's true, for he is just the kindest soul in the world to me."

"Don't say that, Evy," pleaded the young man, tenderly; "say one of the kindest, or the other kindest."

"Of course I meant except yourself, dear; oh, pray, pray don't make fun of it all, for it's dreadful. Yes, my uncle has found us out, though that, as it happens, is nothing; but what is far worse is, that your uncle has found us out also."

"The devil he has!" exclaimed the cap-

tain, forgetting, in his surprise and annoyance, the tender ears of his companion; "why, how came that about; are you quite sure?"

"I am positively certain, though how it happened, or who could have told him, I have not the least idea."

"Then don't trouble yourself to look for one," observed the captain, with as much gaiety as he could assume under what was really a very serious blow to him. "It isn't like inquiring into why our marker at the butt was hit in the leg; my uncle can't find it out a second time; sooner or later he must have discovered it. Still there's no doubt it's awkward. He'll blaze up, like a hill of dried heather; and it'll be hard to put him out."

"My dearest love," exclaimed Evy, sadly, "it will not only be hard, but impossible. This is the last time—I feel it—that you and I will ever meet. It is wrong of me to call you by those endearing names, to let you kiss me thus, when all must be over between us. To think that yesterday we were so happy, supposing that we were to meet every day like this, and now—ah, you will never see me more!"

"And who is to prevent me, Evy?" inquired the captain, not without a flash in his dark eye that seemed to defy any one to attempt it. "If Lord Dirleton forbids us the park, the whole county doesn't belong to him, I suppose?"

"But we are going away ourselves, darling—uncle and I—at once—to-morrow, I believe."

"Going away? What, going to leave Dunwich for good?"

"Yes; at least for ever," returned Evy, dejectedly, "if that can be called for good."

"Ever is a long day," returned the young man, gravely. "Tell me all that happened, dear, from first to last, and then we will settle what is to be done. How did this sudden change in your plans first come about?"

"Well, directly after Lord Dirleton left our house—"

"Your house?" interrupted the captain, in supreme surprise. "You don't mean to tell me that he called at the Cedars?"

"Yes, indeed; he was closeted with my uncle in the study this morning for ever so long."

"One moment, darling." A whimsical expression crossed the young man's features. "That's not the room with the family portrait in it about which Mr. Hulet talks so much, is it?"

"Yes; the one with the picture of that dreadful man with the mask and the axe; the two gentlemen seemed to have quarrelled over that even more than over poor me. So far from allowing that the Lord-President Bradshaw was a great man, as you did, and which made Uncle Angelo so pleased with you——"

"Yes; I thought he meant the man that published the Railway Guide; but no matter for that—it was a most fortunate mistake."

"Well, instead of that, I believe Lord Dirlton called him some dreadful name, and refused to listen to my uncle's political sentiments. So, beginning at that dreadful business of cutting the king's head off, things went on from bad to worse—I wish you wouldn't laugh, dear Jack, when everything is so terrible—till at last my uncle rang the bell, and told Charles to show his lordship out of doors. I saw him from the drawing-room window, and he turned back in the middle of the street, and shook his stick at the house; his rage was something awful to witness. I believe he would have killed us all."

"Stop, stop, Evy," cried the captain, shaking with laughter, "unless you want to kill me. I would have given twenty pounds to have overheard the conversation between our respective relatives!"

"Lord Dirlton called Uncle Angelo an Anaconda," observed Evy, ruefully.

"A what? Oh, pray, pray don't," gasped the captain, pressing his hands to his sides. "If you only knew my uncle's opinions you would understand how charming all this is. He has never seen anybody worse than a Whig, and calls Lord John Russell a firebrand. Do you think it was made quite clear to him who your uncle's great-great-grandfather really was? Oh dear, oh dear, it would have been dirt cheap at twenty pounds."

"But, Jack, don't laugh, pray don't. Indeed, this is nothing to laugh at."

"Well, well, I've done now, Evy; or at least"—here was a slight relapse—"almost. There, there, I'm quite serious now. Well, after my noble relative left the Cedars, what happened?"

"Why, Uncle Angelo came up-stairs to me; he was very shaky, poor dear, and evidently much put out, and I had to drop him some prussic acid to quiet him."

"Quiet him? Gad, I should think it did!"

"Oh, he's used to prussic acid," continued Evy, "and always takes it for his

nerves. 'So, my dear Evy,' said he, when he got a little better, 'I hear you have made choice of a lover.' He didn't fly in a passion, because I hadn't told him about it, but only spoke a little coldly, as though I ought to have done so—as, indeed, he well might, considering how good and kind he has always been to me. But there, you told me not to tell, you know."

"You're an angel," said Jack, admiringly, "and your uncle is a trump. Pray go on."

"Well, of course, I told him everything then; how I had often seen you, not only out at dinner in his presence, but at evening parties to which Mrs. Mellish had taken me; and how we met in the park, at first by chance, and afterwards—just once or twice—by appointment; and how good and nice you were, and how liberal you were in your opinions. I thought I would put that in, and, besides, I knew he had been pleased with you about Bradshaw. Well, he listened very patiently, and when I had made an end of praising you, he just stooped down, and kissed my forehead."

"Like that?" inquired the captain, with affected curiosity, and suiting the action to the word.

"No, sir, not like that; I said 'my forehead.'"

"I beg your pardon," deprecated Jack, "like *that*, then. Well, he just stooped down and——"

"And said," continued Evy, avoiding this time this forward young gentleman's caress, "that I was a very silly girl, and did not know when I was well off. But that if I was bent upon marriage, and supposing that the object of my choice—he would keep calling you 'the object,' dear, which annoyed me very much, though I tried not to show it—supposing that you should appear to him, after due inquiry, and further personal knowledge, to be an eligible person, he would not stand in our way—with one proviso. We were not to see one another, nor even to communicate by letter, for the next six months."

"And what did you say, Evy?"

"Well, what could I say, darling? I felt that it would half kill me, but still things might have been so much worse, so after stipulating for this one interview, I promised not to meet you for six months, unless by accident. At this my uncle replied coolly that I need be under no apprehension upon that account, because we were to leave Dunwich to-morrow. Up to that time I had flattered myself that Lord

Dirleton had agreed to this temporary separation between us, but my uncle then proceeded to tell me what had taken place down-stairs. I will not repeat what he said of his lordship, for of course it would not be pleasant for you to hear; but he ended by protesting that he was quite certain that he should not breathe freely until at least a hundred miles were put between himself and—and—Lord Dirleton, and therefore we were to be off at once. Then my heart sank within me, darling; not because I was going away from Dunwich, nor because I feared that you would forget your Evy in six months, but on account of your uncle's anger, which my heart told me would make him bid you never see me more, and, alas, tells me still."

And once more the poor girl broke into passionate sobs, and feebly strove to prevent Jack from consoling her with his caresses.

"Things are not quite so bad as that, darling," said he, cheerfully, though by his grave face, and the way he pulled his moustache this way and that, it was evident that he feared they would be. "And look you, Evy," added he, solemnly, "if they come to their very worst, it would only be house and land that he could take from me, and what are they compared with you?"

"No, no," said Evy, passionately, "you must not say that. I could never be the cause of your being disinherited. It is all very well for Uncle Angelo to despise wealth and honours—and he does so quite honestly—but I know they are very dear to most men's hearts. You may think to-day that they might be well exchanged for my poor self; but you might not think so when you had lost them; and even if you did, Jack, I should not think so. Not a thought of this beautiful place, so full of sweet memories as it is to me, would come into my mind, without the bitter reflection, 'and it went from him through me.' I was wrong to come here to-day, darling. I am wrong to call you so, and yet, alas, alas, what could I do?"

It was pitiful to see her, folded in her lover's arms, but without returning his embrace, and sobbing as though her over-tried heart would break.

"Now this isn't my good, sensible Evy," reasoned the young fellow, with tender gravity, "the girl whom Doctor Burne says has more wits, and does more good with them, than all the other girls in Dunwich put together, and of whom Mrs. Mellish told me with her own lips that she wished she were a daughter of her own. I don't want to let

the park slip through my fingers, you may be sure, my darling, nor the old Hall, neither, for that matter. I don't pretend to any of the philosophy of your uncle, and had much rather be a great man in the sense of the vulgar herd (which is a very numerous herd indeed) than not. And on the other hand I am not going to sell my soul—you are my soul, you know; what? You're not? Then I wish you were, for then it would be something pure, and good, and beautiful—I am not going to sell my soul, I say, for so much gold and clay. My uncle has your taste, and likes me vastly, and I am much mistaken if he doesn't think twice before promoting my cousin Dick to the post of his heir-presumptive *vice* Jack (who married an angel). Come, look up, dear; let us 'trust in Providence,' as your uncle's friend old Cromwell used to say, and 'keep our—eyes dry.' There, I've kissed the drop away from that, and now—oh yes, I must; you can't have one dry eye and one wet one; it's contrary to nature; there, now all's right. I am dining with Lord Dirleton alone to-night—for the poor old fellow is far from well—and we shall doubtless have this out together. Tomorrow morning, before you start, I will let you know what has happened. But, by-the-bye, what place is it you are going to?"

"To Balcombe, I believe," sighed Evy; "a place on the south coast, much recommended for the nerves."

"Balcombe, Balcombe. I have heard of that," said the captain, referring to a little volume he took from his breast pocket.

"What is that book? 'Where shall we go to this Summer,' I suppose," said Evy. "'Climate warm but bracing,' doesn't it say?"

"Not a bit of it, my dear," laughed the captain. "It is not the Tourist's Guide, as you imagine. It's all about racing. 'Events of the year.' Here it is—'Balcombe. Steeple-chases, April 4th.' That's a good six months hence, and outside your uncle's limit. Well, I'll go down to Balcombe, 'by accident,' with my new Irish horse, Walltopper, and win the cup. Come, that's settled, at all events. We are just coming to the end of the Home Wood, by-the-bye, dearest, and unless you prefer to wish me good-bye in public—a good-bye to last for half a year"—here followed a delicious silence, and little more was said till they parted within a few yards of the park gates, Evy a little comforted by her lover's assuring words, Jack somewhat cast down by the thought of the

expected interview with his uncle, but as firm as a rock in his intention to keep his plighted word.

Mr. Angelo Hulet did the Heytons an injustice in saying that that noble race had never been famous for anything beyond descending from their ancestors; they were quite as notorious for never giving up a determination, whether for good or ill, whatever it cost them. They would as soon have thought of being persuaded out of an opinion.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF SAINTE-ANNE D'AURAY.

AURAY is a small town, in the Department of the Morbihan, and therefore in the very heart of Brittany. On approaching it from the north-west, viâ Brest, the considerable distances from station to station show that the country is not very rich, consisting chiefly of short hills covered with brakes, furze, broom, and heath, intermingled with and subdivided by scrub and stunted forest trees, singly or in mass. Now and then come patches of bright green pasture, through which flow streamlets richly fringed with royal fern. All these afford picturesque bits for the sketch-book, capital cover for game, feeding ground for excellent mutton and pretty little cows, but not otherwise abundantly productive. In running south-east towards Auray, there are signs of a warmer and milder climate. Fig-trees increase in size and productiveness; chestnuts and maritime pines appear—that is, it is worth the while to plant them.

Auray has a promenade frequented by two or three children and their nursemaids only, and four or five old men and women. On the verge of the promenade stands a belvedere, which duty obliges you to mount. From its summit, overlooking a well-wooded landscape, you perceive, on the horizon, a steeple, at this time of writing surrounded with scaffolding. That is the church of Sainte-Anne d'Auray, some five miles off. Looking down, immediately beneath your feet there winds a tidal river, also the Auray, forming a sea-port, until the bridge puts an end to its pretensions. This stream, which is by no means large, permits you either to fish for prawns, or to taste the pleasures of the Bay of Biscay in the little steamer which runs to Belle-Ile-en-Mer, an island possessing a town, an inn, canellias growing

in the open air, lobsters begging to be boiled, and all sorts of agreeable circumstances, except communication with the mainland secure from sickness of the sea.

Domestic luxury at Auray has not yet attained its maximum. Rooms that would content an English cow, content a Breton family. Nevertheless, the curious explorer may venture to make a few days' halt at Auray. Creature comforts are to be had by making friends with the charming mistress of the excellent and reasonable Hôtel du Pavillon-d'en-haut. Still, tourists go to Auray, not because they want to go there, but because they want to go, afterwards, somewhere else.

A favourite spot to be thus approached is the shrine of Sainte-Anne d'Auray, whose miraculous statue is one of the most popular objects of Breton pilgrimage. Unlike Lourdes and La Salette, the multitudes who throng there are drawn thither by no mere yesterday's marvel. With regard to age, Sainte-Anne (the village or hamlet, formerly called Keranna or Ker Anna, the village of Anne) is respectable, if not quite venerable. There was indeed a chapel dedicated to Sainte-Anne (the mother of the Virgin Mary) in the earliest ages of the Church, and destroyed about the year 699; but our story dates no further back than 1622. All that then remained of the ancient chapel were its ruined foundations hidden beneath the soil, whose memory was preserved by a singular phenomenon. They lay in the middle of a corn-field called the Bocenno, and though the ground which covered them could be dug with the spade, never within the memory of man could the plough be made to pass over them. The horses reared and drew back in affright; if pressed, they grew restive, and broke their harness. Whoever was sent to plough that field was warned not to go near the site of the chapel. Everybody believed the chapel would one day be restored, and everybody desired to be the witness, perhaps the instrument, of its restoration.

The favoured individual was a simple ploughman of the village of Keranna, Yves Nicolazic by name, who farmed the Bocenno, age forty-three, temperament devout, education limited and superstitious. He modified the well-known saying into "Orare est laborare;" his warmest sympathies were attracted by the souls in purgatory; the chief objects of his worship were the holy daughter and mother, the Virgin and Sainte-Anne.

The first manifestation was an extraordinary brightness appearing in his house by night, and seemingly proceeding from a taper held by an isolated hand. The phenomenon, he stated, lasted the time of saying two paters and two aves. Six weeks afterwards, one Sunday evening, an hour after sunset, the same prodigy was repeated in the Bocenno field, only it lasted a shorter time, and the mysterious hand was not observed.

At first Nicolazic thought the lights sent by his mother, recently deceased, to beg the succour of his prayers. He did his utmost, in that way, to shorten her sufferings, but a fresh event showed him his mistake. One evening, again an hour after sunset, he and his brother-in-law, both driving their bullocks to water, accidentally met beside a spring embowered by trees (since become the fountain of Sainte-Anne). The oxen retreated in alarm, refusing to be driven in that direction. The brothers, curious to discover the cause, advanced, and beheld before them a Lady of august aspect, standing, and facing the direction of the spring. Her robe, of dazzling whiteness, descended to the ground; around her shone a bright soft light, which illuminated the surrounding objects. They ran away in terror; took courage, and returned. All had vanished.

The miracle was speedily renewed. During the succeeding fifteen months Nicolazic never passed three weeks without beholding some fresh apparition. Whenever he came home from the fields later than usual, after dark, a wax light, held by an invisible arm, accompanied him, to show him the path. However high the wind, the flame never flickered. Often the Sainte appeared in person, sometimes by the solitary fountain, sometimes in the barn or the dwelling-house. On those occasions she was always dressed in a robe of exceeding whiteness; her hands always held a torch; her feet always rested on a cloud; she kept silence; but her majestic air, tempered by mild benevolence, together with the light which pervaded and surrounded her, reminded the worthy labourer of what the Apostles saw on Mount Tabor.

One evening (1624) his barn was suddenly illumined, and a voice asked him if he had never heard say that formerly there was a chapel in the Bocenno. Before he could answer, a resplendent Lady, dignified and amiable, appeared, who said to him, in the country language, "Yves Nicolazic, don't be afraid. It's I, Anne, the Mother

of Mary. Go and tell your pastor that in the middle of the field called Bocenno, before the village even existed, there was a celebrated chapel, the first built in my honour in Brittany. It is nine hundred and twenty-four years, and six months, this very day, since it was destroyed, and I desire that you should be the means of rebuilding it. God wills that my name should again be venerated there." Having spoken, she and the light disappeared.

But the pastor turned a deaf ear to the story, fancying he had to do with a crazy man. He made merry at the sainte-seer's being sent to him, of all people, and told poor Nicolazic to go about his business.

The Sainte reappeared, and urged him to try again; which he did next morning. The pastor listened at first, but at the word "apparition" lost his temper, and would hear no more about it. On trying the curate, his reception was still worse. But new wonders confirmed him in his purpose. Sometimes he saw a shower of brilliant stars, sometimes burning torches alighted on the Bocenno, while subterranean music issued from the ground. Finally, guided by a gliding flame, he and his brother-in-law dug up the wooden statue of the Sainte, decayed and defaced by its long interment.

Nevertheless, both pastor and curate obstinately refused to believe in any miracle, and went so far as to threaten interdiction of Church rites to all who would not immediately renounce these follies. Poor Nicolazic was dumbfounded, but not beaten; because the Sainte, reappearing, told him, "Make your mind easy. Only have confidence. You shall soon have heaps of miracles; crowds of people will come to honour the spot." Nicolazic, "inundated with joy," set to work forthwith to rebuild the chapel.

The statue was dug up in such a state, that it was difficult to make out its definite form. Two Capucins undertook to retouch and paint it; the chips, carefully saved, worked wonderful cures. The wicked curate was smitten with a disease which, in spite of his tardy recantation, cut short his life; the incredulous pastor was struck with paralysis, eventually cured by the waters of the holy fountain.

The events just related (to which many more of the same nature might be added) constitute the foundation on which has been built of granite, not a chapel, but a very handsome church, as yet unfinished, but whose completion in the best style of

ecclesiastical art is as certain as the return of the seasons. Those events are recorded in stained-glass windows, the gifts of various individuals and families, some of which windows raise doubts in one's mind respecting the relative rank of the terrestrial and the celestial hierarchies—the window, for instance, which represents Pius the Ninth “according favours to Sainte-Anne.” Votive offerings around the shrine of the now gilded image are not so numerous as might be expected. Those visible are principally pictures. Perhaps the number of symbolic souvenirs so displayed is kept down by the good taste of the presiding powers; who perhaps also intimate that they don't want rubbish in token of gratitude, but solid means of perfecting the edifice.

Along the drive from Auray to Sainte-Anne, you meet and pass parties of clerical-looking peasantry, all black and buttons, in carts and on foot. Pious beggars with chaplets of beads have taken possession of the railway crossing. Large inns in plenty—the Hôtel du Lion d'Or, the Hôtel de la France, the Hôtel Le Theuff—prove the frequent arrival of easy-circumstanced travellers. Everything tends to the praise and glory of Sainte-Anne. There is a Boulangerie, or Bakery, de Sainte-Anne, which does not exclude pain de fantaisie, fancy bread, from its windows. I bought Sainte-Anne's cakes, stamped with her portrait, for the sufficient sum of six sous each. Not only is there Sainte-Anne's bread; there are also Sainte-Anne's sugar-plums.

Outside the church, on the side next the shrine, a sort of square is lined with booths which hold a perfect fair of “objets de devotion.” Of course, the entrance is guarded by beggars. Inside, you are assailed by saleswomen, who thrust upon you long wax candles to be burnt before the statue. The candles are hollow: not so the devotion, as far as can be judged from appearance. Well-dressed and seemingly educated people, families, father, mother, sons and daughters, each taper in hand, go in and kneel on the cold stone pavement, praying for some favour or returning thanks for some mercy. The stalls display rosaries, prints, photographs, medals, crosses, hearts, scapularies intermingled with mundane toys, even penny trumpets and halfpenny whistles. It is an amusing, if not an edifying, religious lounge.

The vendors lose no opportunity of passing off their saintly wares. Warm are the

invitations to enter every shop, and to purchase at every stall.

“It costs nothing to come in. Entrez, monsieur, entrez. There is a very large choice. Come in, and see.”

I go in; and see that political as well as devotional objects are sold; portraits of the Comte de Chambord, fleurs-de-lis as buttons and brooches, and allegorical pictures of the future of France. I buy medals, hearts, beads, and a brass statuette of Sainte-Anne enclosed in a white metal case two inches high.

“But are these objects blessed?” I asked.

“Not yet, monsieur. Objets de devotion, here, are not blessed until they are sold; but you have only to take them to the sacristy to get them blessed in Sainte-Anne's name.”

Instead of going there, I stroll towards the fountain. A small statue of the patron saint stands in the middle of a low stone boundary, around and inside which are beggars and cripples, whose diversity of maladies and infirmities it is difficult to behold without shuddering. There are small tanks of water, which is liberally handed to you in bowls by some half-dozen women, probably orthodox female officials. The water serves to drink, or to wash sore eyes, or as a topical lotion for any complaint whatever. In not taking away a bottle of this water, I unwittingly committed a double mistake. Firstly, I might have obliged with it several friends who set a high value on its virtues. Secondly, I caught cold on the way to Sainte-Anne d'Auray, and the waters, I am seriously assured, might have cured me.

Not far from the fountain and facing the church, though screened from it by houses which will disappear one day, is a strange-looking edifice resembling a bridge—a sort of Rialto of Venice in small—only that there is not the tiniest canal or even gutter to be crossed. At the left foot of the bridge, looking towards it from the fountain, is a shop for religious objects. I buy of the mistress a photograph of the structure, at the same time inquiring what it is.

“It is the Holy Staircase, monsieur, the Scala Sancta. You can mount it, on this side, on your knees, and kiss the marble column at the top, in which is incrustated a piece of the column of Flagellation of Our Lord. Forty days' indulgence are granted to pilgrims who kiss the holy relic with devout contrition. If your strength does not allow you to go up on your knees, you may mount on the other side on foot, but

then you must come down again on the same side. That side has not been blessed; this side has."

"I know the Scala Sancta at Rome, but I never heard of one at Sainte-Anne d'Auray."

"Oh, yes; here is an account of it, sanctioned by his Grandeur the Bishop of Vannes, and confirmed by his Holiness the Pope, Pie Neuf. Only fifteen centimes, three sous. He grants nine years' indulgence for every step ascended kneeling with a contrite heart. But, madame"—here she rose and shouted to a person on the blessed steps—"you woman there, you, half-way up, you must not rise and walk. You must finish on your knees. If you are tired, you shouldn't have begun."

I bought for three sous the "Visite à l'escalier saint ou Scala Sancta au pèlerinage de Sainte-Anne," ascended on the unblest side, and did not kiss the marble column at the top. Men as well as women, and one little girl, were devoutly climbing the staircase on their knees and counting their prayers on rosaries at every step so surmounted. Between the staircase and the church moved a motley crowd; ladies in costume dresses, costumes containing females not ladies; Breton men, attired like French mayors, in scarves and sashes, mixed up with a throng of heterogeneous vehicles, omnibuses, américaines, calèches, carts. The pilgrimage, though it has its grand days (the vigil of the saint's fête, the 25th of July, for instance), is always open. There are constant arrivals all day long. Carriages with a livery servant and one-horse traps with a family load, are followed by groups of neighbours on foot. So great is the affluence, that the Chemins de Fer de l'Ouest and d'Orleans find it worth their while to give tickets from the whole length of their lines to the stations of Auray and Sainte-Anne and back, at reduced prices, from May till October. The central building of the latter station, rising in a quadrangular pinnacle, is appropriately crowned by the statue of Sainte-Anne.

The new-built structures now existing are only forerunners of architectural splendours to come. Between the staircase and the church is a rectangular space occupied at present by stonemasons, which assuredly will not be surrounded or filled with any but ecclesiastical edifices, and those handsome ones.

The historical facts which gave rise to this pilgrimage are accepted as true by

episcopal and papal authority, and published with benediction, cross, and signature.

SYMPATHY.

THOU askest me wherein the golden chain,
That binds our souls, first found its holy spell,
In smile, in word, in gesture, in a glance,
Heart answering to heart. I cannot tell;
There is some subtle influence unseen,
But deeply felt, that soul to soul will draw,
Even from the first by a magnetic power
Much stronger than our wills. Mysterious law!
But sweet as mystic, for a yearning soul
Finds thus at once its kindred counterpart,
And life-long friendship grows from casual grasp
Of answering hand and thrill of answering heart;
Nor power of man nor march of rolling Time,
May ever solve this mystery sublime.

A NIGHT WITH THE PROFESSOR.

MEISSONNIER should have been there, he really should, to do full justice to the professor and his three friends setting seriously in for that delightful gavotte of Bach. Meissonnier alone could have conveyed that sense of the cosiness and intellectual enjoyment of that evening with Bach, Scarlati, Doctor John Bull, Milton's harmonious friend, Lawes, and honest John Playford, the musical bookseller of the Commonwealth. The professor, with his ivory baton raised before some half hundred performers, is a great sight I allow. The professor at one of Brard's grands, conducting an amateur concert, is also a fine sight; but what are these to the professor on such a night as I describe, enjoying himself, sunning himself, as it were, in green pastures far from the dusty road of popularity and display; his armour off, if I may be allowed the metaphor, his plumed helm laid on the shelf, he himself serene as Apollo, radiant as Bacchus, and tuning his lyre (another metaphor) for mere love of the Muses, and in the cause of sacred friendship and the genius of good-fellowship.

Now to many poor dabbling sciolists a gavotte of Bach's may be a mere tour de force, a scraping of strings, a casual piece of every-day amusement to be struck off at a heat, with a dash of the bow, a stamp of the foot—a thing in fact to be scrambled through with more or less truth of time, and more or less partnership of instruments. But not so with the professor; to him the Great Gavotte—"page thirty-three"—is a fine work of art, to be first firmly etched in, then subdivided, then followed through its labyrinthine windings, each one, moreover, to be subtly traced to the minutest curve, and with the severest

care. It is a thing to perspire over, to wipe the brow over, to take snuff over, to pore over with glittering spectacles, to play with careful reverence, and with grave fidelity; to tap the music-desk about till things go better, to look with piteous entreaty about, to tear away at, till we have defined the high lights with the most delicate piano, and struck out the deeper shadows with rich mellow bass.

The professor's room was worthy of its occupants — a large handsome chamber in Bloomsbury-square, where a lord chancellor had once lived; large and spacious, like the professor's brain. At one side stood a fine old harpsichord, that had belonged to Doctor Burney; and over the great white mantelpiece, sculptured with trophies, lutes and helmets, as in the old manner, hung a portrait of the professor in early youth. Alas for the once curly locks! The professor's head now was as bare as an ostrich egg; but the pleasant, genial smile remained, and the arched eyebrows, though they were grey now and not black. There was a Caravaggio, too, of some musical professor struggling with an enormous theorbo, and some photographs of Rome and Venice to remind the professor of his student days. There were shelves, too, of old music, and books on music, and here and there lay an old lute, or a case containing some Guarnerius or Straduerius, worth its weight in gold. Then, on this table lay some rare portraits of old musicians, besides a few volumes of old madrigals, and some collections of old catches. Place in the midst of the room one of the finest "grands" that Erard could produce, and you have a fair impression of the professor's apartment.

If anything could equal the pleasure of watching the gavotte it was the pleasure of observing the professor marshalling his forces for a quartette from the same great master. The modes of preparation practised by the four friends were curious to observe. Signor Rosanini, first violin, buttoned himself up as much like Paganini as possible, as if the smaller compass he got into the more he could wind into the music. Bagshaw, a fat, jovial man, with full whiskers, seemed to expand as he glanced over the music, and drew a few rich notes from the violoncello with which he grappled; while a German-looking man, with long thin brown face, sat himself down before his bass viol as before the rigging of a mast, and drew musical thunder from its massive cordage. Now to each executant the professor administered an oily glass of

old curaçoa from a quaint gilt bottle, then sat down at the pianoforte with a grand repose that gave courage to his faithful companions, and reflected dignity upon himself. His forehead shone with good nature as he peered down for a moment through his dignified gold spectacles at the first page, then, raising his head, he glanced round to see that all was ready, and dashed at the first movement while the three bows rested on the strings waiting for a look, like rowers waiting for the pistol-shot that is to start them. Soon the great labyrinth widened from maze to maze, and the professor plunged into wild regions of difficulties with a jovial enthusiasm and delight that only the true musician could appreciate; and with him, on the wild hunt after harmony, followed Rosanini, Bagshaw, and the Zamiel-like double-bass. But there was no overpowering the professor. Whatever the first violin did in elaborate weaving of sounds, whatever the violoncello did to further explain the subject, or whatever the double-bass did to reconcile the two or to stop the dispute by alternately denouncing both in thunderous grumbles, still the professor rippled on his way with billows of crescendoes, with playful diminuendoes; now forte and majestic; now piano and plaintive; he knew each mode of the lyre, and was master of all; now he was scattering pearls from the clear high notes; now emphasising on the bass — a thorough master of the instrument, he seemed forcing it to follow his every feeling, subduing it by irresistible spells to do his bidding, and though never overpowering the other instruments, he made them, as it were, subordinate vassals to the instrument over which he presided.

"A superb composition," said the professor, as he threw himself back, and wiped his forehead after the last note of the Presto, "and worthy of the great genius that produced it. What science, what grasp! He was a giant; but I want you to hear the trio they are going to do now from Glück. Try one of these cigars."

"Nothing I should like better," I said, "but I want you, professor, to show me some of your curious old books on music that you promised. I know you are choice in those things."

"Here's a treasure," said the professor, opening his cabinet, and taking out a thin folio, the leaves of which were brown with age. "This is a very perfect copy of the Parthenia, or the first Musick that ever was printed for the Virginals. Composed by three famous masters: William Byrd,

Doctor John Bull, and Orlando Gibbons, gentlemen of his Majesty's Chappell. Printed for John Clarke, at the lower end of Cheepside entering into Mercer's Chappell, 1655. Cum Privilegio."

The professor read out this title with unction, as if the very names of William Byrd, John Bull, and Orlando Gibbons acted on him like a cordial. On the title-page was a finely-engraved sketch of the lady of the period, with Henrietta-Maria side-curls, playing on the virginals, with a quiet dignity which no common artist could convey. The music of the old book was engraved to represent manuscript, and to me was utterly unintelligible.

The professor, however, waxed eloquent over it.

"The very titles of these old tunes," he said, "arouse my imagination. See here, The Earle of Salisbury's Pavan. The Queen's Command—cloaks and swords. Can you not see the queen in her ruff, giving her hand to Essex to lead her forth for a dance? Mrs. Marye Brownlo's Galliard. By-the-bye, would you like to hear a favourite tune of Queen Elizabeth's, Le Sifflet du Charettier, or the Carman's Whistle? I have it here among some works of Doctor John Bull."

"I should, indeed; a simple and fantastic air, I warrant that it is. Aye, marry, and a right quaint one, I wager an angel."

The professor was not going to be out-Elizabethed.

"By my sories, yes; for Doctor John Bull has written variations to it in 'notes with many a winding touch of linked sweetness long drawn out,' as Master John Milton, who could descant right well and wisely on our art, has put it. Have you ever," said the professor, turning suddenly on me with a proffered bottle of hock, "searched these old music-books for poetry? They often contain lovely lines, which lie between their leaves like dried flowers. Listen to this which I found last week in this old book of

Select Ayres and Dialogues, for one, two, and three Voyces; to the Thorbo-Lute or Basse-Viol.

Composed by	John Wilson	} Doctors in Musick.
	Charles Colman	
Composed by	Henry Lawes	} Gentlemen and ser- vants to his late Majesty in his pub- lick and private musick.
	William Lawes	
	Nicholas Lancens	
	William Webb	

And other excellent Masters of Musick.

London: Printed by W. Godbid for John Playford, and are to be sold at his shop in the Inner Temple, near the church dore; 1659.

It is entitled Amintor for his Chloris

Absence. Listen to it and mark how beautiful it is:

Tell me you wandering spirits of the air,
Did you not see a nymph more bright more fair
Than Beauties darling, or of parts more sweet
Than stol'n content? If such a one you meet,
Wait on her hourly whereas'er she flies,
And cry, and cry, Amintor, for her absence dies.

Go search the vallies, pluck up every rose,
You'll find a scent, a blush of her in those;
Fish, fish for pearly, or corall, there you'll see
How Orientall all her colours be.
Go call the Echoes to your aide, and cry,
Chloris, Chloris, for that's her name for whom I dy.

There has been a good deal of nonsense written about God Save the King," said the professor, holding up his hock-glass to the light, as if he expected to find the composer's name written there, and closing the folding doors that opened on the next room, for the trio was just then raging at its utmost intensity. "Now, I'll just play you some bits of John Bull, only to show you how frequently he falls into the same manner."

As he said this the professor, with his usual vivacity, skipped to the piano (for there was one in every room in his house), and played me various fragments by the old doctor, in many of which even my poor ear could detect the stately manner of the well-known composition.

"Some say it was taken from some old German sacred music."

"Oh, they say anything. For my own part, I have long ago decided in my mind that Doctor John Bull wrote it or nobody. It has the James the First manner all over. The doctor, you know, grew disgusted with England, and eventually settled in Holland."

"I wish you could show me, professor," I said, "as I hear you are learned in musical antiquities, how the modern piano grew out of the old virginals?"

"That is a long affair," replied the professor, looking, with a smile, at his diamond ring, as if in good-natured pity of my ignorance. "The modern piano really sprang from the old psalter, that square box of wires that you see sometimes in old pictures, with angels striking the notes with a slender sort of drum-stick. The psalter was carried in processions, the performer having a band round his neck to support it. Then it became a standing box, and slowly grew into the virginals. Next came the spinet, the harpsichord, and finally the piano."

"The early instruments must have been poor jangling affairs?"

"Of course you mustn't compare them with a grand of the present day. Don't

look at my Erard in the other room, with its great length of wires, and its capacity of sound, and its perfect finish. But there must have been a sweetness and purity about the virginals for simple music that I can quite appreciate. You have heard my harpsichord?"

"Yes; and must own that it has a very faint and wiry sound—shadowy. I could fancy I heard the ghost of Mozart playing by twilight on the ghost of a piano."

"Don't you run down the harpsichord," said the professor, wagging his forefinger at me deprecatingly. "It is a singular fact, the further you go back from the harpsichord the stronger the sound seems. I can assure you that when celebrated musicians come here I can hardly get them away from it, they like it so much. It just suits the old music of Scarlatti and Porpora. You must not look for the piano qualities in it, any more than you should look for flute notes in a hautboy. In itself it is charming."

"What gives that thin twangle to the sound?"

"A pig's bristle that catches every wire—the muffler—but there, unless you understood piano manufacture like a musician I could hardly explain the matter. There is hardly a man living now who can tune a harpsichord."

"Here's a curious old book," said I, drawing a little square volume from the shelves, and reading the title, the professor following the words over my shoulder with great uncton. "The English Dancing-Master; or, plaine and easie Rules for the dancing of Country Dances, with the Tune to each Dance. London: Printed by Thomas Harper, and are to be sold by John Playford, at his shop in the Inner Temple, neere the church doore. 1651."

"Ah, that is a book," said the professor; "another of honest John Playford's. Look at this plate; it is beautifully engraved."

The engraving over which the professor gloated was certainly worthy of Hollar. It represented a cavalier of the Commonwealth time offering his hand to a lady for the dance. The cavalier wore broad-brimmed hat and lace collar, and was in boots. The lady had the Henrietta-Maria side-curls, and the Vandyke dress we know so well.

"The names of the dances are so delightful," quoth the professor. "Rose is White and Rose is Red, Round for as Many as Will, Once I loved a Maiden Fair but She did Deceive Me, Prince Rupert's

March, All in a Garden Green. Only listen to the quaint directions.

All in a Garden Green. Longways for six. Lead up all a D. forwards and back, set and turne S.—That again. First man shake his owne wo. by the hand, then the 2, then the 3 by one hand, then by the other; kisse her twice and turne her. Shake her by the hand, then the 2, then your owne by one hand, then by the other; kisse her twice and turne her.

Sides all, set and turne S. This as before, the wo. doing it.

Armes all, set and turne S. That again. This as before, the man doing it."

"I can't quite follow it," said I, "but there seems a good deal of kissing about it."

"Oh, so there was in the cushion dance that Selden mentions in his Table Talk, when he says that in James's reign, as manners grew more dissolute, the court dances grew more romping and vulgar, and the old decorous pavan grew out of fashion. The pavan, you know, was a stately affair, and the people who danced it wore robes with long trains like peacock's tails, hence the name." (Here the professor enthroned himself at the piano). "Listen, this is a saraband, this a brawl, and this is the coranto that Sir Andrew Ague Cheek was to dance to church with; here is a galliard dance. Music is the basis of everything. Handel himself, you know, has used jigs in his oratorios."

Here the professor played me first the dance fast, and then Handel's adaptation of it to a slower tune, that subdued it into religion.

"As to the old dances, if you like that sort of thing," he said, getting up and rushing at the book-shelves, "I can show you enough to keep you here all night. Look here; here's an old book, The Hearty Fellow, dated 1780, printed by D. Merryman (appropriate name), Paternoster-row. Here's a lot of country dances for the year of Lord George Gordon's riots. The Devil's Dead; the Bishop of Osnaburgh's Hornpipe; The Basket of Oysters; Bring the Negus; Down with the Pebble; Follow Me, Lads; Medicot's Rant; The Priest in Boots; Trim Her Velvet; Only think of Her; Lady Carrick's Minuet; La Georgette, &c. These books are a mine, I tell you."

Just then there was a cry through the folded doors of "Professor, professor."

The musical enthusiast jumped up as if he had received an electric shock. "You look over this wonderful book while I go to those fellows. They want me I know to join in that fine quartette from Mozart's

first opera. I shan't be long; there's the hock; don't spare it; you'll find plenty of books to amuse you." And off he ran, and was received with a shout of laughing welcome as the door closed behind him.

I took up a great quarto, bound in gilt vellum, and stamped with the arms of one of the Borgheses. It was Description des Instruments Harmoniques en tout genre. Par le Père Bonanni. Seconde édition. Revue, Corrigée, et Augmentée, par L'Abbé Hiacinthe Ceruti, avec cxi planches gravées par Arnauld Wanwesterout. Rome. MDCLXXVI aux Dépens de Venance Monaldini, Libraire Rue de Cours.

It was a book, written, as I found, by Père Bonanni, a learned Jesuit, who assisted Kircher in arranging his collections of antiquities, and it contained engravings of every known and unknown musical instrument that had ever vibrated since Tubal Cain first produced harmony. There were Roman military trumpets, so large that they had to be suspended by cranes; there were sea trumpets as large at the mouth as bushel baskets; there were African instruments that looked like bird clacks. The Sandwich Island nose flute I did not see, but there was that strange business, the monochord, or one-stringed fiddle, and the crotalus, that the Roman peasant fastened to his feet, and danced in. There was even the horrible hurdy-gurdy, which was called Flemish instead of Savoyard; there were bells of all shapes, even square, but I think no gong. The German or transverse flute, with no keys, was mentioned somewhat slightly, for it had not yet found its way into orchestras; but there were lutes five feet long, theorbos and clavichords. The trombone had not yet been revived from a Pompeian drawing, and the ophicleide was not there, because it had not yet been invented. I was just intent on some remarkable instrument extracted, I suspect, from the learned Father Bonanni's inner consciousness, when, after a jingle of glasses, the folding doors were thrown violently open, and the professor shouted:

"Come in for the quintette, Where True Harmony Shall Prevail. Supper is ready. Bagshaw, try the lobster salad? This is Liberty Hall. Let every one help himself. And after supper we'll have some catches from Catch Who Catch Can, and that superb madrigal we liked so much last time—'Tis Musical as is Apollo's Lute,

Strung with his Golden Hair. Pass the Burgundy, or shall we begin with Chablis? —I put it to the vote."

WATER-CLOCKS AND HOUR-GLASSES.

TIME-measurers or time-meters have undergone such marvellous improvements in recent ages, that we can scarcely realise the state of matters with which our feudal forefathers were fain to be content. The sundial is perhaps the most astronomically perfect of all; but, as we had occasion to explain in our article on the subject,* the usefulness of the sundial is affected by three drawbacks besides the obvious one of clouds often hiding the sunshine. In the first place the dial tells us nothing concerning the hours of the night; we may as well be without such an instrument at all. In the second place the sun is above the horizon during so much shorter a space of time in winter than in summer that the dial's usefulness in mid-winter is necessarily limited to seven or eight hours a day. In the third place sundial time never corresponds exactly with good clock time, except on a few days in the year. On all other days the dial is before or behind the clock, and we are put to the trouble of consulting an almanack, in the pages appropriated to the equation of time, before we can know how much to increase or decrease sundial time in order to assimilate it to clock-time. Therefore, although the sundial rests on an imperishable astronomical basis, its value is cramped and bound by many limitations. Some ingenious but eccentric men have tried a Moondial, to indicate the hours of the night by the shadow of an object on which moonbeams fall; and it is certain that a competent knowledge of lunar motion would suggest two or three modes of constructing such a dial. But it is equally certain that the affair would be very troublesome to adjust and use, and not worth the amount of thought bestowed upon it.

To count the time taken by any liquid in falling through a narrow orifice is to measure time itself, so long as the liquid flows equably. Hence the invention of what the ancients used to call the clepsydra, or water-clock. If you have a small hole in the bottom of a tin pot, or other vessel, water will not flow with uniform speed out of the

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. x. p. 418.

hole; when nearly full of water the flow will be swifter than when only half full, because of the greater pressure or head of water. The Egyptian, Ctesibius, bore this truth in mind when he constructed his clepsydra two thousand years ago. He made a cylindrical vessel or tube, with an orifice at the lower end; he ascertained how much water would flow out in exactly an hour, and made a mark to denote this; he then tried a quantity sufficient for two hours, and this furnished him with another mark; and so he went on, adding and adding in quantity, until he had enough for a whole day. His tube was by this means graduated like our modern thermometers, but with this difference—that thermometer graduations are equidistant, whereas those of the clepsydra were closer together in the lower than in the upper part of the tube, owing to the varying pressure of the head of water. This Egyptian is credited with the construction of a clepsydra presenting many ingenious features. Water flowed down a pipe into a barrel, and filled it in exactly one day; the water was pressed by a piston through a syphon into a kind of water-meter, which slowly rotated as the water flowed away; the descent of the piston lowered a little figure of a man holding out a staff horizontally; a cylinder, having graduated lines on its surface, was made to rotate very slowly by a train of wheels connected with the meter; and the staff of the figure pointed, not only to the hour of the day, but to the day of the year. If Ctesibius really did this, he must have been a singularly clever fellow.

Whether to believe all that the ancients tell us on this matter we do not know; but if so, then there were clepsydræ which marked the age of the moon, and the position of the sun in the ecliptic, and sounded a trumpet, and imitated thunder and lightning, and threw stones and other missiles. It was by means of a clepsydra that Julius Cæsar found that the summer nights in Britain are not the same in length as those in Italy—a fact now known to be due to difference of latitude. The clepsydra appears to have been in use throughout the Middle Ages, in some or other of the countries of Europe; and it lingered in use in France and Italy down to the sixteenth century. Some of them were plain tin tubes; some were hollow cups which, floating in water, became filled through a small orifice in a definite space of time, and then sank. When the clepsydra was introduced into Greece from Egypt, and then into Rome (the Hindoos knew about it five

centuries before Ctesibius), one was considered sufficient for each town, and was placed in the market square, or some open spot; it was guarded by a civic functionary, who filled it with water at stated intervals. The nobles and wealthy citizens sent their servants to ascertain the hour of the day by an inspection of the clepsydra; while the humbler inhabitants received the information by the sound of a horn, blown by the clepsydra attendant to denote the hour for changing the guard. Cicero relates that the length of the speeches made by senators and advocates was regulated by clepsydræ kept in the senate and the courts of justice. Rival speakers were very watchful of each other in this matter, lest either one should get a little more water-time than the other. In order that no fraud or deceit might be practised, an officer was appointed to distribute the water equally to both parties; and if a speaker were at all interrupted he would stop the flowing of the water during the interruption, in order that every bit of his allotted time might be utilised. If a speaker did not quite exhaust his quota, a singular privilege was allowed; he might give the water that remained in his clepsydra to another speaker, who was thus enabled to obtain a longer water-time for his speech than would otherwise have been at his command.

After all, clepsydræ are subject to many defects. They must be supplied at regular intervals; the water must always be of the same temperature, in order that it may always flow with the same facility; attention must be paid to the fact that the orifice will become larger by use; and some of the water is wasted by evaporation. Hence the search for some other agent instead of water, and the discovery that dry sand is well suited for the purpose.

Sand, when very fine and dry, flows through an orifice with regular speed, whether the quantity be great or small. In this property it is unlike water, which, as we have seen, descends more swiftly the greater the weight of it there is above the orifice. Supposing such sand filled a tall glass cylinder with a small orifice at the bottom; supposing there were underneath this another cylinder, graduated at equal intervals of an inch or half an inch; then the sand would accumulate in this graduated cylinder, after entering it through the orifice, by equal quantities in equal times; and the latter cylinder would become a true measurer or meter of hour or half-hour portions of

time. Nay, more than this. Not only is the flow of sand uniform whatever be the quantity which is above the orifice; but it cannot be made more rapid by any amount of pressure. We may use a piston, plug, or plunger, and press it down forcibly on the sand in the tube; and yet the sand will flow out as before, neither more nor less quickly. The pressure is not obliterated; it does some work; but that work is exerted against the sides of the tube—a fact soon made manifest by the rupture of the tube unless it be made of strong material. This singular property of sand becomes of high value in mining and quarrying. When a hole is bored in a hard rock, partly filled with gunpowder, and exploded by means of a fuse or an electric wire, the products of combustion are blown out of the hole, and scarcely any useful effect is produced in blasting the rock. When a plug of wood is driven in after the powder, this also is blown out, and the blast is nearly as ineffective as before. But when the charge is plugged with sand, this refuses to be driven out; the force of the explosion expends itself laterally, and the rock is riven into fragments.

A time-glass might be made of a vertical cylindrical tube, so far as the principle of action is concerned; but the well-known form has many conveniences. Two conical vessels, or two pear-shaped vessels, joined together at their pointed ends, and an orifice piercing the place of junction—this sufficiently denotes the usual form. In making the hour, or minute, or three-minute glasses sold in the shops, the sand is placed in one bulb before the other is joined to it. Common sand is used for cheap glasses; but the best is white silver sand, thoroughly dried and sifted. The two bulbs are fixed together by the heat of a blowpipe, with due attention to the maintenance of the bore or orifice. The French have an ingenious mode of making and filling sand-glasses by blowing four bulbs on one tube of glass; two to form the time-measuring part of the apparatus, one to be opened and made to serve as a hopper, through which the sand is poured in, and the other to be opened and made to serve as a stand. Egg-shell, baked and finely pounded, is found to be a good substitute for sand.

No one knows at what period these time-measurers were introduced. In a basso-relievo at the Mattei Palace, representing the marriage of Thetis and Peleus, Morpheus appears holding an hour-glass in

such implements were known in the mythological days of Greece. The Athenians, we are told, carried hour-glasses about with them, somewhat as we do our pocket watches. But the most interesting feature connected with the subject is the use of the hour-glass to regulate the length of sermons. This was especially the case after the Reformation, when long sermons came into fashion. The mediæval and pre-Reformation divines contented themselves with a homily varying from ten to thirty minutes in length; but the Huguenots, Waldenses, Puritans, Covenanters, Independents, and other protesting bodies, conceiving it their duty to assert and maintain theses relating to doctrine and discipline, made their sermons argumentative, and sometimes spun out the argument to an inordinate length. The hour-glass literally corresponded with its name, for it ran for one hour before the sand had all passed through; and the preacher claimed his full sixty minutes. Sometimes he was provided with an half-hour-glass, which he used when a shorter sermon was to be preached. It was about the middle of the seventeenth century, when Puritan sermons occasionally reached the enormous length of two hours, that the hour-glass limit was applied. Many pulpits were furnished with iron stands for the reception of the hour-glass. One such is still existing at Compton Bassett Church, Wilts, with a fleur-de-lis handle for turning the glass when the sand had run out. Another, at Hurst, in Berkshire, has a fanciful wrought-iron frame, with foliages of oak and ivy, and an inscription, "As this glass runneth, so man's life passeth." At Cliffe, in Kent, is a stand for an hour-glass, on a bracket affixed to the pulpit. The parish accounts of St. Katherine, Aldgate, contain an old entry, "Paid for an hour-glass that hangeth by the pulpit where the preacher doth make a sermon, that he may know how the hour passeth away, one shilling;" and another relates to a bequest of "an hower glass with a frame to stand in."

Many old stories relating to pulpit hour-glasses have a dash of humour about them which would seem a little out of place in our own days. One preacher had exhausted his sand-glass, turned it, and gone through three-fourths of another running; the congregation had nearly all retired; and the clerk, tired out, audibly asked his reverend superior to lock up the church, and put the key under the door, when the sermon was done; as he (the clerk) and

away. Hugh Peters, satirised in Hudibras, after preaching an hour, turned his hour-glass, and said, "I know you are good fellows; so let's have another glass." Daniel Burgess, an eloquent Nonconformist divine in the early part of the last century, let his hour-glass run out while preaching vehemently against the sin of drunkenness; he reversed it, and exclaimed, "Brethren, I have somewhat more to say on the nature and consequences of drunkenness, so let's have the other glass, and then"—which was a regular toper's phrase. A rector of Bibury used to preach two hours with two turns of the glass; after the giving out of the text, the squire of the parish withdrew, smoked his pipe, and returned to the blessing.

Pretty and graceful lines have often been suggested by these time-measurers. In the excellent song,

Five times by the taper's light,
The hour-glass we have turn'd to-night,

we are left to guess as we like at the actual hour in the evening to which the watchers had arrived; probably five hours after sunset or dusk. One poet finds a moral exemplar in the hour-glass:

Steady as truth, on either end
Its hourly task performing well.

Sidney spoke of "Next morning—known to be morning better by the hour-glass than by the day's clearness." Under an hour-glass in a grotto near the water, these lines were written:

This babbling stream not unstructive flows,
Nor idly loiters to its destined main;
Each flower it feeds, that on its margin grows,
Now bids thee blush, whose days are spent in vain
Nor void of moral, tho' unheeded glide,
Time's current stealing on with silent haste;
For lo! each falling sand his folly chides,
Who lets one precious moment run to waste.

Bloomfield's lines, *The Widow to Her Hour-Glass*, typify the trickling of the sand very cleverly:

I've often watched thy streamy sand,
And seen the growing mountain rise,
And often found life's hopes to stand
On props as weak in wisdom's eyes;
It's conic crown,
Still sliding down,
Again heap'd up, then down again,
The sand above more hollow grew,
Like days and years still filtering through,
And mingling joy and pain.

After what we have said touching the hour-glass, little need be added concerning other varieties, in which the sand runs through in a much shorter space of time. The egg-glass, egg-boiler, or egg-timer has its orifice and its quota of sand regulated to a flow in about three minutes; and any other number of minutes might be selected

if the idiosyncrasies of eggs and egg-eaters rendered it necessary. Some egg-boilers have been ingeniously contrived to dispense alike with hour-glasses, clocks, and watches; when the three minutes have expired, a spirit lamp goes out by exhaustion of its fuel, and the boiling ceases. Nay, one bit of practical philosophy boils or decocts its own coffee, puts out its own spirit lamp at the proper time, and drives out the fragrant beverage through a syphon spout into a coffee-cup. The half-minute glass, used on shipboard, assists in determining the velocity with which the ship is moving. The log-line is divided by knots, at intervals equal to a hundred and twentieth part of a nautical mile; and there are a hundred and twenty half minutes in an hour. When the line is thrown overboard, the mariner counts how many of the knots pass through his hand while the sand of the half-minute glass is running; and in this way so many knots an hour denote the ship's speed in miles.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c

CHAPTER XXXVIII. MR. MOLE.

"MAULEVERER!"

"No. Mole, please. Mauleverer no longer. It was my professional name, and I have relinquished my profession. I have resumed my own old real name, that my father, or, at any rate, my mother, bore before me—Mole, plain Mole. It was not suited to the stage, not for the higher walks; and I aimed high. For lovers and heroes Mole was an inappropriate appellation, was fatal to illusion, conveyed even a suspicion of the ridiculous. For comic dancing and singing it might perhaps have sufficed. A low comedian, I would have remained Mole contentedly enough. The name in that case might even have assisted me. I can fancy a Tommy Mole, a great popular favourite, received everywhere with a roar of applause, cordial if vulgar, and drawing largely on the treasury every Saturday. But then the loss of dignity! And my ambition was to shine in high tragedy, or the most refined comedy. No; in the profession I could only be Fane Mauleverer."

"But you were called at the sheep fair—you remember?—Signor Leverini—wasn't that the name?"

"Hush! Not a word of that! Forget it, as an ignominious episode in a too adventurous career; or think of it as a frolic,

an escapade, to which, in a mad hour, I descended, for a generous motive, to oblige the management—I think I stated as much to you at the time. I was as Haroun Alraschid in disguise, or our own Prince Hal playing a drawer. But I clowned it well; I'll say that. I stooped, but I conquered. I beat the buffoons on their own ground. I amazed the public. Still it was an error; such a victory was not worth my securing. And the list of killed, wounded, and missing! My dignity, my self-respect, my reputation, my professional rank! It was cruel work. No, the thing must not be remembered. That sheep fair! And then afterwards, the races—at Lockport, wasn't it? I forget the names of places. But you remember meeting me there? I was in a sorry plight then, and, truth to tell, matters became worse with me afterwards. Those 'boothers' were pretty nearly the death of me. We got pitching among the fens somewhere, playing to wretched houses, asthmatic and aguish. I caught the marsh fever, or some horror of that sort. Don't mention it again; this is only for your private ear. I was for months in a county infirmary! They were kind to me, I own it with gratitude, and brought me round again. But my hair! You remember it? Noble, wasn't it? and I may say versatile. I could do anything with it. It was the envy of the profession. Mauleverer's hair was a thing to swear by. But now—that marsh fever!—all gone but a few wisps. There was enough to stuff a bolster at one time, to fill the lockets of the entire female population. And I won't say that some of it hasn't gone in that direction as it is. But now, you observe, the dream is over. I couldn't spare the thinnest lock; no, nor draw beauty by a single hair. The rounds of applause I used to obtain when the spectators first caught sight of me, the hair-dresser having done me justice! All was won, I felt, by a head—of hair. But 'tis past. If I had remained on the stage wigs would have been my doom for evermore. And I had so despised wigs! My strength was in my hair, my own hair, not another's."

He bowed his head humbly that I might note how bald he was. But I had perceived this bereavement of his on the occasion of his visit to Mr. Monck's office.

"And my voice!" he resumed; "glorious, wasn't it? One is privileged to boast of what one once possessed. It is not vain-glory in such case; it is tender reverence

What power! Amazing! I had a light tenor for comedy that perfectly bewitched the boxes. In severe tragedy certain bass notes that I possessed stirred the hearts of the pit to their lowest depths. I could rant, too, upon occasion, as the galleries well knew. And rant is indispensable in special parts. Richard without his rant would be a cipher. But for his rant he could scarcely have risen to the throne; certainly he could never have been a leading part. The Bard knew what he was about. He was aware that the public liked rant, and he had a friendly regard for it himself. At least, he supplied abundant opportunities for it. Dramatic critics, who are always wrong by-the-bye, condemn rant. I count it almost the breath of life of high tragedy. Kindly declaim Othello's speech, 'Whip me, ye devils! Roast me in sulphur!'—I'm not quite sure of the words, it's so long since I've gone on in the part, though my Othello was a good deal talked about at one time in the West of England—spout those lines, I say, with effect, and without ranting, and I'll give you—that is, I'll owe you—something. And take you this bit of advice: if you ever stroll—you won't probably, but you may, there's no knowing to what a man may be driven—always rant in serious towns. The audience like it. It reminds them of their favourite preachers; and they almost look about them, to put money in the plate, as they come out of the theatre. But I talk only of myself. That's an actor's way, perhaps. I haven't that excuse, however. I'm an actor no longer. I've resumed my real name, returned to my original calling. I'm a painter now; an assistant of Sir George's, your relation, as it seems, much to my bewilderment. I knew that we should meet again, but I scarcely thought of our meeting here, after this fashion. Now tell me, my dear young friend, how you are, and what you've been doing all this long time?"

But it was in vain that I essayed to speak. Anything I ventured to say seemed to be but a cue to Mole—I must no longer describe him as Mauleverer—to commence a prolonged discourse, or to renew his interrogations. He referred to the past continually. The mention of the Down Farm awoke in him a lengthy train of recollections. Thoughts of its bountiful fare still remained with him, the flavour of its amber ale yet seemed to linger on his palate. He inquired with much interest as to my uncle, a "trying audience," as he

mother" he still preferred to say. He had not forgotten Kem, nor Reube, nor old Truckle, nor other of the farm servants. The pig he had most admired he still freshly remembered, and was interested in learning of the animal's conversion into pork, and the impression of him in that form left upon his consumers. He referred again to Dripford Fair, to Lockport races, and the booths there, in which he had been discovered. And so, insensibly, we approached the subject of Rosetta. Yet on the brink of mention of her he seemed to hold back.

"You had a side-ache, I remember," he said, "and you began to think you possessed a heart; a fancy took you, and you thought it love. Well, that's a young man's way. We know how to call things by their right names as we grow older. We no longer mistake a small liking for a great passion. Great passions! Are there such things off the boards? The stage needs them, but the world can manage without them, I trow. Well, well. Wild oats yield good corn at last. The farm thrives, I think you said?"

"Do you know anything of Rosetta, Mauleverer?"

"Mole, I entreat you. Of Rosetta, the tight-rope dancer? No; I know nothing of her."

"She married Lord Overbury."

"I heard so. I heard that she said so. But does it matter? To you, of all people. The world has many Rosettas. I think I told you so before once."

"She was very beautiful."

"Possibly. I've seen a better-shaped nose. You remember my drive over the down after her with that fellow Diavolo? The fool I was to go upon such a journey."

"You admired her, then."

"I did, comparatively. I am naturally frank, and I have never concealed the fact that I have been an ass in my time. That time may be over. I wish I could be quite sure of it. But I'm not. Let us talk of something else. Why should a rope-dancer occupy us thus? Come, own that she is nothing to you now."

"Very little."

"Say nothing. Never be absurd for the sake of being consistent."

"I should be glad to hear of her happiness."

"One would be glad, of course, to hear of everybody's happiness, including one's own. But enough of that subject. Now, tell me. Why are you here? What are you doing in London?"

I told him that I had entered the legal profession.

"A lawyer, you! Why, it's like a fellow of guardsman's stature enlisting in the marines. You're a fallen angel. Pardon me, my dear boy. For your sake I'll henceforth try to think there's something in the law, something honest I mean; and that in certain aspects it may look less odious than I have hitherto accounted it. At any rate, there must be a leaven of good in the profession now that you've entered it. On the stage we always make the lawyer a scoundrel, and the audience approve. But perhaps we do now and then hold the mirror up a trifle askew; or the mirror, from long service, has become worn and blemished, cracked right across, it may even be. Tell me now of yourself."

I told him of my position in Mr. Monck's office, reminding him of his visit there. He was much surprised. He would scarcely credit my statement.

"You there! and I not see you! Astounding," he said. "But you recognised me?"

He was pleased when I informed him that something in the tone of his voice had reminded me of my old friend.

"A note or two is still left me," he observed, regretfully, and yet smiling. "But still you hesitated. I see: my 'make up' was so different. My hair! No wonder you did not know me."

I explained that I had followed him from the office, but had failed to overtake him.

"My boy! It was like yourself," he exclaimed. And then he coughed, and, with an embarrassed air, continued: "It was unfortunate, however. I had not gone far. You would have found me if you had but thought—of looking into the public-house at the corner. I stepped in, but for a moment, to ask my way, I think, or it may have been to see what o'clock it was—some trifling errand of that kind."

I laughed.

"Well, well. Why should I dissemble? Mine is a candid nature. I needed something to take the taste of the lawyer's office out of my mouth. But to think of your bringing an action against Sir George!" He lowered his voice as he uttered that distinguished name.

I then informed him that it was I who had served Sir George with the writ. This interested him greatly. He was amused, and yet much shocked withal. "The presumption! the audacity of the thing!" he murmured. "To approach him, him of all people, with a writ! And the earth did not

open? Your own relation too! It was the refinement of cruelty. And the other man, your friend, the managing clerk—Vickery, I think you called him?—he stood aloof, watching, like an old cat in the shade, eh? Yes; I recognise the old practitioner there, the veteran soldier; and you, the raw recruit, were sent into action. And you didn't know Sir George! It was really dramatic. How looked he? Frowningly? A countenance more in sorrow than in anger? I would I had been there!"

"It would have much amazed you," I said, continuing his Shakespearian quotations.

"Very like, very like." And he struck an attitude.

"But you, Mauleverer—Mole, I mean—how came you here? Where did you make Sir George's acquaintance?"

"Hush!" he said, mysteriously. "I'll tell you. But not here. I can't talk of him, here in this room. I dare not. I have made too free with his name already. We both have. For—Sir George is a great man—and"—this was in a whisper—"a strange one too. Come away, up-stairs."

He led the way to an upper room.

CHAPTER XXXIX. A STUDIO'S SECRETS.

It was a vast chamber divided by wooden screens or partitions, that did not reach to the ceiling, however. The enclosures thus formed had something the look of stalls in a stable. They were furnished as separate studios with easels, chairs, draperies, and other conventional "properties" of portrait painting.

"This is our workshop," said Mole; "here Sir George's assistants—of whom I am one—paint his backgrounds, add accessories, furniture, skies, &c., advance his pictures for him in every way, rub in, dead-colour, glaze, varnish, do all he requires, in fact."

"His pupils?"

"No, his assistants."

"He doesn't paint his own pictures, then?"

"My dear boy, of what are you thinking? He sketches, arranges, touches—he leaves the rest to us. He couldn't possibly do all himself. He is the general in command; we fight under him. He wins the battle; you don't suppose we're mentioned in the despatches? We're paid for what we do; very fairly paid. If we don't like the service we can easily quit it. Perhaps I earn my money thoroughly, and think sometimes I have given value to the pictures they wouldn't otherwise have pos-

essed; perhaps it is rather hard now and then to find another carry off the praise for a choice little bit of work of one's own. But I don't grumble. I am content. The thing must be. And I console myself with the reflection that he often puts his name to work I wouldn't own. If I may talk freely—" he hesitated.

"Most freely, so far as I'm concerned."

"It sounds like treason perhaps; but it's only honest criticism. You won't mind a trifle of truth-speaking about your distinguished relative?"

"Why should I?"

"Just so. Why should you? You never saw him before to-day. You owe him nothing: and he's a public man; he must expect criticism. Only I should prefer his not hearing what I'm about to observe." He went to the door and closed it carefully after pausing for a moment to listen. "He can't hear; he's down-stairs, at the back, in his bedroom. There may be thought something objectionable, you see, in one occupying my position, speaking too frankly. But, as I said, he's a public man, highly esteemed, popular and prosperous. It's the privilege of the unknown to criticise the known; and I'll say for them they usually avail themselves of the privilege. There may be something of envy about it. People are not, perfect, you know. And their fondness for plain speaking may sometimes mean only a secret liking for detraction. If we can't rise to a great man's level, it seems as well to try and pull him down a little nearer ours. Well, the fact is, Sir George *can't draw*. He was never thoroughly grounded. His figures are uncommonly shaky. Only look at the knees of some of them, and the ankles. They stand on tiptoe because he can't plant them firmly on their feet. He wants assistance from competent draughtsmen as much as any painter I ever knew. I may add that, in my modest way, I've helped him a good deal in that matter."

"But——"

"You mean what *can* he do? My dear friend he understands colour—meretricious if you like, but certainly brilliant—and he knows how to please. That's the secret of his success. Sitters don't come to him because they want truth, real art, absolute resemblance. They don't desire the tell-tale, painfully faithful, looking-glass style of portraiture. They come here to be beautified, rouged, pearl-powdered, and curled into darlings. He smooths wrinkled foreheads; restores youth; refines coarse shapeless lips into carmine Cupid's bows; lends

aristocracy to the most plebeian nose—and his eyes! My eyes! if I may be allowed the vulgar exclamation, how they glitter! No matter if they should be really lost in half-tint or shadow. Nature is made to move aside. Sir George understands his patrons. They wish for gleaming eyes? His adroit speck of flake white is always at their service; they have them, with exquisite complexions, elegant figures, pared away or padded out as the particular case may require, arching brows, an amiable smirk, and all the rest of it. No wonder he succeeds. He doesn't paint nature, he doesn't pretend to, but only fashion, and fashion pays very handsomely, through the nose, or it wouldn't be fashion. His gentlemen are superb dandies, inane, perhaps, but invariably exquisite. His women, languid and delightful, but more fascinating than respectable. Simply, he paints to please, and thrives accordingly. Sir George complies with the whims and wishes of his patrons. He is too polite and well-bred to hesitate. Perhaps has too keen a sense of his own interest. You will understand therefore why our portraits—I am well-advised in saying ours—are remarkable for lustre of eye, smallness of waist, length of neck, white hands, rounded arms, puffy chests, and taper ankles. These Fashion insists upon, not Art, but Fashion is the presiding divinity of portrait painting."

"Still he has painted history."

"He has tried to—he thinks he can. In his more sublime moments he looks forward, so he says, to discarding portraiture and taking up with high art. It will never be. It's impossible. He can't do it. I can show you his Abraham offering up Isaac. I will only say that Isaac is certainly not the only sacrifice in that work. And a Deluge, in which the painter was one of the first to go under, although he'd clung fast to the hands of Poussin among others. But I've talked enough treason for awhile. And, after all, Sir George is—Sir George—serjeant-painter to the king, the most popular portrait painter of the time, and—my employer. Indeed, I've said more than I ought, perhaps, seeing that he's been really kind to me, that he's given me bread with butter on it, when I had little enough to put into my mouth of any kind in the way of food; and considering, too, that he's your relation, uncle or cousin, as it may be, and that it's your interest, possibly, to think well of him, conciliate him, and make a friend of him."

"He has many assistants?"

"Some half-dozen, but all are not constantly employed. A German skilled in architectural drawings—we specially need him in painting provincial mayors, who dearly love a castellated background, a Norman arch to issue from, a mediæval city in the distance. In that way their office acquires something of the sanctity of antiquity. Then we've an Italian chiefly employed in adding flowers and foliage to the portraits of ladies of fashion. We find dowagers very fond of being depicted standing in bowers plucking blush rose-buds. The flowers don't quite match the fierce bloom of their cheeks—the sunset glow of constant rouge; but they like a pastoral innocent surrounding; it's so suggestive of youth and ingenuousness. We usually supply militia colonels or deputy lieutenants of counties—who, of course, are always painted in uniform—with distant battle-fields. For statesmen or cabinet ministers we generally select curtains as conveying a sense of mystery. Ordinary members of parliament, especially when aldermen, prefer to be portrayed sitting in a library full of books they've never read. Silent members are invariably painted in the act of addressing the House. We have plenty to do, I can assure you. I count a background as the best part of a portrait. My old experience as a scene-painter has stood me in good stead. Even Sir George has condescended to admire my masterly breadth of style. It's a little slapdash, I own, but he dislikes 'niggling.' You see that means expensiveness of time and labour, and as the public doesn't require it, why give it?"

"It's quite a manufactory," I observed, glancing round the room.

"I called it our workshop, you remember. And, in the season, we're busy enough."

It occurred to me that Tony might find occupation in Sir George's service. Without doubt he was sufficiently qualified. But I did not care to venture on the subject immediately.

"Now you must see our show-room."

He led the way to a large gallery, lighted from the roof, and built out at the back of the house. It contained various pictures and studies framed and hung against the walls—including Sir George's attempts in the way of historical art, of which Mole had previously spoken, and which did not greatly impress me—with many other works stacked together, and simply resting upon the floor. There was little method in the arrangement of the room. It had a neglected and dusty look.

"Some of these are merely beginnings that will never be completed," said Mole; "failures that have been laid on one side, experiments and sketches of all kinds. Some are left on our hands by disappointed sitters, unconscionable people, whom no amount of flattery will satisfy, and we're uncommonly liberal with it, too. Others have forgotten to pay, perhaps, and so their pictures are left here like unredeemed pledges. Sir George has a lordly way with him. He scorns to trouble himself about money. He'd never sue a sitter. He thinks law low—you'll excuse me for saying so. But that's the fashionable tone. They may take their portraits or leave them, it's all the same to him. He's exceedingly polite; but he'll have his own way, nevertheless; he won't be hurried or put out; they must wait his convenience. He sometimes makes quite a favour of painting people at all. It's the only way, perhaps, of dealing with some of the grand folks who come here. Bully them, or they'd bully you. Yet he smiles and bows all the time quite wonderfully. It makes me shiver sometimes to see him. These are pictures come back for repair or alteration, I think. We've had no time to attend to them yet. Terribly faded some of them, haven't they? We must light them up again, somehow."

Mole exhibited to me various canvases: portraits of Lords This and Ladies That—it was something like inspecting an illustrated edition of the Peerage—General Such-a-one and Admiral So-and-so: people of fame and fashion, though, I must own, that of many of them I had never before heard. There was a sort of family likeness existing among them all, it seemed to me; due to the painter's established and enduring manner. They were all smiling, all red-lipped and bright-eyed; gay of dress, elegant of attitude, and blooming of look. The ladies were represented as still in their first youth; though one of them, I happened to know, had been for some seasons a grandmother. No gentleman in the collection owned to being more than thirty five years of age. It occurred to me that Sir George must somehow have mixed his colours with the Elixir of Long Life, or dipped his brush in the Fountain of Youth; a delightful juvenility characterised all his sitters, even to his provincial mayors and aldermen.

"I call this our Royal Room," said Mole, as he led the way to another chamber. "A man isn't serjeant-painter, you know, for nothing. The official salary

is a mere trifle—to Sir George, I mean. To me nothing is a trifle that takes the form of money. But Sir George makes the post pay; and quite right too. What would be the good of the post, or of any post, if it didn't pay? Here we manufacture—that's the word—royal whole-lengths by the dozen, I may say. It's the serjeant-painter's right and privilege to supply these works; they are supplied accordingly. We copy them; he takes the money; that's the way here of dividing labour, and responsibility, and profit."

In the centre of the room was reared a large portrait of the reigning sovereign, standing erect in the velvet robes, silk stockings, rosetted-shoes, satin doublet, decorations and insignia of a knight of the garter. His white, ruffled hand carried a black velvet hat with rich ostrich plumes that swept the dais upon which he stood. I had never seen the king. He seemed, judging by his picture, a simple-looking gentleman, with a facial angle that sloped unintellectually, overpowered somewhat by his fantastic trappings and finery, the while he was doing his best, I thought, to look majestic and august, and had advanced one of his legs, to which art had given much symmetrical grace, as though bidding the spectator note the admirable proportions of his calf. He had, apparently, but just discovered, with equal surprise and gratification, his advantages in this respect.

"We're for ever painting him; I get quite sick and tired of him and his robes too," said Mole, with disloyal bluntness. "You see it's the same thing over and over again. I could almost do it with my eyes shut, or with my toes. Wholesale, retail, and for exportation. What becomes of them all, you wonder? Presents to foreign sovereigns, to ambassadors and the corps diplomatique; furniture for official residences. Every minister accredited to a foreign court is presented with one of these portraits to hang up in his reception rooms, and he keeps it afterwards as a perquisite. A new ambassador, a new portrait. That's the system, and it pays the serjeant-painter. There's something to be said for perquisites, no doubt. I should think better of them, perhaps, if some fell to my share; but none do, as it happens. Whenever we've nothing better to do we take up with a royal whole-length. We know it will be wanted sooner or later. We keep the article in stock, so to speak, and Sir George touches upon the work afterwards—perhaps. At any rate, he always adds his name to it, and, as I have

said, takes the money for it. What have we here? Some early studies, I fancy. Don't touch them. They're covered with dust."

He was turning over certain works that had been placed together in a corner of the room with their faces to the wall.

"Stop," I cried suddenly. "I know that picture."

"This one? A study for a larger work, I should say. Portrait of a nobleman. I don't know him, though."

"It's Lord Overbury."

"You're sure?"

"Yes. The completed picture—I've seen it—hangs in Overbury Hall."

I could not be mistaken, though years had passed since I had first seen the work. All came back to me. My first admission to the Hall through the window of the little room; the satyr; and the picture! He stood again beside me, staring and laughing at me, as he flung his hot rum-and-water at his own portrait—painted, it was clear, by Sir George Nightingale. He had mused over my name in his strange confused way. I now began to understand why, and why he had shown me the picture. He had known Sir George, and I had by mere chance reminded him of the fact. It was certainly curious.

"Lord Overbury," said Mole, "painted years ago, it's plain. If it was ever like him, it's not like him now."

"You've seen him, then?"

"Yes. I've seen him."

"Of late? In London?"

"Not long since, in London. But what does it matter? What's Lord Overbury to you or you to Lord Overbury? Ah! I see. The husband of Rosetta. Sits the wind in that corner still? But, I remember, you would be glad to hear of her happiness. That was the word."

I did not care to question him further upon the subject just then. I should have liked to learn something more concerning Lord Overbury, if, indeed, Mole had anything to tell. But I was unwilling that he should tease me about Rosetta, or that he should suppose she still occupied my heart. Nevertheless, I shrank from avowing how little I now loved her. I had some tenderness and reverence for my departed passion. I could not bear to disturb its ashes for mere amusement's sake, or to satisfy an idle curiosity.

"You've not explained, Mole," I said, "how you came to know Sir George."

"It's soon told. I met him at Covent

Garden—'behind.' He has, of course, the entrée of the green-room."

"And he goes there—often?"

"Often. Where doesn't he go? And where isn't he welcome? Well, mine was but a humble position. In truth, I was little better than what's called a 'super.' They would have made me under-prompter, but my uncertainty of voice—I lose it altogether at times—hindered that. I could scarcely be trusted to deliver a message. The gallery got 'guying' me when I was hoarse, and crying, 'Speak up!' to me. But they didn't—they couldn't know what my voice had been. It was hard, wasn't it? Well, I bore it as I could. The green-room wasn't for me, you know. I could only hover about the entrance, and—you remember my black shades? Well, I hadn't forgotten how to use my scissors. It was humiliating, but what was I to do? I cut out portraits, in my old style—you remember?—of anybody I came near. Sir George among the rest. In his grand way, he was amused—interested. He questioned me. He gave me his address, and bade me call upon him. He thought it a pity I should be doing no better. He smiled upon me, he was most polite. He almost blushed as he offered me money. I took it—without blushing. I'd fallen so I'd well-nigh forgotten how to. You see, though I've spoken freely of him, very freely, that man, your relation, has a kind place in his heart, though it isn't always uppermost, nor easy to find at a short notice. That's why some have persuaded themselves it doesn't exist at all. But he was really kind to me. He tried me with work, he found that I could paint, could be of service to him. He didn't decide in a hurry, but he did decide, in my favour. He offered me regular occupation upon fair terms—better far than I could hope to obtain, in my unfortunate state, at the theatre. I accepted his offer. I think I may say, and yet be modest, that he found me more useful than he had ventured to expect. The fact is, I can draw and paint. I always could. But one day I discovered that I had a voice and a head of hair, and I became what's called stage-struck. I fluttered about the lamps till they singed and scorched me, past all recovery. And now I'm, as you see, Sir George Nightingale's assistant, and your old friend and servant to command—Master Duke, whom I'm pleased and proud to meet again. God bless you!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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CHAPTER V. IN WHICH LORD DIRLETON OVER-REACHES HIMSELF.

WHETHER the proverb, "Everybody has his good point," is one worthy of acceptance, is, in our opinion, open to some doubt, since, in the case of a thoroughly offensive personage, the point in which he displays himself to less disadvantage than in others is but too often set down as a "good" one; but with respect to Lord Dirleton the saying had a proper application enough. He was a tyrannical old Turk, highly disreputable in many ways, and venerable in none, but he was redeemed by some social virtues. He was liberal, not to say lavish, with his money; affectionate, not to say amorous, in his disposition, and at least as violent in his preferences as in his dislikes. Moreover, he hated a sneak (which he shrewdly suspected his nephew Dick to be), and held a hearty, plain-spoken fellow (provided that his opinions did not disagree with his own) in genuine estimation. Had it been for this reason alone, he would have liked the captain; but since the latter went also "straight as a bird" across country, was a crack shot, and his godson—the Rubric is very elastic, but never surely had it before admitted between its lines so unspiritual a sponsor as John, Lord Dirleton—"my Jack" was a prime favourite.

Moreover, some fashionable fibber had once remarked that the portrait (by young Shee) of his lordship, when a youth of eighteen, was the "image" of the present Captain Heyton, and that trifling circumstance had wonderfully assisted to

increase the egotistic old fellow's affection for his eldest nephew. Jack, unlike a certain cousin of his, was not always on the look-out for spoil, and never asked for his debts to be paid until the matter became pressing; didn't meddle with politics, and was not a dandy; indeed, he would have gone on active service, had not his uncle kept him at home for his own pleasure, a circumstance that gave the lad a greater claim than all else to regard himself as his heir. It would have been insufferable to most young men of any spirit to live under the same roof with Lord Dirleton, in a position of dependence upon him; but it was not so with Jack, who really liked his uncle, and would as soon have thought of playing the sycophant as the piano. Bashaw as he was to most folks, Lord Dirleton thoroughly understood that Jack's own liberties were never to be encroached upon, nor Jack himself dictated to; and that, sooner than submit to the least insult, the young fellow would have packed up his half-dozen portmanteaux of fashionable garments, and left the Hall at once, to face the world on his own trumpery five hundred a year. And what would his lordship have done then? Who would have understood his humours, and attended to his wants, as Jack had done? Who would have "managed" him when he had the gout, so as to keep his temper within reasonable bounds, and prevent the servants from leaving the house en masse? Who would have superintended his stud, and had the pedigree of every horse at his finger ends, as well as the names of the winners of all the Derbys, which formed the calendar of his own past? "Let me see, when was it I first sat for Loamshire, Jack?" or "Ran away with that Italian woman?" or "Went out

with Sir Harcourt Leslie?" To each of which queries Jack would answer without error, as he quietly cracked his walnuts, "Blisbury's year," or "Archimedes's year," or "The Dead Heat year, between Antimony and Perspiration," just as it happened. Who but Jack would have left the billiard-room that winter's night, in his pumps and silk stockings, and gone into the Home Wood after those infernal poachers, and netted the whole lot of them? Well, certainly not Dick, who, what with his lisp, and his flute, and his French phrases, might as well have been his niece as his nephew.

And if Jack was not without a sense of the "necessity" that he had made himself—not with calculating design, however—to the old man, he also acknowledged in his uncle, not, indeed, a patron, but a most generous and kindly benefactor. He was not afraid of Lord Dirlerton—he was afraid of no man—but he had carefully avoided all occasions of quarrel with him, and now that a disagreement was impending between them—and one likely to be most serious and lasting—his pity for himself was not unmingled with pity for his antagonist. "The old fellow has always behaved to me like a trump," was his present reflection, as he took his way slowly towards the Hall, after his parting with Evy, "and whatever he says, I will try to keep my temper, and look at the matter from his own point of view." He meant, of course, short of yielding the main point, of which, as we have said, he was, by birth, incapable. Even his cousin Dick, by comparison a most prudent and calculating character, never gave up a fancy, no matter what the pecuniary advantage of so doing.

Unfortunately Lord Dirlerton himself was a Heyton also.

Never had the park, with its herds and flocks, seemed so well worth possessing as now, when the captain trod it, as its heir-presumptive, perhaps for the last time; never had the grand old Hall seemed an inheritance so fair as now, when he was approaching it, as its future master, perhaps for the last time. To ordinary visitors on foot, the porter, a solemn being, resplendent in scarlet and gold, opened the postern door let into one side of the huge gateway; to persons of higher quality, and to junior members of the house of Heyton, one wing of the gate was flung back at their approach; for his lordship and the captain alone was reserved the honour of having the great gate thrown open.

In the first case the resplendent creature,

rapt in contemplative calm, took no notice of the incomer, whom he ushered into the court-yard, there to be received by an inferior member of the household; in the second he stood bolt upright, like a soldier at "attention;" in the third case he removed his gold-bound and cockaded hat, and bowed to the extreme limit that obesity permitted. "Will old Benson ever bow like that again to me?" thought Jack, grimly, as he acknowledged this retainer's profound salutation. For the entail stopped with the present lord, who had, as has been said, the power of leaving house, and land, and gold, everything, in fact, but his bare title, to whomsoever he pleased. Jack's mind pursued the same thread of thought—not a very high one perhaps, but a natural one enough under the circumstances—as he mounted the great stairs, up which he had so often assisted his uncle's crippled feet, and passed along the gallery, from whose walls his ancestors seemed to regard him with doubtful looks. "This is not the young man who is to succeed us, then, after all," whispered they to one another.

In his own apartments, where he proceeded to dress for dinner, there were many things to suggest a continuance of the same theme. The sitting-room had been fitted up by his uncle as a "surprise" to him, on some occasion of his own absence, in a manner that had been judged suitable to the young man's taste; the furniture was of oak, carved in imitation of various incidents of the chase, and on the walls, in frames similarly carved, were engravings of the most famous pictures in connexion with that subject. His dressing-table, again, was weighted with the most splendid articles of the toilet in gold or silver, all gifts from that loving kinsman, whose affection he was now about to try to the uttermost, and, in all probability, beyond what it could bear. But though a sigh would now and then escape Jack on his own account, his chief regret was still, as before, for him who had loaded him with so many tokens of his love, and in whose eyes the return he was about to make for them must needs seem heartless and ungrateful.

"If I am kicked out of this," mused the captain, not in self-conceit, but with the air of one who states a fact to be regretted, "the poor old fellow will find himself very lonely, I am afraid." And then the gong sounded for dinner.

His unwonted pedestrian expedition to the village, and the excitement of his in-

terview with Mr. Hulet, had already brought his lordship's leg to the foot-rest, which Jack did not fail to remark upon with becoming solicitude, and not only on his relative's account, but on his own, for he well knew that the circumstance would not be in his favour in the coming struggle.

"Yes," replied his uncle, peevishly, "I've been most infernally worried to-day, and worry always flies to my toe."

This was the fact, and his lordship was apt to insist upon it, as a reason why he should never be thwarted, just as Mr. Hulet, equally autocratic though on a smaller scale, objected to contradiction on the ground that "it made his heart go." Jack dared not ask what had worried his noble relative, lest he should blurt out something before the servants, but merely expressed his regret; and the dinner proceeded in total silence, except that his lordship "broke out" occasionally (wholly without occasion) at the cook; and that also was a bad sign.

No sooner were they left alone together, however—the claret with Jack, and the whisky, medicinally prescribed, beside his uncle—than the latter drew a letter from his waistcoat-pocket, and tossed it over to his companion, with a "Read that, sir."

Jack obeyed him, and then, with a quiet face, returned it.

"Well, what have you to say to it, sir?"

"Nothing more, uncle, than what is usually said of anonymous communications. It is a very blackguard trick, if such a phrase can be used in the case of a female, for I am afraid the handwriting reveals the sex."

"Yes, it's a woman of course," answered his lordship. "'A true friend to the social proprieties ventures to ask Lord Dirleton whether he is aware that his nephew, Captain Heyton is on the verge of being entangled into a matrimonial engagement by the niece of Mr. Angelo Hulet, a Miss Carthew.' No man could have written like that. But that is not the point, sir. What I wish to inquire is, is it true?"

"So far as the being 'entangled in a matrimonial engagement' is concerned, uncle," replied the young man, slowly, "it is a lie. Otherwise the statement is correct enough."

"I don't quite understand you, Jack," answered his lordship, brightening up. "I am not very strait-laced, as you

know; but I do hope that you have not been so imprudent—in the village here, close under my very nose—to form any connexion that——"

"My lord, I must beg you not to finish that sentence," interrupted Jack, with a sudden flush on his face. "Miss Carthew is a lady born and bred, in all respects my equal—in most my superior. My denial referred only to the word 'entangled;' she is utterly incapable of such conduct as that infamous letter would attribute to her."

"Very likely; but you don't mean to tell me that you have engaged yourself to this girl?"

"Well, if you ask me, uncle, I must needs reply, yes."

"You must, must you?" roared the old man, making as though he would strike the table with his fist, and remembering his gout only just in time to avert the most frightful consequences; "then, by the Lord Harry, you need not trouble to call me 'uncle' any more."

"Very good, my lord."

Here the young man concluded his task of peeling some half-dozen walnuts, and placed them on his companion's plate, as he had been wont to do at dessert-time, in the walnut season, for many a year. In the spring he peeled oranges for him.

"I don't want your walnuts," said his lordship, peevishly, yet evidently touched by the accustomed action nevertheless. "I want you to show a little commonsense, and to remember your position."

"I do not forget it, my lord," returned Jack, modestly. "It has been a very comfortable one, thanks to you, for many years."

"Well, then, why not keep it, sir? Why quarrel with your bread and butter—nay, your bread, for you have almost nothing of your own—for the sake of a pretty face? You know I can leave my money just as I please. All that you inherit, independent of my favour, is a barren title; and can there be anything more wretched than the position of a pauper peer? You will, of course, have a lot of brats, and be unable to maintain them; for what government will give its loaves and fishes in return for a mere vote without influence? But there, I am talking to one who doubtless never troubles himself to look so far ahead. Let me speak, then, of the present. Would you like to be dependent on the bounty of such a father-in-law as Mr. Angelo Hulet; for that, as he informed me with his own

lips, is the fate that is in store for you. Have you ever seen that man, sir? Heard him talk?"

"I have met him on one or two occasions," replied Jack; "he is not a man to my taste, of course, but he is a gentleman; and——"

"A gentleman, begad!" broke in the old lord; "the devil he is! Then I don't know what a gentleman means. Are you aware, to begin with, that he is descended—and boasts of it, sir, boasts of it—from that cut-throat villain, Hulet, who beheaded Charles the First? He's got a picture of him in his parlour, to which he pays as much adoration as any Papist to an altar-piece. Do you suppose I would ever give my permission to cross the Heyton stock with that of a Regicide? No, sir, upon my honour I never will; so there. And I tell you what—you shan't have the title neither; and I'll let the girl know this, since that's what she's after, I suspect; for if you marry her, I'll marry too, begad I will, and beget heirs, like my fathers before me; so there."

In spite of the evil turn affairs were taking, Jack could not repress a smile at this characteristic menace.

"Of course, my lord," replied he, quietly, "you will act as you think proper. The young lady in question is not, however, let me remind you, a Hulet; but the daughter of an officer of distinguished merit."

"Um! ha! they're always that," soliloquised Lord Dirleton; "the only child of a hard-working clergyman, who succumbed beneath his own parochial labours, or else of an officer of high rank, who perished upon the blood-stained field. Who ever knew a *mésalliance* without them? However," added he, "she comes of the Hulet blood on one side; and that is quite enough for me. These are revolutionary times, sir. I should not be surprised—what's bred in the bone, you know, is sure to come out in the flesh—if some offspring of this projected union should become headman to the future Cromwell. Oh, Jack, Jack!" exclaimed the old lord, with a sudden descent from historical prediction to the lowly level of natural affection, "why should you be such an infernal fool? My word is passed, you know, upon this subject, and I can't draw back, even if I would——"

"And *my* word, my lord, is also given," interposed Jack, with dignity; "so with your leave we will let the matter drop. It is from no want of dutifulness, nor of

gratitude, believe me, that I am compelled to take a course which I feel must dis sever my future from yours. You have been a father to me ever since I lost my own—more indulgent than most fathers, and as kind——"

"And as loving," put in the old lord, in trembling tones—"as loving as any father, you ungrateful dog."

"Indeed I do believe it, sir," confessed Jack, playing nervously with his claret glass, "and I am not ungrateful. What I would persuade you, if I could, is, that in giving up all you have to give me, I shall feel the loss of your love the most of all."

"Then why give it up, Jack?" pleaded the other; "or if you will be so infernally obstinate, at least there need be no hurry about giving it up. You are not going to marry this girl to-morrow, I suppose, nor yet the next day?"

Jack, with a certain comical air of chagrin, admitted that such was the fact.

"Very well, then," continued the old lord, "don't let us say another word about it at present; that is, after I have asked one favour of you, and you have granted it."

It touched Jack much to hear his uncle, who had been so long accustomed to lay down the law to everybody, thus appealing almost as a suppliant, and to him.

"Indeed," said he, "there is nothing, my lord, in which I will not oblige you, short of giving up what has become the dearest object of my life."

"Then promise me not to see this young lady for the next twelve months," said Lord Dirleton, grimly.

Jack had stepped into the pitfall. It was an ungenerous advantage for his uncle to have taken, and that the old man felt it to be so was evident from the apologetic tone in which he went on to speak.

"This will be a good touchstone of the sincerity of your affections, you see, Jack; if you are really so bewitched as to be past cure, absence will only make you the more foolish—I mean, more fond; whereas, if your attachment is but a passing fancy, as I most sincerely trust it may prove to be, you will forget all about the girl during the interval. Come, you can't be worse for waiting—though h'm—ha—he shall be no better, for I'm fixed as the poles about the main point—and you did say you would accede to my request."

"Nay, my lord," said Jack, who felt much aggrieved by this sharp practice, "I spoke with the tacit understanding that

you would ask something in reason. Now, if you made it six months——”

“Pooh, pooh. Six months is nothing; I’ve loved a girl myself for as long as that. Let us say nine. H’m—ha—begad, if it ain’t like a Dutch auction. Come, say nine.”

“It must be six months, my lord,” said Jack, speaking with great gravity, yet scarcely able to repress a smile at the reflection that he was hoisting his adversary with his own petard; for was he not already banished from the beloved object for the time in question?

“Well, well, let us say six, Jack—h’m, in six months this young fool will have come to his senses—only mind this, the separation between you must be complete. You must not even write to one another; I’ll have no sending kisses in sealing-wax.”

“That is a very hard stipulation,” pleaded Jack. He was by nature the reverse of hypocritical; and if his uncle had not laid that trap for him, he would have at once confessed that Mr. Hulet had already made this very proviso: but now he had no scruples.

“Come, come; no meetings and no correspondence for six months, sir,” insisted his lordship, impatiently. “Promise me that!”

“Very good, my lord,” said Jack, submissively. “I will send but one note to Miss Carthew to tell her how the matter stands, and then will neither see nor write to her again for the next half-year.”

“Good lad, good lad,” answered the old man, approvingly; “and look here, Jack, you need not trouble yourself during that interval to call me ‘my lord’ any more. And—um—he—this folly of his will never last so long; three months was the extreme limit with me, though I did tell him six. Yes, and now I’ll eat your walnuts.”

CHAPTER VI. BALCOMBE.

THERE is no country in the world, prone as our fellow-countrymen are to travel abroad in pretended search of the picturesque, of such various beauty as old England. Almost every one of its inland counties has its characteristic charm; while its sea-coast is absolutely inexhaustible for variety of form and colour. As to Dunwich, I positively assert that there is nothing to compare with it for rich repose and home-like splendour in the four quarters of the globe, and yet Dunwich is not, I am glad to say, “a show place” by any means.

Now Balcombe is a show place. All who can read the announcements of the railway companies upon the walls, with respect to family excursion tickets, have read of it, and everybody who is anybody (that is, about one thousandth part of our total population) has visited it. Especially everybody with nerves. Balcombe is situated on a beautiful bay on the south coast, where the trees start from the very edge of the shore, on quite an Alpine expedition. They climb seven hills, among which, in dells, and clefts, or on commanding “spurs,” the town is set, and from this circumstance it is sometimes called the British Babylon. It has no other affinity, however, with the Scarlet Woman, who, indeed, is held in general abomination at Balcombe, the migratory population of which—and that is the only population worth talking about—is, as in most seaside places of fashionable resort in England, eminently evangelical. Nor is the morality of Balcombe, as a rule, inferior to its orthodoxy, though this may be in some measure accounted for by physical causes. Five-sixths of its visitors are confirmed invalids, and persons who go about with respirators in bath-chairs seldom indulge in loud language, and almost never frequent music-halls or casinos. If a “Hall by the Sea,” such as there is at places patronised by the hale and vulgar, were to be set up at Balcombe, it would fail most miserably, though it would doubtless show its effects; the very idea of it, the issuing of its prospectus, would be fatal to many; the mere laying its lance in rest would probably empty half the bath-chairs. A shock of that kind would be too much for the poor folks with nerves. I have heard many persons thus afflicted positively find fault with the beauty of Balcombe because of its attracting “mobs of people” during the summer months, and when an excursion train is announced they all withdraw into their villas like rabbits in a warren, and keep themselves to themselves, till the invaders have worked their wicked wills and departed. Thus it was not for its beauty of situation, nor for its fashionable society, nor even for the far-famed table d’hôte to be found at its principal boarding-house, Lucullus Mansion, that Mr. Angelo Hulet visited Balcombe, but for its climate and “aspects,” which last—to judge by its guide-book, edited by “a distinguished physician”—were (one or other of them) beneficial to every description of human malady.

On Number One hill you found a cer-

tain cure for dyspepsia; on Number Two the coats of the stomach were renovated as quickly as any old "swallow-tail" subjected to the tailor's iron; on Number Three you took your stand—or were enabled to take it after a day or two—and defied gout; on Number Four, though you might have arrived there speechless from bronchitis, in a few weeks you could communicate verbally with your friends on the pier below without the aid of a speaking-trumpet, and so on. But all the seven hills, and all their "aspects," were equally good for the nerves. To a hale and hearty stranger, indeed, arriving in this salubrious spot for the first time, the idea is apt to occur that it is raining. Between myself and the reader, I may remark that it does rain at Balcombe six days out of every seven, and is very near doing it on the seventh; but this the inhabitants deny. All the people with nerves, and all the people with gout, and all the people with indifferent coats to their stomachs—everybody, in fact, except the consumptive patients—come out in the rain without umbrellas, and protest that there is "nothing falling," not even the barometer. It is a very warm and gentle rain, no doubt, but it wets you very thoroughly unless you have a waterproof, and my suspicion is that these boastful cripples, like the gentleman who didn't mind fighting duels because he had a shirt made of chain armour, wear waterproofs under their clothes. And yet they are no perjurers, for just as an Irishman (when he is well away from it) paints his own country in all honesty as an agreeable dwelling-place, so they believe what they say. There is an esprit de corps among the Balcombe invalids, which compels them to swear through thick and thin by their adopted home, and to take the guide-book by the "distinguished physician" (a most dexterous manipulator of the statistics of rainfall) as gospel. Nay, the local enthusiasm seizes even upon their new recruits, and no sooner did Mr. Angelo Hulet find himself located at Lucullus Mansion than he pronounced himself "quite another man." He had evidently, however, no intention of dispensing with his former infallible remedies in the way of drugs and potions, for he had already set them out in his own apartment, in admirable disorder, and had taken a good pull at a tonic made of dandelions, and much recommended after travel. Thus refreshed, he sat down at the open window, and looked out on sky, and sea, and shore with a sentimental air; it was enjoined by the label on the

dandelion bottle that he should keep himself quiet after taking that subtle essence, but it was not on that account that he sat so still and thoughtful.

Mr. Angelo Hulet had visited Balcombe—not for its "aspects," nor its climate—nearly forty years ago, when he was young and vigorous, and never needed so much as a glass of sherry and bitters to give him "a tone;" when his head was covered with curling locks, that required no careful arrangement of the comb to hide his baldness; when his hand was steady with his gun among the stubble, and only trembled at the touch of beauty; when—

Ah, doleful When

That marked the change 'twixt now and then!

How aptly could he have gone on to quote:

This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly Then it flashed along!
Nought cared this body for wind nor weather,
When Youth and I lived in't together!

Mr. Angelo Hulet had never been given to poetry even in his youth, but something like the above was in his mind as he regarded the unchanging sea by which he had wandered nearly half a century before, not without a meet companion. The thoughts of forty years ago, indeed, are enough to make a poet of an attorney.

In the next room to his own sat Evy, looking on the same fair sights, but with far other thoughts. Her hand clasped Jack's last letter, the one in which he had bidden farewell to her for six months, but in hopeful words. The old lord had refused his consent, indeed, but on the whole had received the news of his engagement with more patience than he had anticipated. Time might do much for them; and meanwhile, though forbidden to speak or write, his dream by night, his thought by day, would be of his darling Evy. She tried to believe this, or at all events to believe that he would not forget her, or be false to her, but it was hard to do so, for she was a very sensible young woman. She well knew that, even among men, not three in a thousand were like her uncle, uninfluenced by the attractions of social position, and that among women the proportion was even less; that every young lady in Dunwich was setting her cap—or her chignon—at the captain; and that wherever he went the heir-presumptive of Lord Dirleton would be the object of matrimonial ambition. True, she had won his heart—a feat that in her modesty she thought astonishing; but was it not likely that some other, fairer, nobler, better, would

win it from her? Her uncle evidently thought so; deemed that this young man's love was but a passing fancy, or he would not have imposed this ordeal of separation; and Jack's uncle thought the same. She should always love him, of course; she would carry that little locket with his hair in it, that she was now covering with kisses, to the grave; but was it to be expected that he would be equally faithful? Kind-hearted Mrs. Mellish had hinted to her by delicate indirect allusion to the necessity of finding happiness in one's own home, that it was not to be expected, and Doctor Burne had told her so more plainly. The rector only had given her comfort.

For in their "good-byes" they had all spoken of the matter without reserve. "Jack has a sound heart, my dear," he had whispered in her ear, "and will never prove a snob." A snob, indeed! No, that was impossible; but without showing himself in that light it was very possible that he might repent of his hasty engagement, or be persuaded by his uncle to have a due regard to his own interests, which indeed she had herself besought him not to sacrifice on her account. She was not sorry to come away from Dunwich—a place she had once wished to live and die in, and which to her mind had still no equal. Its own surpassing beauty seemed indeed now doubled, tinged as it was with the hues of first love:

From end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
There was no place that did not breathe
Some gracious memory

of him. But it would have been terrible to remain there with him so near, and yet be forbidden to see him. She did not expect to find pleasure in Balcombe, but at all events it would be without the pain of fond regret. And how very, very beautiful it looked in that autumn evening! Lucullus Mansion was an edifice of considerable pretension, standing in its own grounds, with a stone terrace round three sides of it, and a lawn called "the garden," and which would really have been a garden, but that it was so steep that the flower beds, that ran down to the sea, from which it was separated only by a low wall, could not stick on to it, but were washed away by the unceasing drizzle. To the eastward lay the open ocean dotted with a large white sail or two, and with a whole fleet of little red ones, which were the fishing-boats bound for home. On the south was the harbour, a scene of lively movement and harmonious sound.

Evy's glance wandered listlessly from one fair object to another for some minutes, then she sighed and took out a little book on which her eyes riveted themselves with a very different expression. It was not a poem on which they were fixed, though they grew soft and tender; it was not a prayer, though there was something of devotion in them; it was a mere date and a few words extracted from a racing calendar:

"April 4th, Balcombe steeple-chases."

She was still gazing on this memorandum when there came a knock at the door, and a female voice was heard asking, in persuasive accents, permission to enter: "My dear young lady," it said, "may I—I'm Mrs. Hodlin Barmby—come in?" But though Evy answered "Yes," Mrs. Hodlin Barmby is much too important a personage to be introduced at the end of a chapter.

SKIPPER'S BAND.

SKIPPER'S QUADRILLE BAND is widely known wherever the human leg moves to music. For that matter, we have such a reputation, that our strains are listened to with pleasure by the aged, the ignorant, or the neglected, whose limbs may not, for these various reasons, be responsive to our call. This is said in no spirit of boasting; for during the regular season, and that more irregular country season, which goes on all the year round, we are worked like navvies. Skipper's books attest this fact, as also the amazing and india-rubber-like character of Skipper's Band. Expand it or contract it, divide or multiply it; send it down to the race ball in its full strength of five-and-twenty; let it out to the Brixton villa, as a violin and piano, it is still Skipper's Band. Skipper and Walsington properly; but it was felt—Walsington handsomely concurring—that the business would suffer were the crispness of the older title, "Skipper's Band," interfered with. It may be mentioned in this place that I am not Skipper. Walsington is my name—leader, first or second violin, pianist, double bass, as occasion may require; for an organisation like Skipper's demands this ready adaptability, this being prepared at a second's warning to turn one's hand to anything. Balls, of course, can be provided for with reasonable certainty; but the "small and early dances," the little "hops," and "carpet" things, are as distracting as the half-dozen fires to which the

Brigade may be suddenly summoned. I have known a dozen single pianos ordered on one particular morning, for that particular evening; and I have equally known a whole three weeks go by, at the height of the season, without a single inquiry being made for the instrument. To keep, therefore, distinct specialists would be merely spelling bankruptcy and ruin, and the only way is to secure "general utility musicians," as they say at the theatres, who can turn their hand or fingers to everything. Extraordinary combinations used to be asked for—a clarinet and a violoncello, a flute and a violin, as it was believed, under a mistaken notion of economy. But the tariff was the same, except in the instance of our great cornet, and greater pianist, for whose services you had to put down your name regularly, and wait your turn, and even then pay double. The pair were really worth all of us put together, and could make as much noise.

The pianist is an Italian, with long black hair, which he keeps in a savage state, and very wild eyes. He is an amazing creature altogether; his name is Spongini, and his favourite idiosyncrasy, besides his undoubted musical one, is the wholesale avoidance of three things: soap, shaving, and such linen as usually edges off human apparel. The absence of shaving would not be an unusual thing, if he avoided it altogether; but he seems to dally with it, and suggests the idea of using a pair of scissors about every fourth day or so. But when he is at his instrument all these blemishes are forgotten. A gallop of his performance, about two in the morning, is something demoniac. He plays with fury, and, as some one remarked, makes the keys yell. An elderly instrument under his hands, would find itself "rebuffed," as it were, into perpetual youth; its old ivories being banged and clattered into sound, much as an old horse can be flogged into a gallop. As he plays, his black eyes roll round the room with a ferocious scowl, as though he regarded the dancers as his born enemies, but was forced to work for them as their slave. His lean yellow fingers rise in the air with all kinds of antics. Between the dances he indulges in wild voluntaries, snatches of walses and other music made up into a weird-like concatenation, such as the late Paganini might have indulged in. Late in the night, or in the morning rather—when the bottle which the delighted hostess has injudiciously ordered to be placed between his feet, close to the pedal, begins to get

low, and the effects proportionately visible—his eyes grow wild, his fingers more furious, and his galops more headlong.

Sometimes, towards four in the morning, he plays standing up, in a reckless, jovial style, and muttering snatches of Italian. He is a remarkable performer, though the instrument on which he has performed such prodigies is often found next morning to be hoarse and feeble in sound, exhausted as it were by the savage belabouring it has endured the night before, with two or three of the notes absolutely "dumb," and the machinery turned "rickety" and wheezy.

Our cornet, too, is a player of mark; very tall, with dark moustaches, and makes a point of holding his instrument full towards the public, in a severe, challenging style. He is haughty, and plays as if he was paying a compliment. With the rest of us he rarely mixes, and is generally called "Stand-off Shuter." But his employers appreciate him, and there is no doubt about his ability. It is a treat to hear him die away altogether in pathetic agonies in a piece like the Waltz of Love, and get slower and slower, until he expires quite tenderly at the close; and he is really exciting when he sounds the alarm in the inspiring Hunting Horn galop, sending every one 'cross country like good uns. He, too, will occasionally stand up when it comes to between three and four o'clock in the morning, a time when the sobriety of discipline is relaxed, and at such times indulges in voluntaries and flourishes of the most wildly impromptu character. He, too, does not disdain the bottle and glass between his feet, to which, indeed, he has frequent recourse.

Music is certainly what may be called a graceful profession, and yet it reveals to us some of the dirty corners of human nature. How greedy, for instance, how supremely selfish, seem the gentlemen and ladies who dance all night! Stand-off Shuter may have played nobly during that last galop, and put all his wind and limb into the performance; yet, while he is recovering himself a little, he sees the glaring eyes of the promenaders bent on him, impatient for him to begin again. He is certain, says Stand-off Shuter, that if these rapacious terpsichoreans knew for a fact that the one more galop which they require would entail the planting of the seeds of consumption in him, Shuter, with the prospect of causing him to drop his instrument for evermore, they would unhesitatingly require him to strike up. I

could name instances of heartless brutality on the part of these people when they get "blooded," towards the small hours.

Ask any professional what he thinks of that inhuman, selfish, and unprofitable dance called the cotillion. For this there is a deep-seated feeling of abhorrence in the profession; indeed, it is pretty well understood if it took deeper root, and was more largely patronised, the relations of the performers to those for whom they performed would have to be altogether revised. When this wretched fandango sets in, about two in the morning, we know what is in store for us—a good two hours' spell, without an interval, of that miserable and almost idiotic tomfoolery, compared with which the antics of the dancing dervishes always seems to me highly rational. That gathering of stage properties—the wreaths, flags—above all, the ridiculous self-importance of the gentleman who "leads the cotillion," and gives more orders than a prime minister, is really the most imbecile exhibition. As we grind mechanically the same valse over and over again, for they tell us "anything will do," we do not take the trouble to look at the notes, but have opportunity to see our fellow-creatures reducing themselves to the lowest level of nursery intellect. Most delightful of all is the anxiety, the wise folly, or foolish wisdom, on the face of the leader of the game. When things are going right he is forecasting what is to come, consulting hurriedly with the hostess, who has been told that she must leave all to him, or let the thing go to wreck. There is a kind of serious concentration in his manner, which suggests some great captain, who is called in at a crisis, and who engages "to save the country," provided he gets *carte blanche*, and must be strictly obeyed. Some of these commanders lie in bed the next day, I am told, exhausted, not by the bodily labour, but by the mental strain. As the ladies and gentlemen are complimentary enough to think that we are about on a level with the china figures on the chimney-piece, they make most of their confidential remarks, their backs resting on our fiddles. Thus I have heard the "leader" telling his fair companion gravely what "anxiety" he had felt for the week past, as Algy Blueboy, who had given his word to support him, had gone off to the country, to stand by Mrs. Mantower at a similar crisis. He was going to throw it all up, only that Mrs. Blank, the hostess, had come to him in floods of tears, saying, poor woman! that she would be ruined

and undone if he didn't stand by her. This put him on his mettle; he had lain on a sofa all day, giving strict orders that no one was to be let in, had put his head to the work, and now every one might see it was going off splendidly. But the wear-and-tear of these things was awful! Sweet sympathy greeted these disclosures, as Captain Babyman unfolded his distresses. I protest to see him thinking a moment, then seizing on some one and leading him up, putting back some one else sternly, then hurriedly whispering, then rushing away to a bedroom, and emerging with a stick with ribbons, or some other nursery toy, carrying it as proudly as though it were a mace, or, above all, to note the sheepish helplessness, not unmixed with pride, of the others—this more than consoles us for our weary two hours' fiddling. These cotillion-wallahs never think of stopping; it is only when the thing wears itself out, and the jaded dowagers begin to groan as the daylight breaks in, that the thing begins to halt and droop. Otherwise Captain Babyman has more scarves and flags in the bedroom up-stairs not yet used, and is rather pettish at being interrupted. No; if this sort of thing became "deep-rooted," it would have to be a separate charge, or a street organ should be brought in to do the mechanical duty for the two hours.

But as certain conditions are requisite to see the Abbey of Melrose "aright," so, to see Skipper's Band under the most favourable auspices, it is necessary that you should attend us to the country or opulent suburban villa, when we "go down special." There we are in our full strength and glory. Then Skipper gets what he delights in, and what he is never weary of invoking, "a cart blench." When the owner of the opulent villa begins to question or make inquiries as to the conditions of the arrangement, Skipper, knowing his man, invariably quenches discussion in a lofty way by saying, "If you would leave it all to me, and only give me cart blench, I will take care that you needn't mind having the Prince of Wales himself here." This loyal allusion, and the cart blench, generally overcome all scruples.

At the luxurious villa the arrangements are usually in the *al fresco* style—lanterns "glinting" through the trees—(a young lady used this very expression, almost sitting on my fiddle)—and we are commonly at such entertainments disposed in a little ante-room off the drawing-room, the piano being drawn across the door, Spongini thundering away in the centre,

whilst we fiddle and tootle behind, forming a graceful and pyramidal arrangement, of which Skipper himself is apex. Skipper usually "leads" on these great occasions, violin in hand; but this is little more than a phrase of courtesy, for, curious to say, he is but an indifferent musician, and it is more his manner, and connexion with the wealthy aristocracy, that lends Skipper's Band its prestige. Skipper always furnishes the "engagement cards," programmes, &c., models of graceful treatment, decorated with coloured cupids attired to suit the tropics, and perfumed by the ubiquitous Rimmel, with more prominence given to the name of Skipper, and of Skipper's Band, than even to the cupids. They generally run somewhat in this way:

PROGRAMME.

LOLLYPOP VILLA, JUNE 30.

1. Quadrille, "Mayonnaise" . . . SKIPPER.
2. Valse, "Hamadryad" . . . SPOFF.
3. Polka Mazurka, "Swim-swum". SKIPPER.
4. Lancers, "Jeel-Mahmoud," composed for H.R.H. the Raneemokanna's garden party . . . SKIPPER.
5. Valse, "Lumps of Delight" SPONGINI.
&c. &c.

SKIPPER'S BAND.

The music of the above may be had of Messrs. Dong and Minim.

Nor is this all. Before every dance there is hoisted on the piano a sort of cardboard banner of large size, on which is displayed the name of the dance, but in even more conspicuous letters, the collective title of the performers, thus:

VALSE, "LANGUISHING EYES."

SKIPPER'S BAND.

In this ingenious way the name of Skipper's Band becomes, as it were, indelibly imprinted on the dancer's mind; and when a helpless hostess consults her friends on the ball she is going to give (as only helpless hostesses do), they always say, "Oh, of course you will have Skipper!" The pure aristocracy would not tolerate this ingenious mode of making the music prominent; but Skipper looks chiefly for opulent clients, and plays always, as he says, "for City legs," the proprietors of which can best discharge his rather heavy bill:

	£	s.	d.
To attendance with Skipper's Band—twelve musicians . .	25	10	0
Two hundred scented fancy programmes	10	10	0
To hire of cabs	1	1	0
To Mr. Skipper's personal attendance	8	3	0
To one dozen enlarged card programmes	0	10	0
	40	14	0

But what we relish far more than this is the professional visit down to the county race, or opening of town-hall ball, to which we usually repair five-and-twenty strong. This junketing is always agreeable, as there is no mean limiting of expense, and we are treated with a profuse liberality and generosity. It is something to see Skipper then, standing in the centre of the gallery, with the privates of his regiment behind him, leading away ferociously like Sir Michael Costa, making believe that *he* is accountable for those crescendoes, fortes, and piano, and that "light and shade," for which the local newspaper so praises "Skipper's Band." On these occasions we come out with "the brass," "side drums," and triangles, instruments of noise, which we dare not introduce into the metropolis, and which indeed would not be desired or paid for, there. At these great entertainments we see a good deal of human nature looking down from our gallery. Of course the dancing is kept up till six in the morning, but still we are prepared to use or to lose the whole night, so it makes little difference. How they do cut out the work, while we bray, and drum, and fiddle above the crowd below—an imposing sight—tumbling and rushing round with a noble ardour! As may be imagined, we play better when looking down on our dancers, and we, both of us, act and react on each other. After supper, when the hunting gentry have drank a good deal, it is like steeple-chasing, and Skipper, as he says (with a confusion of metaphor though), takes off the break and lets the musical mainsheet go with a run. Then we put spurs into our violins, and take the "Run-a-Muck" gallop violently 'cross country. And then is the time, if you want to see us in our glory, to observe the performances of Skipper's Band.

IN MY LADY'S GARDEN.

HUSH!

Quiet is queen in this enchanted close;
The silent-footed shadows throng
So thickly round my lady's rare red rose,
One may not see its bright auroral flush;
But there where, queenly tall and saintly strong,
The ranged lilies lift their cups of snow,

White as a seraph's brow;

There sleeps the tracéd moonlight; argent sheen,
Soft-netted silver veiling slumbering green;
Mystic, unspeakable, fairest of earth-lights,
Reflex of what far glow on what clear heavenly heights!

Soft!

Tread not too briskly through the crisped grass,
Break not this tender nocturn harmony
With one harsh chord. The white-plumed cloudlets
pass
Like soundless wings across a sleeping sky,

The bats wheel swift aloft—
 Dusk-winged shadows, silent, bodiless;
 The drowsing leaves above us scarcely quiver,
 The tall grass plumelets abake not, and this tress
 Of soft hair, tendril-light, lies still, unstartled
 Across a snowy brow. Ah! list! the river
 Low rippling through its reeds, is faintly heard
 Beyond the shadowy line.
 Where still, wave-dipping willows silently incline.

Cool!

Laden with fragrance of a thousand flowers,
 The night-air, like a tranquil ocean, laves
 This bosky garden-close, with silent waves,
 That, stealing o'er the lily-cumbered pool,
 Ruffle it not; the bowers
 The blossom clustered bowers whose roses trail
 Unnumbered, drowsing, mystically pale,
 Send forth no murmurous sound, but through the dusk
 Their unswayed censers breathe delicious musk.

Sweet!

Is summer night not kin with all things pure,
 And fine beyond sense-seeming, redolent
 Of unimagined glory and content,
 In worlds whose peace is amaranth-crowned and sure?
 As yon white cloudlets fleet

Moon-silvered, silent, like home-winged doves,
 The heavens soothe us with their tender calm
 To fine tranquillity. This perfect balm,
 The skyward breasting of all fields and flowers,
 Comes like a benediction. Blameless loves
 Fair friendships, pure aspirations, these accord
 With the bland influences of such hours:

Ah! gentle love, what word
 Of mine avails to interpret witcheries
 So shy so subtly spirit-fine as these?
 Only thy voice that silence self might woo,
 Thy silver song attuned to all things sweet;
 May lend a grace to quiet. Let it rise
 On wings of music through the mystic blue
 Of the moon-tranced skies,
 List love! the night-bird echoes, flooding fleet
 The shadows with soft waves of fluty song,
 While the pale lilies listen, and along
 The river marge the willows whisper low,
 And, though the moon-mist veil their gladdened glow,
 Song-rapt and passion-flaunt the amorous roses throng.

ARMED FOR WAR.

THOSE amiable enthusiasts who, in 1851, saw the red planet Mars set for ever behind a great glass palace in Hyde Park, and whose theory was that the gates of Janus were sealed by the opening of the first Exhibition, have perhaps been unduly laughed at of late years. They, their hopes, and their overbrimming confidence in a coming commercial millennium of peace and goodwill, have been impressed into pointing more than one military moral, and adorning more than one tale of strife. Yet it is so easy to be wise after the event, that we may well pardon the pacific sages of four lustres ago if they did not foresee the storms that would ruffle the quiet ocean of European politics, and recognise the unwelcome truth that war is always at our gates. How best to prepare for that grim guest is a question only to be answered after a minute and careful retrospect of

what has hitherto been done since nations first began to draw the sword.

Savages—the genuine, utter barbarians, who live by the chase and by such scanty crops as can be lightly raised by the unskilled labour of their women—are always, and at a moment's notice, prepared to take the field. Where there is no commissariat, no transport to organise, no elaborate plan of campaign to prepare, no reserves to call in, and where every able-bodied male is a warrior, whose weapons hang always within his reach, a few hours may witness the setting out of a formidable war party. But if the Camanches and Sioux of the prairies, the hillmen of India, or the wild Magals of Australia, find it easy to get the start of their white foes, it is none the less true that they go to certain defeat when confronted by a tenacious enemy. Once worsted, their ruin is inevitable. They have no reinforcements, no stores, no place wherein to rally and take breath for a renewal of the struggle. When the tiny stock of provisions which each man carries is exhausted, there are no magazines on which to draw for rations, and the band must hunt or starve. There are no medicines for the sick, no care for the wounded. A stolen march, an ambush, a surprise, make up all the simple strategy of savage warfare, while to retreat is to be routed. In every quarter of the world the feeblest forces of trained troops have proved an overmatch for swarms of untutored combatants.

Far different is the case with pastoral and nomadic, or semi-barbarous nations. The flocks and herds, that are their only wealth, give them an almost unailing supply of food, while the wives and sisters of the fighting men, well used to the dressing of wounds and to the sight of blood, willingly put the resources of their rough surgery and kindly nursing at the disposal of the disabled champions. The only recent experiences of this method of making war are furnished by the Yemen revolt against the Sultan, and by the resistance of Turcoman tribes to the Russian advance in Central Asia. We know with what irresistible weight Goths and Wends, Huns and Sarmatians, Gepidæ and Franks, pressed upon the weakening frontiers of the Roman empire. But history teaches us this further lesson, that whenever the legionaries were led by a really competent general, skill and discipline prevailed over the brute force of an enemy whose base of operations was unavoidably laid open to attack, and whose cattle, waggons, and

families were never out of reach of an enterprising commander. Moreover, as is usually the case where the losses in battle are equally shared by the community, a single repulse attended by great slaughter is sufficient to disgust the herdsmen of the steppe with war. The check given, through the valour of the Teutonic knights, to the Tartar inroad under the grandson of Genghis, saved Europe, as the defeat of Attila at Chalons had previously done. The promptitude with which a people can rush to arms is no positive criterion of its willingness to protract a contest to the uttermost.

The pictorial records and the written chronicles of the past exhibit Assyria and Babylon and Egypt as placing their main dependence on a warlike aristocracy, of which the mode of fighting strongly resembled that of Homer's heroes before Troy. So long as Pharaoh could muster his long array of spear-throwing nobles and mounted archers, the "chariots and horsemen" so frequently mentioned in Scripture, supported by hired tribes from the desert, and in case of need by a levy of the servile population, his country could defy the desultory onslaught of his neighbours from beyond the wilderness. But no nation can permanently depend, as the example of Sparta and that of the Moorish kingdoms in Spain clearly illustrate, on the personal services of a patrician caste. At its best, indeed, although at the cost of much oppression and degradation of the humbler classes, such a system provides good soldiers. But the expense of maintaining such a force is ruinously great, while luxury enervates, and civil strife destroys, the flower of a fighting nobility. The rise of a fourth great power, soon to be mistress alike of Egypt and of Mesopotamia, was strangely impeded by the existence of a knot of little civic states, whose tiny territories consisted but of rocky peninsulas and hilly islets in the south-eastern corner of our continent. The multitudinous host which Xerxes led to the conquest of Europe was not, of course, in the true sense of the word, an army. But it comprised the warriors of many subject nations and barbarous tribes; it brought into the field many hundred thousand fighting men, to whom each other's speech and garb were unknown, and it was backed by the richest treasury west of the Chinese boundaries, then, as now, the golden sinews of war. More than this, the great king's body-guard, the famous and splendid Immortals,

represents the earliest body of regular troops recorded to have been kept on foot among the princes of the East.

Had the Greeks been less patriotic or less carefully drilled than they were, the history of South Europe might have been very different from what it has been; Sun-worshippers might have overrun the Mediterranean shores more effectually than was afterwards done by the armed missionaries of Mahomet, and Persian supremacy might have crushed in the germ the future glories of nascent Rome. As it was, a perfervid people, who were soldiers or sailors at will, whose early training in the gymnasium made every youth an athlete, while the science of strategy had its native home among them, presented an impenetrable barrier to Asiatic ambition. The Hellenes, dashing seamen as they were, and ready at any moment to take to the long oar and the brass-beaked galley, showed a wise discrimination in preferring their heavy-armed hoplites to the rest of their citizen militia. Their horsemen, composed of young men of the higher ranks, were no doubt creditable as light cavalry, but neither in numbers or efficiency a match for the Parthian riders in the pay of Cyrus or Darius. Their slingers and bowmen, fit to cover the flanks of a few hundred Thebans or Athenians in domestic Grecian broils, would have been crushed beneath the darts and stones of the countless auxiliaries of the great king. But their infantry was matchless, and Persian monarchs were willing to bid high for the hire of a machine so potent and so well regulated. The retreat from the heart of Persia of Xenophon and his comrades remains one of the most instructive chapters of military history, and shows how ten thousand mercenary Greek soldiers, far from home, could make their way through the midst of jealous and predatory clans as a gallant ship cuts her course through a waste of waters. The Greeks alone understood that war was an art to be studied; they alone could set guards, form a camp, reconnoitre the road, and reduce the operations of their advance to an almost mathematical precision, while other nations were governed by blind impulse, and attacked in hasty fury, to retire in disgraceful panic.

Yet, however admirable was a phalanx of Greek spearmen calmly confronting the assault of a superior force of lofty-turbaned Medes, the ample civic records which remain to us show that it was no light task to call out an army of Hellenes.

Each expedition was attended with much expense, and there was much hesitation, usually, before belligerent counsels could prevail. This was an inevitable consequence of a comparatively high standard of civilisation. The Greeks were moderately rich, thrifty by instinct, sensitive to danger as well as to the call of honour, or the sense of greed, and they had few idlers among them. It was a distinctly painful effort by which the nobly-born burgher of Athens tore himself away from his counting-house, his wheat-ships, the lawsuit pending before the Dicasts, the pleasant evenings whiled away by sweet music and witty conversation, the gossip of the Forum, the philosophy of the Portico. The sturdy citizens of the next grade, ready enough for a mere semi-piratical cruise among the tributary islets, were not always prompt to buckle on the ringed mail, and to don the nodding helmet, while the poorest freemen of the Demos must often, as they marched out beneath the olive-trees of Attica, have grumblingly contrasted their own hard lot with that of the pampered slaves with no country to fight for, whereas Laodices and Sosthenes must start for battle and bivouac, and precisely, too, when the long-promised tragedy of that clever playwright, Euripides, was about to be brought on, with unprecedented attention to scenic effect (and with mimes, singers, and buffoons to follow), at the theatre. Alexander's campaigns remained unique of their kind, until Napoleon, in a lesser degree, emulated the policy of the Macedonian victor. The discovery that a vanquished enemy might make a valuable recruit, was one which has proved useful alike in Europe and in India, but the first application of it was due to the martial son of Philip. There was the phalanx, proof against any tumultuous onset of a disorderly foe, and cleaving its resistless way, wedge-like, through hostile masses. There was the careful guard-mounting, the practised adroitness in taking advantage of every inequality of ground, the vigilance, the alertness in profiting by the blunders of an enemy, all the tactics and all the strategy of Greece, yet those were not Greeks whose blood and toil bought triumph after triumph. Some chosen corps, such as the Silver Spears, might still consist of the natives of North or South Greece, but the bulk of the common soldiers were of Oriental birth, trained by Hellenic sergeants, and led by Macedonian captains. The heirs of Alexander's divided

empire found themselves somewhat in the position of an Indian viceroy, who should be by some extraordinary casualty cut off from succour or instructions from the home authorities. For a good while, no doubt, the machinery would work well, and so it was with the Antiochi of Syria, and the Ptolemies of Egypt. It was not until the degeneracy of the dominant race had become an established fact, that the docile populations, over which they bore sway, bent their necks to a new yoke.

The Romans, from the first a military people, in the sense that discipline, order, and forethought were congenial to them, rather than merely a warlike one, such as the Gauls, their restless neighbours beyond the Umbrian Apennines, had the great advantage of profiting alike by the lessons and the errors of their Greek teachers. It was perhaps well for the Quirites that they first came into collision, not with a compact force of soldier-citizens from the free republics of Hellas, not with brilliant Athenians or haughty Spartans, but with the superb host of Pyrrhus, encumbered by its lengthy baggage-train, and ostentatiously provided with engines of war. When once the Roman foot-soldier had got over his first alarm at the sight of the turret-bearing elephants with their guard of Eastern bowmen, of the catapults hurling heavy stones, and of the balista discharging ponderous darts, he found himself situated towards the invaders much as the heroes of Marathon towards the glittering crowd of the Persians. The elephants, after all, were but beasts that, when mad with pain and terror, were as likely to trample down friends as foes. The spoils of the rich camp tempted the avarice of the frugal yeomen of the Alban uplands. They were not long in learning that the legion was more than a match for the antique phalanx, and themselves, man for man, at least the equals of the veteran Epirotes of the king's trusted body-guard.

Roman armies were, from the first, remarkable for the promptitude with which they took the field. The hardy husbandmen, who composed the rank and file, were as ready to repel invasion, or to gather for a raid into Samnite territory, as were the bellicose patricians by whom they were officered. And when soldiery grew more and more into a profession, and Rome was rich with the plunder of centuries of buccaneering, so perfect was the organisation, that the ill-wishers of the Republic stood aghast at the rapidity with

which Roman camps bristled among the hill-tops, and Roman columns moved along the arrow-straight high roads that led from the Eternal City towards every point of the compass. To the last, even when most of the patient legionaries, laden like beasts of burden, as skilful with the spade as with the spear, and trained to a life of labour and endurance, were of foreign birth and blood, the mere word of Rome appeared sufficient to evoke armies from the earth, and to beat back, again and again, the often renewed incursions of the barbarian. Where all so well knew their duty, where war was as a game of chess, the moves of which had been studied in theory and in practice, a cohort, a legion, an army, was instantly ready to do all that could be required of it, and it was not until the heart of the empire was hopelessly corrupt that the members failed to do their duty.

The feudal system, at its highest pitch of perfection, failed deplorably as a preparation for war. Ostensibly, indeed, it rendered the commencement of hostilities possible within a very few days. Where all lands were held by military tenure, each great vavasour and his vassals and subtenants could instantly be summoned to the royal standard. The whole lay property of Europe belonged either to the king, or was leased in fief among a martial aristocracy, whose pride and amusement was the daily exercise of arms, who broke lances on each others' shields by way of festive pastime, and who knew of no pleasures save the joust and the chase. The network of feudal dependence was so contrived as to draw into its meshes the whole freeborn population; burghers beneath the banners of their guild, yeomen under the knight's pennon, and the chivalry of a province around the guidon of some great vassal of the crown. But forty days of unpaid service were not sufficient to effect anything beyond a transitory success, and to this may probably be attributed the fact that the balance of power oscillated with such apparent caprice during the Middle Ages. There was barely time for a march, for fighting a battle, for laying waste a tract of country, for beginning a siege which had commonly to be abandoned, when the tide of armed men ebbed again homewards, and the short six weeks' campaign was over.

It is not very wonderful that ambitious and able monarchs should have chafed at the imperfections of a system which was really defensive, and which left a victor

without the means of profiting by his success. By bribery and browbeating, by cajolery, entreaties, threat, and promise, a king could sometimes prevail on part of his baronage to remain with him, and to keep such of their dependents as could be induced to go on fighting. But the uncertain services of these volunteers made the rulers of all rich countries prefer the mercenary troops, such as the Brabançons of Richard the First, or the free companies of a later date, who would sell their swords and their blood for regular pay. The first of these hirelings, as their name implies, came from the Low Countries, and to Flemish and Gascon men-at-arms were presently added adventurers from England, from Genoa, Germany, and the Swiss Cantons. All of these, it may be observed, were freemen, at a time when predial slavery was so usual that personal freedom was almost a badge of nobility, and all served for a rate of pay that was relatively high, and which gave the advantage to the heaviest purse.

The system of hiring foreigners to defend a country reached its climax in Italy. Every petty prince, every sovereign count, every marquis holding under the emperor, had his mercenaries. The free republics made a bargain with some well-known captain of Condottieri to do their fighting for them for a certain annual sum. The professional soldiers thus enlisted had no desire to kill or be killed, and grew to look on bloodshed as an unfortunate accident which now and then attended an encounter of two bodies of heavy-armed cavalry. It was not until the French and their Swiss auxiliaries were confronted by the Spaniards and German spearmen, who disputed with them the spoils of Italy, that Cisalpine warfare became a gory reality. Even after the decay of feudalism, compulsory military service, in Teutonic countries, at any rate, remained the rule, but only for the defence of the realm. In England, for instance, that "king's press," which Sir John Falstaff so abused for his private profit, was a mere muster of militia against rebels or foreign raiders. The disorderly rabble that the queen's proclamation called into the field when the Spanish Armada coasted our shores, was a sample of the militia of the period, and was divided, on paper at least, into two armies of great numerical strength. Lord Macaulay's speculations as to the probable result of a contest between this unwieldy mob, without discipline, provisions, or officers, and the

trained veterans under the skilful guidance of Parma, are moderate enough, and we can hardly wonder that no prince of the sixteenth and seventeenth century was fond of relying on a force which the necessities of the age had outgrown.

The palmy days of professional soldiering may be said, roughly speaking, to have been contemporaneous with the reigns of Tudor and Stuart. For then, abroad and at home, the fighting man was regarded as a skilled artisan, whose value in the labour market ruled high. Cromwell's splendid army was maintained on the same footing, as to pay, which James the First had fixed for the remuneration of his small force engaged in the reconquest of Ulster. At a time when the daily wages of a cloth-weaver, or of a ploughman, seldom exceeded sixpence, it is evident that the soldier's eightpence, with the contingent advantages incidental to military arrangements, raised its recipient to a higher level of comfort than the average. Louvois, the thriftily-disposed minister of sordid, splendid Louis the Fourteenth, first established the custom of relying on armies that were, indeed, of great numerical strength, but systematically ill-paid and ill-fed. Hogarth's grim caricature, in which the starveling French sentinel guards the gates of Calais, was not such a very great exaggeration of the truth. How such a force, to be employed amid Canadian frosts, on the sultry plains of India, or on the steaming banks of the Mississippi, as well as in Flanders and the Palatinate, was ever raised by voluntary enlistment, is a marvel to the tyro in history. But the key to the seeming puzzle is to be found in the bitter poverty which afflicted many of the provinces of France, in the local influence of the vain and warlike aristocracy, and in the connivance of the authorities with the scandalous proceedings of the *Racoleurs*, or recruiting agents, licensed kidnappers, compared with whom our Sergeant Kite and Ensign Plume were mild and conscientious purveyors of human flesh. Better paid and better treated than the unlucky subjects of the magnificent monarch and his successors, were the Swiss and German mercenaries, who, with the privileged regiments of the king's household, were the élite of the service.

The eighteenth century was stained by one great blot, from which its precursors had been nearly, or wholly, pure, that of systematised man-selling for military purposes. English and Dutch crimps in sea-

port towns were ever on the watch to ensnare the raw material of soldiers to serve the rival East India Companies. In France, ruffianly contractors made regular bargains for handing over a specified number of hounded or terrified young rustics to the rich marquis, who had bought from the king, or his reigning favourite, the colonelcy of a new corps. But Germany, split up into a multitude of petty principalities, offered the most pitiable spectacle of all, for there every little despot, bishop, duke, or sovereign count, suddenly discovered that in the blood of his people he possessed a gold mine that would conveniently provide the means of that lavish expenditure of which Versailles had set the example. Press-gangs were continually at work in dragging away the husbandman from his plough, the shepherd lad from his sheep, to wear blue or white uniforms, according to the colours of the customer, and to bleed and die for the King of France, for the King of Prussia, or for the Elector of Hanover, like those Hessians whom George the Third bought to repress the revolt of the American colonists.

It would be ludicrous, were it not that the wretched circumstances of the actors in the gory drama demand compassion, to trace the fortunes of some of the involuntary warriors who were bartered by their native rulers for foreign gold. Often a whole regiment would be taken prisoners, and would change sides without a murmur, and do battle under the enemy's flag with the meek submissiveness of armed slaves who have found a new master. Individual captives were usually cajoled or bullied into taking service with the victors. Such troops had no heart in their work, and when not under the watchful eye of a strict officer, were more prone to run than to fight. But Frederick the Great and his eccentric father had found out that drill and discipline could work wonders with indifferent materials, and that a man might be a valuable fighting machine long after his spirit had been crushed and snubbed out of him. It is not pleasant to read the details of a régime of cane and pipe-clay, of dungeons, executions, cold, shame, hunger, all coolly calculated to tame turbulent humanity into automatic obedience, and each item of human suffering and degradation reckoned with the scientific complacency of the mathematician. A young man of tolerable constitution, whether Frenchman or German, whether English, Polish, Swedish, mattered little,

was worth a certain sum in the military market, precisely as a Guinea negro was worth a certain sum in the labour market. It was cheaper to buy him from somebody else than from himself, therefore prince, crimp, and kidnapper were dealt with in preference to the intended soldier, and when once he was caught, the drill-sergeant, the prison-keeper, and the captain with a sword in his right hand and a cane in his left, could be trusted to screw out of him the money's worth of available service. Men of various nationalities, stocked, scourged, and sharply looked after by vigilant warders, fought the battles of the Great Frederick just as the galley-slaves rowed the vessels of the Great Louis, and under the same stimulus of consistent terror, oarsman and grenadier fulfilled their allotted task. It was not until after the iron had entered into the souls of the vanquished of Jena that a national Prussian army—sprung from the land of Körnhorst, Schill, and Blucher, rather than from that of the royal philosopher of Potsdam—thrice found the road to Paris.

The French, however, are correct in their boast that national armies, as distinguished from professional ones, first sprang from their soil, although certainly not as spontaneous productions. The French youth, though not, save in mountainous districts, such as the Lower Pyrenees, apt to go to such extremes as desertion, manifests much passive reluctance to pay the "tax of blood." Under the Directory it was necessary to tie the conscripts, neck and heels, and fling them into a cart like so many calves, to bring them safely to head-quarters. But just as pressed men in the British navy were the briskest at their guns, so did the lads whom the fury of the revolutionary wars dragged from home fight with much dash, if with no great steadiness. There is no doubt but that the old soldiers raised under the Monarchy cleared the way for the raw levies of Fleurus and Marengo, but their number was soon thinned, and it was not until the families of France were drained of sons that the tide of conquest rolled backwards from the Kremlin to the Parisian boulevards.

From the French other nations have readily caught up the idea of compulsory military service, and for more than half a century guards have been mounted, and battles fought, by millions of armed men who were forced into fighting or preparing to fight. England has remained the soli-

tary country on this side of the protecting Atlantic that has thought fit to intrust her safety to a small but costly army, raised by voluntary enlistment, and aided by a fine fleet, manned on the same principle. These safeguards, as we know, she has supplemented by the assistance of a large force of volunteers, a percentage of whom are undoubtedly the finest marksmen in the world, while some are fairly trained, though necessarily unpractised, infantry. On the other hand the military systems of all continental nations are in a state of anxious and expensive transition, and armed nations, in place of national armies, are fast being prepared to confront one another, armed for war.

YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

CHAPTER XL. MY TREACHERY.

"YOU'VE a certain look of Sir George, I think, 'a trick of Cœur de Lion's face.' But 'tis not much. Some token of the Nightingales, it may be. I could not swear to it, however. There are things that run in families; line of brow, and glance of eye; mould of nose, and cut of lip. We get these from our forefathers, whatever their worth. Oftentimes it's all they have to hand down to us. An heirloom in the form of a snub-nose is no such prize; no, nor a long-descended gout or hereditary rheumatism. You haven't Sir George's smile, however. Well, we can dispense with that. There are some smiles that set one's teeth on edge, and worse. 'Why I can smile and murder while I smile,' says Richard. And you haven't Sir George's inches. No, Master Duke, he's the handsomer and finer man. 'An older soldier, not a better. Did I say better?' He's a noble figure; I own that. He would have succeeded on the boards; he's to the manner born. What a Joseph Surface he'd have made! I shouldn't mind playing Charles to his Joseph, even now. But for lovers! No, he could not touch me there; nor in parts of passion or tenderness. But in Iago he'd be my match I think; and Iachimo, there's a wily Italian look in his face, perfect of its kind; and in Shylock he might run me hard. But this is idle. He's Sir George the Great, and I'm his humble assistant, with my voice departed and no head of hair. One thing, he's even balder than I am. There's comfort in that. He'd have to find himself in wigs not less than

I should. It's a stage convention that heroes should be thickly thatched. Why not a hairless Hamlet, or a Romeo with a bare poll? The audience would grin and guff; yet why not those gentlemen as bald as others? I grow weak on this topic, and envious; and an inclination towards scalping comes over me. Your hair is very thick, my young friend. Cherish it, but not with vanity. It will perish and fall as the leaves do, as mine did. 'Oh! Hamlet, what a falling off was there!'"

I parted with my old friend newly found on most cordial terms. I gave him my address, and promised to see him again very shortly. Altogether I was much gratified with the results of my visit to Harley-street.

Sir George perplexed me somewhat. I admired and liked him, but a measure of doubt mingled with these sentiments. Certainly he had been kind to me, and very courteous. Yet I felt that there was the coldness and the polish as of marble about his manner. He was unlike, in every respect, any one I had ever seen before. He seemed to possess a magnet's power, both of attraction and repulsion. Even Mole, the while he permitted himself great liberty of speech concerning him, yet clearly was impressed with some awe of his employer. He had conveyed this only vaguely, seeming to be unwilling to descant upon it definitely, preferring to dwell upon Sir George's method of conducting his profession. Yet, after allowing for a certain exaggeration to which he was prone, the result of his theatrical career, much significance had pertained to his looks and gestures, and to the curious changes of his husky voice. He feared Sir George. "A great man, and a strange one too;" so Mole had described him.

Yes, he was strange, undoubtedly. He seemed to belong almost to a different order of creation, to stand widely apart from us on the strength of some natural law. If we were flesh and blood, then he was otherwise constituted. But it was no fault of his probably, if we failed to understand him, and therefore took up a position far removed from his. After all, who were we that we should presume to judge him? Mole was—Mole or Manleverer—a hapless stroller, to whom it was promotion to work as a journeyman in the portrait-painter's studio. And I was—young Mr. Nightingale, from the Down Farm, an articulated clerk, an insignificant boy, albeit I knew a little of art, and had written a five-act tragedy in blank verse.

In truth, what fault had I to find with Sir George? I had claimed kindred with him, and forthwith my claim had been allowed. He had not hesitated for a moment. That delay had occurred in the matter was solely my own fault. He had acknowledged me as his relative, had welcomed my visit, had begged me to repeat it, had offered to serve and assist me in any way that was possible. Had I gone to him sooner so much the sooner would his kindness have been displayed to me. Of what, then, had I to complain?

That he had long lived apart from his relatives at Purrington, insomuch that they, I felt assured, knew very little of him, his fame, his prosperity, his high station, could scarcely be charged against him as a fault. His occupied and public career, their remote and secluded existence, naturally hindered their meeting. It was unlikely, it was scarcely possible, that they should know much of each other. Their ways of life, of character, of thought, would perhaps have sundered them somewhat even under conditions more favourable to their union. And, as I judged, the relationship was not very close. My father was not of Purrington. It was only by his marriage that the Nightingales were connected with the Orme family, or with the present inmates of the Down Farm. I represented that link, and Sir George had at once recognised it, without hint of reluctance or distaste. He had done all that the situation had seemed to demand of him. He had inquired concerning my mother and my uncle with all necessary courtesy; any great show of cordiality in regard to them was not to be looked for. Still, I must end as I began: Sir George perplexed me somewhat. I felt that I did not comprehend him.

I sent my mother a full account of my visit to my distinguished kinsman.

She replied briefly. She was pleased to learn that Sir George had shown me kindness. She had always understood that his success in his profession had been very great. She trusted that I would always treat him with the consideration and respect due to his elevated position. At the same time she cautioned me not to trespass on his politeness, nor to intrude upon him too frequently, seeing how valuable his time must necessarily be. I was to be very careful not to overtax his friendliness towards me, nor to construe his offers of service too literally. The great were often tempted out of courtesy to say more than they really meant. Concern-

ing my delay in presenting the letter of introduction she made no remark. It was plain that she did not view it as a matter of any moment. In a postscript she stated that she should be glad to be informed of any further interviews Sir George might favour me with.

Tony, to whom I hastened on quitting Harley-street, was much gratified with my narrative, and in his sanguine way predicted the most surprising consequences as likely to ensue from it. He looked upon my fortune as made. He regarded Sir George as a very glorious person indeed. He had not, he owned, hitherto held the serjeant-painter's art in very high estimation; henceforward he promised to view it much more favourably. It was a pity, he thought, that I was not a painter. In such case I might certainly look for Sir George's mantle, in his character of serjeant-painter, to descend upon me. Still, he would surely assist me, and further my interests in a great variety of ways. A bachelor, why should he not adopt me? He was not likely to marry now. Could he do better than constitute me his heir, in right of my name and my supreme abilities? Tony had a great deal to say on this subject.

I did not as yet venture to touch upon the plan I had formed for obtaining him employment in Sir George's studio. I felt that it would be premature until I knew more of Sir George, and had ascertained whether I could possibly, with any hope of succeeding, address him upon the matter. Still I hoped that this opportunity of assisting my friend might speedily arise. For I could see that there was real necessity for Tony's finding occupation and proper reward. He did not complain, and, to all appearance, was as gay and light of heart as ever. But, in truth, his task of colouring the plates of the Milliner's Magazine was wretched drudgery, and very ill-remunerated. He was capable of doing much better; for he possessed real ability, though it might stand considerably in need of discipline and guidance. He was poor, and he had now begun to look poor. He was forced to deny himself many things—trifling luxuries they might be—but he had been accustomed to them for so long, that to lose them was a real deprivation to him. Poverty was indeed pinching him. His old dainty, dandy air was almost gone from him. He explained laughingly that he now cultivated an artistic slovenliness

of appearance, and that he should let his beard grow, when Nature was kind enough to assist him in carrying out that intention. He persistently refused to borrow money of me. Again and again he put back my proffered purse; not that there was much in it, but I knew that his means were now reduced to nothing almost.

"There's a good deal due to me," he said, "and of course it will all be paid one of these fine days. But just now, you know, I haven't the heart to plague poor Rachel about it. I'm sure she's no money to spare. I must get on without it somehow. I own I'm dreadfully hard up, but, poor child, she musn't know it. She's got quite enough trouble on her hands already."

I could not urge him to apply to Rachel. I knew well that the Monck household was terribly straitened at this time. Still, I felt that my good, generous friend was hardly and unfairly used. I missed even more than he did, perhaps, his dandy graces and adornments; his glossy clothes, light gloves, flowered button-holes, and tasselled canes. They suited him so well that they seemed to be part of himself. It was hard that he and shabbiness should make acquaintance, and become close allies. He was to me as a dainty flower to be carefully treasured in a delicate vase of ornate glass or painted china; not thrust into a coarse vessel of pewter or brown earthenware. I was greatly grieved when he told me that he had paid his first visit to a pawnbroker. He spoke lightly and laughingly of it, but he blushed a little the while.

"There was no help for it," he said. "I didn't like it, but I don't feel ashamed. I couldn't get on without an advance. All will come right by-and-bye. It's simply a commercial transaction. Nobody is thought the worse of for charging an estate; why, then, should people look askance at one for mortgaging one's superfluities of dress? The scale of the affair can't make any difference. Pawnbroker is not a pleasant word; but call the lender mortgagee, or even 'uncle,' as the world does, and it's surprising what a difference it makes. He appears in quite an amiable light; a family friend who has kindly stepped in to render valuable aid in a sudden emergency. He wouldn't look at my art studies in 'oil'—there, I think, he was wrong, for they are really well worth looking at; but he was very ready with an advance upon my shirt-studs. I hold his tickets as the title-

deeds of those articles of jewellery. I shall redeem the mortgage, of course, as soon as may be. Meanwhile, don't look so serious, my dear Duke, please don't. I haven't robbed the pawnbroker's till. I don't like 'spouting,'—that's the word—but could I help it? Surely it's better than applying to Rachel—troubling her under present circumstances?"

It was better; I felt that. Yet I reminded him that he might have borrowed of me.

"You're the best fellow in the world," he kindly said, and there was the glister of tears in his eyes as he spoke. "But you see I don't like creditors; it's pleasant to me to abuse them. Now I couldn't do that with any sort of justice or sense of comfort if you were one of them. Could I? I should be landed in all kinds of inconveniences. I should have to keep a perpetual watch over my tongue. One cannot be always making exceptions, passing saving clauses. I'm rather fond of sweeping statements myself. I should constantly, in the most unconscious way, be treading on your corns. No; you wouldn't mind or cry out very much, I dare say. But think of the pain I should feel, when I came to remember, as I should surely do, my folly, my thoughtless ingratitude."

I had seen Rachel again and again. She had sent for me on business of the office, Vickery being the bearer of her message. He performed his task in this respect with considerable reluctance, still disapproving, as it seemed to me, my admission to the upper chambers of the house. Rachel I found always seated at her desk in the front drawing-room. Her manner did not vary; it was uniformly simple, kindly, graceful. Her industry was quite exemplary; she executed her task of copying papers and documents with the same diligence and completeness. She looked pale and worn, I thought, but her steady eyes were still bright, her smile was not less engaging, and the wistful beauty of her air and expression appealed to me more and more forcibly. From each interview with her I returned with my heart still further stirred by admiration of her, by a sense of devotion to her. But I said no word of this to any one. I felt that I could not trust myself to speak upon the subject to Tony, from whom otherwise I had few secrets. I knew that she loved him. He did not even suspect this; but by-and-bye he might discover it—and then?

I had not seen Mr. Monck. But I

learned that his state of health had much amended; could now be more hopefully viewed, indeed, than had been possible for some time past. I surmised this in the first instance from a certain change I one day noted in Rachel. She seemed relieved, not altogether, but still in an appreciable degree, from the pressure of a cruel burden. Her air had become less subdued, and, if I may say so, more girlish. She spoke more freely, and I was enthralled by the beauty of her smile. In reply to my inquiries, she informed me that Mr. Monck was really better.

She complimented me upon the improvement in my handwriting. Indeed, I had taken pains to merit her approbation. No doubt my penmanship still left much to be desired. There had been a change, however, and, under the circumstances, any change could not but be for the better.

It was sometimes our joint task to compare the transcripts we had made with the draft or original writings. We took turns in reading aloud and noting any clerical errors that might have crept into our copies. The papers were for the most part uninteresting even to unintelligibility—proceedings in Chancery, or, now and then, abstracts of title and other complicated conveyancing matters. Still I found the occupation very delightful.

She had been reading in her peculiarly clear, soft, musical tones. She stopped suddenly, and there danced a charming sparkle of merriment in her dark, grey eyes, as she said, "I'm afraid you have not been attending, Mr. Nightingale. I skipped a line on purpose to try you; and you took no notice of the omission."

It was true. I had been listening to the silvery melody of her voice, regardless of the dull, formal words she uttered. I murmured vague apologies. I owned that for the moment my attention had strayed. I could hardly confess the plain truth.

"It's really important these copies should be correct," she said, quietly. "Perhaps in future it will be better that you should read. Only you must take care to leave off when you're tired."

It was so pleasant to be near her, and to steal occasional glances over the top of the papers at the graceful lines of her bowed head, at the rich bands of her dark hair, her tiny transparent ear, and the delicate colouring of her brunette cheek and neck, that however great the risk of losing my place scandalously, and seeming absurdly stupid in her eyes, I went on reading sometimes

until my tongue clove to my palate, and my voice died away into the faint inarticulate murmur of wind in a pipe. I was determined to go on until power of utterance quitted me altogether.

"I'm sure you're tired. You *must* be tired. In any case, that will do for to-day. I congratulate you, Mr. Nightingale. Your copy is most correct." I was quitting the room when she said, with a rather confused air, "You have seen my cousin of late?"

"I saw him last night, Miss Monck."

"And he is well? Quite well? It is so long since we have met!"

"He is rather busy, I think."

"Busy? Ah! I remember—he told me. Colouring plates for a magazine. Poor Tony!" She pressed her hand upon her forehead. "He is paid for what he does, I hope?"

"Yes. He is paid. But not very handsomely, I fear."

"Poor Tony." And she sighed. "But he mustn't desert me. You have influence with him, Mr. Nightingale. Kindly tell him not to forget me. Will you? Not formally, you know; not as though I had asked you to remind him. But it's really so long since I've seen him. It's not right of him to keep aloof from me."

She rested her head upon her hand, and seemed to lose herself in thought. I noticed the tears gather in her eyes. I quietly withdrew.

I spoke to Tony on the subject. He admitted that he had not been to Golden-square for some time past.

"I'll go soon," he said; "but not yet. You see, poor Rachel will think I've only come for money, and she'll trouble herself dreadfully about it. I long to be able to say to her, 'I'm independent, Rachel. I can earn enough to live on. Never mind about the arrears of my annuity, or its future payment.' I don't care to see her until I can say that to her. I soon shall, I do fervently trust."

I had lately received a liberal remittance from my uncle. He expressed a hope that I would make it last for some time, adding

a mild warning against extravagance. In a kindly postscript, however—which I judged to be of my mother's suggesting—he stated that he was well aware that London was an expensive place, and he would not have me deny myself any comforts suitable to my position and occupation in life.

I then carried into execution a cunning plan I had formed.

"Tony," I said, "Miss Monck has charged me to give you these." I handed him five guineas. "You will kindly give me a receipt—it's a matter of business, you see, and I should like to satisfy her that I have faithfully discharged her commission. One can't be too business-like in such cases."

He was completely deceived. But he was of most unsuspecting nature at all times.

"It's very good of Rachel. I can't say that the money has come before it was wanted. But I do hope that the poor child has not pinched herself. I ought to call and thank her, or at any rate to make sure that she can really spare the amount. I know that she has many calls upon her just now."

I was alarmed.

"I told her you were very busy, and made excuses for you on that score. I thought you had quite resolved not to see her until you had really good news to tell."

He did not go to Rachel. My treachery was well intended. Yet I regretted it. I felt that I had not dealt fairly with Rachel Monck, and that my motives might be gravely misconstrued. I was chargeable with loving her myself, and on that account sundering her from one I knew she loved. Yet in good sooth there had been no such stuff in my thoughts.

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